

**THE ‘OTHER’ LANDSCAPE: LOCATING  
ENVIRONMENT AND ECOLOGY IN DEVIKULAM**

*Dissertation Submitted to  
Mahatma Gandhi University  
in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements for  
the Award of the Degree of  
Bachelor of Arts in History*

Submitted by

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## DECLARATION

I, **SHALU BIJU**, do here by declare that the project entitled “**THE ‘OTHER’ LANDSCAPE: LOCATING ENVIRONMENT AND ECOLOGY IN DEVIKULAM**” is a bonafide record of project work done me under the supervision of **Dr. Jijo Jayaraj, Assistant Professor on Contract, Department of History, Pavanatma College, Murickassery, Idukki** and that it has not been submitted to any other university/institution for the award of any Degree or Diploma.

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# CONTENTS

*List of Illustrations*

*List of Tables*

*Abbreviations*

## INTRODUCTION 1-8

## CHAPTER 1: GEOGRAPHIC SETTING 9-35

*Climate-Temperature and Humidity-Altitude-Rainfall-Accessibility-Wind-Soil-Laterite soil-Alluvial soil-Red soil-Forest and Hill soil-Properties of the soil-Fauna-Mammals-Birds-Reptiles-Amphibians-Invertebrates-Streams and Rivers-Flora-Grass land-Forest cover-Tropical Forest-Semi Evergreen Forest-Moist Deciduous Forest-Dry Deciduous Forest-Sub Tropical Forest-Temperate Montane Shola-Early Cultivation-Early Inhabitants-Muthuvans-The Mannans-The Palliyars-The Kuravas-The Vellalars.*

## CHAPTER 2: COMMERCIAL LANDSCAPING THROUGH PLANTATION 36-55

*History of Tea Industry-Growth of Plantation in China-Sung Dynasty-Plantation in Japan-Plantation in India-Plantation in Travancore-Arrival of European Plantation-Plantation Concession and takeover-Cinchona Plantation –Land Patterns –The Middle Space of the Kanganies.*

## CHAPTER 3: EUROPEANISATION AND LANDSCAPING: CREATION OF THE ‘OTHER’ 56-81

*Transport in the Hill station–Road and Connectivity-Moto traffic in Devikulam-Trace by Kannan Devan Hills Produce Company-Munnar-Devikulam Road-Bridle path through Anjanad-Surianelli Estate to Devikulam Road-Kumali-Devikulam Bridle path-Establishment of Factories-Opening of the Bazars-Travellers Bungalow-Niruva Shed-Arack shop and liquor supply-P.W.D camp shed-Sreemoolam Club*

*Library- Police station- Muncif court-Telegraph and Telephone-Postal  
and Anjal Mechanism in Devikulam-The Monorail way and Ropeway-  
Kundala Valley Light Railway-Centres of Faith and Church.*

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<b>CONCLUSION</b>	<b>82-86</b>
<i>Appendix I</i>	<i>87</i>
<i>Appendix II</i>	<i>88-92</i>
<i>Glossary</i>	<i>93-95</i>
<i>Bibliography</i>	<i>96-98</i>



## LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

Figure 2.1	Tea Plantation	38
Figure 3.1	Travellers Bungalow, Devikulam	66
Figure 3.2	Niruva Shed, Devikulam	68
Figure 3.3	Sreemoolam Library, Devikulam	71

## **LIST OF TABLES**

Table 3.1	Bridle Path maintained by P. W. D, 1905	61
Table 3.2	Fees for Occupation of the Travellers Bungalow	67

## **LIST OF APPENDICES**

Appendix 1:	Map of Devikulam	87
Appendix 2:	Photographs triggering European Memory	88-92

## ABBREVIATIONS

A. D	:	Anno Domini
Adv.	:	Advocate
As.	:	Annas
B. C	:	Before Christ
C. M. S.	:	Church Mission Society
C. S. I	:	Church of South India
C. V. N. T	:	C Velu Swami Nadar Transport
Col.	:	Colonel
D. O	:	Document Order
K. D. H	:	Kannan Devan Hills
K. D. H. P	:	Kannan Devan Hills Produce Company
Km	:	Kilometres
Lt.	:	Lieutenant
M. E	:	Malayalam Era
P. W. D	:	Public Works Department
Re.	:	Rupees
S. M. S	:	Sree Moolam Sabha
T. B.	:	Travellers Bungalow

## INTRODUCTION

Devikulam is a meeting point of historical knowledge and legends. Geographically the area falls within the Precambrian metamorphic terrain. The study area is located in the tropical monsoonal belt, experiencing alternate dry and wet period. The average height of the area is 700 meter sea above mean sea level. About 80% of the area has moderately steep to steep slopes owing to the undulating nature of the land and its high altitude, Devikulam has a well ordered system of natural drainage i.e., Pampar, Idamalayar, Periyar, and other water bodies.

In earlier records `Devikulam is mentioned as `Devimala'. (Mountain resided by goddess) Devikulam Taluk is on the Western slope of the Western Ghats. It is the Northern most part of then Travancore state. The study area stretches between the latitudes of "9<sup>0</sup>56'56" N to 10<sup>0</sup>21'29"N and longitudes 76<sup>0</sup>45'00 E to 77<sup>0</sup>20'00 E covers an area of 1140 KM<sup>2</sup> and has a population of 177,621.

The High Range has been the abode of the Adivasis even before the arrival of the Europeans and peasants. There are twenty seven hill men settlements situated inside the Reserve Forest in Cardamom Hill Reserve and Kannan Devan Hills area. They are living inside the forest for many generations. They did small scale agriculture and gaming wild animals in the hill ranges of the district. Their ignorance in modern farming methods and their inability to invest money for large scale agriculture were exploited by the British. In the view of the modern anthropologists, the tribal populations in Idukki were belonging to the Proto Austroloid ethnic groups.

The tribes living in the High Ranges speak both Tamil and Malayalam. The Muthuvans were seen in the High Ranges of Devikulam Taluk. They settled on the Northern portion of the Cardamom Hills, and in the High Ranges of Travancore. The Muthuvans were the original inhabitants of the hill constituting the major tribal community in Munnar. They claimed to have come from the forests of the neighboring Madurai District of Tamil Nadu. According to legends they were loyal subjects of Madurai and forced to seek refuge in the mountains during the wars of the Pandyan Rajas in about 900 A. D. On their way the Muthuvans carried idol of Meenakshi on their back and hence they got the name Muthuvan. The Mannans are seen in the forest areas of Kanjirappilly, Devikulam and Udumbanchola Taluks. They are mostly found in the Cardamom Hills to

the South of Periyar River up to the South of the tract of the land now submerged by the Periyar Reservoir. According to the legend, they were originally the vassals of the king of Madurai who deserted their chief and joined the king of Punjar, and were called 'mannar' meaning chief. According to legend, Goddess Sita Devi of the Indian epic Ramayana bathed in the beautiful lake near water surrounded by lush, green hills, now named Sita Devi Lake, this was later known as Devikulam. Most of the inhabitants in this town speak Malayalam and Tamil.

The genesis of the population in Devikulam is not a recent one. It has a very old history, which finds mention even in the epics. The State Manual of Travancore 1940 described the High Range as, "This land is almost of indescribable beauty. "Sholar" or small pieces of jungle clothed the banks on one side of the water, while on the other sweeping grassland rose to the due cliffs above a further colour contrast being lent to the scene by the bright red flowers of innumerable clumps of wild rhododendron trees. Herds of wild goats (Thar) looked down upon them from rocky peaks, while elephants and bison roamed the grass land. Under the cover of the forest, tiger and panthers, Sambar and muntjac and many other species of South Indian fauna thrived, undisturbed by the presence of man".

It was with the arrival of the planters that the area received large scale change for instance, there was no postal system in the area. Originally, the planters' communication with the outside world was by way of 'anchal' service of the Travancore government, where runners took mail from place to place. This was inadequate once the plantations came into being on these hills. Representing the matter to the government, they got the first Post Office opened in 1902 at Devikulam estate on an experimental basis Thambi.

A.W Turner immediately arranged with his friends to send a number of postcards to ensure the requisite number of stamping in the Post Office. A second Post Office opened at Yellapatty. The company arranged for the carriage of letters and parcels to the respective places by coolies.

Archeological evidence states that human presence in the high ranges dates back to 8000 years. The petrography, petroglyphs, Tamil Vatteluthu, trident and terracotta objects found in the Anchanad Valley (Combination of five Nadus, Marayur, Kizhantoor, Kanthallur, Vattawada, KannanDevan Hills) reveal the ancient development of human culture and of settled life. During the late 1990s Devikulam in the High Range areas has

been transformed into a bustling tourist destination and has developed modern infrastructure. The population of Devikulam had links with the Poonjar kings. Before the arrival of the planters and the plantation industry only the Adivasi populations like Mannan, Muthuvan, Pulaya, Malapulaya etc., lived there. As per the story, the first European to visit these hills was the Duke of Wellington Arthur Wellesley in 1790. In the year 1840 Ward and Connor made a great trigonometric survey of the study area and in particular the Anamudi and Chokanad and this survey is valid even today. The 'Planting Opinion' of the 1896 records that Arthur Wellesley was dispatched by General Meadows to cut off the retreat of Tipu Sultan at Kumily gap. Tipu's intelligence, however, forewarned him of this move and Wellesley was ordered to retreat his steps.

After the arrival of adivasi population such as early denoted Mathvans, Mannas etc., the planters and the plantation industry arrived. In 1877 Turner and a team came to India for Shikar, reached the mountain by a pass called Bodimettu and guided by the local hills men (Muthuvans), eventually reached the summit of the Anamudi and saw the beautiful of these hills with commercial advantage formulating in their minds, they ultimately acquired a concession of approximately 227 miles of land for the purpose of developing cinchona and other plantation crops from the Poonjar rajas Kerala Varma Valiya Raja of Anchanad. Small holders then began to purchase plots of these lands and planted a variety of crops ranging from cinchona, coffee and sugar to tea, and eventually these planters formed themselves into the North Travancore. After acquiring and getting the land leased, J D Munro (the then cardamom superintendent) planned to develop the industry. So he gave advertisements in the newspaper in London. In 1895, Sir John Muir, Baronet of Deanston, Scotland bought over the deeds of the concession for further development in 1900. The concession became vested with the Kannan Devan Hills Produce Company (KDHP), Ltd of which finally Muir held a large share and area started to develop very rapidly along more commercial lines, the main crop being tea. Plantation was opened in completely virgin tract covered with thick forest until 1879. KDHP along with as two subsidiaries- the Anglo- American Direct Tea Trading Company and the Amalgamated Tea Estate Company owned the major tea and coffee estates of the area.

Each estate needed 500-800 workers as to clear the land and open estate; workers had to be brought from the plains of Tamil Nadu. This was the beginning of Kangani system. The kangani is also called 'maistiri' who supervised the work. Most of the job seekers would have been agricultural workers in the employment of some landowners for

generations. The kanganis or the middle men recruited large scale labours from different parts of the Madras Presidency.

## **Area of the study**

The proposed study mainly focused on the geography of the hilly region of Devikulam, which was part of the then Travancore state the study focused on the environment and ecology in Devikulam and focuses on the environmental setting of the region with landscape changes with the opening of the plantation industry.

## **Objectives**

1. To comprehend the peculiar geographical features of Devikulam.
2. To understand the settlers in this area and their life style, customs etc.
3. To understand the infrastructures and subsequent changes that brought to the area.
4. To evaluate the origin and development of various plantation industries in the area.
5. To trace the landscape change happened in Devikulam as a result of the plantation.

## **Hypothesis**

The historical changes occurred in the small town, Devikulam are the logical outcomes of colonial exploitation. This was a case which had commonalities with the happenings of the other areas in India as well as the other parts of the world. With the introduction of the monoculture foundation including cinchona, coffee, tea, the area witnessed large scale reconfiguration in both biological systems and landscape. The evergreen forest of the area was cleared and has a clear ecological consequence. The environmental changes including climate change and species lost have to be seen in the large context of colonial exploration and domination

## **Research Questions**

1. What are the geographical features of Devikulam?
2. How to analyze the historical importance of Devikulam?
3. What are the specific changes occurred in the area?



4. How the tea and other monoculture plantations emerged in study area?
5. How the landscape of Devikulam was reconfigured?
6. Who were the original dwellers in Devikulam? What are their lifestyles, customs?
7. How devikulam emerged as a township?

## Review of the Literature

For the study of this work primary and secondary sources are used secondary sources include books, articles, research thesis etc. primary sources like gazette, manuals, census reports etc; are to be consulted written by different authors.

*Memoir of the Survey of Travancore and Cochin States* Vol. 1 authored by Lt. Benjamin Swain ward and Lt .Peter Eyre Conner, serves the purpose of a gazetteer, a census document and a socio-economic survey, enriching the topographical and geographical knowledge of the erstwhile Travancore and Cochin regions in the nineteenth century. The survey covers a period from a period from July 1816 to the end of the year 1820, explicating various aspects of Kerala's society such as history, climatic patterns, class and caste systems, religious establishments, administration and revenue system. This work has been reprinted with brief biographical sketches of the authors.

*Census of Idukki District -2011*. The book "Census of Idukki District 2011" is an authentic one which gives more ideas about Idukki District. It furnishes important details of Idukki district such as its geographical areas, rivers, crops, animals, etc; and other like total geographical areas, total number of households, sex proportion, total literacy rate and population density and so on. It is very helpful in analyzing about the population, living conditions, life styles, etc. We get a good idea about the places in Idukki District with the help of this book

*Other Landscapes: colonialism and predicament of Authority in nineteenth century south India*. How power can transform a landscape, and of how the imperial discourse imagined and constructed certain landscapes as other.

The Book *A Centenary of Planting in the Kannan Devan Hills Concession 1878-1978* by Amita Baig and William Henderson published by limited Tata Finlay Limited. This is special book which have written by the two chief proponents is about the Kannan

Devan Hills including Amita Baig and William Henderson. The book is basically very significant for those who are new concerns in this field and have least idea about the KannanDevan Hills and about tea in different 13 chapters namely Genesis, The formative years, catastrophe, the changing scene, transport, arms and the man, the irks, In all things Just and Fair, Recreation -Conservation, Argling, the back people, at work and play, changing values. This book describes to its readers, among other things, the operating up of the High Range 100 years ago by men of great pioneering spirit. They were certainly attracted to the region by mercenary consideration but an additional enticement was that in many ways, the country side born a resemblance to the highlands of their native land. A server of famous and not so famous - men, ranging from the Duke of Wellington to Mr. Mc. Ginty have visited the High Range during the last two centuries and all have carried away with them an abiding impression of the magnificence of Nature. Present day, the despite commercial exploitation of the High Range, there is very obvious evidence of the great care that has been taken during the last 100 years to ensure that Nature's gifts of flora and fauna are properly preserved and nurtured. In first Genesis part, the author is trying to explain some historical background of KannanDevan Hills. But their explanation was limited only to individual level.

The book *The story of Munnar* was written by Sulochana Nalapat. This book offers you some food for your right brain, in other words the soul of an enchanted place called Munnar. Here generations of people, black, brown and white, along with children of the wild, lived and died to produce a composite culture we may call plantation culture. They were neither demons nor gods; they came on stage, played out their roles and when the lights were out, blended into the bright blue of these skies, the perfect texture of this soil, and added sharpness to the icy winds that blow along the valleys laid out at the feet of the majestic Aneimudi.

The Book *Idukki, Desham, Charitram, Samsaharam* was written by Manoj Mathirappilly. The book specializes in introducing various sources, the historical significance of the marginalized community, the analysis, of the subdivisions, the description of the historical relics and the hundreds known and unknown tourist. This work can certainly be considered as a guide to local historical writing. The surroundings are so heart warming and objectively presented by the author that they satisfy even the intellectual level reader. In first Introduction part the hills and plains of Idukki have a history of at least 2000 years in the history of the monarchy. At the heart of the treaty was

the aroma of cardamom, pepper, cinnamon, which grew naturally in the forests of the High Range. This book is an adaptation of the books "Idukki History and Prehistory " and has morethan doubled the information .

The Book '*IdukkiCharitrarekhakhakal*' was written by T. Rajesh. Summary of this book is about the history of Idukki District, Kerala, India. The subject of this book is on the history of Idukki District. The book language is Malayalam and English. This book was published in 2008. 'IdukkiCharitrarekhakhakal' tells about the history of Idukki. It helps us to study about the history of Idukki. It helps to get knowledge about Idukki and I give a new facts and story about Idukki. The author is trying to explain the historical background of Idukki District. He is telling everyone that the unknown facts and story of Idukki District. This book is an intersting one to those who wish to learn more about Idukki District.

George Mathew Kavalangad's book *Historical Perspective and Idukki District* has been completed. The author takes the reader's thinkinginto many historical facts and reaffirmsthe admiration that the people of today haveand should have for them. The hilly region helps in the formation of Idukki District, linguisticfeatures, geographical features and theland itself. All of this is comprehensiveHistory combines the life of the past,the contributions of the ancestors and the background on which it was based. Available information-both oral and written-needs to be passed down from generation to generation. Even thepost-human history of mankind has beendocumented after much research. Here, the facts are presented by combining several factors. Mentioned in this book.

The Book *Path to Hills* was written by George Abraham. In this book the contents of this compilation are not claimed to be a complete historical reference as this is in the fact only an attempt to link the historical backdrop of the plantation destinations offered through our plantation tourism activities. Only the presentation and someobservations are claimed to be original.In the introduction part. He said that this book seeks to remind us to appreciate therulers of our land who opened the shores to the travelers who visited our soil with newthoughts and ideas which helped establishing plantations, augmented economic changes and social reformation through the missionaries they brought in honor and respectmissionaries who gave us education tribute the pioneers, who introduced plantation and the protection of our land, its culture and tradition, past and present.

## Methodology

The project is flourished by the use of primary sources such as memoirs and census report. The study is also depends on secondary sources such as books, journals, newspaper report and web sources.

## **Chapterisation**

The thesis begins with **introduction**. The introduction discusses the methodology of the whole thesis.

The first chapter entitled **Geographical Setting** gives the detailed research on the soft climate, early cultivation, flora, fauna, soil, forest, savanna, woodland, mountain ranges, wet land, rivers, lake, canals.

The second chapter **Commercial LandScaping Through Plantation** gives an elaborate description of the gradual development of plantation. This chapter tries to historicise the tea plantation in India and opens the way for Europeans to Devikulam.

The third chapter **Europeanisation and Landscaping:Creation of the Other** speaks on the transformation that occur in the area as a result of colonization.

The thesis **concludes** with the findings of the study.

## **Limitation**

Since the study was conducted during the Covid-19 pandemic period, detailed investigation was interrupted. Sources about Devikulam fall under Munnar and hence distinct data availability is limited.

# CHAPTER 1

## GEOGRAPHICAL SETTING

The High Range mountain landscape of Devikulam Taluk as located on the western slope of the Western Ghats. It is the Northern most part of the Idukki District. The Devikulam Taluk possess definite physical characteristics such as land forms, elevation, water features, climate, soil, natural vegetation and animal life. Geographically the area falls within the Precambrian metamorphic terrain.<sup>1</sup> The study area is located in the tropical monsoonal belt experiencing alternate dry and wet periods, and hence the geomorphic processes are dominated by weathering and denudation that operate on the surface to produce a myriad of beautiful shapes and awesome structures. The average height of the area is 700 meters above mean sea level.

About 80% of the area has moderately steep to steep slopes.<sup>2</sup> Owing to the undulating nature of the land and its high altitude, Devikulam has a well-ordered system of natural drainage i.e. Pambar, Idamalayar, Periyar and waterbodies. Fertile valley fills are created by the depositional action of these rivers along the river course. This has attracted people from the plains to high range for settled agriculture practices.<sup>3</sup> The genesis of population in Devikulam is not a recent one. It has a very old history which finds mention even in the epics. The migrant population in the study area is a unique feature. The State Manual of Travancore 1940 described the High Range as.

... this land is almost of indescribable beauty. “sholas” as or small pieces of jungle clothed the banks on one side of water, while on the sweeping grass lands rose to the blue cliffs above, a further color contrast being lent to the scene by the bright red flowers of the innumerable clumps of wild rhododendron trees. Herds of wild goats (Thar) looked down upon them rocky peaks, while elephants and bison roamed the grass – land. Under

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<sup>1</sup> Precambrian rocks of Minnesota encompass metamorphic, igneous, and sedimentary rocks. Examples include gneiss, greenstone, granite, graywacke, iron-formation, schist, basalt, gabbro, and anorthosite.

<sup>2</sup> S. Suresh and Rajesh Selvaraj and et. al, *History and Development of Devikulam High Range*, Idukki District, Kerala (Research Paper), 11 October 2018.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

cover of forest tiger and panthers , sambhar and munjac, and many other species of South Indian fauna thrived, undisturbed by the presence of man.”<sup>4</sup>

## Climate

The climate varies and in the higher altitudes, winter receives severe cold. In his report J.D Munro(who was the superintendent of the Cardamom Hills. He was the British resident in the Travancore province from 1811 onwards. He came to High Range in 1872.) gives, the details as .”in March and April there are often heavy rain and most part of November is wet.”<sup>5</sup> However , December and early part of January nights are frost to Munroe, Devikulam and Vattavada are the most pleasant place, which he had ever visited, the area is situated on the Western slippers of the western water receives the South West and North East monsoon.” The average annual rainfall is about 3000 mm. Monsoon starts by October and continues until the end of November. Wind is generally light and moderate, and the temperature varies from 6-26<sup>0</sup>Celsius. The air is highly humid throughout the year. The relative humidity is 80%.<sup>6</sup>

High degree of altitudinal variations difference and changes in aspects induces remarkable difference in the climate within this tract. The climatic conditions in the High Ranges are different from those of the Low Range. Climate on the Western side of the Western Ghats is extremely different from that of the Eastern side.<sup>7</sup> Appreciable changes climatic conditions are noticed from one end to the other. The climate is more or less temperate in the High Ranges of the Munnar.<sup>8</sup> J.D Munro, when he visited the Higher Range for resettling the boundary dispute between Travancore and Madras Presidency, had given a detailed account of the climate of the region. To him;

“In March and April there are often heavy rains and mist but the climate is delightful. Most parts of the November are wet, in December and early in January the nights are usually frosty. From December to the middle of the

<sup>4</sup> T. K Velu Pillai, *State Manual of Travancore 1940 Vol. I*, Government of Travancore, Travancore, 1940, p.

<sup>5</sup> J. D Munro, *Report on the High Ranges of Travancore* <http://www.archive.org> accessed on 19/2/2022.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid., p. 134.

<sup>8</sup> Ward and Connor, *Memoir of the Survey of Travancore and Cochin States, Vol. I, Government of Kerala, Trivandrum, 1994, P.22.*

February, the east winds blows strong and make it trying to natives. Devikulam and Vattavada, at a height of 6000 feet, are the most pleasant of the spots, visited and being more accessible, will no doubt in time induce settlements.”<sup>9</sup>

## Temperature and Humidity

The climate is more or less temperate in the high altitude areas. The temperature varies from 6 to 26 degree Celsius. The relative humidity is 80% in the afternoon. During May due to south west monsoon season, sky is thickly clouded. In the past monsoon month of October and November sky is moderately clouded and in the other months it is lightly clouded.

## Altitude

Munro in his report mentions in the numerous peaks on the Higher Ranges. He gave an account of the twelve principal peaks including Anaimudi. They are currincollum (8480 feet), Davymalla (7300 feet), coecacomboo (7000 feet), Chokenamuddy (7300 feet) etc.(7300 feet), Vagavurra (8000 feet), Allearmallay (6900 feet), Katoomallay (8100 feet), Coomarikul ( 50feet) Payratmallay (7400 feet), Korumpara (7900 feet), Pambadyshola (8000feet) .<sup>10</sup> Anaimudi, (8837 feet) in Munnar range, the highest peak in South India, is located on the boundary betweenEravikulam National Park and Munnar Division. <sup>11</sup> Munro vividly described the grand view from the Anaimudy peak. In his own words "The two most conspicuous are Currincolam and Aunymuddy. From the top of the latter is a beautiful and extensive view on a fine day of the sea to the west coast, the intermediate hills and forest making a splendid foreground. To the north can be seen the Anamallay and Cochin hills, and to the North East plains of Coimbatore and the Nelgherries, also the Unjenaad valley, and to the south as far as the eye can reach the Cardamom hills and the ranges of hills beyond Peermand, and to the South-East a glimpse of the

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<sup>9</sup> Jijo Jayaraj, *Environmental Reordering of Native Land: Colonialism and the Making of Munnar*, Unpublished PhD Dissertation submitted to M. G University, Kottayam, 2021, p.21.

<sup>10</sup> J. D Munro, *Report on the High Ranges of Travancore*, <http://www.archive.org>, accessed on 19/2/2022. p. 5

<sup>11</sup> P. K Mohanty, *District Hand Books of Kerala; Idukki, Department of Information and Public Relations, Thiruvananthapuram, 1998, p. 8.*

Bodinaickenoor valley. The via in fact comprises four provinces otherwise than Travancore, viz. Coimbatore, Madura, Malabar, and Cochin."<sup>12</sup>

Colonel Hamilton of Madras Army visited the Anaimudy hills in 1863 as part of his duty. He noted about the magnificent mountain, standing out amongst the other smaller hills. Viewing it from several points, comparing it with Nilgherries, Hamilton was of the opinion that it is the loftiest on the Anaimalai Range, and it may perhaps prove to be a rival even to Dodabetta, which was considered the highest mountain south of the Himalayas. Hamilton described the area as;

"It is difficult to judge the superficial area of a mountain range with accuracy by the eye, but having walked over nearly, indeed, I may say, the whole of the Annamullay Plateau, I think I am not far wrong in estimating it to be between 80 and 100 square miles, but this includes a large tract situated in the Travancore territory.....Ungeenaad valley...the views from this mountain are the grandest and most extensive I have ever beheld; some of the precipices are of stupen magnitude, and the charming variety of scenery, comprising undulating grassy hills, wooded valleys, rocky crags, overhanging precipices, the green fields, in the valley of Ungeeniaad, the grand mass of the Pulnies beyond, and the blue ranges in the far distance, present a view far beyond my power to describe, and which must be seen to be appreciated; in a word, the scenery in the Annamullays is surpassingly grand, and incomparably beautiful; on our way to the Kartu Mullay we disturbed several herds of ibex, which, as they bounded amongst the crags and precipices, added greatly to the effect of the grand and wild features of the country we were passing through.." <sup>13</sup>

The second highest peak in this division is the Meesapulimala, with an altitude of 2687 meters.<sup>14</sup> The land consists of numerous main and subsidiary hills. The hills are highly undulated

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<sup>12</sup> J. D Munro, op. cit., p.5.

<sup>13</sup> Jijo Jayaraj, *Environmental Reordering of Native Land: Colonialism and the Making of Munnar*, op. cit., pp. 17-18.

<sup>14</sup> Manoj Mathirappally, *Idukki: Desam Charithram Samskaram (m)*, Geo Books, Kattappana, 2017, p. 255.



owing to the harsh nature of the land. It has both main and subsidiary ridges that take off in various directions. The general course of the main rivers and streams is westwards.

## Rainfall

The major parts of the Kannan Devan Hills falls in the Western slope of the Western Ghats. This area receives rain from both monsoon i.e., the South-West and North-East and showers during April – May.<sup>15</sup> The annual average rainfall is about 3000 mm.<sup>16</sup> Monsoon season commoner by June and lasts to the end of August the heaviest precipitation is during June- July. North – East monsoon starts by October and continues till the end of November.<sup>17</sup> During this period, rain stars in the afternoon accompanied by thunder and lightning.<sup>18</sup> During this period, rain season severe cold is experienced, especially in study area due to the continuous drizzling during days and nights, it is cold even in the midday. The high relative humidity also adds to the fury of the climate.<sup>19</sup>

## Accessibility

The accessibility to the high ranges was a problem from the pre-colonial period onwards. It was in fact the main repelling faced by the British planters. The only accessibility of the area was from Tamilnadu. Munro identified several paths to high ranges from the cardamom hills of the south.<sup>20</sup> One of the best way used by the Meechanth were a route from Bodinaiknnur to Devikulam. However, the transportation. One can reach Devikulam by ponies and foot. The second rout was from Bodinaikannur to Vattavada via the village of Kottagudi. The third route is identified by J. D Munroe was from Udumalpet to Anjanaad. There is yet another route from

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<sup>15</sup> Jiji Thomson, *District Hand Books of Kerala:Idukki*, Department of Information and Public Relations, Thiruvananthapuram, 2004, p. 6.

<sup>16</sup> Fr. J. Kurias, *High Ranginte Kudiyetta Charithram (m)*, A.K.C.C., Diocese of Idukki, Murickassery, 2012, p. 36.

<sup>17</sup> Jijo Jayaraj, *Environmental Reordering of Native Land: Colonialism and the Making of Munnar*, op. cit., p. 18.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid.

<sup>20</sup> J. D Munro, op. cit., p. 10.

Udumalpet to Payratamala through Michael's valley. According to him the best route from west coast to high ranges was through Gudallorghat to Bodinaikannur then by Bodinaikannor to Devikulam. He chose this route because most of the area can be covered by Bullock cart.<sup>21</sup>

Floristically it was one of the richest areas in the country, there is not less than three thousand and five hundred species of trees with different age, and girths were seen. These forests were once dense and evergreen. These forests composed of broad-leaved evergreen species. Species diversity was the peculiarity of the forest. Small inconspicuous flowers and cauliflory was the salient feature. Epiphytes, ferns and mosses, orchids are seen. Most of the floral composition of the area might be the continuation of the early period, but in a reduced manner. The Anamudi Reserve has the highest incident of species like *Mesuaferrea*, but in a degraded scale. The Sholas is common in the Kannan Devan Hills. It usually occurs in the high elevation. The shola is confined to the folds of the hills. The trees in these forests are short. The shoals were surrounded by grasslands.

Varieties of trees are found in the thorny scrubby forest like *AcaciaArabica*(karivelam). *Acacia Leucofolia* (velvelam), *Acacia Concinna*(cheevakka). The dry deciduous forests have *Anogeissues* (mazhukanjirem) *Tamarindusindica* (puli), *Terminaliaarjuna* (neermaruthu), *Pongamiaglabra* (pongau), *Lagerstroemia ianceolata* (ventheku) *Dalbergialatifio* (rosewood), *Tectonagrandis* (teak), *Terminalibellerica* (thanni), *Emblicaofficianalis* (nelli) etc.<sup>22</sup>

## Wind

The wind is generally light to moderate which strengthens in monsoon season. During this period from January to may win strengthens in afternoon. In the south west monsoon season wind mainly westerly or north westerly. During the rest of the year wind is mainly westerly or north westerly. During the rest of the year wind is mainly north easterly to easterly in morning and blow from direction between south west and North West in the afternoon.<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> Ibid., p.11.

<sup>22</sup> Jijo Jayaraj, *Tea in Munnar; Tracing the History of Ecological Imperialism*, op. cit., p. 18.

<sup>23</sup> K. C Prasad, *Working Plan Officer, Munnar, Working Plan Munnar Forest Division 2010-11*. p. 4.

## Soil

Geology the area is part of the Archean system. The rocks represented diacharnockite, granite, silimanite and magnalities. The geography along with the soil and climate determined the destiny of the region. The altitudinal variations and changes make the climatic conditions of the High Ranges peculiar one. There for, it is different from those of the low ranges this peculiar climate attracted the notice of the Europeans John Daniel Munro on his report dated 8<sup>th</sup> March 1877, reported that “the soil on these hills especially in the valley is good, and wheat, burley and potatoes would no doubt grow well.”<sup>24</sup>

The ridges and hilltops are often entirely rocky and devoid of any soil. The higher hill-slopes, on the other hand, have a fair amount of soil, but it is mixed with a good deal of boulders. The soil on the lower slopes and valleys is considerably deeper and finer. The best soil consists of chocolate coloured loam with an admixture of humus and sand. The River and stream banks generally support large deposits of Alluvium. In depressions and low-lying lands where the drainage is particularly poor there is an accumulation of clayey loam, which results in a semi-marshy condition. Four different types of soils are met with in the tract.<sup>25</sup>

## Laterite Soil

Laterite is yellowish brown in colour with cellular structure and rich in hydroxides of iron and Aluminium. It develops in high rainfall areas with tropical climate. It is derived from the atmospheric weathering of rocks under monsoon conditions of alternate dry and wet climates. Laterite soils vary in depth from 2 to 3 meters and have a thick layer of kaolin below it.<sup>26</sup> This type of soil is highly porous, well drained but poor in water holding capacity. This soil has low fertility and contains a fair amount of organic matter and nitrogen but is very deficient in phosphorous, potash and lime. The process of laterisation is due to leaching out of silica by high rainfall, and accumulation of sesquioxide.<sup>27</sup> Laterite soils are common in the forests of Western

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<sup>24</sup> J. D Munro. op. cit., p. 124.

<sup>25</sup> K.C, Prasad, *Working Plan Munnar Forest Division 2010-11*, op. cit., p. 5.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid.

Ghats in cleared areas and denuded forests. It is highly acidic and only a few species thrive well in it.

### **Alluvial soil**

This type of soil is found on banks of streams and river, richly supplemented with organic matter and deposits of alluvium but deficient in lime and phosphorous. The upper layer is generally rich in organic matter derived from the decomposed organic debris. It is acidic in reaction. Due to the presence of fine sand fractions the soil is well drained. This highly fertile soil on river and stream banks supports for good tree growth.<sup>28</sup>

### **Red soil**

This type of soil is reddish in colour due to the presence of Ferric oxide and is deficient in organic matter and nutrients. Commonly it is met with in non-forest areas of this Division. The pH<sup>29</sup> value varies between 6-8.<sup>30</sup>

### **Forest and Hill soil**

This is the typical soil met in the evergreen and semi evergreen forests of this Division, characterized by a thick layer of organic matter derived from the forest cover. The soil is usually rich in nitrogen with low phosphate content. It is usually loamy with different proportions of sand and clay depending on locality. Soil is yellow, red, dark in colour and usually acidic in nature. Usually the forest soil is well drained along slopes, and swamps are common wherever drainage is poor. Along the ridges, the depth of soil is shallow. Along valleys, loamy soil is very common. Alluvial deposits characterize the riverbanks.<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>28</sup> Ibid.

<sup>29</sup> Soils can be classified according to their pH value: 6.5 to 7.5—neutral. Over 7.5—alkaline. Less than 6.5—acidic, and soils with pH less than 5.5 are considered strongly acidic.

<sup>30</sup> K. C Prasad, op. cit., p.5.

<sup>31</sup> Jijo Jayaraj, *Environmental Reordering of Native Land: Colonialism and the Making of Munnar*, op. cit., p. 21.

## **Properties of Soil**

The edaphic features play an important role in determining the type of vegetation in a locality. In the conventional forestry practices that are generally followed, no distinct measures are adopted to alter the texture and composition of the soil, with a view to better the edaphic conditions and to ensure profitable production of biomass. As such, for planting species which suit the prevailing soil conditions are selected. Of the various soil properties, the most important from forestry point of view are its fertility, depth, texture, structure, drainage, organic matter content, hydrological features, nutrient level and the pH. The soil fertility varies with factors such as soil depth, texture, topography, chemical composition, presence of vegetation etc. The ability of soil to support tree growth by providing a firm substratum and supplying an adequate amount of mineral nutrients in an absorbable form to meet the requirements for tree growth is of fundamental importance.<sup>32</sup>

High hilltops are generally with bare rock or with scanty soil capping covered by grass and herbaceous vegetation. The gentle slopes with fairly deep sedimentary soil with a top layer of humus can hold good tree growth. In the valleys, the soil is deep, fine, and highly fertile and is capable of supporting luxuriant tree growth. While the soil conditions influence the growth and composition of plant life, the vegetation present on a site influences the nature of the soil. A close-canopied well-protected forest eventually results in the formation of a thick layer of humus, which will appreciably improve soil productivity and may bring about a progressive change in the habitat. On the other hand in the slopes which are planted with teak after clearing the original tree crop, the soil is seen to be dry, hard and deteriorated due to the detrimental effects of annual ground fires, erosion and exposure to the scorching sun that prevent accumulation of vegetative debris and formation of humus.<sup>33</sup>

## **Fauna**

In the report of J.D Munroe dated March 1877, he had given a detailed description of the wild fauna of the small game animals, he found, jungle fowl, spur fowl, a few snipe and quail. He had mentioned about the woodcock and Bison. Bison was plentiful in Munnar and Devikulam

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<sup>32</sup> Ibid.

<sup>33</sup> K. C Prasad, op. cit., p. 5.

region. The herds and solitary bulls were plentiful in the distant areas of anaimudi, Sandbur's were plentiful, and hunted by wild dogs. Tiger was scarce and the number of scorpions, centipedes, jackals and monkeys were less. Munro finds unique feature of Munnar as the absence of crow.<sup>34</sup> The absence of human habitation was the main reason for this peculiar phenomenon.

From puranic times onwards, elephants were part of our religious beliefs. In Travancore, special place was given to the elephants and was part of their beliefs. The belief was that 'when there were no more elephant in the state, the royal house would fall'. These beliefs reflected in the laws framed in those days. The best example can be seen in the pooniate (poojar) concession of 1877, where the Travancore Government imposed restrictions on capture of elephants. According to the regulation in the concession, if elephants caught on the concession land, it was required to hand over them to the Travancore Government and the rewards were given.<sup>35</sup> This was granted only when the elephant endangered life of property. The rogue elephant could only shot for which the planter should acquire prior permission from the Government.

A British Naturalist called Angus Hutton, who mis – Identified the specimen as the common short-nosed fruit bat, first collected the specimen in 1948. The specimen was reexamined later by thonglongya who recognized it as a new species.<sup>36</sup> The area has proximity to various protected areas. A good portion of the early Munnar Division has been declared as protected areas. Even then at present this tract is not considered as an area which has much significance in Wild Life Management. No activities are carried out till this time exclusively to manage the wild fauna of this tract. During the peak summer days the streams crisscrossing this tract will become dry. The grasses and other edible plants in the open areas will perish and there will be the threat of annual wild fires. Owing to these, the animals will be congregating around certain spots where water and food materials will be available in diminutive quantity. This will result in severe competition among the animals and it will cause irreparable damages to certain

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<sup>34</sup> Amita Baig and William Henderson, *A Centenary of Planting in The Kannan Devan Hills Concession 1878-1978*, Tata-Finlay Ltd, p. 122.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid., p. 70.

<sup>36</sup> Sulochana Nalapat, *The History of Munnar*, op. cit., p. 268.

group of animals. As such, it is imperative to chalk out some simple measures to provide essential facilities to the Wild Life at various ideal spots within this tract.<sup>37</sup>

## Mammals

The langur or monkeys seen in this forest area are the representatives of the order Primates of class Mammalia. The different types of monkeys found in the region are. Elephant (*Elephas maximus*): Among the mammals the elephant is seen throughout the forest area of this Division where the terrain is hilly or undulating and where bamboos and reeds grow in profusion. They are extremely adaptable and can live in steamy humid jungle or in cool elevated forests with equal ease. They roam about in the forests and probably during unfavorable conditions like summer descend to the cultivated slopes and villages in herds creating havoc in the villages.<sup>38</sup> Niligiri Langur Karinkurangu (*Trachypithecus johni*), UCN state vulnerable it is seen abundant in shola patches and stretches of evergreen forests which usually mark the nullahs and water courses their grass covered slopes. They are found mostly in the higher as Munnar and Devikulam Ranges. Bonnet monkey Vellakurangu (*Maccaca radiata*) These are more common in both High Ranges and plan areas of Munnar Division the troops of as many as 20 to 30 animals may be found feeding on the ground or in trees in some places they are abundant and become bold enough to get in to human habitations and make themselves a nuisance.

Lion Tailed Macaque-Simhavalankurangu (*Macaca silenus*) They are usually found in dense evergreen areas and are gregarious, living in hords of 12 to 20 animals or more. They normally live deep inside forests and far away from human interferences Very shy in nature and try to avoid human contacts. They occur in the Eastern portion of Anamudi Reserve. They were once common in CHR and the first study on them was carried out by the Japanese scientist Sugiyama in the Panniyar Cardamom Estate of Chinnakarial area. Slender loris-Kuttythevangu (*Loris lydekkerianus*) It is another primate found in the dense evergreen forests. Its limbs are long and slender, ears are large and snout is pointed. It is nocturnal in habit and feeds on berries of lantana bush, insects, lizard's small birds and tree frogs. Leopard - Pullipuli - (*Panthera pardus*) they belong to the cat family Felidae of order Carnivore in class of Mammalia. They are found in

<sup>37</sup> Jijo Jayraj, *Tea in Munnar: Tracing the History of Ecological Imperialism*, op. cit., p. 22.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid.

all types of forests as well as in open country among rocks and scrubs. They can kill and feed on anything they can overpower with safety and are particularly fond of domestic a dog which is the reason for their frequent sighting in and around human habitations.<sup>39</sup>

Tiger - Kaduva - (*Pantheratigris* Tiger is the top predator in the food pyramid of forest ecosystem and belongs to family *félidae*. It is usually found in the moist deciduous and dry open jungle and maintains territory. The Division is adjacent to different Protected Areas and hence there is a continuity of geographical area through which different animals move around and forage freely. Abundance of herbivorous animals is an indication of healthy habitat. Leopard Cat-Poochapuli - (*Prionailurus bengalensis*) This cat is about the size of domestic cat, but rather longer in the legs. Its colour and marking are similar to miniature panther. It is nocturnal in habit and preys on small birds and animals. The hollows in trees are the favourite shelter being fond of pountry it frequents human habitations.<sup>40</sup>

Jackals - Kurukkan the jackals, wild dogs and sloth bears all belong to the family *Canidae*. The jackal's long drawn coifed howling at dusk or before dawn in the forest is very familiar to people living in the vicinity. It was over the hills and the low country and is known as for stealing poultry. Wild dog (*Cuon alpinus*) these animals are similar to domestic dogs with long body and short legs they lead a social life with prolonged association between parents and young. The pack is a union of two or more families or some times of several families. They hunt in packs within the forest and their favoured prey is sambar. Sloth bears-Karadi- (*Molurus ursinus*) they are found in Adimaly and Neriamangalam Ranges. Usually they come out shortly before sunset, hunt for food all night and retire in the morning. They climb trees for collecting honey and dig termatorium for feeding on termites. The mongoose belongs to family *Herpestidae*, order *carnivora*. They are very adept in killing snakes and rats. Four species of mongoose are found in the Division. The common grey mongoose (*Herpestes edwardsi*) is seen in forest as well as in the plains of both Divisions. It has long coarse fur with uniform Rufus color darker on the legs. The stripe necked mongoose (*Herpestes vitticollis*) and the ruddy mongoose (*Herpestes smithy*) are found in Munnar and Devikulam Ranges. The Brown mongoose (*Herpestes fuscus*), though not common, is also found in the higher altitudes. Otters-Neernai-(*Lutra lutra*): Otters are in the sub

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<sup>39</sup> Ibid., p. 66.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid.



family Mustelidae of class Mammalia. The common otter is found in the rivers of Munnar Division. Their bodies are streamlined with flattened muzzle and brown with pale under parts. Tail has a thick base and the feet are usually webbed.<sup>41</sup>

## Birds

Due to the tropical climate, Munnar Division areas are enriched with different types of Avifauna. Even though no bird can be mentioned as endemic to this Division there exist large varieties of birds in this area. Since the Division is adjacent to different protected areas, the birds naturally get extended protection. Tree pie- called *Dendrocitta* is one of the common birds found in both Division areas. They are named 'Olaenjaly due to the habit of hanging in leaflet of coconut. They feed on small insects. The common tree pies found in this area are Indian tree pie (*Dendrocittaleuicogastra*) and White bellied tree pie (*Dendrocittaleuicogastra*). The Drongos (*Dicrurus*)-Kakkathampuratty seen in the plains feed on small insects. It has glossy black plumage, turked tale and often seen in High Ranges. They belong to the family *sescuridae*. They are often seen behind the troop of the lion tailed macaque. The troop moves around disturbing the insects resting on branches and these birds leap off the branches to catch them.<sup>42</sup> Babbler Babbler is locally called KariyilaPakshi found the Division areas. They belong to the family *Timalidae*. They charecterised by short wings with soft and fluffy plumage. They are no birds and seven sisters are unique. They are seen in groups of seves g more and have the capacity to imitate other birds.

The common Bat found in the Division areas are spotted babbler (*Pellomeumruticeps* Scimitar babbler (*Pomatrohinushorsfield*), Rufous babbler (*Turdoidsubrufus*), Jungle babbler (*Turdoidesstriatus*), and grey breasted laughing thrush (*Garrulaxjerdoni*). Copsycus- The beautiful singing birds focally called MannathiPaks Quaker babbler (*alcippepoloicephala*) coming under Copsycus genus common in this Division area. The birds found are the Mag pie robe (*Copsychussaularis*), and Shama (*Copsychusmalabaricus*). Bulbuls- The different variety of Bulbuls locally called Irattathalay are also found in this Division area. Due to the significant shape appearance of their head, they are locally called Irattathalachy or Thoppthalachy. The common bulbuls are (*Pycnotuspriocephalus*), Re whiskered bulbul (*Pycnonotusjocosus*). Red

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<sup>41</sup> Ibid., p. 67.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid., p. 69.

vented Bulbul (*Pycnonotus cafer*), White browed bulbul (*Pycnonotus lutellus*), Yellow browed Bulbu (*Pycnonotus indica*), and Black bulbul (*Pycnonotus leucocephalus*).<sup>43</sup>

Flycatchers- the Division areas are abundant with different varieties of flycatchers. Due to the presence of fantail and their restless dancing pose they are locally called as 'Attakaran'. The common visible fly catchers are Blue throated flycatcher (*Muscicapra rubeculaoides*), Tickell's blue flycatcher (*Muscicapra tickelliae*). Verditer flycatcher (*Muscicapra sthalaensis*) Nilgiri flycatcher (*Eumyias albicaudata*), Brown breasted flycatcher (*Muscicapra muttui*). Black and orange flycatcher (*Ficedula nigrorufa*), Gray headed flycatcher (*Culicicapra ceylonensis*), Black and orange flycatcher (*Ficedula nigrorufa*) and Black naped monarch flycatcher (*Hypothymis azurea*).

Tailor birds. The tailor birds (*Orthotomus sutorius*) are famous for their ability to make their nests by sewing the leaves of plants. The stitches are separate and made with wool, silk or spider web. They come in the family Sylviidae. It keeps its tail wagging up and down. They are commonly seen in bushy areas hunting for insects. Manjakily- These most beautiful and bright yellow colored birds are seen in this area. They are locally called 'Manjakily'. The different varieties of this type of birds are Golden Oriole (*Oriolus chinensis*), Black naped Oriole (*Oriolus chinensis*) and Black headed Oriole (*Oriolus chinensis*) are common birds present in the area. Myna- The common Myna of madathu (*Acridotheres tristis*) is commonly seen in this Division area. The Mynas have the ability to mimic speech. They rest at night in large numbers and are known for their cacophony in the morning and evening. The other common Mynas in these areas are Grey headed Myna (*Stumus malabaricus*), Brahmini Myna (*Sturnus pagodarum*), Rosy pastor (*Stumus roseus*) and Jungle Myra (*Acridotheres fuscus*). The Southern grackle (*Gracula religiosa*) locally known as Kattumyna is slightly larger than the Common Myna with bright yellow naked patches on the head. It is found in the hilly forests but in captivity it learns to talk more distinctly than the common myna.

Thrushes- The birds Thrushes make whistling sounds. The Malabar whistling Thrush (*Myiophonus horsfieldi*) makes whistling sound of an idio school boy and it is located in highly elevated areas of Munnar Division. The other whistling thrushes are Blue headed Rock thrush (*Monticola cinclorhynchus*), Blue rock thrush (*Monticola solitarius*), White throated ground thrush

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<sup>43</sup> Ibid.

(Zootheracyanotus). Wayanad laughing thrush (*Garrulaxdelesserti*), White breasted Thrush (*Garrulaxjerdoni*) and Eurasian black bird (*Turdusmerula*). Nightjars are commonly seen in the deciduous forests they have large bright eyes, gleaming red on illumination, have wide gap with short legs, long wings and noiseless flight. The different species of Nightjars present in this area are Jungle Nightjar (*Caprimulgusindicus*) Common Indian Nightjar (*Caprimulgusasiaticus*). Longtailed Nightjar (*Caprimulgusmacrurus*). Franklin's Nightjar (*Caprimulgusaffinis*), and Great-eared Nightjar (*Eurostopodusmacrotis*).<sup>44</sup>

## Reptiles

Lizards-The garden lizard i.e Calottes commonly called the blood sucker Onthu (*Calotesversicolor*) seen in the forest areas. The lizard chameleMaraonthu (*Chamaelenzeylanicus*) is another type of lizard which is cryptically colored and lives among the green leaves, it is q unrecognizable. It is slow and clumsy in its reaction, but this is compensati for by its remarkable tongue, which can be lashed out to catch pray. The flying lizard Draco (*Dracussumier*) is another species which can Gide from tree to tree. It is seen in plains and High Ranges with patchy distribution. It has a flying membrane supported by the ribs. The Membrans is not flapped, but spread out and is used as a parachute the animal glides from one tree to another. Saleaanamalayana is an endemic lizard found in the high altitude regions. Udumbu - The largest lizard 'Udumbu' Varanidae (*Varanusbengalensis* is commonly seen in this Division areas. It is dull brown in color and as it moves it frequently protrudes its bifurcated tongue. Mabuya - The Mabuya, or 'Arana' is another commonly found lizard inthe forests of Munnar Division. It has small stout body with short limbs, it is highly adapted to move through the rocks, narrow chink and crevices. Since it protrudes and withdraws its tongue frequently like the snake, there is a popular superstition that these are highly poisonous. The different species of Mabuya found in this area are Mabuyamacularia, Mabuyacarinata and Mabuyabibroni.

Tortoise - The tortoise (*Testudotrancorica*) is occurring in plane and hilly areas of this Forest Division. They are herbivores and feed on SMA plants and foliage. They lay leathery eggs varying in number from 1 to 200 The incubation period depend on the warmth of the soil and can vary from few weeks to ten months. CrocodileThey are also present in rivers of Admaly and

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<sup>44</sup> Ibid., p. 81.

Neramangalam Ranges. The species found is *Crocodylus porosus*. Snakes The most striking reptile population in these Division areas are the snakes. They belong to order Squamata of Gossypia. There are poisonous and non-poisonous snakes. Practically all the poisonous snakes common to South India are present in the Division. The *Amphiesmophetidae* is an endemic family of snake confined to western and Sikkim in the Himalayas many species of this family have been reported from the Himalayas and the snakes like Rat snake, Cobra, Krait and Python are oviparous and all Vipers and Green Vine snakes are viviparous.

Cobra - It is the best known highly poisonous snake which is quite common both on the hills and plains. It is easily recognized by its hood, often bearing eye marks and by its way of raising the head and part of the trunk and spreading out the hood when alarmed. King Cobra (*Ophiophagus hannah*)- It is the largest poisonous snake in the world commonly seen in the Neramangalam Range and Edamalakudy of Munnar Division. Its body colour varies from deep green to yellowish with a jet black tail tip. They attain an average body length of 3 to 4 meters. They behave with intelligence and awareness that is often unusual in snakes. Krait (*Bungarus caeruleus*) it is another deadly snake equally common but unfortunately of an unobtrusive in nature and hence a source of greater danger as its presence often get unnoticed. It has Bluish black colour with distinct paired white cross bands around 40 on the dorsal side. It thrives on snakes, lizards and rodents. Krait is a true cannibal.

Russell's viper (*Viperarusselli*)- It is a heavy rough scaled snake with vertical pupils. Large vipers grow to a length of about 5 feet. It is characterized by triangular head, the upper surface of which is covered by overlapping scales. Coral Snakes:- These are certain snakes mostly confined to the hills. They are poisonous but not deadly at least as far as man is concerned. They are slender and small sized allies of Kraits. They are mainly nocturnal, remaining buried during day in loose soil, or humus of forest floor. The common Coral snakes are *Callophis melamurus*, *Callophis maclellandi* and *Calphis bibroni*. Large Scaled Pit Viper (*Trimeresurus macrolepis*) - It has large scales on the head. The colour of the adult is uniform green with white or yellowish stripes along the flanks. The maximum size is little less than 73 cm. Saw Scaled Viper (*Echiscarniatus*) :- It is a heavy rough scaled snake with vertical pupils. Body colour is brown or yellowish with pattern of dark round spots edged with black and white. The head is triangular

shaped and body has three longitudinal rows of reddish brown or dark brown rings that form a chain like pattern. The Venom is hemotoxic.<sup>45</sup>

## Amphibians

The burrowing worm like Caecilians, toads and frogs are the Amphibians present in this Division. The frogs are represented by genus Rana and the main species are Rana temporalis and Rana curtipis. Flying species are represented by the Rhacophorus maculatus, Philautus beddomii. The common toad species are Bufo parietalis, Bufo metanostictus, Bufo microtympanum. The other amphibian species are Indirana beddomii, Limnonectes keralensis. The water area of this Division has various catfishes like Ophiocephalus, Etroplus, Carps and climbing perch, Anabas etc. The common fishes in this area are Puntius fasciatus, Puntius scoticus, Tor khudree, Saimostoma acinaces, Garra gotylastenorhynchus, Garra, Lepidocephalus thermalis, Garra partuciosomadaniconius, and Barilius bendelisis. Banilus gatensis, Dania aequipinnatus, Nemacheilus denisoni, Oreochromis mossambicus.

Trout - Trout Fish was introduced to the high altitude during 13th century. It is basically anadromous fish like the Salmon. It was introduced in India during 1869 from U. K. New Zealand and Sri Lanka. It is now cultured at high altitudes in India. This was introduced to Munnar by Europeans as high altitude game fish. Later to propagate the species a hatchery was started in the Rajamala Tea Estate. It is given to understand that large number of fingerlings of this species was introduced in the streams and lakes of the high altitude area and the fishes are now thriving well in the high Ranges. Besides Munnar they were also introduced in Nilgiris, Jammu and Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh,

## Invertebrates

This Division is rich in invertebrate populations. The microorganisms like Amoeba, Paramoecium etc. are the representatives of protozoa. The hydra and polyps present in the river and streams are the Coelenterates. Nature's plougher, earth's warrior and leaches are the representatives of Annelida. The territorial molluscs are the representatives of the mollusca group.

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<sup>45</sup> Ibid., p. 82.

The animals with segmented legs are the phylum Arthropoda of invertebrates. The millipedes, centipedes, various types of bees, butterflies, spiders etc are examples of this group. Insects and Butterflies: The animals with truncated body, jointed legs and compound eyes are classified under class insecta of phylum Arthropoda. They are represented by largest number of species and they contribute to the biodiversity significantly.<sup>46</sup>

## **Streams and Rivers**

The peculiar geo setting of the area allows it to receive heavy rains from the south west and north east monsoons. All there helped the formation of a network of rivers and streams and hence there is no scarcity of water in the western slopes of the tract. At the same time the area is well drained due to its highest gradients. The principal streams are the Munnar, Devikulam, Yedamallay, Pambar, and Vattavada. Kodandoor and Chinnar. The first there river originates from the High Ranges and flows towards the periyar. The other three falls in to the Amaravathy in Coimbatore distrit. The Devikulam stream drains the plateau of the same name, and falls over the side of the Puddikut in to the Surianelly valley.

## **Flora**

The undulating terrain with high altitude and the consequent variation in climate has given rise to the formation of a variety of vegetation. The plan area is located in the windward portion of the WestemGhat, which has the widest width in this tract. Floristically, the tract is one of the richest areas in the country harbouring not less than 3500 species of angiosperms, which is 27% off lowering plants in the country. This diversity coupled with endemism is equally seen in fauna also. Floristically it was one of the richest areas in the country. Not less than three thousand and five hundred species of trees with different age, and girths were seen. These forests were once dense and evergreen. These forests composed of broad leaved evergreen species. Species diversity was the peculiarity of the forest. Small inconspicuous flowers and cauliflory was the salient feature. Epiphytes, farms and mosses, orchids etc., were seen. Most of the floral composition of the area might be 49 the continuation of the early period, but in a reduced manner. The Anaimudi Reserve has the highest incident of species like Mesuaferrea, but in a degraded scale. The Sholas

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<sup>46</sup> Ibid., p. 83.

is common in the KannanDevan Hills. It usually occurs in the high elevation. The shola is confined to the folds of the hills. The trees in these forests are short. The shoals were surrounded by grasslands.

Variety of trees is found in the thorny scrubby forest like Karivelam (*Acacia Arabica*), Velvelam (*Acacia Leucofolia*), and Cheevakka (*Acacia Concinna*). The dry deciduous forests have Mazhukanjirem (*Anogeissus*), Puli (*Tamarindusindica*), Neermaruthu (*Terminaliaarjuna*), Pongau (*Pongamiaglabra*), VenthekuLagerstroemiaiaanceolata, Rosewood (*Dalbergialatifio*), and Teak (*Tectonagrandis*). Thanni (*Terminaliabellerica*), Nelli (*Emblicaofficianalis*).<sup>47</sup>

## Grass Lands

The grass lands of this Division are situated interspersed with the shola forest (Montane temperate type forest). There exists divergent views regarding the ecological status of these. One school of thought opines that grasslands are climax formation grass. Another school of thought advocates that the grasslands are a pre-climax formation brought about by the biotic factors like fire and grazing. Grass lands have been in existence from time immemorial. While sholas are confined to the sheltered folds and depressions, mostly along the river stream bases in the hills, grasslands occupied the rest of the area. In other words, sholas are surrounded by grasslands.

Floristic Composition: Species of grasses occurring in the grass lands are *Andropogonpercuria*, *Ardinellasp*, *Ischnomumsp*, *PilsumspThemodasp*, *Cymbopogonsp*, *Eragrostisnigram*, *Ponnlisotcom sp*, *Aristidasp* and *Dicanthiumsp*. They are found interspersed with the shola forests (Montane temperate type forest) in the upper reaches of KDHI. Aomun Reserve and Chinnakanal.<sup>48</sup>

## Forest Cover

There are great variations in elevation rainfall distribution, temperature and other factors within the Munnar Forest Division. The following are the major types of forests in and around Munnar. Tropical evergreen forests and semi evergreen forests, moist deciduous forests, dry deciduous forests (mixed with sandalwood), sub-tropical forests, temperate (montane) shola

<sup>47</sup> Ibid., p. 49.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid. p. 54.

forests interspersed with grass lands.<sup>49</sup> “Tropical evergreen forests, semi evergreen forests and moist deciduous forests are met within areas having heavy rainfall, on the wind ward side of the Western Ghats. The dry deciduous forests occur in the rain shadow region. The Anchanadan Valley on the Eastern side of the Western Ghats is interesting as far as its vegetation is concerned. This is the only area in Kerala where sandalwood comes up naturally in profusion.”<sup>50</sup> Rainfall here is very low and vegetation is typical of the dry deciduous nature. Sub-tropical and temperate forests are met within high elevation areas. The temperate shola forests occur above 1677 meters.<sup>51</sup> In this type of forests large patches of grass lands are found, and the tree growth is confined to moist pockets or valleys. A short description of the different types of forests is discussed below.

### **Tropical Evergreen Forests**

They are found in areas ranging from 1, 500 to 3,500 feet in elevation on the Western side of Western Ghats.<sup>52</sup> The evergreen forests are characterised by a bewildering multiplicity of vegetation forests.<sup>53</sup> Trees are lofty in size with a dense canopy. Undergrowth is also dense, often a tangle of canes. The evergreen forests are highly suitable for cardamom cultivation

### **Semi- Evergreen Forest**

Semi evergreen forests are found wherever there has been biological influence or interference and in areas adjoining the evergreen forests. In this type of forests, there are less of evergreen tree species and are more of deciduous trees.

### **Moist Deciduous Forest**

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<sup>49</sup> A. Sreedhara Menon, *Kerala District Gazetteer- Kottayam*, State Editor Kerala Gazetteers, Trivandrum, 1975, p. 157.

<sup>50</sup> Ibid.

<sup>51</sup> Ibid., p. 158.

<sup>52</sup> Mani K, ‘Land Use and Land Cover Changes Detection Using Multi Temporal Satellite Devikulam Taluk’, *International Journal of Geometrics and Geo Sciences*, Vol, III, Kerala, Year nil, p. 1422.

<sup>53</sup> Jijo Jayaraj, *Environmental Reordering of Native Land: Colonialism and the Making of Munnar*, op. cit., p. 23.



This is a closed high forest, commonly of good height with 100 to 120 or more. The dominant species are mostly deciduous: Bamboos are seen mixed with this type of forests. Teak is the most important timber found in such forests. This type of forests can be seen in well drained fertile soils, in areas having a rainfall of about 80 to 100" and in low-level areas up to 457 meters to 610 meters and sometimes even up to 914 meters.<sup>54</sup> From the economic point of view, this is the most important type and it carries valuable timber species like teak and rosewood.

### **Dry Deciduous Forests**

This type of forest has trees practically all of which are deciduous during the dry season, usually for several months. Many of the species of trees have strong adaptations for xerophytic life and in drier areas thorny species occur in large proportion. These types of forests are seen in the Anchanadan valley. It has a good proportion of sandalwood. The height growth is generally poor, which constitute only about 15 meters.<sup>55</sup>

### **Sub-Tropical Forests**

Sub-tropical forest is of a transitional nature i.e., from the tropical type to the temperate forests. There are no clear cut sub-tropical zones with characteristics differing from tropical and temperate zones. The sub-tropical zones have been considerably interfered with and are now mostly under the tea gardens.<sup>56</sup>

### **Temperate Montane-Shola Forests**

It is a closed evergreen forest, the trees being mostly short holed and branching, though often attaining a considerable girth. The height of the forest canopy is relatively low which rarely exceed 15 meters to 18 meters. This type of forest is found in patches in the protected pockets or declivities in rolling grass lands.<sup>57</sup>

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<sup>54</sup> Ibid., p. 157.

<sup>55</sup> Ibid., p. 158.

<sup>56</sup> Ward and Connor, op. cit., p. 41.

<sup>57</sup> Jijo Jayaraj, *Tea in Munnar: Tracing the History of Ecological Imperialism*, op. cit., p. 28.

## Early Cultivation

Regarding the flora and productivity of the hill ranges, J. D. Munro reported that potatoes were cultivated by the aboriginals called Muthuvans.<sup>58</sup> In the upper Anjanaad Valley, onion, garlic, wheat was grown. Wheat was the main item of trade by the merchants of Coimbatore. Paddy and raggy were mostly cultivated in the lower villages. Trees such as jack, mango, limes and oranges and the sandalwood were seen in the area. The natives also grew plantains. All these cultivations were practiced at an elevation of 6000 feet. To Munro the sandal trees, were small but the wood was strongly scented and it was collected for the private use of the Puneate chief.<sup>59</sup> The advises produced for their self-consumption and barter system remained as the mode of transaction. Muslim traders of Coimbatore carried on the transaction with Anjanad valley and the trade was based on barter and they bartered rice and wheat with clothes, chilies brass vessels etc.

## The Early Inhabitants

The High Range has been the abode of the advises even before the arrival of the Europeans and peasants. There are twenty seven hill men settlements situated inside the Reserve Forest in Cardamom Hill Reserve and KannanDevan Hills 39 area.<sup>60</sup> They are living inside the forest for many generations. They did small scale agriculture and gaming wild animals in the hill ranges of the district. Their ignorance in modern farming methods and their inability to invest money for large scale agriculture were exploited by the British.<sup>61</sup> In the view of the modern anthropologists, the tribal populations in Idukki were belonging to the Proto Austroloid ethnic groups.<sup>62</sup> The tribes living in the High Ranges speak both Tamil and Malayalam.<sup>63</sup>

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<sup>58</sup> Sulochana Nalapattu, op. cit., p. 21.

<sup>59</sup> Amita Baig and William Handerson, op. cit., p. 124.

<sup>60</sup> Ibid.

<sup>61</sup> Ibid., p. 78.

<sup>62</sup> Manoj Mathirappally, op. cit., p. 18.

<sup>63</sup> Kanchiyar Rajan, *Noolmazha (M)*, Saphala Books, Kattappana, 2005, p. 19

## The Muthuvans

The Muthuvans were seen in the High Ranges of Devikulam Taluk. They settled on the Northern portion of the Cardamom Hills, and in the High Ranges of Travancore.<sup>64</sup> The Muthuvans were the original inhabitants of the hill constituting the major tribal community in Munnar. They claimed to have come from the forests of the neighboring Madurai district of Tamil Nadu. According to legends they were loyal subjects of Madurai and forced to seek refuge in the mountains during the wars of the Pandyan Rajas in about 900 A. D. On their way they carried idols of Madurai Meenakshi on their back. Yet another belief is that they climbed the Ghats from the Eastern side of the hills with their children who were carried on their backs.

The word 'Muthuvan' believed to be originated from the word muthuku, which means 'back' in Tamil. Thus the tribe which carried the idols on their back or muthuku later settled in the forests near Tamil Nadu.<sup>65</sup> Interestingly another local saying traces their arrival with the Kannaki - Kovalan story. By this, they followed Kannaki, the legendary heroine of Madurai into the hills after burning Madurai.

Hamilton in his Report on the Anamalais gives account of the Muthuvans; "According to the Pooliar's information, there are not more than fifty Moodoowars on the hills, probably only one clan visits the Eastern portion of the High Ranges frequented by the Pooliars. They appear to be a wandering race, cultivating small patches of ground; they possess herds of cattle and buffaloes, with which they till the soil; and when the grass is fresh and green after the annual fires they drive them on to the higher ranges to graze. They have no fixed habitations, or villages, but wander over the mountains with their cattle, erecting temporary huts, and seldom remaining more than a year at one place. They eat Samber Ibex, Pig, but will not touch the Bison, which latter the Pooliars do not object to eat, they are a timid race, and avoids strangers; they make "pooja" to the Pooliar idols."<sup>66</sup>

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<sup>64</sup> Violet Martin, *History of the High Range Planting District North Travancore-1930*, Scripture Literature Press, Bangalore, 1931, p. 50-51.

<sup>65</sup> Manoj Mathirapally, op. cit., p.33.

<sup>66</sup> T. Damu, *Munnarrekhal* (m), D. C Books, 2010, p. 20.

Munro through his Report of 1877 and W. S. S. Mackay, from Madras army gave a clear picture of the tribal groups living in this hill station 3 D. Munro referred them as 'a handsome race' in his own words.<sup>67</sup>

They are a fine handsome race, especially those who always reside on the upper elevations, but the good looks are confined to the men, as the women whom they keep almost as much out of sight as Mussalmans do theirs, are singularly plain.<sup>68</sup> The Muthuvans were expert hunters and were guide and companion to the European planters. They helped them to reach into deep remote areas in the forest of High Range The Muthuvans always kept aloof from outsiders, and were friendly to the Europeans W. S. S. Mackay in his Account noted their close relation with Europeans. They were appointed as the forest watchers and guides because of their instinctive knowledge of the geography, flora and fauna of the forest. The English planters used the term "Old shikari" to denote the Muthuvan.<sup>69</sup>

They were liable for the payment of small knife tax, especially in Anjanaad. Some carried on cultivation while others collected hill produce and reared and sold goats and poultry. They preferred independent work and have the institution of the Kani or the headman in all their settlements. The Kani was also known in different names as Kularan, Sundarapandi etc. The Muthuvans were illiterate. Their dialect was their own, but was allied to Tamil with a few Malayalam words. Their only festival was Tie Pongal, it is celebrated as New Year day and those who visit the village must be fed. The festival is celebrated in the middle of the January. Their dwellings are small, rectangular rattan flat-roofed huts, made of jungle sticks and grass; both walls and roof, and are very neat in appearance. Where grass was scarce as in big forests, the leaves of a broad leaved variety of 'Ethra' take its position. Their villages have no permanency due to the system of shifting cultivation they follow. The huts are usually one roomed with a door in front. Their only furniture was a mat woven out of reeds. The fire occupies the corner of the hut.<sup>70</sup>

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<sup>67</sup> Amita Baig and William Handerson, op. cit., p. 115.

<sup>68</sup> J.D.Munro, op. cit., p. 1.

<sup>69</sup> W.S.S.Mackay, 'On the Hills of Travancore', *Finally's*, U.K, 1971, p. 8.

<sup>70</sup> Jijo Jayaraj, *Environmental Reordering of Native Land: Colonialism and the Making of Munnar*, op. cit., p. 30.

The Muthuvans are nomadic agriculturalists and raggi constituted their staple food. They were skilled hunters and trappers. They ate fish and the flesh of the sambur, ibex, monkey, and jungle sheep. Flesh of the black monkey is their special food. They do not kill bison. Marriages were arranged by friends or more often by cousins on the mother's side of the bride groom. Sexual license before marriage was neither recognized nor tolerated.

They professed Hindu religion and their favorite goddess was MaduraiMeenakshi and called her as Sokuru." They also worshipped the forest deities including Kottamala Swami and Vadaganatha Swami and believed that they resided in the upper crests of the hills. They were greatly influenced by Hinduism and worshipped the Sun, and Subramaniya.

### **The Mannan**

The Mannans are seen on the forest areas of Kanjirappalli, Devikolam, and Udumbancholataluks. According to a legend current among them, they were originally the vassals of the King of Poonjar. They are of medium height and their colour varies from very light to very dark brown. The Mannans both male and female, generally dress well. They are non-vegetarians who eat bison meat, but not beef. Though they drink alcohol, they avoid milk. There are several clans among the Mannans, and they observe the clan rules scrupulously for the good conduct of their society. The clans are named after the place of habitation. Marumakkathayam or the matrilineal system is the popular rule of succession among the Mannans, though a few follow makkathayam or the patrilineal system. The Mannans practiced independent cultivation, and work as agricultural laborers. They are also engaged in the collection and sale of hill produce like honey. Hunting is resorted by them in order to supplement their diet. They have among them the institution of the headman called Kani or Kanikkaran. A Mantri who highly respected and obeyed assists the headman. Marriages among them are conducted after negotiations between the elders. Cases of desertion and remarriages are common.

Mannans have a peculiar political structure. Raja, Deiva Mannan(the King) is the head of their polity and without any structural features of monarchy, he continues to rule over. They were in fear of bison, tiger and elephant. There is only one king for the Mannan and this kingdom has four divisions. I.e. (i) ThekkottuKattuRajyam, (ii) Nedukkuda Kattu Rajyam, (iii) AthalOrupuram

and (iv) Chenkanattu Mala. Their main goddess or Kula Deivam is Madhura Meenakshi Amma of the Madura Meenakshi temple.<sup>71</sup>

### **The Palliyers**

Palliyers exists on the slopes round about Udumban Shola. They cultivate raggi, rice and roots. They do not work for other people. They are not shikaris as the Muthuvans are, and are inclined to keep themselves aloof. Formerly they lived in the caves, but now are resort to grass huts. In their own primitive way, they are very clever in cooking. They roast the root of sweet potatoes or yam or ginger. The raggi is crushed after being harvested,<sup>72</sup> and made into coarse flour. This is mixed with the water, put into hollow bamboo as thick as can be found growing in the jungle. Then placed over fire, it soon boils, the bamboo remaining unaffected.

The people from the plains coming to the hill slopes for firewood would carry with them salt, chilies and other necessities and will exchange them for yams and other produce, which the Palliyers bring with them. In some cases, the Palliyers will collect firewood for these people, and they give the salt and chilies in exchange. The women fashion their cloth in the same manner as Muthuva women; they are very fond of bead necklaces. The men grow their hair long, but screw it up tight and hide it under a head cloth.

### **The Kuravas**

The Pooliahs or Kuravas are entirely a servant class. They are almost slave to the Mannadis or hill Vellalas, who are in greater number at Marayoor. They work for the Anginadu and Vattavada people also. Their huts are thatched, have mud all and are permanent settlers. They are rather a dirty people, but after those at Marayoor were converted to Christianity, change was shown in their habits of life. Their women also wear many bead necklaces, worn rather tightly round the neck. They are known to slay their cattle for meat. The long black rat like snake is also eaten by them, and any other game they catch in traps or while hunting. Both these groups speak Tamil and were well clothed and healthy. Petty crimes among them were settled by the Manyacara appointed by the Poonjar Chief. The Headman was known as *Munnudy* or *Mundry*.

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<sup>71</sup> Jijo Jayaraj, *Tea in Munnar: Tracing the History of Ecological Imperialism*, op. cit., p. 25-26.

<sup>72</sup> Ibid., p. 26.

According to Munro's Report he was the Magisterial in charge of the Anginad for eight years, there was only one complaint that was compromised and he did not face any trouble with these people.<sup>73</sup>

### **The Vellalars**

Vellalars were the other tribal group who were present in the Kannan Devan Hills. They were also called as Kunuvers, and are engaged in agriculture. There are differences in the custom within the tribe. Some of the groups within Vellala, especially those who live in the villages of Wattavada. They usually do not marry outside their group. But the Kunuvers of Ettoor Villages of Palani practice intermarriage within the tribe. Exploratory journeys made by the Europeans, like in other parts of India, were conceived as a strategy to make changes upon the existing landscapes and resource use patterns. Ward and Connor, Munro and Mackay accomplished such explorations and discovered the vast potentials of Munnar for their colonial masters and traders. A biodiversity hub, with unique floristic and faunistic richness was open for commercial exploitation by European planters. The tribals like the Muthuvans and Mannans were looked upon as supporting staff in this European mission. The owners of the forest if at all they believed, became, guides and servants of the 'White man'. Here commenced the first stage of ecological transformation of the high ranges, which were kept intact by the inhabitants of the 'lesser technology and the doors of Munnar lay opened before European enterprise and superior technology.'<sup>74</sup>

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<sup>73</sup> Ibid., p. 26.

<sup>74</sup> Ibid., pp. 27-28.

## CHAPTER II

# COMMERCIAL LANDSCAPING THROUGH PLANTATION

“...surpassingly grand and incomparably beautiful; undulating grassy hills, wooded valleys, rocky crags, overhanging precipices and the green fields of the valley of Unjanaad”

- General Douglas Hamilton, 1862 <sup>1</sup>

The historical changes caused by the emergence monoculture plantation are the logical outcomes of colonial exploitation. With the introduction of the Monoculture plantation including cinchona, coffee, tea, the area witnessed large scale reconfiguration in both biological systems and landscape. From the early part of the sixteenth century, cinchona has been used as a medicinal drug. ‘Quinine’ the anti-malarial drug was produced from the cinchona bark. This medicine was introduced to Europe from South America.<sup>2</sup> By understanding its commercial importance, the British East India Company started its commercial production. But the cinchona plantation was not suitable for the temperate climate of Europe. In their search, they found that India and Indonesia were suitable for the growth of this new crop. The wide spread devastation of coffee plant by the leaf disease and the high price for cinchona in the world market prompted the Europeans to turn their attention to the cultivation of the new crop. The private planters soon turned to the latter crop. Some of the coffee plantations in Nilgiri and Waynad transformed into the cinchona plantations. The natives took a key role in the success of this new crop.<sup>3</sup> This aspect was highlighted in the letter send by the Secretary of State for India to the Governor in Council, as follows:

“The cinchona febrifuge trees were grown by the natives throughout the hill districts in their gardens and small holdings, and the success of the cultivation among the natives depends mainly on the interest taken by the local officers. And the progress in the hill districts of Travancore is remarkable....” The plantation in Munnar was started under the North Travancore Land Planting and Agriculture Society. Under the initiative of John Daniel Munro and A.W Turner, cinchona cultivations were opened at Devikulam.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> General Douglas Hamilton, Journal Entry 1862.

<sup>2</sup> K. Ravi Raman, *Global Capital and Peripheral Labour: Political Economy of Tea Plantations in Southern India*, 1850-1950,P.23

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> Jijo Jayaraj, *Environmental Reordering of Native Land: Colonialism and the Making of Munnar*, Unpublished PhD Dissertation submitted to M.G. University, Kottayam, 2021, p. 74.



But the boom of eighties did not last long. There was a general depression in the cinchona markets in Java and Sri Lanka. As a result the price dropped from 9.12 Pence per pound in 1880 to 1.12 Pence in 1888.<sup>10</sup> This market crisis once again forced the planters either abandon the plantation or to turn to a third crop, i.e., tea. But the Government continued the plantation in small scale. For instance the Secretary of State for India wrote:

"The coffee planters of Peermade were doubtful of the financial result of the cinchona and therefore the Resident adopted efforts to spread the cultivation over the sholas and grass lands of Travancore hills.<sup>5</sup>

One of the other important reasons for the decline of the coffee industry in India was due to the gold rush in the coffee lands. The discovery of gold in the Nilgiri-Waynad region by an Australian company in 1868 resulted in the competition among the other mining companies. The gold rush began with coming of the Alfa Gold Mining Company in Waynad in 1874. The estates such as Cherambadi, Devala, and Pundalur were bought by the new companies. The Went Worth Gold Mining Company were some prominent among them. Thus gold mining adversely affected the coffee plantations throughout the high ranges. Thousands of acres of coffee lands were destroyed and caused financial loss among the investors.<sup>6</sup>

Munnar, the confluence of three rivers received the attention of the world market from the beginning of the commercial tea plantations.<sup>7</sup> It was the Scottish capitalist investors who started the coffee, cinchona and tea plantations in Munnar. The cinchona, which produced quinine medicine that fetched high value in the market. This cinchona boom, along with coffee diseases and the decline of the coffee production prompted the planters to switch over to cinchona and tea. At this time tea replaced coffee as the national drink in the European market. The end of the tea trade monopoly with China in 1833 forced the English to turn their eyes on the possibilities of tea growing in the colonies.<sup>8</sup>

The first English man visited this hillock was Col, Arthur Wellesley in the year 1790.<sup>9</sup> But this argument continues to exist without any historical evidence. According to the available records in 1816-17 Lieutenant Benjamin Swayne Ward, son of Col. Francis Swayne Ward and his assistant Lt. Eyre Connor landed in High Range to map the unexplored country. However the plantation

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<sup>5</sup> Ibid., p. 60.

<sup>6</sup> Jijo Jayaraj, *Tea in Munnar: Tracing the History of Ecological Imperialism*, Unpublished M. A Dissertation, M.G University, Kottayam, 2012, p. 60.

<sup>7</sup> Sulochana Nalapattu, *Story of Munnar*, Mathrubhumi Books, Kozhikkode, 2009, p. 16.

<sup>8</sup> Jijo Jayaraj, op. cit., p. 60.

<sup>9</sup> Amita Baig and William Henderson, *A Centenary of Planting In the Kannan Devan Hills Concession, 1878-1978*, Tata Finlay Ltd., 1978, p. 2.

history of Munnar that is, the Kannan Devan Hills begins with the arrival of John Daniel Munro, who was the Superintendent of the Cardamom Hills in 1877.<sup>10</sup> His Report of 8 March 1877, titled The 'High Ranges of Travancore' indicated the commercial possibilities of the hills.

In 1877, J. D. Munro leased 256sq km (1, 37, 600 acres of land and adjoining forest) from Poonjar Valiya Thampuran kerala varma raja for 99 years for coffee cultivation. This is the Anchunadu area where the famous Kannan Devan Company is located. The land was purchased for a concession of Rs 5,000. The king of Poonjar considered it a great profit to get Rs.5000 in cash and Rs.3000 per annum for the vacant land. The first agreement of this agreement was signed by Poonjar Pala Silva on 11 July 1877 and the final agreement was signed on 28 November 1878 at Thiruvananthapuram. The first agreement was witnessed by Hami Swaran Damodaran Namboodiri at Kallampally house and Thuppan Nambi Namboodiri house at Thiruttan house. The Munnar hills are mentioned as Kannan Devan Anchunad hill in the lease agreement registered with the Meenachil Sub-Registrar's Office under No. 731. The treaty was approved by the Maharaja of Travancore.<sup>11</sup> The final treaty was between Kuruvila Varkey



Figure 2.1. Tea Plantation, Photograph Taken By the Researcher

Vekkunnel (Pulikil Unni), one of the largest landowners in Travancore, and Saip, a British Resident, and King Poonjar, respectively. Kannandevan also became a witness for the company. In principle, the land was leased, but in effect the land was leased out. The 17 Karas were signed by King Poonjar and Monroe. The agreement was registered at the Ettumanoor lom trar office. The land was leased by some Englishmen who knew that India would have to leave someday. Others bought land from the coast. When the private forests were taken over in the late 1980s, the government paid compensation to all the private forest owners except the Poonjar royal family.<sup>12</sup>

Once tea had been the drink of emperors. Now tea is one of the beverages drunk by all. It is the oldest and most popular beverage known to man. The origin of India's tea industry is a story of adventure and hardship. It is an outstanding example of the man's triumph over the rough nature, wild animals and epidemics. Tea has been known since 2737 BC and consumed as a beverage for

<sup>10</sup> T. Rajesh, *IdukkiCharitrarekhakhakal*, Lion Books, Kattapana, 2008, p. 64.

<sup>11</sup> Mathew Mannarakam, *Malanadinte Ithihasam (m)*, Turn Books, Kottayam, 2019, p. 352.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 353.

over twelve thousand years. Before the introduction of the tea industry in India, the habit of tea drinking was already well established in Europe. From 1669 onwards, tea was a regular item of trade for Britain.<sup>13</sup> The British were also responsible for popularizing tea in Canada, Australia and New Zealand. The weakening of the trade relations between the European countries during 1780 prompted the English East India Company to introduce the commodity in India. Thus, the introduction of tea industry in India can be associated with the refusal of the Chinese Government in 1833 to renew the agreement granting the East India Company rights of monopoly of British trade with China. This made the company's efforts more active. In 1834, the then Governor General Lord William Bentick, appointed a Tea Committee.

The company sends its secretary, G.J Gordon, to China to procure the seeds of *Camellia sinensis* (tea). Soon the tea growing wild in the Territory of East India Company was found from Sadiya in the borders of the Chinese province Yu-nan. Suitable climate was necessary and this helped the tea plantations in India. Tea later spread to the monsoon belt of Assam, West Bengal, foot hills of Himalayas in the North and moist slope plateaus of Western Ghats in the South.<sup>14</sup>

## History of Tea Industry

The tea, *camellia sinensis* (Scientific Name) has been known to man for a long time.<sup>15</sup> It has been cultivated by the Chinese people for more than two thousand years. It has been cultivated by the Chinese people not on large plantations, but in thousands of small plots. Thus the Chinese were well familiar with the tea plant and its value. The origin of the word prime tea prime goes to China. The Chinese call it as 'kia'. As far as it is known, it was during the course of the 60 century AD that the name evolved in When it arrived to the West it became 'te' (tea in its first abbreviated form), which is still the name for tea in many countries.<sup>16</sup> The Chinese were the first who had discovered that the infusion of its leaves when it is carefully processed produced a 13 very palatable drink.<sup>17</sup> The Chinese were the first to chew tea as they found that tea-eating sheep had more energy. Then the leaves began to drink boiled water. Indigenous tea plants are found only in southern China and Assam. Tea is widely grown in Tibet, Northern India, Sri Lanka and South India.<sup>18</sup>

The people in Shan states of Burma and Siam had been using tea leaf for the medical purpose and then as a beverage. The original home of the tea is in an indefinite area to the South-

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<sup>13</sup> Jijo Jayaraj, *Tea in Munnar: Tracing the History of Ecological Imperialism*, op. cit., p. 30.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid., p. 31.

<sup>15</sup> <https://byjus.com> accessed on 23/3/2022.

<sup>16</sup> <https://www.wordhippo.com>, accessed on 23/3/2022.

<sup>17</sup> Jijo Jayaraj, *Tea in Munnar: Tracing the History of Ecological Imperialism*, op. cit., p. 31.

<sup>18</sup> Mathew Mannarakam, op. cit., p. 349.

East of Tibetan plateau, including Szu-chuan, Yu-nan, Burma, Siam and the Assam variety in North-East India. Tea spread and was grown by the natives over centuries. It was found in the caravan route between China and India.<sup>19</sup>

The typical small leaf Chinese tea was found in the East and South-East China. The Chinese provinces of Sze-chuan and Yu-nan produced the best China tea.<sup>20</sup> Much of the details regarding the origin of tea are still in mystery. Chinese were drinking tea in the 5<sup>th</sup> Century AD. It was first carried towards West by the Turkish traders, during the end of 5<sup>th</sup> Century. Through this way it reached to the Mongolian border. It was in the 6<sup>th</sup> Century, Chinese began to regard tea not only as a medicinal drink but also as a refreshing beverage. According to legend it was the Emperor Shen Nung (3000 B. C) who first realized the properties of tea. Shen Nung was a skilled ruler and he was a patron of arts and was a creative scientist. He made strong foundation for many Chinese agricultural practices. He is said to have eaten as many as three hundred and sixty five varieties of medicinal plants over the course of his life and died of toxic overdoses. It was his far sightedness that the Chinese used to boil the drinking water as a hygienic precaution. It was in one summer day while he was on his march for visiting a distant region of his empire, Shen Nung and his court stopped to rest. With the order of the emperor his servants began to boil water to drink. Dried leaves from a nearby bush fell into the boiling water, the water changed to a brown liquid, being a scientist; the emperor was interested in the new liquid. He drunk some and found that it was very refreshing. Thus began the practice of tea drinking. Even though the story seems mythical, it was closely related to practical events. Over the years tea consumption spread throughout the Chinese culture. It became an unavoidable aspect in their daily life.<sup>21</sup>

## Growth of Plantation in China

In 800 AD, the Buddhist monk Lu Yu wrote the first authentic Account of tea. This famous book known as 'Cha Ching' (Tea Book) describes the various methods of cultivation and preparation of tea in China.<sup>22</sup> "It is generally plucked during March, April or May. The best of the three, four or five tea shoots growing on the thick branches is plucked. The leaves are not plucked on a rainy or cloudy day. It is plucked only when the weather is fine. The entire tea manufacturing process includes several stages such as steaming, pounding, patting, baking and finally packing. The book mentions thousand varieties of tea leaves. The quality of the tea is determined by the flavor which is largely controlled by the 18 weather. Regarding its value, the book mentions that the effect of tea is

<sup>19</sup> Jijo Jayaraj, *Tea in Munnar: Tracing the History of Ecological Imperialism*, op. cit., p. 31.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid.

<sup>21</sup> <https://www.tea.co.uk/history-of-tea>, accessed on 23/3/2022.

<sup>22</sup> Jijo Jayaraj, *Tea in Munnar: Tracing the History of Ecological Imperialism*, op. cit., p. 31.

cooling.<sup>23</sup> As a drink, it suits very well, persons of self-restrained and of good conduct.”<sup>24</sup> When feeling hot, thirsty, depression, suffering from headache etc. one should drink tea four or five times. If the tea leaves are not plucked during the proper season, and not properly prepared, when they are mixed with herbs, they may cause diseases. In regard to general drinks it is said that "boiled water is to quench thirst, wine to drown sorrow and the tea is to avoid sleepiness."<sup>25</sup> Chinese tea was grown by small farmers, largely related to their household activity. The daily routine of the Chinese include boil rice for breakfast in the morning and roast tea in the evening. Every cottager owned his own little garden. He produced what he need for daily life and the surplus was sold. This small earning helped him to spend on his other needs. The simple technique and the affordable investment largely contributed to the spreading of plantations in the different parts of the world. It was the beginning of the universal habit of tea drinking.

## Sung Dynasty

In 960 -1127 AD tea was a regular item of trade through the borders to Mongolia. The trade was undertaken by the Government. At the same time, tea was exported to Tibet. It was of poor quality tea and was transported by yaks, mules and on the back of porters. It was a long tedious journey from China to Tibet. The porters moved five miles a day, along the mountain passes with a height of five thousand feet. Their loads were so heavy about three hundred pounds carried by the porters put opium behind their ears to deaden the pain caused by straps and weight.<sup>26</sup>

There were two different kind of teas drank during the Sung dynasty. One is solid tea (Pian Cha or Yuengao Cha) and another one is loose leaf tea. Both teas were used for drinking after finely grounded. The high-grade Yangaocha was tribute to the imperial court. The process of making Yangaocha was very complicated and needed special skill. Moreover, extra process was added such as flavoring or molding the design of dragon. As this tea gets excessively fancy, it lost the value for true enjoyment, and became something to show one's power or status. Early Song dynasty, tea was whisked with spoon, but by reading "Daguanchalun" or "Chajin" we can see the change to the bamboo whisk. Japanese Buddhist priest "Eisai" came back to Japan after the study of Buddhism end of the Song dynasty. He introduced powdered tea which he brought back from China and show the way to drink to Japanese people. That is why our style of tea ceremony is so similar to the drinking style of Song dynasty. In China, end of the Song dynasty, grinned tea was already very popular. To increase the production to match the large demand of tea, water power was used for

<sup>23</sup> Jijo Jayaraj, *Environmental Reordering of Native Land: Colonialism and the Making of Munnar*, op. cit., p. 186.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid.

<sup>26</sup> <https://www.o-cha.net> accessed on 23/3/2022.

grinding tea. They were also sold on the streets. There was even a record in "Tonqing muhualu" about the vender who were selling this powdered tea on the street. This kind of tea was probably drunk simply by adding hot water. In the cities, Chasi, the place for drinking tea became popular. People enjoyed tea game "toucha" there, and also enjoyed different kind of tea. Various unique teas called "Quyichatou" were also sold in there. During the Song dynasty, the habit of tea drinking had begun taking root among the common people, and tea was already playing important role in people's everyday life. Tea industry remarkably prospered during this time.<sup>27</sup>

## Plantation in Japan

Meanwhile, during 600 AD, tea crossed East China and reached Japan. Tea seeds were brought by a Buddhist priest named Yenissei. He preferred it because tea enhances religious meditation. Yeisei was known as father of tea in Japan. Because of this, tea is linked to Zen Buddhism in Japan. Like the Chinese, the Japanese initially took tea for medicinal purpose. It was grown around the temple gardens soon the Japanese priests identified that apart from its medicinal value, it can also be used as a pleasant drink. Soon the emperor was attracted to this new drink, and it became an imperial drink.<sup>28</sup> Tea became a drink of the religious classes in Japan when Japanese priests and envoys sent to China to learn about its culture brought tea to Japan. The Buddhist monks Kūkai and Saichō may have been the first to bring tea seeds to Japan. The first form of tea brought from China was probably brick tea. Tea became a drink of the royal classes when Emperor Saga encouraged the growth of tea plants. Seeds were imported from China, and cultivation in Japan began.<sup>29</sup>

Tea consumption became popular among the gentry during the 12th century, after the publication of Eisai's *Kissa Yōjōki*. Uji, with its strategic location near the capital at Kyoto, became Japan's first major tea-producing region during this period. Beginning in the 13th and 14th centuries, Japanese tea culture developed the distinctive features for which it is known today, and the Japanese tea ceremony emerged as a key component of that culture.<sup>30</sup>

There is a traditional story in Japan behind the popularity of tea. The mighty Minamoto Shogun Sanetomo (1203-1219 AD) became desperately ill from over feasting and the royal authorities summoned Yeisei, the senior priest of the monastery to offer prayers for the emperor's recovery. Yeisei supplemented his prayers with his favourite beverage tea. Soon Sanetomo was cured. Naturally he wished to know more about tea; Yeisei presented him a copy of his book, and

<sup>27</sup> <https://www.o-cha.net/english/teacha/history/sungdynasty>, accessed on 23/3/2022.

<sup>28</sup> Jijo Jayaraj, *Tea in Munnar: Tracing the History of Ecological Imperialism*, op. cit., p. 34.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid.

<sup>30</sup> [https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/History\\_of\\_tea\\_in\\_Japan](https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/History_of_tea_in_Japan), accessed on 22/3/2022.

thereafter the Shogun became a tea devotee. The fame of the new remedy spread far and wide. Now tea acquired an important place in the Japanese social life. Soon China started supplying small quantities of tea to Russia by the end of 17<sup>th</sup> century. It was first carried overland by Government caravans. Ordinary caravans were drawn by two hundred to three hundred camels; each of them carried four chests of tea. The journey took three years.<sup>31</sup>

## Plantation in India

It was from 1689 onwards that English East India Company imported directly from China. The commencement of the tea industry in India can be largely related to the refusal of the Chinese government in 1833 to renew the old agreement and granting the right of monopoly with Britain in tea trade.<sup>32</sup> Now the British turned their full attention to India. In 1778 itself Warren Hastings, the then Governor General asked Sir. Joseph Banks to prepare a note on the possibility of the cultivation of new crop. He advocated for the tea cultivation in India. He advocated that black tea would grow best between 26<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup> parallel of latitude and green tea in 30<sup>th</sup> and 35<sup>th</sup> parallel. All this assumption was based on the Chinese and Japanese experience.<sup>33</sup>

The conditions in India were favorable for the British at that time. The administration of the whole country was in the hands of English East India Company. In these days the company was popularly known as John Company. The monopoly of the trade with China vested with the company by the Charter Bill of 1813. This bill was replaced by the Charter Act of 1833 and it was for a period of twenty years. Thus it gave up its monopoly with China. Trade in the colonies was opened to all British subjects. They were allowed to settle in British India without any restrictions.<sup>34</sup>

The discovery of tea plant in the forests of Upper Assam in a wild state marked the beginning of tea plantation in India. There is an extraordinary controversy between Agricultural and Horticultural Society of India regarding the discovery of tea plant. The rival claimants for the discovery were C.A Bruce and Lt. Charlton. In 1819, David Scott who was the agent to the Governor General in Assam was interested in growing tea in India. He wrote to Dr. N. Wallich, the botanist of East India Company regarding the possibility of growing tea. In 1823, Major Robert Bruce, who was residing in Assam came to know about the tea plants.<sup>35</sup> It was introduced to him by a Singpho Chief, Beesa Gaum. He became aware that the natives were in the habit of drinking the water boiled with the dried leaves of this wild growing tree along with his brother CA Bruce sent

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<sup>31</sup> Jijo Jayaraj, *Tea in Munnar: Tracing the History of Ecological Imperialism*, op. cit., p. 35.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid.

<sup>35</sup> Mathew Mannarakam, op. cit., p. 349.

samples of these plants to the Botanical Gardens of Calcutta. By examining this, it is revealed that the wild plant found in the jungles of Assam belonged to the same family of Chinese tea plant. But this plant belonged to a different species; therefore these discoveries were not recognized.<sup>36</sup>

Shortly after Lord William Bentick became the Governor General of India in 1828. With the abolition of the Chinese tea trade, the company was searching for a new place suitable for growing tea. In January 1834, Lord William Bentick proposed a committee to investigate and make recommendations about the most suitable areas in India where tea grows well. The committee consisted of eleven English men and two Indians. The committee decided to send its secretary GJ Gordon to china to 45 procure the Chinese Tea seeds. He was also under the deputation to bring skilled tea makers, those who were familiar with the cultivation. Gordon left Calcutta in June 1834 on the sailing ship 'Water Witch.

China was unfamiliar to the Europeans, and Chinese always kept the secrecy of tea preparation. J.I.L.L. Jackson, the pioneer of tea industry in Java stayed in China in 1833 for the same purpose. The journey to China was hazardous and adventurous. The committee was also asked to find suitable sites for tea plantation in different parts of India. C.A Bruce was appointed as a Superintend of Tea Culture in February.<sup>37</sup>

### **Development of Plantation in Travancore**

The development of the South Indian tea industry in Travancore was due to the general depression of the coffee industry. Coffee leaf disease appeared in Cylon in 1869 and a year later, appeared in South India.<sup>38</sup> John Daniel Monroe, a British man who certainly claimed the fatherhood of the plantations in the High Range. In 1810, under Labtan, a trigonometrically survey<sup>39</sup> of the whole of southern India was conducted. Subsequently, in 1816, a survey was carried under the leadership of Lieutenant Benjamin Swine Ward of the Madras Infantry in Travancore. Peter Ire Connor was the Chief among his assistants.

In 1862, General Hamilton of the Madras Army was commissioned by the British government to find a place to rest. Based on this, Hamilton visited 8841 feet high places including Anamudi. In 1877 a two-member commission was appointed to determine the boundaries of Madras Providence and Travancore. That the commission confirms that

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<sup>36</sup> Jijo Jayaraj, *Tea in Munnar: Tracing the History of Ecological Imperialism*, op. cit., p. 38.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid.

<sup>39</sup> The Great Trigonometrical Survey was a project which aimed to survey the entire Indian subcontinent with scientific precision.



Kannan Devan hills are part of Travancore. John Daniel Munroe came to provide service to this commission. In the same year, Munroe approached King Poonjar, the owner of the Kannan Devan Hills. The 215 sq. Ft. Area was purchased by Monroe Kannan Devan on July 11, 1877, with an agreement to pay a total of Rs. 5,000 and a fixed sum of Rs. 3,000 per annum. Kannan Devan gave the mountains to King John Daniel Monroe of Poonjar not as a lease but as a gift. Can be inherited as a lasting legacy. Can be transferred. The government must be notified when making the transfer. That too only for the purpose of levying taxes. The transfer was approved by the Maharaja of Travancore in 1878. This was because at that time, there was a law that must obtain the approval of the Maharaja for requiring land transactions in the Travancore area.

At that time Kannan Thevar was the village headman of Anchanad, an area of five village's viz., Vallanad, Marayoor, Kanthalloor, Vattavada and Kovilur. The village headman, who was very popular, was a great sinner. People going to Kothamangalam and other places from Tamil Nadu for trade had to go through this village. Kannan Thevar had given them generous support. Thus the place came to be known as the Kannan Thevar Hills. Gradually, Kannan Thevar was lost and Kannan Devan became a mountain.<sup>40</sup> Gribble Turner, a civil servant in Madas, and his half-brother, A.W. Turner also visited the place where Munroe purchased. After their return to Madras, they formed the North Travancore Land Planting and Agricultural Society with Munroe. In 1879, Munroe transferred the land that he had purchased, to the Society. Attempts were made to sell the land (Gribble Turner Society land) and his half-brother Turner began to bring workers from the hinterland of Tamil Nadu to clear the forest. Advertisements for the sale of land were published in the newspapers available at that time. Cinchona cultivation was first started. There was no cure for malaria at that time. Cinchona (coyna) barks It was used as a medicine for malaria. That is why the coyna tree bark was so popular in the world market. With the discovery of the Medicine for Malaria, the popularity of the cinchona tree declined. Then coffee cultivation started. The weather was not conducive for coffee.so he turned to tea cultivation. The first tea plantation was set up on 50 acres on the Parvati Estate. It was started by a Scotsman named Sharp. By then the financial liabilities of the Society had increased. In 1895 Sir John Muir reached the High Range. Muir visited all over the society land and Kannan Devan Hills Produced Company was established in 1896 Kannan Devan purchased the whole land of the Society.

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<sup>40</sup> T. Damu, *Munnarrekhal* (m), D. C Books, Kottayam, 2010, p. 14.

By a treaty signed by the King of Poonjar and the Maharaja of Travancore on September 18, 1898, all the powers and rights of the King of Poonjar were ceded to Travancore. According to the agreement, the government of Travancore decided to pay Rs. 14,000 annually to the King of Poonjar on a regular basis.

### **Arrival of European planters**

The first Europeans set foot on the Kanan Devan Hills in 1790. Col. Arthur Wellesley the Europeans Arrive subsequently became the Duke of Wellington. Wellesley, along with a small force lay in wait at the Kumali Gap to trap the redoubtable Tipu Sultan of Mysore whose forces were devastating the borders of Travancore. The wily Sultan, however, gave them the slip and made good his escape through an alternate route. His plans foiled, Wellesley decided to return to Coimbatore through the Kanan Devan Hills. He moved north over the Cardamom Hills by way of Bodinayakanore and marched up a cattle track to reach the Surianelly Valley. There, setting up camp at the foothills of Devimalai, smarting under the humiliation of being out-manoeuvred by Tipu, he tried to somewhat retrieve the situation by commencing to build a small entrenchment-all for the glory of the East India Company. However, things were just not going right for the man; half way through the task he received orders to return immediately. The half-finished stone structures can still be seen on the slopes of Devimalai. The route he took was through Munnar Vagavurrai and Eravikulam onto the British Anamalais and then to the plains of Coimbatore the journey took the soldiers past dreamlands that would later be christened Hamilton's Plateau and Turner's Valley, after General Hamilton and the Turner brothers who arrived a century later.<sup>41</sup>

### **Plantation Concession and Takeover**

The tea districts in South India were located in the hills and slopes of the Western Ghats. The Kannan Devan Hills (known after Kannan Thevar) were situated higher up the hills in the Travancore at an elevation of the first European 5000 fact.<sup>42</sup> After fifty years in 1862, Sir. Charles Travelyan, who was the Governor of Madras, instructed Col. Douglas Hamilton to inquire into a suitable place for establishing a sanatorium and for developing revenue earning projects in the land.<sup>43</sup>

But more significant from the point of history was the expedition of the ever exploring John Daniel Munro, who had been the Superintendent and Magistrate of the Cardamom hills division of Travancore. He was appointed to settle the boundary dispute between the Travancore state and

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<sup>41</sup> Sulochana Nalapattu, op. cit., pp.23.

<sup>42</sup> Jijo Jayaraj, *Tea in Munnar: Tracing the History of Ecological Imperialism*, op. cit., p. 48.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid.

Madras Presidency in the High Ranges. John Daniel Munro was impressed by the nature, climate and the inhabitation i.e. Muthuvans whom he called as 'wild shikkari', of the area. He made a detailed Report on the hills titled "The High Ranges of Travancore" and submitted it on March 1877. His report provides a vivid description of the geography, accessibility. Rivers, inhabitation, soil and productivity. He found that much of these worthless lands were fit for cultivation. He concluded that coffee, tea and cinchona would grow better in this climatic condition. Through this Munro was pressing the future commercial possibilities of the hills.

"The soil as already mentioned is everything that can be desired and it only wants capital and energy to bring a large portion of this fine tract into cultivation. What the latter can do has been shown by the ryots of Unjenaad who have converted the grass and scrub hills into highly cultivated terraces of wheat, rice and garlic."<sup>44</sup>

By understanding the commercial viabilities of the land, John Daniel Munro procured a tract of land from Kerala Varma Valiya Raja of Poonjar on 11<sup>th</sup> July 1877, which came to be known as 'First Pooniate Concession of Mithunom 1052. By this agreement the Pooniate Chief granted a large tract of land called Kannan Devan Anchanatu Mala to J. D Munro. It was with a payment of Rs. 5000 76 and an annual payment of Rs.3000 as rent. This agreement showed the desire of the Europeans to acquire land within the dominion of His Highness Maharaja of Travancore. The agreement between Pooniate Chief and Mr. J.D Munro is reproduced.<sup>45</sup>

"..Agreement executed on the 11 degrees July 1877/29 Mithunom 1052, by Puhatil Kayikal Kela Varms Valuja Raja, aged 47, in Punhattita vaka Kondu pravarti. Minachel Tahug, to Mr. John Daniel Munuo, aged 43, a Christian coffee planter at Peerumeta in Peruvantanam mure, Kanhirapalu Pravarti, Changanaseri Taluq.....

....as you have made an application for the grant of the property called Kannan Tevan Anchuanatu Mala, belonging to us at panbattila vaka in kondu pravarti, Minachal Taluq for coffee cultivation, all the hills and jungles on the said property within the following boundaries, with the exception of such parts as are used by the tenants for agriculture, public

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<sup>44</sup>Amita Beig, William Handerson, *A Centenary of Planting in The Kannan Devan Hills Concession 1878-1978*, Tata Finlay Ltd., Calcutta, 1978, p. 123.

<sup>45</sup> Jijo Jayaraj, *Tea in Munnar: Tracing the History of Ecological Imperialism*, op. cit., p. 49.

utility, water supply and other purposes are conveyed to you under this agreement in consideration of rupees 5000 received.”<sup>46</sup>

Under this agreement the boundaries of the property determined were Chirnarulpatin, Tandokara, Kumarikallu, Munnatumala, Anakulam and Chumarulpathi. Through this concession Munro was given the right to use all the waste lands, but he was abstained from the rights over the ivory, cardamom, wax and other similar forest produces. The roads, rivers and water channels continued to remain open to the public. He was also given the right to surrender the land whenever he feels. On the above, he will also be returned his amount of Rs.5000 which was received in advance.<sup>47</sup>

The new surveyors appointed and had to report on the Western Ghats, South of Nilgiris. The way was obscure that the surveying party arranged to go from Kodaikanal. Their only guide was the compass, all equipments being carried on the head of the coolies. H. G Turner, an L.C.S from Madras, was desiring to go on a shooting tour, took a long leave in India. To climb on the hills he used a Muthuvan as guide to reach the Devicolam slopes. On this expedition he was accompanied by his brother A. W Turner, familiarly known as thumbi, The Muthuvans were initially shy with the dorai, but they were his own right hand, and acted as excellent guides" Thinking of the future and seeing the wonderful possibilities of this land, Mr. Turner climbed the peaks and marched long distances just to estimate what forest land was possible for future enterprise. He found climate and rainfall suitable for cultivation.<sup>48</sup>

Good jungle soil was there in plenty, but the only problem he found was absence of roads to reach the land. Yet he saw the possible development of the land and found out that the owner of the hills was one of the Pooniate Raja, who lived in the village of Marayoor. With great enthusiasm he set out to meet this man who was the Kannan Devan Zamindar. On reaching Marayoor, he discussed the subject of land transfers to the Zamindar.<sup>49</sup> He pointed out that the big forests of the Kannan Devan Hills inhabited by so many wild beasts and that little use as they were not be 20 opened up for cultivation. After a short time the title deed papers were produced. Turner now returned to Devicolam and leaving his brother to open up a cinchona estate there, he went back to his station after an interval of only three or four months.<sup>50</sup>

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<sup>46</sup> Ibid.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid.

<sup>49</sup> Jijo Jayaraj, ‘Munnar Paristhithy: Charithra Veekshanam’, *Mannum Manushyanum: Oru Daivajnante Jeevithadarsanam* (m), Ed. Pauly Maniyattu, Book Solutions, Kottayam, 2018, p. 132.

<sup>50</sup> Ibid.

Later Turner brothers along with J.D Munro registered the North Travancore Land Planting and Agriculture Society in 1879 with a capital of Rs.5, 00,000. Through the Kannan Devan Hills Concession, the Diwan N. Nanoo Pillai declared certain terms and conditions with the concerned parties. According to this, apart from the payment of annual rent, the grantee was required to pay half a British Rupee per acre to the Sarkar for the land granted. He can use all the lands under the concession except the grass land. But he was allowed to use it by paying two annas and eight paise for every acre of grass land. The annual tax should be paid on last day of "Audi" of each year 10<sup>th</sup>, 14<sup>th</sup>, or 15<sup>th</sup> August to the Tahasildar of the district resided at Meenachil." The grantee was also asked to keep the boundary marks of the concession land clear and keep them in good repair. The party was allowed to keep the timber for his own use except Teak, Cole Teak, Black wood Ebony, Karunthali, Sandalwood etc. They were allowed to construct roads throughout the land granted by the Pooniate Chief. The road would be considered as public roads and land granted was held as perpetual, heritable or transferable property. But he should inform, in case of any transfer regarding this property immediately to the government. But the cultivation of the new crop shall not refrain the production of cardamom.<sup>51</sup>

Thereafter, 'a Second Pooniate concession was signed on Left right arrow July, 1879 with Munro and the Pooniate Chief.<sup>52</sup> Through the second concession the society held 227 sq. miles of land called as 'Kannan Devan Concession Land'. By this agreement the grantee agreed to pay 500 British Rupees and 3000 British Rupee annually and additional of one half British Rupee per acre of land. By this treaty full right over the land was ceded to the European planters. With the creation of North Travancore Land Planting and Agricultural Society, A.W Turner came to Devikulam for starting a new cinchona plantation. This was the beginning of the plantation history in Munnar. Cinchona and coffee were the earliest crops planted in Munnar. The cinchona boom of the eighties stimulated the cultivation of cinchona in the high 82 ranges. There was an increased demand for the cinchona from the world market and also from the native physicians. For instance, the Durbar Physician had written to Botanical garden.<sup>53</sup>

"The medical department requires fifty pounds of cinchona from Botanical Gardens of Calcutta to meet its necessary requirements. Further demand for cinchona is revealed from another letter "The Medical Department demanded a continuous and steady supply Cinchona febrifuge to meet the urgent condition."<sup>54</sup>

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<sup>51</sup> Ibid.

<sup>52</sup> Ibid., p. 128.

<sup>53</sup> Jijo Jayaraj, *Tea in Munnar: Tracing the History of Ecological Imperialism*, op. cit., p.49.

<sup>54</sup> Ibid.

The pioneers in planting in this District soon began to appear. The first was Baron Ottovon Rosenberg, a friend of A.W Turner. He opened Manalle. A. H Sharp was the next; he opened up the first tea plantation in Munnar in the Parvathy estate right in the wild.<sup>55</sup> Another pioneer was C. Donnovon; he camped at old Munnar in 1881. He opened a small patch of the jungle on the way to Nadiar, behind the present present traveller's bungalow. In those days he and Mr. Sharp shared a bungalow which they had built on the site in Munnar. Another early planter in the district was E.J Fowler, he having heard of the Thumbi Turner's success in 1881, felled one of the jungle and laid out what he choose to call as the "Anaimudi" estate which was ten miles from the famous mountain. In 1882, came C. O Master, son of a distinguished civilian at the time. He opened Sothuparai plantation in 1853.<sup>56</sup>

H. G Turner, encouraged by these developments, suggested that others should join him in opening new estates. At this time cinchona was three pence a unit, a splendid price. As a resu't C. W. W Martin, a confrère in the Madras Civil Service, came in 1883 with his nephew, Aylmer fluke Martin (Toby), via Kodaikanal to old Chittavurra, and bought a piece of land from Turner. Toby (then a lad of 18) opened his first estate under the lee of Chittavurrai (the Tamil equivalent for a small precipice) from which the estate took its name.

The year previous, G. W. Claridge had opened Harehatch or Allinjamade in cinchona, afterwards introducing tea to that end of the District. A young B. I. officer, by name Lawrence, meet ing Claridge was tempted to leave the sea and turn planter. He joined Claridge at Kodaikanal, came over to a hut at Harchatch, took a small piece of land, now a part of West Ellapatty, and felled the jungle round about, so forming what still known as Lawrence's Cinchona. This man was about 28 years old and lived with Toby Martin at old Chittavurrai in a thatched bungalow, sur rounded by an elephant trench. He remained on the Kanan Devan hills until 1884, and then went off for a fortnight to Kodaikanal. The absence lengthened into months, then into years; and he was next discovered in the Argentine in 1904.

Claridge and Toby Martin were now at the east end of the concession, C. G. Master at Sothuparai, J. E Fowler at Aneimudi, A. H. Sharp at Parvithi Munnar, A. W. Turner (Tumbi) at Devi colam and Baron von Rosenburg at Manalle. Up to this stage we have not mentioned the best planter of all at that time. He was John Payne, who had in 1881 opened Talliar for H. G. Turner in coffee. Payne was a great help to the young planters, and Toby Martin always declared that road tracing, draining and general. Tote work were carried out better after Payne's plans and teaching Fresh food supplies were transported in those days from Bodivia Bodi-Metcu to Devicolam, on

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<sup>55</sup> T. Damu, op. cit., p. 16.

<sup>56</sup> Violet Martin, *History of The High Range Planting District North Travancore 1930*, Scripture Literature Press, Bangalore, 1931, p. 8.

through Guderal and the present Silent Valley, by Oorallekad (now called Arivikad Estate) and Palaar to Sothuparai and thence down to Talliar. The life of those early planters was not at all unpleasant: there was plenty of shikar: visits to Kodaikanal took place occasionally, and riding was the one way of getting about. Ladies at this time were still unknown on the High Range. The first lady arrived only in 1889 when Baron von Rosenburg brought up his bride, daughter of Henry Gribble, I.C.S., and Madras.<sup>57</sup>

Mr. H. M Night, one of the foremost planters of Suryanelli acquired lion prime s share of lands in Munnar. He had requested the Diwan "to grant permission to start crop cultivation in the nearby waste forest land and he also wanted to know the rate charged for per acre by the government."<sup>58</sup>

He possessed about eight hundred acres. The society came into existence during the cinchona boom, very soon the Company ran into financial losses. In 1893 Sir. John Muir under James Finlay & company visited the high range. Along with the South Sylhet Company he took over the whole land from the North Travancore Land Planting and Agricultural Society. In 1897, the Kannan Devan Hills produce company purchased the whole estates from the old consolidated companies and acquired a number of new estates in the high range. With the spread of the plantations new factories needed to meet the increased supply of tea leaves. Soon plan for establishing a new factory at Devicolam was commenced. The Survey Department sent a letter to the Dewan of Travancore concerning the matter "the survey department sent the sketch of the Devikolam Factory site, which was in the Todupuzha Taluk, under the property of the Devikolam Estate Company. It requires 28.11 acres of land and requested the Diwan to grant 27.5 acres of land".<sup>59</sup>

The number of Europeans and Tamil workers increased and the population increased proportionately. When J. D Monroe arrived, there were 2,375 people, including tribals, in the Munnar-Marayoor area. 598 in 125 houses in Marayoor, 87 in 41 houses in Nachi field, 191 in 35 houses in Karayoor, 404 in 205 houses in Keezhanthur, 568 in 122 houses in Kanthalloor, 157 in 17 houses in Poothur, 148 in 27 houses in Perumala and 155 in 44 houses in Vattavada. The J. D (U) said there were 634 households and 2,375 people in the area, including 67 in 17 households. Recorded by Monroe in 1880. Most of them are white people from 19 villages in Anchanadan and

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<sup>57</sup> Ibid., p. 9.

<sup>58</sup> Jijo Jayaraj, *Tea in Munnar: Tracing the History of Ecological Imperialism*, op. cit., p. 55.

<sup>59</sup> Ibid.

Muthuvans who lived in the hinterland. Monroe gives a detailed account of the forest trails leading to Munnar today, as well as its climate and geographical features.<sup>60</sup>

Thus a new plantation culture was developing in the high range. Once thickly forested and the abode of wild life now cleared and the short green tea plants spread everywhere. The land fully utilized by the aborigines was now opened to a new race, which were eagerly looking for profit. The intense zeal of the European planters was noteworthy in unbearable jungle of high range. They lived without proper food or shelter and fought with the wild animals. The inaccessible forest lands were now with full of dwellings. Bungalows spread at different parts of the hills. The wild grown tea was now a marketable item, which consumed much capital and labour. A new habit of tea drinking was developing among the natives, The Muthuvans, the Slowly and steadily, the original landscape of Devikulam got converted into one which was to cater to the needs of British and soon the use of its land was integrated with the global capitalist network, dominated by British capital and industries.<sup>61</sup>

### **Cinchona Plantation**

In 1879, Henry Gribble Turner, LC.S., Madras, desiring to na shooting tour, took long leave in India, a possibility in go on a those days, and worked his way from Bodinayakanur to the foot of the adjacent hills, coming on to what is now the Bodi-Mettu, and continuing up the Periakanal Valley on the grassland, he used a Muduvan as guide to the Devicolam slopes under the lee of Devimalai. He got huts built there and made the place his headquarters. On this expedition he was accompanied by his step brother, A. W. Turner, familiarly known as "Tumbi." Once the friendly Muduvans lost their original timidity of the "Dorai" they were to Gribble Turner as his own right hand, being excellent guides. Thinking of the future, and seeing the wonderful possibilities of this great stretch of country, Mr. Gribble Turner climbed peaks and marched over long distances just to estimate what forest land was possible for future enterprise. Climate and rainfall seemed suitable for cultivation; good jungle soil was there in plenty, but where were the roads to reach it? They were non-existent save in Mr. Turner's mind. Yet he saw the possible development of the land and found out that the owner of the hills was onc Poonyattu Rajah, who lived in the village of Marayoor. With great enthusiasm he set out to interview this man who was the Kanan Devan Zamindar. On reaching Marayoor, with not a little tact he broached the subject of land transfers to the Zamindar. He pointed out that the big forests of the Kanan Devan Hills, inhabited by so many wild beasts, were of little use as they were and that without considerable expenditure the land could not be opened up for cultivation. He found the owner of the country in agreement with him, and after a short time the Title Deed Papers or Parchments were produced, and for a wonderfully small sum the Zamindar's

<sup>60</sup> Manoj Mathirappally, *Idukki: Desam Charithram Samskaram* (m), Geo Books, kattappana, 2017, p. 103.

<sup>61</sup> Jijo Jayaraj, *Tea in Munnar: Tracing the History of Ecological Imperialism*, op. cit., p. 55.



rights were assigned to him. Mr. H. G. Turner now returned.<sup>62</sup> To his headquarters at Devicolam and leaving his brother to open up a cinchona estate there, he went back to his station again, after an interval of only three or four months on the hills. He then made his purchase known and offered land for cultivation to his headquarters at Devicolam and leaving his brother to open up a cinchona estate there, he went back to his station again, after an interval of only three or four months on the hills. He then made his purchase known and offered land for cultivation.<sup>63</sup>

Pioneers in planting in this district soon began to appear. The first was Baron von Rosenburg, a friend of "Tumbi" Turner. He opened Manalle. A. H. Sharp was the next, and Parvithi, an estate right in the wilds, was opened in tea. Faced with the financial crisis, North Travancore decided to sell the land owned by the North Travancore Land Planting and Agriculture Society. Land for sale in Munnar. He also advertised in various foreign newspapers that land was available for sale in Munnar. The first to be sold was "manalle", now a division of Lockhart Estate (under Devikulam Peak) Owned by the German nobleman Baron Ottovon Rosenberg 16, this area was the first garden in Munnar. Meanwhile, coffee, sisal and cardamom were also cultivated in different parts of Munnar. But none of that was successful enough. Following this, tea was cultivated. In 1880, under the leadership of AH Sharp, the first tea plantation in Munnar was located on 50 acres in the Parvati Division of the Seven Hills Estate.<sup>64</sup> In 1897, the Kannan Devan Hills produce company purchased the whole estates from the old consolidated companies and acquired a number of new estates in the high range. With the spread of the plantations new factories needed to meet the increased supply of tea leaves. Soon plan for establishing a new factory at Devicolam was commenced. The Survey Department sent a letter to the Dewan of Travancore concerning the matter "the survey department sent the sketch of the Devikulam Factory site, which was in the Todupuzha Taluk, under the property of the Devikulam Estate Company."<sup>65</sup>

## Land Patterns

The average price of an acre of land was Rs. 3 in 1870, Rs. 10 in 1897 and Rs. 22 in 1904. In 1925, the TTE rate was fixed at Rs. 25 per acre. The company bought the land. The government levied land tax and export duty on coffee and tea. The teak, sandalwood and mahogany trees in the forest land were wholly owned by the government. In the early days, estate owners had the power to cut down trees. In 1923, the government banned the cutting and exporting of timber.<sup>66</sup>

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<sup>62</sup> Violet Martin, op. cit., pp. 7-8.

<sup>63</sup> Ibid., p. 8.

<sup>64</sup> Manoj Mathirappally, op. cit., pp. 101-102.

<sup>65</sup> Jijo Jayaraj, *Tea in Munnar: Tracing the History of Ecological Imperialism*, op. cit., p.55.

<sup>66</sup> Mathew Mannarakam, op. cit., p. 351.

## The Middle Space of the Kanganies

As mentioned earlier, to make sufficient labours available to the plantation, the plantation masters resorted to a systematic recruitment of workers with the help of the intermediaries, popularly known as the 'Kanganikal' or Maistrimar. They had done dual functions as, recruiting of the labour and supervising their work. The Kanganikal recruited from the same district and villages as the labourers who were to be recruited. They spoke the same language i.e. Tamil and shared a common cultural system. They came from the same social background of the labourers. It was the assumption of the planters that a common bond aided the Kanganikal in controlling the workers both in the villages as well as in their work place. The rich landlords with their influence also recruited persons from their villages and sent to the estates.<sup>67</sup>

Initially there were two types of recruiting systems, both functioning through the Kanganikal prevailed, i.e. the recruitment of the 'indentured labour' and 'free recruitment'. Under the indentured system a labour was bound by a penal contract to serve on a particular plantation for a specified period. By the late 1900s, this was gradually replaced by the free recruitment system. Under this system the workers were not bonded by any written agreement. Now the coolies those who came to work under the non-indentured system also remained in bondage, even when they came to be settled on the plantations as resident labours.

The history of the Kanganies goes back to the history of coffee plantations in Ceylon. They occupied the middle space between the planters and the workers. They had to work on the interest of the planter, the master on one hand and the coolies on the other. From 1850 onwards the Kanganies were professional group of recruiters, and collected the labours from the villages in South India. The Kanganies always belonged to a higher caste and class than their workers. Because of this the Kanganies position as Tamil translators are particular. The Kanganies enjoyed higher position from that of his fellow workers. The Kanganies lived in separate room allotted to them by the planters at the end of the each labour line. It was here the workers came for his advice, loans, and for justice. The Kangany usually enhanced their position by appointing Sub-Kanganies from his extended family. Sometimes these Sub-Kanganies bribed against the Head Kanganies.<sup>68</sup>

A Tundu system was in practice. According to this system the labours moving to a new estate had to show a piece of paper demonstrating that they were not in debt to their former estate." The Kanganies demanded extra allowances at the times of labour shortages. If the planter did not agreed the Kanganies would find an estate. Willing pay the attractive allowances. However the workers got no benefits out of this extra earning of the Kanganies. Sometimes the Kanganies fought

<sup>67</sup> Jijo Jayaraj, *Tea in Munnar: Tracing the History of Ecological Imperialism*, op. cit., pp. 69-70.

<sup>68</sup> Ibid.

each other over the issue of the desertions. The planters were always conscious about their control over the Kanganies. Though these people were middle men, they held powerful positions among the workers. So the middle men always remained a threat to the planters. These people represented the old harsh village authority. The planters always cautious, that they may challenge the White authority.<sup>69</sup>

The history of tea spreads across multiple cultures over the span of thousands of years. Plantation systems originated as products of colonialism in the sixteenth century. The spread of capitalism fundamentally altered the socio-ecological set-up of colonies as imperialist countries began to extend their control over the inhabitants and the natural resources of these regions and exploited them for their own economic advancement. Plantations provided raw materials—natural resources, land, and colonial markets that fueled industrialization in European nations while colonies themselves became impoverished. A good example of this can be found in the tea plantations under colonial rule. A new habit of tea drinking was developing among the natives, The Muthuvans, the Slowly and steadily, the original landscape of Devikulam got converted into one which was to cater to the needs of British and soon the use of its land was integrated with the global capitalist network, dominated by British capital and industries.

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<sup>69</sup> Ibid., p .71.

## CHAPTER III

### EUROPEANISATION AND LANDSCAPING: CREATION OF THE 'OTHER'

“The British were building a mini-Europe in High Range as if they had no intention to go back. Horse race, flower shows, golf courses and Sunday parties, whatever they experienced in their homeland they tried to recreate here,”

—Deobrah Sutton<sup>1</sup>

Introduction of monocultural plantation, as a part of colonization led to landscape changes. several facilities were adopted in order to increase efficiency of work and for make it easy consequence of colonialism drove economic development in study area ,however the colonization have both merit and demerit. Looking back to the post colonisation and pre colonisation period ,we can clearly understood that land scape before the advent of colonizers and after it are too different Landscape changes are mainly due to the emergence of tea as a monoculture plantation. Tea created new needs like transport facilitie, Communication facilities, Monorail way, Rope ways etc.

The British Ecological Imperialism paved the way for rapid bi dimensional changes in the agricultural, social and cultural fields .Profit motivated agriculture resulted in a shift from ordinary crops to commercial crops. More over the imperial agenda to secure the availability of raw materials to the growing British industry was satisfied from the commercial farming in the British colonies. Tea, Coffee, Pepper, Cardamom, Rubber etc. which are the indispensable part of the European life motivated the British to find out suitable place for the large scale cultivation of the same. In the historical analysis of the Plantation era of the High Ranges, the pre independent era deserve special mention because most of the historical diversions like migration, cultural blending, formulation of a mixed socio-economic system etc. were flourished during this time.

The plantation sector in the High Ranges witnessed pivotal changes in the land utilization pattern in the pre- independent era especially during the British days. Growth and development of communication system, transportation system, agricultural system, land tenure system and finally the economic system of the region witnessed sea changes. Colonization, imperialism, exploitation etc. takes its' share as the side effect of every foreign rule that any country experienced.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/blogs/munros-munnar>, accessed on 22/3/2022.

<sup>2</sup> Santhosh George, 'British Planters and the Question of Ecological Imperialism- A Historical in the High Ranges of Kerala', *Pesquisa Journal*, Vol. II, Issue. 1, Murickassery, 2016, p. 55.

## **Transportation in the Hill Station**

When the British first arrived in Munnar, the mode of transport was dollies. Soon there were horses and then motorcycles and cars.<sup>3</sup> The Kanan Devan Hills Produce Company came into existence with a capital value of 1.50 million pounds sterling. They owned 26 estates of which few were tea, some were coffee, and many were cinchona. They devoted themselves to extending the plantations at the rate of over 600 acres per year. At the time there were, "few factories with little or no machinery, only two hand power rolling tables. The firing is all done in chulas and the sifting by hand." The mature tea yielded 500 lbs. made tea per acre. The rapid increase of produce from the district necessitated modern and quicker means of transportation and the second General Manager, W. Milne, endeavoured to improve matters by importing a vast team of bullocks. Five hundred of these animals were stalled on the Kundaly Flats (now the Golf course) and a veterinary surgeon and two assistants were brought from England to ensure that the team was maintained in good working condition.<sup>4</sup> The company at the beginning stage targeted a growth of six hundred acres per annum. The increased output in the hill slopes necessitated modern and quicker means of transportation. In those days, the only access to the Kannan Devan Hills was only from the then Madras Presidency. The best way for an outsider to climb the hill was to reach the Ammanayakanore on the South Indian Railway, then by bullock cart to Bodinaykannur, from there a cart road leading to the low country at Bodi and then a road even difficult for the pack of ponies to Devicolam.<sup>5</sup>

## **Road and Connectivity**

The first explorers to the hill station, Lt. B. S. Ward and Lt. Peter Eyre Connor in their Trigonometrical Survey Report, mentioned about the transportation facilities as follows;

"The roads will be found minutely in their proper place, but it may perhaps be well generally to enumerate the principal entrances into the country. The mountainous frontier on the east is passed by 16 communications of very various characters. That of Bodinaikenoore is the most northern; it is ascended with considerable labour from the valley below, the activity on which it rises measuring about two miles; it continues rugged and confined till passing the Moodrapully 26 miles; thence it is still difficult, running through a rugged country to Neereemangulam 23 miles; beyond this place is Kodhamunglam 12 miles on reaching which it experiences less embarrassment. This road traverses a complete wild, there not being a

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<sup>3</sup> <https://timesofindia.indiatimes>, accessed on 22/3/2022.

<sup>4</sup> Amita Baig and William Henderson, *A Centenary of Planting in The Kannan Devan Hills Concession 1878-1978*, Tata-Finlay Ltd, Calcutta, 1972, p. 29.

<sup>5</sup> Jijo Jayaraj, *Environmental Reordering of Native Land: Colonialism and the Making of Munnar*, Unpublished PhD Dissertation submitted to M. G University, Kottayam, 2021, p. 111.

habitation for nine tenths of the whole distances amounting to sixty one measured miles; in accomplishing it with cattle, twelve days are consumed.”<sup>6</sup>

Thus the area remained untouched during the arrival of the earliest explorers. Transportation was not available and only possible ways were by walk or cart. One cannot use the cart everywhere because of the uneven gradients of the mountains. The only successful possible way was to use the elephant paths which has been quiet steady and has been used by the Muthuvans in the region. Later Col. Douglas Hamilton and later John Daniel Munro also visited the hill station and they also made some important remarks on the roads and communication facilities in Kannan Devan Hills. Munro mentioned several paths from the South Le, the Cardamom Hills. He finds the path from Devikulam as the best one. It is interesting to note that he referred the road as the path. In those early days, roads were absent and only paths existed. The Devikulam road had been capable of having cart transportation. In his own words,

The other paths in the south are elephant tracks and lead to Gudaramalla and Moonaur. Another and second route passable for loaded cattle is from Bodinayekenur to Wattawuda by the village of Kotudy. A third also fit for loaded cattle is up to Aunymuddy from Odumellapett via Unjenaad. A fourth is from Tirkaroor on the west to Munaurand thence to Unjenaad. This was formerly used by many bullocks from Odumellapetta but has been abandoned for many miles. It is marked in the maps. There is fifth from Odumellapetta to Payratmalla via Michael’s valley. The first one could easily be improved.<sup>7</sup>

William Horsley is one of the pioneers who travelled across Travancore. He published his memoir in 1839. In his memoir, he commented about the roads and communications that existed in the mountains. He comments that, the mountainous frontier on the east is passed by sixteen communications of various characters. That is of the Bodinaikenoor is the most Northern, it is ascended on which it rises measuring about two miles, it continuous rugged and confined till passing the Moodrappilly, twenty six miles, thence it is still difficult, running through the Neareamangulum, twenty three miles and beyond this place is Kothamungalam, twelve miles in which reaching is embarrassment. This road traverses a complete wild, there not being a habitation for nine tenths of the whole distance amounting to sixty one measured miles; in accomplishing it with cattle twelve days are consumed.<sup>8</sup>

The company gradually opened a vast new network of roads. Earlier there were only bridle paths, and these paths were gradually expanded in to cart roads with the expansion of the plantations. The initial

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<sup>6</sup> Ward and Conner, *Memoir of the Survey of the Travancore and Cochin States*, Vol.I, Kerala Gazetteers Department Trivandrum, 1994, p. 50.

<sup>7</sup> J. D. Munro, *The High Range of Travancore 1880*, accessed from <http://www.archive.org/details/highrangesofravöOmurich>, on 25/3/2022.

<sup>8</sup> Jijo Jayaraj, *Environmental Reordering of Native Land: Colonialism and the Making of Munnar*, op. cit., p. 112.

efforts were made in 1881 by Col. Valentine, a Surveyor, traced the Government road from Munnar flat over the Nymakad gap on to Talliar valley and Marayoor to Chinnar, and thence through the village of Manpatty. He also made a trace from Munnar in the other direction down through Pallivasal to the plains. The new road trace was for long years a model for all those interested in making roads for transport. During this time A. W Turner of Devicolam, Baron Von Rosenburg of Manalle, E. Fowler of Aneimudi, A. H Sharp and A. F. F Martin, all of them were Managers of the estates held by North Travancore Planting Company met to discuss the question of roads. The consultation resulted in the decision that the possibility of making a road on Valentine's trace should be looked in to. The duty fell on one of the senior planter Mr. A. F. F Martin to go down and find the trace and report as to whether a path could be opened up there, for the ponies.<sup>9</sup>

In July 1892, the survey was conducted by Mr. & Mrs. Martin and a couple of coolies. They encountered stiff resistance from the villagers. The villagers heard that a cart road was to be cut through their paddy fields and they refused to help the gentle man who could not think of spoiling their land. Even after offering Re.I per measure for rice, they were not ready. The poor coolies and Mr. & Mrs. Martin had to go on to the next camp without food. But the couple succeeded in tracing the land marks. Then Finlay & Muir Company's Chief Engineer, Mr. Thorpe opened this trace as a cart road in 1904. The contracts for cutting the Munnar - Top Station road called 'Kundally Valley Cart Road' were given to two Engineers called, Gorden brothers in 1902. The road extended to twenty two miles, consisting two bridges on the way, such as Victoria and Palar.<sup>10</sup>

### **Mototraffick in Devikulam**

In the early part of the century, transportation was made through the bullock carts. The Managers and their assistant reached the estate on horseback. This was considered as the essential qualification for the appointment of a new Manager in the company. In 1910 the planters were paid an allowance of Rs. 30 to maintain a horse. The General Managers frequently requested the planters for the increasing their horse allowance. The last horse allowance paid was in 1971, and it was Rs. 300 per month for the Manager. If he is married, then he was eligible for an increase of Rs. 125 per month as dearness allowance.<sup>11</sup> From 1911 onwards, the motor cycles gradually replaced the horses as the mode of transport in the High Ranges. The second motor cycle was brought to the hills by H. L. Pinches in 1911. The first being brought in 1908 namely Beaston Humber.<sup>12</sup> It was of one and a half horse power. It was a complete failure. By 1923 the Company owned one lorry and three cars. 3 Cars and 1 lorry were started in 1923, by the year

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<sup>9</sup> Ibid., p. 113.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid.

<sup>11</sup> Amita Baig and William Handerson, op. cit., p. 48.

<sup>12</sup> Sulochana Nalapattu, *Story of Munnar*, Mathrubhumi Books, Kozhikkode, 2009, p. 75.

1926 Department of Veterinary Services and bus service to Top Station in 1928. The Munnar and Neryamangalam Roads were inaugurated in 1931. Udumalpet- Munnar Bus Service the bus service on the Munnar Top Station Road, also known as the Kundalawali-Cart Road, was started in 1928. The gorge was built by the Europeans known as the Gordon Brothers.<sup>13</sup> Stations to bring tea from the estates of Munnar and West sides of the district, a number of Ford Lorries were purchased from Oakes and Co., Madras, and put on the new road. These Lorries met the train at Madupatty, Palaar, Puttugoodi and Ellapatty and went back with rice and food stuffs. These lorries continued to be used until the new Kundale Valley Ropeway was opened." A Bus service was started to Top Station and in 1928 it was extended from Udumalpet to Munnar. In the same year Vellusami Nadar started his bus service known as C.V. N.T.<sup>14</sup> Buses that used to reach Kumily during the migration period later extended to Nedukandam and Devikulam. The first bus to reach Vandanmedu in the early 1930s was called 'Deshabandhu'. Swaraj buses play daily service from Pala to Vandanmedu. During this period, the facilities in Devikulam taluk also increased. In 1957, traffic was started on Kunchithanni Rajakkad Road. Bus service from Muvattupuzha to Rajakattu via Devikulam Poopara started in 1974.<sup>15</sup>

The colonial state of Travancore helped the planters in their newly initiated venture. This was evident from one letter; "with reference to your letter of the 18 instant, I have to inform you that the action of Government in sanctioning the road was not in consideration of my ones representation but in the interest of the planting community. The roads, hospitals, bridges etc., were initiated based on the planter's interests, K. Raviraman, in his 'Global Capital and Peripheral Labour', says that the entire system of communications in the plantation regions was designed to transport the rich commercial crops of the state including the tea, coffee, cinchona, pepper, ginger, cardamom, rubber etc., to the nearest ports by the cheapest and safest routes of exportation." The roads also helped to speed up the process of plantation labour migration. The establishment of the Public Works Department (P. W. D.) in Madras in 1848 and in Travancore in 1860 facilitated the construction of the roads on a massive scale. Many roads were constructed during the subsequent years on behalf of the request from the planters and thus the roads later become known as the "plantation roads".<sup>16</sup> The list of roads and the bridle paths maintained by the P. W. D. in the High Range is given as below (Table 1.1);

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<sup>13</sup> Mathew Mannarakam, *Malanadinte Ithihasam* (m), Turn Books, Kottayam, July 30, 2019, p. 386.

<sup>14</sup> Jijo Jayaraj, *Environmental Reordering of Native Land: Colonialism and the Making of Munnar*, op. cit., p. 115.

<sup>15</sup> Mathew Mannarakam, op. cit., p. 386.

<sup>16</sup> Jijo Jayaraj, *Environmental Reordering of Native Land: Colonialism and the Making of Munnar*, op. cit., p. 115.



**Table 3.1****The Roads/ Bridle Paths Maintained by Public Works Department - 1905**

Sl.No	Road	Division	District	Annual cost in Bh.Rs
i(1)	Cardamom Hill road to Peermade	Kottayam	Peermade	1250
(2)	Peruvanthanam road	do	do	30
(3)	Pambanar 51 <sup>st</sup> mile main ghat road to do Manimalai ridge Cardamom Hills Road (Glenmary)	do	do	1200
(4)	Road from Residency to Main road at Cutticanam.	do	do	50
(5)	Trace from 43 <sup>rd</sup> mile Peermade road to Aruday	do	do	90
ii(6)	Road from Pallivasal to Munnar	Muvattuouzh	High Range	240
(7)	Road from Kothamangalam via Neriamangalam to Pallivasal	do	do	
(8)	Munnar to Bodimettoo road 8 <sup>th</sup> mile 13 <sup>th</sup> mile	do	do	
iii	Cardamom Hills	Nil	Nil	

Source: Letter No. 5710, dated 28/12/1903, Information asked from the Dewan D. O particulars regarding the Western outlet road, cart road from Munnar to Chinnar etc., Trivandrum, File No. 12861, Bundle No. 279, State Archives, Trivandrum.<sup>17</sup>

**Trace by Kannan Devan Hills Produce Company**

After Col. Valentine's effort, the K. D. H. P. Company initiated an agreement with the Travancore state for cutting the road trace from Munnar to Chinnar known as the 'Northern outlet'. The total distance was 40 miles (64 k m). The newly built Northern outlet road became the part of the Kanniamali to Munnar road.<sup>18</sup> The road constructed in the beginning was 12 feet wide and 1 foot for drainage. Maximum attention was given to the gradient of the road and was flat. In some places they were steeper for short lengths to avoid heavy rock cutting. The road has been metalled according to the specification and

<sup>17</sup> Ibid., p. 116.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid., p. 121.

culverts were made in regular intervals for proper drainage. The bridges from Vagavurrai to the Southern bank of Chinnar had been constructed with light iron and light steel girders and timber floors. The bridges in the northern outlet road were constructed in the style of the Beal Kotagudi bridges and were designed by K. D. H. P.

Sufficient strength was ensured for making the ordinary cart traffic. So the arches were made by using Teak and Thumbagam (*Mimusops elengi*) beams. The best timber available from the nearest jungle was used for the timber requirements of every construction. At the same time the Company had given full liberty to fell and carry away any trees and timber suitable for the bridge work from the forest. A permit of 3000 feet timber for single bridge was given. All the requirements of the land were provided by the Travancore state. At the same time, the K. D. H. P. did not demand any compensation for the crop loss during the construction of the road. The construction was undertaken by the company and the work carried on by the completion of each 8 miles.

The total cost taken for the construction was 4 lakhs. The company paid Rs. 50,000/- as the security to the Government for the fulfilment and discharge of the work by the company. The expenditure comprised of the cost for plant, tools, implements, ladders, cordage, tackle and scaffolding required for the proper execution of the work and the salaries and travelling expenses of the Managers, Engineers, Overseers, Clerks and Workmen employed on the work. Inspection sheds were also built by the company for the inspection purposes at 10 mile, Luckham, and at Chinnar. The cost for the construction was taken from the state treasury.<sup>19</sup>

### **Munnar Devicolam Road**

Initially there was no road from Munnar to Devicolam. Only bridle paths existed by connecting the plantation estates and small towns. The initial attempt for the construction of a road from Munnar to Devicolam started in 1887 by the North Travancore Land Planting Agricultural Society the first 10 miles had been constructed in the first instance and it incurred a cost of 5000 British Rupees. On the other the grant was sanctioned on certain conditions. Firstly the Government took the condition that half the amount be disbursed only after the completion of the work after receiving a report from an authorised officer appointed by the Government. Secondly the duty of the maintenance of the road vested with the company. The road was not very much used for the cart traffic in those times. The provisions for Devikulam came through horse back and the road was used by the European planters.

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<sup>19</sup> Ibid., p. 122.

## **Bridle Path through Anjanad**

A trace of the road was cut from the Northern outlet road. A six feet bridle path was opened initially. The matter was considered as exigent in view of the plantation expansion. One of the letters from the chief Engineer points this, "During late Dewan Krishnaswami Raw's tour to the High Range in February 1902, he observed that the riots and officers of the Cardamom Department were much in need of a bridle path in Anjanad connecting the new villages to suit their convenience."<sup>20</sup>

The Anjanad route was one of the earliest bridle paths in the Northern outlet road. The bridle path touched Nachivayal, Karaioor, Keelandoor, Khandal, and Putoor. Maramala, Kottakkombur, Koviloor and Vattavadai. The bridle path ended at Pambadumsholai of a distance of 40 miles.<sup>21</sup> The total cost for the construction of the path was Rs. 14,170/ the cultivators and the cultivations of the region were alienated. The difficulty of the villagers before the coming of the particular road is evident from another letter.

"in his last visit to Anjanadit was represented to him by the villagers of Kanthalloor, Keelanthoor, Marayur and Perumalath that they are greatly handicapped in their cultivation and transport for they want of a road, there is not even a foot path connecting the villages with the main northern outlet road and the only means of communication they have now in across the paddy flats and rocky slopes over which no pack cattle could tract and that they are unable to transport the produce of their fields and are not in touch with the estates which will readily purchase grain if their villages are more accessible"<sup>22</sup>

Initially the British Resident was not in favour of the work because he saw it as an unnecessary affair. It is important to note that the villages came in the said areas of Anjanad, produced paddy and other agricultural produces. Huge sum of money was spending on other developmental initiatives for the betterment of the plantation roads and factories which catered the need of the European and there by the empire. A letter from the Resident to the Dewan of Travancore wrote his note of objection for the proposed plan. It is interesting to see that even the native state had sanctioned the amount understanding the difficult situation.

"I learn from the Chief Engineer that an estimate for 14,170 was sanctioned on May 13 last for opening a bridle path in Anjanad. The officers in the hill told me nothing about this proposed work and I have no knowledge of any path requiring such a very large expenditure." (Letter No. 1240-1,dated 3/07/1907,regarding

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<sup>20</sup> Ibid., p. 123.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid., p. 124.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid.

opening of a bridle path in Anjanad, File No. 397, Bundle No. 42, State Archives, Trivandrum).<sup>23</sup>

### **Surianalli Estate to Devicolam Road**

The request for a road from Surianalli to Devicolam road was initially made by one of the earliest planters H. M. Knight. The plan was to cut a bridle path connecting the Munnar - Bodimettu road. The total cost incurred for the construction of the road was Rs. 620. The fund for the road was taken from the budgetary allocation of 1082 M. E. (1906-07). The total extent of the road was 2 and quarter miles." Later the road was used as a means for shortening the distance between the Munnar - Bodimettu road. The road shortened two miles in the existing Munnar - Bodimettu road. Mr. Sealy the then Cardamom Magistrate gave the permission to cut the said road.<sup>24</sup>

### **Kumili - Devicolam Bridle Path**

The initial attempt was to trace a 20 mile bridle path from Devicolam to Kumily. The total distance was 40 miles. The newly opened road was of 40 feet width. The construction was carried on through two phases. The construction of the first 20 miles was finished in 1916. The first 20 miles were constructed in 10 feet wide. 3.94 acres of land had acquired from Kambala, Myladumpara, Vallarakkanpana, Udumbanshola, and Santharuvi Thavalams.<sup>25</sup>

### **Establishment of the Factories**

With the spread of the plantations factories were established. In order to increase the production fully equipped factories were required. All the technological back up for the new factories were imported from England. The heavy equipment for the use of factories were imported at the Trichinopoly port later brought to Bodinaikanore from there with the help of cart, coolies and Muthuvans they were brought to the factories in the hills by head load. In 1894 there was a factory at Ancimudy. In 1894 for taking over the Kannan Devan Hills Concession and John Finlay Muir along with his son James, P. R. Buchanan and W. Milne visited the High Range. In their diary they mentioned about a factory working at Sevenmallai.

The factory had worked with two hand power rolling tables. The firing was done by the chulas and sifting was done by hand. The factory run at Anaimadi had a machine driven roller and one hand roller and one drier. In 1900 proposal and plan for factory at Devikulam was made. A total of 28.1 acres of the Devikulam Estate Company was utilized for the construction of the Devikulam factory. In 1915 there were 16 tea factories in Kannan Devan Hills. The largest factory had a capacity of making a million

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<sup>23</sup> Ibid.

<sup>24</sup> Fr. J. Kurias, *High Ranginte Kudiyetta Charithram* (m), A.K.C.C. Diocese of Idukki, 2012, p. 44.

<sup>25</sup> Manoj Mathirappally, *Idukki: Desam Charithram Samskaram* (m), Geo Books, 2017, p. 254.

pound tea annually by power used from electricity. It was Dr. Harler the Scientific Officer of the Company who made valuable contributions to the development of the modern factory in High Range.

### **Opening of the Baazars**

The Bazaar provided the necessary food supplies to the estate labours. It was necessary for the planter to retain sufficient number of labours in the estate because the whole tea industry was labour intensive at that time. Often the labours run in to their home villages in the different parts of Madras Presidency at the time of food scarcity. Even though there were laws that regulated these kinds of contract violations, the labour usually violated it. Thus the planters considered it as most urgent need. One Letter by the Resident noting the necessity of opening Bazaar is added.<sup>26</sup>

"it has been brought to my notice by the Civil Engineer that great inconvenience is being felt by the department from the want of a Bazar on the Peermade Ghat to supply the necessary provisions to the coolies employed on the works executed in that locality. Mr. Barton further informs me that this inconvenience will be still more seriously felt when the large body of coolies which he is collecting from the low lands at a distance, more especially from the Madura side, is sent up to work at that place."<sup>27</sup>

Another Sunday market was opened at Pambanar and in Bonami estates. This was intended to ensure supply of rice and other food materials for the workers at a cheaper rate. It was start Peermade experiment and later in most of the estates in the planting districts adopted the same model. This was started under the Managership of R. S. Imray of Travancore Tea Estate Company. The Cardamom Superintendent welcomed the new venture. This is very clear from his letter;

Mr. R. S. Imray the Manager of the Travancore Tea Estate Company has written informing me that a market will be opened on Bonami estate on all Sundays commencing from the 24th instant. I believe Government sanction is required for the opening of markets but cannot find out any Regulation or Proclamation on the Subject. As I am of opinion that opening of market will benefit the District, tending to reduce the prices of rice and provisions and will be very popular with the labour, the experiment meets with my hearty. Approval. I have replied to Mr. Imray that the experiment has my sympathy and approval and that I have referred the matter to you with a recommendation for its sanction.

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<sup>26</sup> Ward and Conner, *Memoir of the Survey of the Travancore and Cochin States*, Volume I, Government of Kerala, Trivandrum, 1994, p. 8.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid.

I am also informing the police, ordering the Inspector to send the Station House Officer and the Station House Officer and a couple of Constables to be present.<sup>28</sup>

The Travancore Government also took measures to open weekly markets with the request of the planting community. One such weekly market was opened at Mannarapatty, near Marayur in Munnar. The market was opened on all Sundays and the coolies, travellers and the native people were able to purchase and sell all minor produces from the market. The market was located between Munnar and Udumalpet at a distance of 29 and 24 miles respectively. The Dewan issued notice in this regard. it is hereby notified for the information of the public that from and after the 3rd Audi 1085, a weekly market will be held every Friday on Government land, survey No. 107/2.A. measuring 1.46 acres at Mannarapatty in Marayur Pakuthy, situated below the Munnar - Chinnar road on or about the 26th mile. Later the Munnar Supply Association came to existence in 1900, to meet the food needs of the labours. It supplied necessary provisions to labours at low rate. To make further infrastructural facilities apart from the Labour lines and Bazaars, the planters resorted to start rest houses throughout Kannan Devan Hills.<sup>29</sup>

### Travellers Bungalow

In the old days there were no adequate facilities for the transportation and all. The planters



**Figure 3.1. Travellers Bungalow, Devikulam, Photograph taken by the Researcher**

resorted to horse for travelling to the longer distances. Geographically the area was Ghat region which contained slopes and ridges. The travellers resorted to walk to longer distances. Thus rest houses or the traveller's bungalow or the Chutram was built for the convenience of the travellers both foreign and local populations. 136 This was considered as most urgent by the planters. They

requested the Government for this. One such instance is discussed in one of the

letter send to the Government. "Many labourers died because of the diseases and were not given any financial assistance for treatment. The Kanjirappalli and Mundakkayyam police are well aware of the

<sup>28</sup> Ibid., p. 9.

<sup>29</sup> Jijo Jayaraj, *Environmental Reordering of Native Land: Colonialism and the Making of Munnar*, op. cit., pp. 95-96.

situation; they did not take any measures to dispose the dead bodies of the coolies when they were died on the road. The locals found it difficult to walk along the road."<sup>30</sup>

The Travancore State built several travellers bungalows all over the State. The bungalows were maintained by the Public Works Department. The Chief Engineer of P. W. D. was in charge of the construction and maintenance of the building. Generally the bungalows were of two classes according to the nature of the facilities provided. A first class traveller's bungalow had the service of a butler who catered the needs of the inmates. The whole service was made on payment. The tariff for each service including the rate of an ordinary meal was posted up in the bungalow. These tariffs were subjected to revision from time to time. The second class traveller's bungalow had only a watcher who acted as the in charge of the bungalow.<sup>31</sup> He was not expected to cook but rendered service to the needy. List of fee for two classes of the bungalows are given below (Table1:2);

**Table: 3.2**

**Fees for Occupation of the Travellers Bungalow with Non Electric Installation**

No.	Accommodation	First Class T.B	Second Class TB
a.	For each adult for a period of six hours or portion thereof in any one day	As.8	As.4
b.	For each adult for one day or any longer period than six hours in any one day	Re.1	As.8

Source: Letter No. 67910, dated 9/7/1912, from the Division Cuthery regarding acquisition of land for the construction of a Satram at Munnar, File No. 701, Bundle No. 168, State Archives Trivandrum Lener No. nil, dated 11/11/1899, regarding the establishment of coffee and tea estates, File No.701,Bundle No.168,State Archives,Trivandrum.

Fees for Occupation of the Travellers Bungalow with Non Electric Installation These were maintained by the Government in the interest of the travelling public New Traveller's bungalows were opened and the old was strictly maintained. There is one instance at Munnar near the Supply Association where an old bungalow was extended by the Department of Public Works.es Land was taken over from the Finlay Muir & Co. and paid adequate compensation for three and a half acres of land taken. The Dewan of Travancore issued orders for that; under the section 4 of the Land Acquisition Regulation III of 1067, it is hereby declared that the land to the North of the travellers bungalow at Munnar originally proposed to be acquired but subsequently excised measuring 41 cents and forming part of Survey No. 62/3, Kannan Devan Hills pakuthy, Devicolam Taluk belonging to and in the occupation of Messrs.

<sup>30</sup> Sulochana Nallapattu, op. cit., p. 78.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid.

Finlay Muir & Co., with the buildings thereon is required for extending the premises of the said travellers bungalow.<sup>32</sup> A car shed was present near Devikulam Bungalow to park their car.<sup>33</sup>

## Niruva Shed

'Niruva' is a term used by the local peoples in colonial times. The term 'Niruvai' is a Tamil word means 'Measurement'. This shed was built by the colonizers (Britishers). The purpose of this shed was, it was used to measure collected kolunth (means young green leaf used for making tea powder). Tea, either black or green is manufactured from the more tender shoots of the bush. These usually consist of a bud and 2 leaves or one or more banjis and systematically plucked at regular intervals. Labours recruited by the planters plucked the leaves and bring it to the Niruva shed. Where collected leaves measured and take away this to the factory through tractors. Each labourer brings their collected leaves to this



**Figure 3.2. Niruva Shed, Devikulam, Photograph Taken by the Researcher**

shed, the supervisor (kangani) who measures it through vintage brass. Measurement was carried out in 2 times daily (Morning and Evening). Wages of labour depend on the quantity of kolunth that they collected. Payment is made at the end of the month.<sup>34</sup>

## Arrack Shops and Liquor Supply

With the spread of the plantation a small township developed in Munnar. The establishment of the bazaars and the traveller's bungalows naturally led to the development of the shops. One of the strategies to prompt the coolies to stay in the hills was to provide them with better infrastructural facilities. In order to increase productivity they had to increase the labour productivity by means of increased investments, such as providing better wages, proper drinking water, houses, schools and crèche for their children, facilities for education, hospitals and dispensaries. Further Arrack shops were started along the Kannan Devan Hills.<sup>35</sup>

<sup>32</sup> Ibid., p. 9.

<sup>33</sup> Personal Interview with Mr. Varghese Joseph, aged 80, Kangani, Kannan Devan Hills Produce Company, Munnar, on 24/2/2022.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid.

<sup>35</sup> Sulochana Nallapattu, op. cit., p. 80.



The company leased shops to the traders to ease the problems of the coolies. The company agreed the Opium and Ganja contractors of Devicolam in conductin the sales of opium in Munnar town. The Kannan Devan Company itself acquired the monopoly right for the sale of foreign liquor in Munnar all along the concession land. It had acquired three license from the Travancore State i.e., one whole sale and two retail licenses. Company paid Rs. 1500 annually for renewing the right to vend foreign liquor in Munnar town. Besides this the Company had to pay Rs. 600 per annum for one whole sale and two retail liquor sale. The abkari contractor for the Devikulam taluk had sold the arrack through a shop at Munnar. The Maharani Regent's order in this regard was made in 1925 for a renewal petition from the K. D. H. P. Co. Ltd.<sup>36</sup>

The Rani ordered that; "with reference to your D. O. C. No. 3792 of 25/Devl., dated 29 July, I beg to inform you that Her Highness the Maha Rani Regent has been pleased to sanction the monopoly for the vend of foreign liquor in the town of Munnar for 1101 being granted to the Kannan Devan Hills Produce Company on the existing terms "The site of the arrack shop was set up near to the Police Station and was just close to the Munnar Devikulam cart road. It was run in a pucca building and was included in the Government puramboke which was adjoined to the Excise Inspectors office. The Government had collected ground rent for the building. It was one of the seven arrack shops opened by the Government. Among other arrack shops three of them were in Kannan Devan concession land, three in Cardamom Hills and one in Marayur. It was located in the puramboke near the Police Station in 1090-91 M. E. (1915-16) and was shifted from there after the complaint of the Police Commissioner in 1917. Once there arose a rift between the excise Commissioner and arrack contractor regarding the payment of the rent in which his arrack shop was ated. The Government leased the contractor on the tenant mode.<sup>37</sup>

In Munnar there was a special situation in which the whole land remained to be concession area which was owned by the K. D. H. P. It never allowed a private contractor to sell arrack in their jurisdiction because the Company had acquired the monopoly right for the sale of foreign liquor in High Range. The Government issued land taken from the company as puramboke land. It was leased to private individuals as kuthagapattom

For the easy sale of the liquor, the company allowed private individuals to gage in the sale. There are records seeking permission, leasing right to sale liquor Suppan Chettiyar was one of the famous low country merchant who had dealership in both the rice supplies and liquor .He was very rich as he even owned coffee estate in Kannan Devan Hills Whole right was given to them including the sale and

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<sup>36</sup> Fr. J. Kurias, op. cit., p. 43.

<sup>37</sup> Manoj Mathirappally. op. cit., p. 69.

transportation of the same throughout the hill districts across the Travancore territory. He supplied liquor to Palaar.<sup>38</sup>

### **P. W. D. Camp Shed**

The Government staff faced great inconvenience due to the unavailability of proper accommodation facilities. It was difficult to stay in the extreme climate at Munnar. The situation became more complicated during the monsoon season. Munnar become frost and the climate varied 0 - 7 degree from March itself. Due to these special conditions the Government officials requested to build P.W.D staff quarters and camp sheds at Munnar. Thus 3.8 acres of afforested land was allotted from the Malayattur Reserve and a sum of Rs. 5500 issued for the construction purposes from the Budget allotment of 1088 M. E. (1903-04).

The P. W. D. camp sheds were similar to the rest houses. The camp sheds are primarily intended for the use of Government officers travelling on duty. Camp sheds were established all over the Travancore State by the P. W. D. Department. There were electrified and non- electrified camp sheds and varied its fees according to its nature .However it was cheaper than the bungalow. The camp sheds differed from the ordinary rest house in respect to the preferential claim for the occupation by the Government servants. The accommodation was ensured through reservation system. When an accommodation was reserved these occupants had to pay the reservation fees, whether or not they actually occupied building. The other travellers were also accommodated and had the right to reserve on application to concerned P.W.D Division Officer. But the rate was different. A traveller other than officer had to pay the same rate of the Traveller Bungalow.<sup>39</sup>

### **Sreemoolam Club Library**

The earliest libraries in Idukki are dedicated to Maharaja Sreemoolam Thirunal. Recipient of President's Award for Teacher C. Chacko Kapil Kodikulam (died 21 January 1999) was the organizer and secretary of most of the libraries in the taluk. Joseph Thoppil Kaliyar (born 30 April 2001), Organizing President of the Adimali National Library; December 15), K.C. Chacko, T.V. John, C.V. Kurian, A.V. Vikraman Nair, A. Sankarappilla, S. Narayanan Nair, T.K Thomas, J. Joseph Thoppil KG. Bhaskaran, A.K. Sukumaran, Devasya Poomattam, Narayanan Ilayath, K.V Mathew Pottamkulam, K. Baburaj, P.J. The services of Varkey are particularly memorable. Mathachan Puraikkal, N.M., who has been interested in the library industry since 1960. Kurian, Kanchiyar Rajan K.R Ramachandran, Adv. M. Chandran's

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<sup>38</sup> Ibid., p. 106.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid., p. 107.

services led to the emergence and growth of new libraries. The activities of the library were carried out in collaboration with migrant farmers, plantation workers and officials.<sup>40</sup>

Representatives from 4 taluks of the district attended a meeting convened by the General Secretary of the Vazhathoppil Library Association in 1972, when the libraries helped to create a new awakening in the community and to create social awareness among the people. T.K. Thomas Thaliyachira is the president and R. The committee was formed with Gopalakrishnan Nair as secretary. With the election of Mathachan Puraikkal as Secretary in 1973, significant progress was made in the number and operation of libraries. Matha Chan Puraikkal was able to set up activities by walking to places where transportation was limited. During this time many libraries were able to build their own buildings in various places. The District Advisory Council came into existence in 1977 when the

government took over the management of the Library Association and brought it under the control of the Board. T. The first advisory council was formed with Thomas Thaliyachira as president and Mathachan Puraikkal as secretary.<sup>41</sup>

Later, Mathachan Puraikkal became the president and V.P. There were advisory committees with Sulaiman Rauthar as secretary and P.T Thomas as president and Kanchiyar Rajan as secretary in the next phase. The active library in Thodupuzha started functioning after



**Figure 3.3. sreemoolam Library, Devikulam, Photograph Taken by the Researcher**

independence. National Renaissance and the activities of the Library Organizer gave impetus to the activities in Thodupuzha Taluk The library was started in 1914 as a Silver Jubilee Memorial of Maharaja Sreemoolam Thirunal and is now in Thodupuzha, acts as the Municipal Library. Recognition of the Public Library which started functioning in Kanjar before independence.<sup>42</sup>

In 1948 the library has its own space and building. As early as 1948, a loom was established in Kolhapur in connection with Gandhian activities. The Janaranjini Library, which opened in the Colony in 1949, was named the 2000 D. C of the Year for Best Rural Library. Has received the award. The Jaihind Library, which started functioning in Muthalakkodam in the 1950s, has been functioning moderately despite its slowdown in the meantime, but won the Parameswaran Award for Peace in 2008 by the Library Council.

<sup>40</sup> John Konattu, *Idukki, Ezuthum Vayanayum* (m), Konattu Publications, 2019, pp. 17-19.

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 19.

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*

S.M.S is a library started in 1917 by the Maharaja's dependents and their family members of government employees in the plantation area of Peermede to commemorate the completion of Maharaja Sree Moolam Thirunal.<sup>43</sup> It operates on a 32-cent space allotted on a library and leasehold basis. Deshasevini Public Library was started in 1954 and is now the Public Library at Kattappana and the Taluk Reference Library. In Devikulam taluk, another plantation area, there are 35 active granaries for acquiring knowledge and entertainment. At Devikulam, the headquarters of the taluk, in the year 1090, Maharaja Sreemoolam Thirunal allotted 50 cents of land and money for the construction of a library building to commemorate his 56th birthday. The oil paintings of Raja Ravi Varma at that time are still kept here.<sup>44</sup>

## **Police Station**

A corps of six or eight hundred men composed principally of the natives of the other Coast; forms the Police a completely civil establishment, which under the immediate control of the Dewan executes all services connected with the internal tranquillity of the country. A Naik and ten Peons are stationed at the Cutcherry of each District; their duty is limited to the apprehension of delinquents, who when arrested are with the witnesses dispatched for trial to the next Zillah Court; they also carry into execution the sentence or order of those tribunals as regards the seizure of person or property, &c., and on the requisition of the Tassildar or other servants of the Revenue apprehend such individuals as are indebted to it. The habits of the people in most cases render the duties of Police rather protective than coercive; apprehension is eluded by flight or concealment, scarcely ever opposed by resistance, the system is not defective in its provision for securing internal tranquillity; disturbances rarely happen. When occurring they are soon suppressed. The pay of the Peons perhaps may be considered too small; this is a cause and perhaps believed an excuse for their committing petty aggressions on the ryots, in which the timid and passive disposition of the lower classes greatly encourage them.<sup>45</sup>

Devikulam Police station is one of the oldest police stations in the state and the date of opening or any other related details are not available. This police station is now functioning in a new government building from 23.03.2006 onwards vide GO (RT) no 2899/04/Home dated 30.12.2004. Kottakamboor, Vattavada in full and part of KDH village comes under the jurisdiction of Devikulam Police Station.

Among the Village Vattavada is 52 K.M far From The station and Kottakamboor is 62 K.M Far from the station. Mostly Tamil Cultured peoples are staying here. Half of the Jurisdiction area covered by Tea Plantation and the other portion horticulture crops.Sree Dharmasatha Temple Devikulam.This is an

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<sup>43</sup> Personal Interview it Mr. Shanmukaham Vel, Sreemoolam Library Assistant ,Devikulam.

<sup>44</sup> John Konattu,op.cit.,p.19.

<sup>45</sup> Ward and Conner, *Memoir of the survey of the Travancore and Cochin States*, Vol. I, op. cit., p. 110.

oldest Temple in this Station limit. Which was constructed by the Punjar Maharaja. Peculiarity of this temple is that its direction is to west.<sup>46</sup>

## **Munsiff Court**

Even before the independence, Munsiff Court was established at Devikulam on 8.4.1914 as per order of the erstwhile Travancore government. The court was established at Devikulam in 1888. The first magistrate was a man named Seeley, who founded the Gudarali Estate.<sup>47</sup> It has completed more than 100 years as on 8.4.2014. The District Munsiff Court at Thodupuzha was functioning from 8.10.1926. after independence the Devikulam Munsiff Court was made a Munsiff-Magistrate Court in 1965 and (after formation district) a Judicial First Class Magistrate Court was established at Nedumkandom and Adimaly in 1980 and 1981 a Munsiff Court and Judicial First Class Magistrate Court was established in Idukki in 1983 and a Sub court and M.M Court was started at Kattappana in 1993. An Addl. District Court started functioning in 1982 and a Spl. Court for trial of NDPS Cases was established in 1996.<sup>48</sup>

## **Telegraph and Telephone**

The necessity for a better communication increased as the plantation developed in to a second phase. It was considered that a good communication facility was necessary in the hills to develop the plantation. It was under the tenure of Milne as the General Manager of K. D. H. P. This matter came before the planters. One of the letters by Cardamom Magistrate pointed to this,

I consider three things are necessary for the rapid development of the Anchinad viz opening communications, constructing water channels, and securing cultivators: if the first and second conditions are effected the area at present under cultivation can be vastly increased. There is reason to believe that there will be competition for the land, which will bring in round a good round sum for the capital value of the land sold and secure permanent source of revenue. The telegraph facilities were used in the early days for transmitting the urgent matters. Telegraph Office was established at Devikulam for this purpose. Received all the intimations through the telegraph facility. A telegraph line was Planters erected from Munnar to Talliar a 13 and half mile length. Later, a combined Telegraph Office was established at Talliar.<sup>49</sup>

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<sup>46</sup> <https://idukki.keralapolice.gov.in> accessed on 24/3/2022.

<sup>47</sup> Fr. J. Kurias, op. cit., p. 80.

<sup>48</sup> <https://districts.ecourts.gov.in> accessed on 24/3/2022.

<sup>49</sup> Jijo Jayaraj, *Environmental Reordering of Native Land: Colonialism and the Making of Munnar*, op. cit., p. 147.

With the invention of the Magnetic Telephone system in Europe and America, the company installed the latest equipment in the estates in 1908. It was the company's General Manager H. L. Davidson who established the telephone communication between all the estates. The Company and the Government considered that it would be advantageous if a telephone line connecting the estates existed. Company established the telephone line operating as separately as private in their own concession land. The establishment of the telephone line saved considerable time spent by the office through travels. Many of the travels were avoided with the establishment of the telephone communication system. System helped a great deal in communication with different parts of the planting district. The High Range was usually infected with Malaria and the new system helped to obtain punctual information and also for transport arrangements. In earlier days, there was often inordinate delay for getting sufficient information about the suspicious deaths. The planters considered it as urgent and the cost was insignificant when compared to the immense advantages gained. Different estates were connected by this new telephone system, which was capable of making hundred connections at a time. The network was operated by Crank Phones. The Magneto Telephone was used until it was replaced by Integrated Digital System of Communication.<sup>50</sup>

The telephone line was constructed by cutting the timber clearings in one chain in width 12 in some cases, the Government and the Company collaborated for the construction of the telephone line because the expertise in telephone networking was there with the Company which was already maintaining telephone link between the estates and their Headquarters Office located at Munnar town. For instance, in the proposal by the Devikulam Commissioner to put up a telephone line connecting the Company and the Commissioner Office located at Devikulam, the Company agreed to install the line in free of cost and the Government needed to pay only 6% to her as an annual maintenance fee.<sup>51</sup>

### **Postal and Anchal Mechanisms in Devikulam**

The communication was a serious issue in the hills especially in those days. Munnar has been considered to be one of the remotest corners of Travancore. Efficient Anjal system had worked in the other parts of Travancore.<sup>52</sup> The hill ranges of Munnar lacked roads and the climate had been unfavourable in those days. The problem was common in all hill districts. The first proposal for postal connection between Travancore and the hill districts appeared in 1878. It was the planters of Peermade, who urged the Government to set up a postal line connecting Kottayam and Peermade. It was one of the

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<sup>50</sup> Sulochana Nallapattu, op. cit., p.83.

<sup>51</sup> Jijo Jayaraj, *Environmental Reordering of Native Land: Colonialism and the Making of Munnar*, op. cit., p. 149.

<sup>52</sup> Violet Martin, *History of The High Range Planting District North Travancore 1930*, scripture literature press, Bangalore, 1931 p. 14.

land marks in the history of the working of the Anchal system in the High Ranges. The request by H. G. Turner implicated the importance and difficulties regarding the absence of communication between the Travancore territories and the British owned plantation estates.<sup>53</sup>

The planters at Peermade represent that they want of an imperial mail line between Peermade and Kottayam is much felt. They state that all of them keep agents at Kottayam, some have houses there, stores and send their coffee to Cochin and Alappey and that consequently there correspondents with these towns to very large. I consider that it would be a great improvement to open the proposed line as it would form an important link to the postal communication between the Eastern districts and the Travancore territories and I request that you will be good as to obtain the permission of the Government of His Highness the Maharaja of Travancore to the measure being carried out.<sup>54</sup>

The communication facilities were developed during the period of the Finlays. In 1901 P. R. Buchanan took charge of the company as the new General Manager. In 1920s itself active efforts were taken for the starting of an Anjal line from Kothamangalam to Munnar. It was due to the reason that the Western outlet road has not been opened until 1920s. The accessibility of Munnar with outside largely confined to the Eastern outlet which opened easily towards the lower plains of the Madras Presidency. The house mails reached usually in the Mondays. The Ceylone mails reached in the hills twenty four hours longer than a passenger leaving Colombo by ship." Sheds for Peons and runners were established throughout the line and the duty of the construction of the shed for this purpose was met by the Engineering Department. A sum of Rs. 7820 was sanctioned for the purpose of the construction of shed for Anchal Department. During his term of office developments took place rapidly.<sup>55</sup> The beginning of the postal system in Munnar was through the establishment of the Anchal Department. The land needed for the department was acquired from the Kannan Devan Hills Produce Company. Accordingly, a third class Anchal Office was established.<sup>56</sup> The land was purchased right in front of the Travellers Bungalow at Munnar town. The land was leased out of the Kuthagapattom agreement on Rs. 200 100 An Anjal took at least five days to reach from Trivandrum to Devikulam.<sup>57</sup>

The runners took the mail from one place to another. But this was done in the other parts of Travancore but considered not practical to High Range. Mr. Turner immediately arranged with each of

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<sup>53</sup> Jijo Jayaraj, *Environmental Reordering of Native Land : Colonialism and the Making of Munnar*, op. cit., p. 143.

<sup>54</sup> Ibid.

<sup>55</sup> Ibid., p. 144.

<sup>56</sup> Fr. J. Kurias, op. cit., p.80.

<sup>57</sup> Jijo Jayaraj, *Environmental Reordering of Native Land: Colonialism and the Making of Munnar*, op. cit., p. 144.

his friends to send him post cards. This was done in order to get a sufficient amount of stamping registered in the Post Office, so that the authorities would keep it open.<sup>58</sup> The arrangement for carriage of letters and packets was carried out by the General Managers of each estate. The coolies carried the letters down to Bodi on their heads.<sup>59</sup> The planters made a request to the Travancore Government, to open a Post Office in the hill and they got the first Post Office opened at Munnar in 1888 on an experimental basis. The planters requested on these times and a letter to the Government which reads as below.

"A Sub Post Office must be opened at Devicolam and the appointment of a Clerk of the office of the Cardamom Hills as the Post Master may cause complications in the case of any offence. A person outside the service must be appointed as the Post Master."<sup>60</sup>

Though Post Office was opened at Devikulam in 1892 the planters regularly complained about the delay and loss of their articles. One of the Kannan Devan Planters explicates this;"that since our representation to the District Superintendent of the Post Offices, Madura have had no effect, the attention of the Post Master General, Madras, be invited to the unsatisfactory and irregular way in which postal matters (particularly Home Mail papers) are being received at the Post Offices in the District and an investigation of the matters requested."<sup>61</sup>

Afterwards a second Post Office was opened at Talliar in 1898. The labours were also benefitted from the postal service. In the later periods the old Ford Lorries started run between Munnar and Top Station, daily. It also carried down the mail bags from Top Station on Sundays, when the ropeway was not working. The mails from the North side were brought up by bus from Udumpepet in the Coimbatore district, where a good bus service existed. The English mails came by this route and the return mail was sent through the train. On the hills the mails were carried on by the ropeways. In case of any storm or wind, they may of course be delayed. But otherwise the "tapal" was regular and provided a good service.<sup>62</sup>

A Post Office was established later on at Munnar. It became more convenient for the planters and for the people to send receive the mails. When the number of the mails increased, there was a request from T. H. Cameroon, the Commissioner, Devikulam, to the Chief Secretary for changing the name of

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<sup>58</sup> Sulochana Nallapattu, op. cit., p. 83.

<sup>59</sup> M. J Babu, *Kannan Devan Kunnukal* (m), Kerala Basha Institute, Trivandrum, 2017, p. 20.

<sup>60</sup> Ibid.

<sup>61</sup> Jijo Jayaraj, *Environmental Reordering of Native Land: Colonialism and the Making of Munnar*, op. cit., p. 145.

<sup>62</sup> Fr. J. Kurias, op. cit., p.89.



the Munnar Post Office from Munnar - Travancore to Munnar - High Range since it was often confused with the Post Office at Mannar in the Mavelikkara Taluk, resulting in great delay on the receipt of postal articles by the addressees concerned.<sup>63</sup>

Another request was made to open a Post Office at Kallar in 1879, right in the jungle on those days. Yet another Post Office was opened again in one of another plantation estate namely Madupatty. Madupatty was earlier the Head Quarters of the Kannan Devan Hill Produce Company Ltd. Hence it was necessary to open one in the particular place. Extreme care has been given for the protection of the Post Offices because; in those days many burglaries and robberies happened. One of the letters roibm Mr. Verneed, Cardamom Superintendent attested this;<sup>64</sup>

“The present office building which belongs to the Sircar and for the use of which a rent Rs. 10 per ransom being paid is insufficiently protected from the burglars. The Post Office receives and has to keep for the night insured parcels or money and as there has been a house breaking in the district including the Post Office at Panniar Bridge. The authorities are naturally rather anxious about the safety of the place and if the building has to be maintained by the Sircar as a Post Office, I think it is necessary to put strong bolt to the doors and windows inside and to put iron bars to the latter as well the cost of which will not exceed Rs. 30/- which amount has not been provided for the budget and therefore have to be specially sanctioned.”(Letter No.141,Dated 30/2/1909,from the Cardamom Suoerintendent regarding repairs to the post office Building at Devikulam,File No.84,Bundle No.22,State Archives,Trivandrum).<sup>65</sup>

## **The Monorail and the Ropeways**

During the initial days for the quicker transportation, Mr.W Milne the second manager of the company imported a vast team of Bullocks. A veterinary Surgeon and two assistants were brought from England to ensure, that the team was in good working condition. In the initial stages of the development of the high range, the transportation was through the pack of ponies and on head load. The access was from two points, the Bodimettu to the south side and Korangani to the North. Sir. Leybourne Davidson, the General Manager gave stress on the development of transport and communication. He gave a contract to the Gorden Brothers and planned for a ropeway starting from Kottagudi ghat to Bottom station. The ropeway was constructed in two and a quarter miles in length and at an average height of 5000 ft. It was built under the supervision of the company's engineers such as Gideon and William Kemile. The ropeway was opened in 1900." Mr. Kemile's Bungalow at Top Station afterwards became a rest house there. After the completion of the ropeway, Davidson decided to speed up the traffic. The difficulty of

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<sup>63</sup> Jijo Jayaraj, *Environmental Reordering of Native Land: Colonialism and the Making of Munnar*, op. cit., p. 145.

<sup>64</sup> Ibid.

<sup>65</sup> Ibid.

combating the very rocky and steep country together with that of preventing wild elephants from pulling down standards and in interfering in general with the work was a difficult for engineers and the workmen. Besides these the fever often caused sufferings. Mr. Gordon Kemlo an old man who started the work during 1899, died due of fever. Mr. Pottic was working at Top and Central stations.<sup>66</sup>

A Monorail tramline was constructed from Munnar to Top Station along the Kundaly Valley Cart road. The Monorail was a simple truck like platform having a large wide wheel running on the road and a small iron wheel that runs on a single rail. This truck was drawn by cattle in the early days and was replaced by ponies posted at intervals on the line to do about 5 miles at a time. Passenger carriages were fitted with canvas awnings and chairs. The Monorail transported hill produces down and brought up food and other essential articles to the hills. It moved the goods at an average speed of 4 mph to 6 mph. The daily travel of the tea starts from, the factories to the central store in Munnar by Bullock cart, and then on the Monorail it reached to the Top station, from there with the help of the ropeway it reached right up to the foot of the ghat. Then the tea was stored in the Suppan Chetty's godown, and finally to Ammanayakanur Railway station by bullock cart and then to the Tuticorin for shipment.<sup>67</sup>

### **Kundale Valley Light Railway**

In 1908 the Monorail was replaced by the Light Rail called the Kundale Light Railway or the .D.H.P & Company Steam Train. It took one and a half years to complete. In 1919 there were only two rail lines marked in Kerala, the Kollam-Sengotta line and the Kannan Devan Railway in Travancore hills. The driving force behind this was project was G.W Cole, who became the company's chief engineer.<sup>68</sup> The equipment's for this railway were purchased from Orenstein and Koppel of Bremen, the specialists in light railways at that time. They were also responsible for the forest tramway near Chalakkudi in North Malabar over which much valuable commercial timber was transported to the plains during the two World Wars. All the equipments for the Kundaly Valley Railway was imported from U.K. brought up to Munnar in pieces and were locally assembled.<sup>69</sup>

Initially it was hoped to run the locomotive on wood fuel alone possibly assisted by oil applied to the fire boxes by jet furnaces. But owing to steep ridges and curves, this impracticable and the use of Indian coal and firewood generated sufficient steam the two feet gauge lines was adopted for the new rail line. Was Two of the engines were assembled with the help of the South Indian Railway; this new railway took tea chests from Mattupetty to Munnar. The railway station in Munnar was located at present Regional Office, until 1924 it also used as the rice store, tea store. The other stations were at Madupatty,

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<sup>66</sup> Manoj Mathirappally, op. cit., p. 104.

<sup>67</sup> Ibid., p. 81.

<sup>68</sup> Ibid., p. 104.

<sup>69</sup> Amita Baig and William Henderson, op. cit., p. 35.

Paalar, and at Top station. There were four engines in use, the Buchanan, Anaimudi, and a double funnelled, Kundaly, and a lighter one called, High Range. It was thought that there might be a better compartment for first class passengers, but this when tried was found to be too heavy for the engine along with their ordinary load, so it was not used. "The High ranger had a first class compartment for the use of the European Managers and for their occasional visit."<sup>70</sup> The journey of the train was slow owing to derailment. The elephants usually stood on the track and blocked its free movement. The practical use of the railways came to an end with the disastrous flood of July 1924. It damaged the tracks between Munnar and Madupatty, leading to irreparable damages on the rail line.<sup>71</sup>

The flood of the 16th July 1924 was a milestone in the history of Munnar hills. There was heavy rain across the high range in the whole month. A total of 195 inches measured in July. Many lives including coolies and managers lost in the cyclone, factories and other buildings were damaged and the coolie's lines were carried away in the flood. The cyclone affected the Munnar-Top station Light Railway. The railway was completely damaged. Once again the General Manager H.L. Pinches, made efforts to develop the Kannan Devan Hills from the devastations of the flood.<sup>72</sup>

The construction of the first part of the ropeway was started in 1925. The new ropeway was surveyed by Mr. Midgley and Mr. Grant. The work was very strenuous. The ropeway was constructed in three stages, initially from Top station to Chittavurrai Estate, from there to Sothuparai and Pattupetty, then the third stretch to Munnar. The ropeway was built at fourteen and a half miles distant. It had the capacity to carry 25 tonnes every day. The construction of ropeway was completed at a cost of Rs.7, 61, 500. The new rope line was worked with the power generated from the Pullivasal power house.<sup>73</sup> The inauguration of the ropeway was on 27th November 1925. After the ropeway had been running for six months, they removed the remaining railway lines and made the Kundale Valley road suitable for the motor traffic. In 1930 the old Top station-Kottagudi ropeway was replaced by modern one and both the ropeways served the high range until the modern roads began to replace it. Soon the old ropeway become out modded.<sup>74</sup>

In the days of the whites, the Kannandevan Hills Produce Company used to pay for its own minted coins in the estates of Munnar. On one side of the coin was a portrait of Sir John Muir, chairman of the Finley Company. On the other side is a picture of a tea factory. With this coin, workers could buy

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<sup>70</sup> Ibid., p. 43.

<sup>71</sup> Fr. J. Kurias, op. cit., p. 69.

<sup>72</sup> Violet Martin, op. cit., p. 14.

<sup>73</sup> Sulochana Nallapattu, op. cit., p.77.

<sup>74</sup> Jijo Jayaraj, *Environmental Reordering of Native Land: Colonialism and the Making of Munnar*, op. cit., p. 84.

rice, groceries, clothing, and liquor from company stores. But it had no exchange value outside the company's plantations. The conclusion was that the aim was to keep at least those who worked in the Kannan Devan hills who did not have enough labor available. Due to the miserable life, all the workers who had come here in the early days soon returned to Tamil Nadu. But with the value of work-only money becoming the only value here, many are unable to go home. This currency existed here until its ban by the Central Government in 1967.<sup>75</sup>

## **Centres of Faith and Change**

The temple must have been the first to be established in the shrines. The Subramanyaswamy Temple in Munnar was worshiped by the adivasi Muthuvans. When the British migration started, the old families went into the forest and the temple was devoid of worship. The temple was later renovated with the visit of members of the Travancore royal family. In the early days, the priest belonged to the Namboothiri family and now, a Tamil Brahmin.

The main festival is the Karthika Mahotsava. The first day is for Muthua families. They come to the festival in groups. On the second day, the three of them. With the return of the Sam or Ratham around the town to the temple, the curtain falls on the Karthika festival.

It is believed that the Ayyappa Temple at Devikulam was established in connection with the royal family. The view of the temple is to the west. Mount Carmel Catholic Church in Munnar was established in 1898. In the early days, priests were foreigners. The church was built by Spanish Carmelite missionaries. The mosque on another hill was originally a tin shed. The new church was thought of after the tin shed was washed away in the floods of 1924. Munnar Town Renovated Marikars also took over this responsibility. The mosque was later rebuilt twice. It was last rebuilt in September 2011.<sup>76</sup> Sree Dharmasatha Temple Devikulam. This is an oldest Temple in this Station limit. Which was constructed by the Punjar Maharaja. Peculiarity of this temple is that its direction is to west.<sup>77</sup>

The first Bishop to visit the High Range was Bishop Hodges. He rode from Kodaikanal in April 1898 and was met by Mr. Martin about three miles beyond Bombardic Shola. Bishop Hodges was the guest of the Martins for a week. He held two services, one at the Chittavurrai bungalow and the other at Mrs. Thorp's bungalow at Kundalle. He visited several other estates and then returned by the Bodi-Mettu Ghaut passing Devicolam and Periakanal. About 1905 Mr. Buchanan encouraged the managers of the K. D. H. P. Co. to subscribe to the building of a church at Munnar. This idea was well received. The Company was very generous in making up the sum collected to that actually required for building. A site

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<sup>75</sup> Manoj Mathirapally, op. cit., p. 106.

<sup>76</sup> M. J. Babu. op. cit., p. 75.

<sup>77</sup> <https://idukki.keralapolice.gov.in> accessed on 24/3/2022.

was chosen just below the cemetery and here the present church was erected; it took about a year to build. It is a pretty and pleasant building.<sup>78</sup>

The present CSI Church was built in 1910. Made in the Gothic style. This temple is 116 years old. Construction began in 1910 with full use of granite and was completed in 1911. The Bible, organ, money and Casa Pilasa used by the whites are still preserved here. The church is also a monument to an eternal love of 132 years ago and the cemetery was built before the construction of the church. The body of Eleanor Isabel, a British bride, was buried here 16 years before construction began on the church. Isabel, 23, was the wife of Henry Mansfield Knight, a plantation manager in Munnar. Fascinated by the beauty of Munnar, Isabel wandered around the place in the next few days despite her travel fatigue. Meanwhile, we reached the hill slope where the present CSI church is located. While walking down the hill holding Henry's hand, Isabel asked her husband to bury her when he ever died. Within days, Isabel died of cholera on December 23, 1894. According to her wishes, the body was buried on the slope of this hill. Henry Knight did not forget to build a moat around it to prevent the herd of elephants from destroying it. Toby Martin's four - and - a - half - year - old son, who later played a key role in the development of Munnar, was buried here on November 2, 1895, when he fell to his death. Years later, on December 4, 1926, when Toby Martin died in Chennai, he was buried next to his son. The tomb of Baron Ottovon Rosenberg, a German nobleman who bought land from the North Travancore Land Planting and Agri-Cultural Society in 1879 and established the first garden in Munnar, died of pneumonia in 1904. Thirty-five tombs belonging to Europeans are in the CSI church cemetery.<sup>79</sup>

The growing demand for the tea in the global tea market and the loss of early market prompted the authorities to undertake such developmental activities in the rural area. The development of the transport and communications were remarkable. These developments changed the ecology as well as the aborigines of the land i.e. Muthuvans. In the primitive times they lived in perfect harmony with the nature, now were alienated from the forest and denied all the rights enjoyed in the early days. They lost their free access and become the watcher of their own property. Ones they kept aloof from the mainstream of the population, and are now exposed to the outside world. The planters created a new class of labourers, and a class difference soon developed in the society. On the whole the plantation changed the whole face of High Range. Its wild beauty lost with the commencing of monoculture plantation.

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<sup>78</sup> Violet Martin, op. cit., pp. 33-34.

<sup>79</sup> Manoj Mathirapally, op. cit., p. 107.

## CONCLUSION

According to Suttons theory, the colonizers treat our land as 'other'. They came here as foreigners, lived as foreigners and left as foreigners. They saw our land and forest resources as useless. According to them, the resources become useful, when it satisfied their needs. There for otherisation also become the parts of colonization. In the history of colonialism, a plantation was a form of colonization where settlers would establish permanent or semi-permanent colonial settlements in a new region. The High Range mountain landscape of Devikulam taluk is located on the Western slope of the Western Ghats. The genesis of the population in Devikulam taluk is not a recent one. The study area is highly rich in flora and fauna. Vegetation ranges from scrub forests at the foothills, up to ubiquitous expanses of tea and coffee estates, to spice (pepper, cardamom, cinnamon) plantations and finally to the dense evergreen forests at the top. Devikulam forest area hosts a variety of birds, mammals, reptiles and butterflies and hence it is rich in its avifauna. Resident and migratory elephants are common. Other animals sighted are tiger, leopard, nilgiri thar, gaur, spotted deer, barking deer, sambar, wild boar, porcupine nilgiri langur, lion-tailed macaque, and common langur. Bonnet macaque, sloth bear, grey jungle fowl, smooth-coated otter and flying etc.

The High Range has been the abode of the adivasis even before the arrival of the Europeans and peasants. There are twenty seven hill men settlements situated inside the Reserve Forest in Cardamom Hill Reserve and Kannan Devan Hills area. They are living inside the forest for many generations. They did small scale agriculture and gaming wild animals in the hill ranges of the district. Their ignorance in modern farming methods and their inability to invest money for large scale agriculture were exploited by the British. In the view of the modern anthropologists, the tribal populations in Idukki were belonging to the Proto Austroloid ethnic groups. The tribes living in the High Ranges speak both Tamil and Malayalam.

It was the two English men namely Mr. Ward and Mr. Connor who came for the purpose of the Great Trigonometrical Survey. The pre-Colonial history of Devikulam is a story of its natural richness. Kannan Devan Hills was noted for its unique biodiversity. The soil always remained alluvial and fertile with good organic content. The existence of three rivers made the land with sufficient water channels. One of the notable aspects was its

climate that varies between six to twenty six degree Celsius along with eighty percent of humidity.

Teak, rosewood, ebony, Sandalwood etc., were plenty in the forest. The number of different types of fauna including elephants, gaur, panther, spotted deer, sambar, giant grizzled squirrel, rabbit, Nilgiri langur and lion tailed macaque will elevate the status of Devikulam in to a sacred grove. Until the year 1817, Devikulam remained a secret place. As mentioned earlier the year 1817 may be regarded as the beginning of the colonisation of the land. Thereafter Devikulam witnessed continuous explorations and surveys for land. The Colonial history begins with the coming of Ward and Connor and it travels through the explorations of Douglas Hamilton and J.D Munro. The climax in this long colonial domination is the establishment of the Tata Tea Ltd.

Colonial rule was established in every part of the country. Neither the Travancore State nor the Poonjar Chief or the Zamindar who managed the land failed to assess the real value of the land. The real issue was the need for high capital investment to begin any cultivation in the hill tract. In the colonial context it was not possible for the native state to spend such a high amount in the grass land. Moreover there was no need for such attempt. In fact the native state was under the economic pressure of the Colonial Government.

The circumstances were favorable for the Colonial masters. The adventurous spirit, imagination, courage, enterprise and the pioneering zeal, all these factors together put the tea industry in India in its eminent position. There were certain reasons which are combined in providing the stimulus to the British planters. The removal of the company's monopoly of China trade in 1833 gave incentive to develop the industry. The discovery of the indigenous tea plants in Assam in 1833 was another factor; moreover India remained a good choice for the British planters. India possessed large amount of raw materials, ready markets, and an abundant supply of untrained but cheap supply of labour. Tea was an export item from its beginning. It was actually developed in order to meet the needs of the people of the British land. So the origin, growth and development of the tea have to be studied in the context of the growth of the western markets for tea and the colonial era in the East.

Thus the Concession arranged with Munro was fully favorable for the Colonisers. This process continued in other parts of the country especially in Upper Assam and in the deep South including Nilgiris and Coorg. The fluctuations in price for the crop in the

world market often determined the type of crop produced in India. For example initially coffee was the national drink in Europe. So there was high demand for coffee in the market. It prompted the planters to start coffee plantations in their colonised lands. Then eighties witnessed the cinchona boom due to the high price for 'quinine' in the world market. This compelled the planters to start wide spread cinchona plantations. Once tea replaced coffee in Europe, the planters switched over to the tea plantations. Thus the European market determined what to produce in the lesser developed colonies.

The tribal population lived in the hills cultivated raggi, wheat, rice; plantains etc, and were unaware of the commercial crops. They produced what they needed and the surplus was bartered for the other necessary good they needed in their daily life. With the development of a plantation culture the white then introduced commercial crops such as tea, coffee, cinchona, rubber etc. in the hills. The native tribal population not even heard of these plants and they had nothing to do with these crops. Thus slowly tea culture developed among the natives. Tea became a causative in the transformation of the region.

The arrival of the new group to the hills entirely changed the life of the forest dwellers. These people lived in the forest for many years. They followed own culture and a different custom. Munro reported that the number of Muthuvan, the major tribal group as two thousand and five hundred. They were very shy towards the outsiders and refused to mingle with the mainstream. This was a special feature of the tribal women. Because they were living in the forest for many centuries they possessed good knowledge about the forest. They possessed the details of the plants in the forest and use, how to hunt a rogue bison, their behavior etc. It was this factor that attracted the planters towards the population. They were unfamiliar to this new land. They found that the forest was dangerous. The attacks of the elephants, tigers, bison was common. Trenches were built to escape from the wild animals. Thus, seeing future possibilities the planters appointed them in the forest as the forest guides and forest watchers. Once they were the owners of the forest now became watchmen of their own property. Their harmony with the nature was lost and the same people was utilised for the hunting.

European technology was augmenting colonial penetration in to the deep woods. On a social history level the coming of European plantations in to Munnar created a new class in the area. The new working class they brought from other areas, especially the Tamil country, became a vital element in the colonial city. New settlements emerged and



slowly Devikulam became a plantation city. The European planter did all their best in retaining the plantation labourers in the area even through providing intoxicant drink (arrack). Exploitation of the newly recruited labour class and the already present tribal class was part of the global Colonial strategy of the European planters in making successful plantation industry. At this critical stage, environmental history of the region integrates with social history.

The opening of the tea plantations throughout the hills necessitated the opening of the bazaars for meeting the needs of the labourers. The colonial ambition was clearly motivated by the profit. The speed transportation of the bulk quantities of the goods to longer distances was necessary. To meet this purpose monorail, light rail and rope ways were constructed at a high cost. All these developments led to the emergence of a town centre in Munnar. This catered to the needs of the planters as well as the labourers.

Colonial hegemony imposed restrictions upon the use of the forest, including hunting and entry. The forest lost its biodiversity. Teak, ebony, sandal wood was plenty. All were disappeared tea replaced every tree. Monoculture plantation was on its growth. The destruction of the plant diversity due to the monoculture and excessive felling of the forest and hunting resulted in the disappearance of many animal species. The best example is the Indian tiger. Last tiger shot in the forest was in 1970. New species of trees like *Spathodia* and *Eucalyptus grandis* were introduced to serve their needs. Rainbow trout fish was brought from U.K and released it in the pond During the late 1990s Devikulam high range areas has been transformed into a bustling tourist destination and has developed modern infrastructure facilities. However, colonisation badly and positively affected the Devikulam of High Ranges. The Colonial penetration continues until 1983. During the late 1990s Devikulam high range areas has been transformed into a bustling tourist destination and has developed modern infrastructure facilities. However colonisation badly and positively affected the Devikulam.

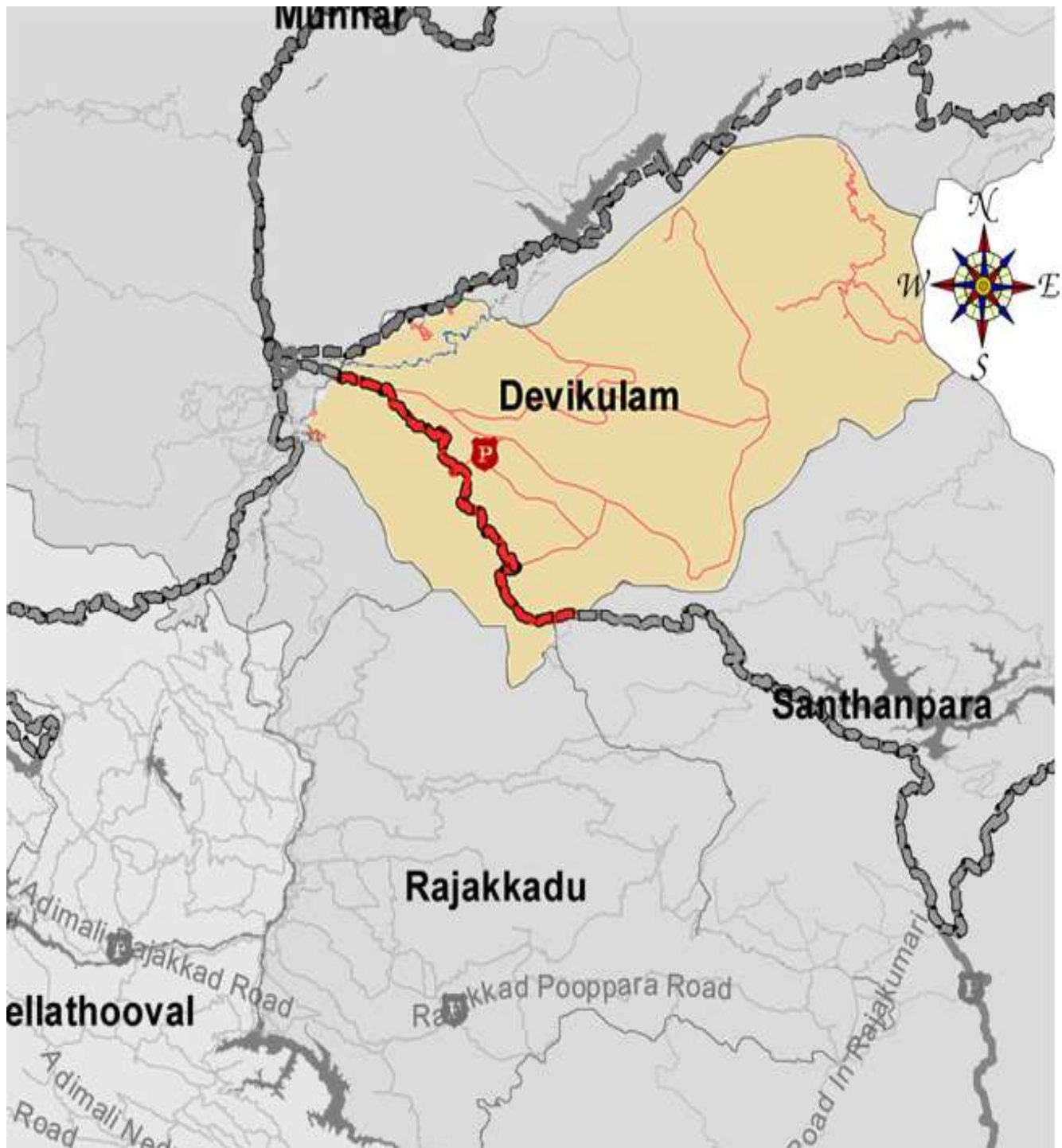
Edward Said in his theory 'Orientalism' remarks that how the European viewed Asian people and their culture. It is a dichotomous perspective. The theory highlighted the two terms respectively occident and orient. By the influence of Edward theory, later several studies were carried out relating to Asian 'otherisation'. Deobrah Sutton who greatly influenced by Edward Said prepared studies centered around Europeans views or attitude towards Asian people, culture, territory, ecology, their language etc. Sutton states

that, the colonizers wanted to develop the colonies into their homeland atmosphere. This was in order to cater their growing demand for the natural resources for their population in Europe and thus they 'otherised' the colonies. There was a colonial motive behind the developments they established here in the colonies. Sutton argued that the British or the European motive was to create a governable landscape. This was the main research problem he initiated in his pioneering work on Nilagiri in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century. It can be seen in commonality with the other colonies in Asian countries. Devikulam attests the colonial logic of creating governable landscapes all around the world which was a colonial agenda of the then British Raj. Thus Europeans also cultivated a sense of Familiarity in Devikulam which actually catered their commercial needs.

Emergence of Devikulam town occurred even before the creation of the Munnar Township. The historical values of Devikulam is not shrouded in Munnar alone. It has its own historical as well as cultural values. Through this research we can see that emergence of bridle paths such as Surianalli estate - Devikulam bridle path by H. M Knight (extent was two and quarter miles), Kumili - Devikulam bridle path founded in 1916, The initial attempt for the construction of a road from Munnar to Devicolam started in 1887 by the North Travancore Land Planting Agricultural Society. In 1900 proposal and plan for factory at Devikulam was made. A total of 28.1 acres of the Devikulam Estate Company was utilized for the construction of the Devikulam factory. The company leased shops to the traders to ease the problems of the coolies. The company agreed the Opium and Ganja contractors of Devicolam in conducting the sales of opium in Munnar town. The abkari contractor for the Devikulam taluk had sold the arrack through a shop at Munnar. Telegram and telephone also developed in this area. Even before the Munnar, the first Post Office was opened at Devikulam in 1892. Other developments regarding familiarisation of Devikulam can be seen through the establishment of Niruva (measurement) shed, Munciff court, police station, ropeways etc. Devikulam cultivated sense of familiarity to colonizers and the colonized became the victim of Europeans in negative as well as in positive sense.

## APPENDIX I

### MAP



Map 1: Territorial extent of new Devikulam, accessed from <http://mapcarta.com> accessed on 12/05/2022



## APPENDIX – II

### PHOTOGRAPHS TRIGGERING EUROPEAN MEMORY



**Photo1: Pathway Near Devikulam Bungalow, Photograph taken by the researcher.**



**Photo 2: Car Shed near Devikulam Bungalow, 1912, Photograph taken by researcher.**





**Photo 3: First Motor Cycle H. L Pinches, 1912, Photograph taken by Researcher.**



**Photo 4: Travellers Bungalow at Signal Point near Devikulam, photograph taken by the Researcher.**



**Photo 5: Old Anjal Office- 1892, Photograph taken by the Researcher.**



**Photo 6: Seetha Devi Lake, Photograph taken by the researcher.**





**Photo 7: Ropeway 1900-1972, Photograph taken by the researcher.**



**Photo 8: Sundial 1913, Photograph taken by the researcher.**





**Photo 9: Telephone Exchange 100 Lines, 1908-1922, Photograph taken by the researcher.**



**Photo 10: Devikulam Township, Photograph taken by the researcher.**

## GLOSSARY

- Cinchona** : Large genus of South American trees and shrubs of the madder family. The dried bark of the tree contain alkaloids such as Quinine and being used especially formerly as a specific in Malaria, an antipyretic in other fevers etc., also called as Jesuits bark, Peruvian bark.
- Cobra** : It is the best known highly poisonous snake which is quite common both on the hills and plains.
- Etha** : Meaning of Etha: Name Etha in the Old English origin, means noble or honourable in old English. Name Etha is of Old English origin and is a Girl name. People with name Etha are usually Christianity by religion.
- Kanaki** : Name Kanaki in the Indian origin, means a small kite. Name Kanaki is of Indian origin and is a Girl name. People with name Kanaki are usually Hindu by religion.
- Kani** : In Tamil Language, the word Kani gives the meaning of fruit. It is also used as name by Tamil people.
- Kanikkaran:** Concerning their genealogy and genesis they have interesting stories. Aryans who moved from north to south called them Kanikkar, which literally means landlords, descendants of the Kings, gave their offerings to Attingal King. Thus they are so called.
- Karta mullay** : Now, everyone knows that there is hatred between Jews and Muslims (at least in some countries). When a Hindu calls you 'katua', you call him 'worshipper'. If a Catholic Christian calls you 'katua', you call him an 'idol worshipper'.
- Kia** : The word Kia has origins in the Chinese language with the first syllable Ki meaning to arise or come up out of. The second part of the word, a refers to Asia. Kia means to rise or come up out of Asia.

- Mabuya : The Mabuya, or 'Arana' is another commonly found lizard in the forests of Munnar Division.
- Makkathayam : The word literally means inheritance by sisters' children, as opposed to sons and daughters. 'Marumakkal', in the Malayalam language, means nephews and nieces.
- Mannan : Tribals living in the Kannan Devan Hills. They also claim that they came from Madurai. The King of the tribal kingdom in the entire State, is living at in Kovilmala of Kanchiyar Panchayat Udumbanchola Taluk of Idukki district.
- Mantri : A minister is a politician who heads a ministry, making and implementing decisions on policies in conjunction with the other ministers.
- Mesua ferrea : Mesua ferrea, the Ceylon ironwood, or cobra saffron, is a species in the family Calophyllaceae. This slow-growing tree is named after the heaviness and hardness of its timber.
- Muthuvan : The back people', came from Madurai are the earliest inhabitants of Munnar and followed a primitive way of living.
- Pongal : Learn to pronounce noun the Tamil New Year festival, celebrated by the cooking of new rice. A southern Indian dish of rice cooked with various herbs and spices.
- Pooja : The act of worship. "I perform puja every day"
- Raggi (muthari) : Annual plants, widely grown in the arid areas. It was cultivated by the Mannans and was their major staple of food in the early days.
- Rana (Devanagari): an Indian name of Sanskrit origin meaning "king" in South Asian languages and is the masculine derivative of the Sanskrit word "rānī" meaning "queen".
- Shikkari : An expert hunter who often acts as a guide.

Sholas	:	Patches of stunted evergreen patches of tropical and sub-tropical moist broad leaved forest.
Udumbu	:	Stomach
Diwan	:	a central finance department, chief administrative office, or regional governing body. A chief treasury official, finance minister, or prime minister in some Indian states.
Black Tea	:	Fermented tea, (the tea keeps its fragrance so it is suitable for long distance shipment).
Brick Tea	:	Chinese packaged tea in compressed bricks for ship transportation and as such retains the flavour.
Coolie	:	Asian slave or those who engaged in manual labour. In Tamil it denoted those worked as the day labourers as well as to describe a payment for work.
Niruvai	:	‘Niruva ‘is term used by the local peoples in colonial times.
Niruvai	:	Tamil word means ‘Measurement’.
Saip	:	Foreigner
Kara	:	Land
Coyna	:	Cinchona
Devimalai	:	Hills resided by deity
Thumpi	:	Brother
Dorai	:	Respected
Maistirimar	:	Middlemen
Koluth	:	Tender leaf

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## INDEX

Devimalai	:	1, 46, 52
K.D.H	:	37, 38, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 51, 53, 57, 58, 61, 64, 67, 69, 75, 79, 80, 82
Dorai	:	48, 52, 82, 83, 84, 85, 86
Thumbi	:	48, 50, 82, 83, 84, 85, 86
Mannan	:	3, 33
Muthuvan	:	1, 31, 32, 34, 35, 47, 48, 52, 55, 58, 64, 80, 84
Ropeway	:	1, 60, 76, 77, 78, 79, 86
High Range	:	30, 31, 37, 38, 44, 45, 47, 50, 51, 52, 53, 58, 59, 75, 82, 85
Kanganies	:	54, 55
Imperialism	:	14, 56
Colonialism	:	5, 13, 36, 41, 55, 56, 57, 58, 60, 66, 73, 74, 75, 76, 77, 79, 82
Europeans	:	8, 36, 44, 46, 47, 51, 60, 81, 82, 85, 86
Bridle path	:	58, 60, 61, 62, 63, 64, 86