

RE CONFIGURATION OF A NATIVE LAND: PEERMADE UNDER BRITISH

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In partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of
the Degree of
Bachelor of Arts in History*

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DECLARATION

I, Sonu Soman do here by declare that the project entitled “**Re Configuration through a Native Land: Peermade Under British**” is a bonafide record of project work done me under the supervision of **Mr 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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GLOSSARY

Annas	: An Anna was a currency unit formerly used in British India, equal to 1/16 of a rupee.
Bazars	: Market
Dhoti	: A long loincloth traditionally worn in Southern Asia Hindu men
Edangazhi	: Smallest of the measuring vessel associated with the Rice- paddy system in Kerala
Herons Pool	: Any of various long- necked and long- legged birds With a long tapering bill, large wings, and soft Plumage. Above the Herons Pool was a book written By Heather Lovatt & Peter de Jong
Kankanies	: The chief recruiters to the plantations, they spoke the same language and shared a common social Background with these labours
Kudi	: Village
Malankoothu	: Most popular art form among the Uralis
Mooppan	: Headman of the Kudi
Pattom	: Land leasing system
Periyadorai	: Big master
Puthari	: Festival of Harvest and getting the harvested paddy Crop home, highlighting the relationship

and close Bond between mother earth and man

Sinnadorai : Small master

Thavalams : Known as resting place, cart stand and camp

ABBREVIATIONS

C. M. S.	: Church Mission Society
C. T. P. A.	: Central Travancore Planters Association
S. I. P. A.	: South Indian Planters Association
T. T. E	: Travancore Tea Estates
UPASI	: United Planters Association of South India

INTRODUCTION

Peermedu is a hill station situated in the Erstwhile Travancore Kingdom. It is a part of Western Ghats or sahyadris. The name Peermedu is sometimes related to the Sufi saint, Peer Muhammad who is said to have visited Peermedu. Other stories say that, the name must have originated due to the abundance of bonsai guava trees near Peermedu:or “Peramedu” which means hills of guava plants in malayalam. Peermedu is situated at an altitude of 914 meters above mean sea level. The landscape of Peermedu is hilly with spectacular waterfalls, open grass lands and forests. Peerrmedu was once the summer retreat of the Maharajas of Travancore. Peermade receives a lot of rain during the monsoons as it is situated on the Western Ghats, facing Arabian Sea. The meaning of Peermedu is “hill of the peer”., is also written as Perumedu and Pearmedu, through the accepted spelling is Peermedu. These hills (Western Ghats) were a barrier between the Kingdom of Travancore (Kerala) and Madurai(Tamilnadu). A forest road across the hills connected the two kingdoms and the section at Peermedu was the highest point on the route.

The early people of Peermedu were tribes who lived along the fringes and slopes of the hills. The tribal of the area are the Irular and the Muduvar. The Irulars have migrated from the neighboring plains of Tamilnadu and live by selling firewood and catching snakes for extracting Poisson once legalized for them by the government. The Muduvars are shy and do not like the company of non-tribal people and consider themselves superior to the Irulars but they help each other agricultural operations such as hunting and fishing. But other historians say that the first inhabitants are Malayarans and Malapandarams. They were satisfied with the fresh food from the jungle and lived in primitive simplicity.

The plantation history of Idukki starts with the arrival of the European missionary Henry baker junior. Henry baker junior started missionary activities in kottayam during 1843 onwards. During this period the tribes named Malayarans lived in forest of Kottayam, Peruvanthanam, Mundakkayam, invited Henry baker in to their place or their ‘Kudiyirippu’. And so on Henry baker and his brother George baker arrived in Mundakkayam in 1850. Then he arrived in Peermedu through forest and difficult hilly

routes. He noticed that Peermedu is a valley of abundance. He thought of the fertile soil and agricultural potential of the place, while challenging the forest and wildlife. Then he visited Travancore king Uthram Thirunal Marthandavarmma II, and he got the permission from the king to use the land without any tax or rent.

Then they decided to start plantation industry, the land given by Travancore king. As a part of this deforestation began at Mundanplavu, between Elapppara and Vagamon under the leadership of FG Richardson. The labors are from Tamilnadu. He tossed coins into the bushes that had to be cut everyday Richardson said they could own these coins in addition to their daily wage. With this, the competition between the employees to own the coins started. Along with this, the land was also being cultivated. Thus The T-Ford Company, the first plantation in Idukki district, was established in Peernedu. The first plantation is coffee. They bought hybrid coffee plants from Wayanad and planted in Peermedu. However the climate here is cold, foggy and rainy, making it unsuitable for coffee cultivation. Following this, Cinchona started cultivating in various estates. During this time, Cinchona skin was used globally to making medicine for malaria. Then this turned into coffee plantation. They import Tea plants from China and Neelagiri. The first Tea plantation in this area was Penshvarest Estates. In this period the Tea plants in this area was known as Peermadu Hybrid Tea.

Under the leadership of the whites, the infrastructure of Peernedu was started during the time of the plantation. Construction of the bullockarts road from Kottayam to Peermedu started in 1871 and was completed in 1827. As the small hillsides along the slopes of the high range became more and more British planters and local natives established plantations here.

The first estate here was, Bonami, Walardi, Glenmary, Fairfield, Mary Ann, Heaven valley. Meanwhile the plague spread in 1932 in Mundanplavu, were the plantation industry in the high range began. The fiber of the plant Arutha, which was grown here at that time, was used against plague. In 1914 Mundakkayam-Peermadu Motor Transport Company were established. But it only worked for a while.

Area of the Study

The study centered the history of Peermedu during British era. This area was a part of North Travancore. This area was a mixture of Tamil and Malayalam culture. The aim of this study was to understand the history of Peermedu or Azhutha. Here we tried to find out History, culture and social life of Peermedu under British era.

Objectives

1. To understand the Adivasi demography of Peermedu and its diversity.
2. To study the coming of the plantations and the resultant policy changes in the administration of the land.
3. To examine the changes brought to the hill station with the arrival of the British planters.
4. To analyze the landscape changes happened in Peermade with the advent of new system of cultivation by the planters.
5. To study the socio-economic fabric of the hill station

Research Questions

1. How the plantation industry was opened in South India?
2. What was the role of the native government in the beginning of the plantation?
3. What was the process of colonialism in Peermade?
4. How the new industry affected the original dwellers of the land?
5. What are the specific changes occur in Peermedu under British?
6. Why Peermade was selected as perfect spot for the plantation industry?
7. How the landscape of Peermade was reconfigured?
8. What was the role of the Western market in this process?

Hypothesis

Peermade remained as a busy plantation spot with the coming of the British planters. The planters along with the native government were able to transform this hill station in to different plantation estates. The transformation happened in this area was a bi-product of colonialism and has effected large scale changes in the land and ecology.

Methodology

The present study involves a historical narrative methodology. It attempts to study the area and its people and hence oral history will be used as a major methodological frame work. Apart from oral history the study will naturally take in to consider the primary sources including the government reports, confidential records, planter's diaries, letter transactions between the princely states of Travancore and planting community. Above all historiophoty will be the major methodology used for the study to show the socio ecological reconfiguration happened in the hill station. The available secondary literature will also be used for general outline of the study.

Summary of Chapters

The present study is a detailed research on the topic Reconfiguration through Colonialism: Tracing Peermade under Western Capitalism. The entire research work will run into three core chapters along with an introduction and conclusion. The Introduction of the present study will introduces the research problem and will discuss the methodology used for the study.

The first chapter entitled *Peermade the Native Ecology* will locate the ecological background of Peermadu. The flora, fauna and the original dwellers of the land will be studied in detail.

The second chapter entitled *Peermade on its Transformation* will discuss the coming of the plantation industry in to the Peermade hills along with the major planting companies and the other developments.

The third chapter is entitled as the *Re-Configuration a Bi-Product* will study the socio ecological transformation of Peermade in detail *concluding Analysis* will conclude the whole study with findings

Review of Sources

The Travancore State Manual Volume-3 by V. Nagam Aiyya is a primary work from Kerala gazetteer. This work provides some vital information about the history of Peermade. The state manual was very valuable book which provides a picture of the

history of Peermade. The state manual was provided several valuable information that the British approaching the rulers of Travancore for leasing agreement etc. This volume gives a detailed account of the general economic condition, the land tenures, agriculture, industries, trade, commerce etc. The scholar gets valuable information about the plantation history and its expansion.

The Path to the Hills written by George Abraham Pottamkulam provides some valuable information about the arrival of plantations in high land areas. The text explains about the plantation industry that was introduced by the British capitalists. This book through some light on history of plantation industries in South India. It provides clear information about the plantations in south Indian states. The history of coffee in Mysore area, the history of tea in Peermade and Kannan Devan hills, the arrival of Rubber in Mundakkayam etc. were also discussed. He was also focused on the emergence of tourism around the plantations.

Idukki Dhesam, Charithram, Samskaaram by Manoj Mathirappilly, also gives important information about the History of Idukki. This book explains the history and culture that had existed in the early periods of Idukki. Also point out the history of Peermade and its culture, it also include plantation history of Peermade. The book is written in the tourist view.

Limitations

Absence of time is also a limitation to the work. The lockdown issues make very difficult to the completion of the work.

CHAPTER-I

PEERMADE: THE NATIVE ECOLOGY

The chapter discussed here about the ecology of Peermade. The geographical position of the area, types of soil, climatic features, forest and their types, native dwellers, medicinal plants, geological features, flora and fauna were discussed.

Position

Peermade is a hill station situated in the Travancore kingdom. It is a part of Western Ghats or Sahyadris. It is situated at an altitude of 914 meters above mean sea level. These hills were a barrier between the kingdom of Travancore and Madurai.¹

Soil and Geology

The fertility of the soil is generally poor with low available nitrogen and phosphorous. Brown hydro orphic soils are confined to valley portions in undulating terrain. These soils formed as a result of transportation and sedimentation of materials from adjoining hill slopes and are brownish black in color. The surface texture varies from sandy loam to clay. Alluvial soils are seen as narrow strips along the banks of rivers in the district. The surface texture of these soils range from sandy loam to clay and they are fertile. The soil of the elevated land reposes on a bed of laterite. The more elevated parts are somewhat barren producing only coarse grass and a few meager shrubs.² The soil of the lower parts of the valleys consists of brownish coloured clay of depth but of great variation. The uplands during the rains display some strength of vegetation but are comparatively barren for nearly half the year. The following are the major soil types in the area.

¹George Thengumoottil, *Story of Peermade*, accessed from http://gtedits.com/The_Story_of_Peermade.html on 10/1/2020

² A. SreedharaMenon, *Kerala District Gazetteers Kottayam*, State Editor, Kerala Gazetteers Trivandrum, 1975, pp.105

Forest and Hilly Soils

The peermade, Udumbanchola and devikulam Taluks of the district are covered with this soil type. It is characterized by a surface layer of organic matter derived from the forest. It is rich in nitrogen but deficient in other plant food.

Laterite Soil

These soils are porous, well drained with poor water holding capacity. They are usually of low fertility. They contain a fair amount of organic matter and nitrogen but are deficient in phosphorus, potash and lime.

Red Soil

They are deep red in color due to ferric oxide content and are deficient in organic matter and major plant nutrients.³

Geologically Peermade can be divided into three major belts-peninsular Genesis Complex, Charnockite group of rocks and Migmatitic Complex. The oldest rock of the area belongs to peninsular genesis Complex represented by granite genesis. The rocks are well foliated and show regional folding as well.⁴

Climate and Rainfall

The Peermade lies on 962m above sea level. This city has a tropical climate. Most months of the year are marked by significant rainfall. The short dry season has little impact. The annual rainfall in Peermade is 2295mm/90.4inch. The average annual temperature is 22.4 degree Celsius/ 72.3 degree F in Peermade. The least amount of rainfall occurs in January. The average in this month is 22mm/0.9 inch. The greatest amount of precipitation occurs in July, with an average of 475mm/18.7inch. The Temperature is highest on average in May, at around 24.2 degree Celsius/75.6degree F.⁵

³ Ibid. p. 106

⁴ Department of Mining and Geology, *District Survey Report of Minor Minerals Idukki District*, accessed from <http://www.dmg.kerala.gov.in> on 10/1/2021

⁵ *Climate of Peermade*, accessed from <http://en.climate-data.org/asia/india/kerala/peermade> accessed on 10/1/2021

The highland region is having a comparatively cold climate. In the places above an elevation of 2400 meters, the temperature at times falls down to freezing point in the winter. Occurrence of mist is usual in the highland regions lying over an elevation 1300 meters above mean sea level.

Original Inhabitation of the Land

Plackathadam Adivasi Settlement

Plackathadam is a tribal settlement situated in Peermade. There is no evidence for the origin of the name Plackathadam.⁶ During the period 1950-51, koina cultivation was started to control malaria in the Murinthappuzha, Valanjankanam area under the control of Travancore. There were 5 Malayara families working in the koina estate Kodungattussery, Kunjukutty Ambalathinkal, Kunjappan, Mannam Narayanan and Vepatt Kandan. They were given a plaque to work on as they farmed. Then people came from Palur Kavu and Palapra areas. Kapliyil Ayyappan, Kulanthodu Sankaran and Nedungattussery Konthi came here. In the early days, the village head was called a spectator. Kapli Ayyappan was the first spectator. From the 2000s onwards, he was known as *Ur Mooppen* by the government. K.K. Raghavan is now the elder of the village.

The settlers gave priority to the education of their children. Thus an Asan college was established. Narayanan Nair, a teacher, imparted literacy to the students. Until 1974, kernels and tapioca were the main crops.⁷

The Orali, Malappandaram and Malayaran tribes live in the hills of Peermade. The main tribal settlement here is Plackathadam.

Malayarayan

Malayarayan are at the fore front in areas like education and economy. There are Malayarayan in the administration up to the district collector in the post their livelihood was stored in forest resources. Now they cultivate Rubber, Nutmeg and vanilla. According to census 30,444 Malayarayan are lived in Kerala.⁸ Their traditional villages situated in Idukki and Kottayam districts. Majority of the population follows Hindu

⁶ http://universalrecordmedia.blogspot.com/2020/10/blog-post_7.html accessed on 10/1/2021.

⁷ Sunil Joseph, *plackathadamennagirivargacolonyudeutbhavavumcharithravum(m)*, Universal Record Media, accessed on 11/1/2021

⁸ Sunil Joseph op. cit.

religion. Malayarans are opened to exploitation of their illiteracy and cultural uniqueness for centuries. Traditional art forms include Ivarkali, Koladikali. Ivarkali tells the story of panchapandavas and is used to worship devi. In 1878, the arduous mission Hendry baker junior, died leaving a legacy of eleven churches and 27 schools, which he founded in these areas. With this, the history of the hill Arayan or Malayaran mission took a new turn.⁹ In the early days, deforestation and replanting existed. At that time, there was only paddy cultivation. Their only aim was to cultivate the paddy they needed. In the early days, the practice of buying money in Thodupuzha with their surplus paddy was nonexistent. They took it away and bought cloth and salt instead. It was not until much later that other crops began to be cultivated. Tapioca, pepper, rubber are planted later. The wedding ceremony is held in a tent in the brides' home backyard. Neighbors and relatives will be invited. The bride and groom wear white dress. The groom bind his forehead women required to have tops and ear muffs. But with the reform, young people are getting married. Hunting is common in Malayarans. Hunting is mainly done as a part of agricultural protection. First they use knife and axe. Then they moved to use gun. They had a habit of raising hunting dogs.¹⁰

Urali

Uralis one of the earliest tribes in Kerala, are mostly found in the Idukki hills. Also known as urali, uraly and orali, agriculture is the main occupation and is also experts in creating household utensils using cane. Besides this they are considered to be the expertise in the tradition of collecting honey from trees. Some of the main festivals like Onam, Vishu and *Puthari* (Related to harvesting) and for all festivals they have dance and songs. One of the popular art forms of Urali tribe is the *Malankoothu*, which they will perform as part of the ritual and also of festivals. Performed by both men and women, in this circular dance the senior member of the community will lead the performance by singing the song and handling the music instruments. Dancers along with singing have to move their body by bending it into forward and backwards. Musical instruments used for *Malankoothu* are *Udukku*, *Kuzhal* and *Para*. And dancing will be lasted till in the

⁹ Kanchiyar Rajan, *Idukkiyile Gothrakalalakalum Samskaravum (m)*, Idukki District Panchayat, 2000, p. 98

¹⁰ Kanchiyar Rajan, op.cit, p. 100

dawn. Hunting was a part of their life it was also celebrated. The hunt was conducted in the wild. For this they use axe, knife, gun.¹¹

Malappandarams

Malappandarams are found in regions where they are unaffected by the competition and influence of other people and, therefore enjoy full freedom for the continuance of a nomadic life. Gregariousness would be a positive disadvantage to them under such conditions. Being nomadic hunters they have no permanent habitations. Their family seldom consists of more than two or three members. The huts are of the simplest pattern, built of jungle wood posts with a lean-to roof thatched with plantain leaves. A fire is kept going at all times to keep them warm. Their clothes are scanty. They are dark brown in complexion and short in stature. The hard life they lead in jungle has made them strong and sturdy. Malappandarans also called Hill Pandarams.

They live primarily in settled colonies in the forested mountains near the temple complex to Lord Ayyappa at Sabarimala, a major pilgrimage destination in the state of Kerala, Idukki. Economy: Nomadic gathering and hunting in the forest have traditionally provided the basis of their economy, which is supplemented by trading forest products with the farming villages in the plains, for whom they also occasionally do wage labour. According to the census of 1991 there are 2939 Malappandarams living in Kerala among this 6.94% of population work in Industrial sector. They use a mixture of Tamil and Malayalam language. Girls are married both before and after puberty. Marriage generally contracted between cross cousins. The exchange of sisters in marriage is also practiced. Marriage is celebrated at the bride's house. When a girl attains puberty, she remains in a small shed about a hundred yards away from the hut. Pollution lasts for 16 days. The dead are buried. After burial the tribe deserts the locality and moves on to another place. Death pollution lasts for 8 days. On the ninth day, the chief mourner gives a feast to the villages in honor of the dead.¹²

¹¹ Kanchiyar Rajan and K.R. Harilal, *Idukkiyile Gothrakalalakalum Samskaravum (m)*, Idukki District Panchayat, 2000, p. 140

¹² Manoj Mathirapilly, *Idukki, Desam, Charithram, Samskaram (m)*, Geo Books, Kattappana, 2017, p. 123

Forest and Their Types

Long time ago the Tea Plantations in Peermade hill were with thick forest. Tropical evergreen forest and semi evergreen forests are found mostly in these areas. However the sylvan wealth of the district and the animal life are fastly disintegrating due to deforestation, indiscriminate felling of trees and encroachment. The important types of trees found in the forests are Rose wood, Teak, Pyne, etc... The plantation crops like Tea, Coffee, Rubber, and Cardamom etc...Are grown abundantly in this region ¹³

The types of forests in these areas are:

Tropical Evergreen Forest

It is an inferior variety of the typical evergreen forest, reaching to a maximum height of 10m. This type of forest abounds in the Andaman and Western Ghats. They are usually seen on the Western Ghats. They are usually seen on the slopes and tops of the hills. These forests have high windless favorable soil. Rain fall is usually high. They occupy about seven percent of the earth's land surface and harbours more than half of the world's plants and animals. They are mostly found near the equator. These forests are dense and multi layered. They harbour many types of plants and animals. The trees are evergreen as there is no period of drought. These evergreens are characterized by the great luxuriance of their vegetation which consists of several tiers, the highest containing lofty trees often with huge buttresses at the base and the lowest containing dense evergreen shrubby undergrowth. There will be heavy rainfall, high atmospheric humidity and comparatively short dry season.

Wet - Evergreen and Semi-Evergreen Forest

In Kerala, wet evergreen forests are mostly confined to the wind ward side of the Western Ghats where rainfall is above 200mm. By taking into account the distribution pattern of certain characteristic species, which reflect the climatic variations of the forest are further subdivided into eight main floristic and three faces. All these types are classified according to low, medium, high. ¹⁴The wet evergreen forests are characterized by tall, straight evergreen trees that have a buttressed trunk or root on three sides like a

¹³ Census of India, *District Census Handbook Idukki*, Directorate of Census Operations Kerala, 2011, p. 23

¹⁴ <http://www.forest.kerala.gov.in/idukki> accessed on 11/1/2021

tripod that helps to keep a tree upright during a storm. The most common trees that are found here are jack fruit, mango etc. The semi evergreen forests have a mixture of the wet evergreen trees and the moist deciduous trees.

The forest is dense and is filled with a large variety of trees of both types. The semi evergreen forests are home to exotic species such as flying squirrel, Malabar civet, brown mongoose, nilgirimante etc. These types of forests are mainly seen in the slopes and hilly regions of Western Ghats and Andaman. It is a place where high winds are experienced. Wet evergreen and semi evergreen climax forests are seen in the regions of Western Ghats where wind wall is high.¹⁵

Moist Deciduous Forest

The south Western Ghats moist deciduous forest is a tropical moist broadleaf forest ecoregion of Southern India. It covers the southern portion of the Western Ghats range and the Nilgiri Hills between 250 and 1000 meters elevation in Kerala, Karnataka and Tamil Nadu states. It covers an area of 23,676 km square. The climate of the ecoregion is tropical, and varies with elevation and exposure. Average temperatures are generally cooler than in the adjacent lowlands, and decrease with increasing elevation. Moist deciduous forests are the mixture of trees and grasses. The main species found in these forests are teak, Sal, rosewood, bamboo etc... It is comparatively easy to exploit these forests due to their high degree of gregariousness.¹⁶

Flora

Topographic and climatic conditions play an important part in the determination and distribution of the flora of a place. Based on the physical features the Peermade can be divided into two natural divisions.

1. The low land
2. The highland

The highland constitutes about 73% of the area of the place. It comprises of mountain ranges, valleys and the lower ground from which mountains arise. These hills and the lower ground from which they arise together constitute The High Ranges.

¹⁵ www.forest.kerala.gov.in/forest-types-in-Kerala accessed on 11/1/2021

¹⁶ <https://abhipedia.com/Article/Types-and-characteristics-of-Forests>, accessed on 11/1/2021

The peaks of the high ranges are of varying elevations. Ponmudi hills are at a considerable distance to the south of Peermade and have an average height of 924.94 meters. One of the hills has an elevation of 1828 meters. The district has a tropical humid climate; the hot season is oppressive in the plateau but the climate is cool and pleasant in the high ranges and cardamom hills. The western side of the chain of mountains receives the maximum atmospheric precipitation and consequently the slopes are clothed in a dense mass of vegetation.¹⁷

The plants here are mostly of the herbaceous types which are all pubescent hairy and often aromatic. Trees like pines *suylvestris*, *cupressus* and *eucalyptus* are found here. These are not generally found at the lower elevations. Shrubby forms are rare, but many under shrubs and grasses are met with. Bulbous plants as lilies and orchids like *Hebenaria*, *peristylis*, *satyrium* are found here. The Tea Plant is extensively cultivated in this region. The rain forest area is found in places where there is mean annual temperature, with rainfall of over 2.03 meters evenly distributed throughout the year. The climate in such areas is warm and moist and the vegetation most luxuriant. Plantations of Pararubber are seen in parts of the forest which of well distributed rainfall. The whole of these area is thickly populated and all the important food crops and other plants of other economic importance are cultivated in these regions.¹⁸

Fauna

From the fanatic point of view this area is peculiar share to some extent with the Western Ghats. This area have a typical forest were animals and jungle fauna mix. In the forest the best known and dreaded animals are the larger cats, carnivores animals beautifully adapted for catching living prey which they hunt, mostly singly, at night. In the forest also are the hyenas true carnivores animals attacking small game, and destroying them. Once they were quite abundant but now much reduced.

The elephants are true denizens of the forest along the eastern border descending lower during the monsoons where they often are very destructive to cultivation.

Typical Forest Birds are the Hornbills Vultures and the queer owl with a frightening shrieking cry bursting out suddenly at dead of night. Being gifted with wings for easy

¹⁷ A. SreedharaMenon, *Kerala District Gazetteers*, Kerala Gazetteers Trivandrum, 1975, p. 552

¹⁸ A. SreedharaMenon, op.cit, p. 554

aerial locomotion many of the birds move from the foresters to the hilly regions and even wander into the low lying plains.

A close ally of the civets is the palm-civet or Toddy cat occurring in low lands and loving to dwell with humans. They have the habit of climbing Palmyra tapped for toddy and stealing the toddy that has collected in the tappers pot. They are highly destructive in coffee plantations and are a menace to poultry.

Mongoose and allied types live in the hilly scrubby jungles adjoining the foresters and extended to the low country with rocks and small vegetation. These animals have been, from time immemorial, regarded as the beneficiaries to humanity since they destroy the dreaded snakes. They are too great immune to snake venom but their safety when attacking snakes seems to be more in their extreme agility. In movements and erectile property of the long of their body which gives the snake wrong idea for their size so that often when they strike, they miss.¹⁹

Grasslands

Extensive areas of pure grasslands are seen occurring in these areas. Patches of stunted tree growth are observed along the water courses down to the lower slopes of the combined effects of shallow soil, annual fires, excessive grazing and practice of shifting cultivation in the past. The determination of the ecological status of the grasslands of the peermade plateau calls for thorough investigation and research.²⁰

The grassland of the Peermade which is the result of successive annual fires is planted with by isolated fire resisting species such as *phylanthus* and *pterocarpas* with rampant growth of elephant grass. Owing to the continued forest fires the elimination of surface soil especially from hill slopes is very conspicuous by poor growth of elephant grass on such slopes and luxurious growth in the lower alluvial flats²¹

¹⁹ Ibid, p. 575-578

²⁰ Ibid, p. 578-579

²¹ A Sreedharamenon, op. cit. p. 154-159

Chapter II

PEERMADE ON ITS TRANSFORMATION

In this chapter we discuss about the coming of plantation industry in to the Peermade hills along with the major planting companies and the other developments. The history of the plantation industry in the High Ranges dates back to the 18th century when the British started cultivating coffee and tea as part of the colonial rule and occupation. Missionary Hentry baker junior started the coffee plantation in 1860 at elappara. The major plantation industries in Peermade are Tea, Coffee, Rubber, Cinchona and Cardamom. The history of the emergence of plantations in Travancore areas were especially based on the context of the highland areas such as Peermade, kannandevan hills, Anjunad valley and the Mundakkayam valley. The first plantation estates in Peermade are Tyford, Ashley, Stagbrook, Peshurest etc...¹ At this time John Danial Munroe, son of forest conservator Urban Rihose Munroe married to Henritta, younger daughter of Hentry Baker and tried to develop plantations in Peermade with baker brothers and opened the bisonvalley plantation.

Emergence of Coffee Plantation

The Bakers, Henrys senior and Amelia, daughter of Daniel Frederick Kohlhoff, Chief Secretary to the Raja of Tanjore and brother of Rev. J.C Kohlhoff of the Tanjore mission,² are chiefly remembered for their work in the educational field. Amelia Baker opened the first school for girls in Travancore. They found time to raise 11 of their own children, 6

¹ Fr. J. Kurias, *Highranginte Kudiyetta Charithram*, A.K.C.C. Diocese of Idukki, 2012, p.54

² Rittu Mathew Siby, *Making a colony Through Roads, History of Plantation Roads in the Highrange*, Unpublished M.A Dissertation Submitted to M.G University, Kottayam, 2019, p. 21.

boys and 5 girls. Three of these boys were to play a decisive part in opening up of Peermade.³When Colonel Munro left India in 1819(Resident and Divan of Travancore from 1811-1814 to Rani Lakshmi Bai).⁴

The sight of the empty hills overlooking the Mundakkayam valley was an invitation to the adventurous Bakers from their hill mission along the banks of 'Herons Pool'. By the time to launch his son Harry, into career, his thought turned the idea of planting coffee in Peermade. Peermade or pir-madu, as it was then called derives its name from a Muslim hermit whose remains are buried on a hill overlooking Peruvanthanam the forest where the pir arrived. Peermade was a staying post on the track over the hills from the east hence came the Tamil traders. The Travancore government was well aware that plantation crops were useful source of revenue so that there was little difficulty in obtaining a grant of land. In fact the government was doing as much as possible to encourage development. Henry Baker Jr. acquired a tract of land in 1860 which is now covered by Tyford and Vembanad and put it under the management of F.G Richardson who opened part of it in 1861.⁵

Henry Baker the missionary who came to Peermade had an idea of planting coffee in the new clearings of Peermade. He acquired a free land grant from the Travancore government and to coffee estates were raised near Periyar and later it was increased to eight. Soon other planters followed him and Peermade became an active coffee

³ Ibid., p. 21

⁴ Ibid., p. 22

⁵ George Abraham, *The Path to the Hills: History of the Plantations of Western Ghats, Southern India: A Journey Along the Plantations and its Tourist Destinations*, Stayhomz Ltd., Kottayam, Kerala, 2010, p.310

cultivating area by 1860s. The first seed brought from wayand. The small plants were brought as head load during the time.⁶

As in the case of Ashambo, near Trivandrum, where blocks of land has been opened by Scottish planters from Ceylon, the land in Peermade was a free grant. In other parts of the world where the CMS were represented, notably in Australia, some provisions for the feature of missionary families was made through the purchase of land, usually for agriculture, but this was never the procedure in India. The land in Peermedu having been freely obtained, the caoital for development may have been provided by Henry bakers wife's family the kitchins. They may also have supplied the money for their in brother in law. George baker began clearing and planting Hope, Ashley and Stagbrook in 1862, freshly joined by their cousin J.D Munro on Ashley and Robert baker on Stagbrook and F.G Richardson on Tyford, the first clearing were gradually being planted with coffee.

Woodlands first cleared in 1867 by a man named Burroughs, but the capital was partly provided by a general Stevenson, who was distantly related to the bakers. In 1866 Richardson sold back his share to the bakers and moved on to Periyar valley. F. G was later to play a big part in the districts developments. Soon John Daniel Munro was responsible for much of the openings in Peermade. J.D Munro opened a clearing called Volong John at the head of the Ghats and further north opened Glenrock estate and Bison valley estate, along with Ashley estate.⁷

The Peermade hills originally belong to the Rajah or chief of Punjar, from whom the Travancore government took over the whole district in exchange for a certain amount of

⁶ Gerge Thengummoottil, op. cit., p. 34

⁷ George Abraham, op. cit.p. 310

paddy land near Kottayam. The government has rendered every help to the planters by opening up roads, traces throughout the districts; which has led to the circulation of enormous European capital in the country and additional revenue to the state. There was a time, when, starting from Kottayam on his pony to ride to Peermade Ghats constructed at an enormous cost. Unable to commence work on the hills owing to the lateness of the season when they arrived in India, they made nurseries in the low country, and when their new clearing was ready had the plants carried up to the estates on coolies' heads. The trees from which the seed was obtained were grown in the ordinary natural, never topped or pruned, the result was in every way highly satisfactory. The first clearings not only did well and bore handsome crops for over 30 years, but the old trees are still in existence, having outlived hundreds of acres planted up subsequently on various estates with seeds procured from all parts of south India. Owing to bad crops and worse prices, the old place has of late years been more or less abandoned, but will, doubtless, ere long, take new lease of life and be as successful as a tea garden as it had been as a coffee estate.

Munro cleared the main path from Peermade down which the cardamom and coffee was carried by bullocks and went on to cut a bridle path throughout Peermade, making his way beyond Elappara and along the Chinthalar valley.⁸ He and his cousins lived in bamboo huts put up by the Mannans; their roofs thatched with lemon grass, the lives brought down to four feet from the ground to protect them from the monsoon gales. Until the cart track was cut their food was brought up from the Kottayam by head load and it consisted almost solely of rice.

⁸ Heather Lovatt M.A, *A Short History of the Peermade and Vandipperi District*, 1972, p. 7

As the malayarayans would not work for higher, or carry headloads, Harry Baker brought up labour from Kottayam, and as long as coffee was grown and labor requirements were seasonal, most of the labor came from Travancore. Before 1886 the number of labors normally employed was not more than 1400, which swelled to 4000 during the coffee harvest, but even after the abolition of predial slavery in Travancore in the middle of the century, it was difficult to get enough laborers to come up from the west coast where there was no shortage of food or local employment. Consequently labour was also enlisted outside of Travancore and by 1887 there were sufficient Tamil labourers employed in Peermade and Vandiperiyar for the Rev. Henry Baker to propose the establishment of a Tamil colony mission in Peermade. In 1888, the C.M.S. noting the rapid increase in the Tamil population, engaged a Tamil clergyman, the Rev. Nallathambi, who had previously worked in the Nilgiris. He remained pastor of St. George until his death.⁹

Hardly had coffee cultivation got underway in 1870 in the district, than it was threatened by leaf disease which was first noticed in Ceylon in 1878 then reached Mysore and in 1875 reached Ashamboor in south Travancore. The disease inevitably reached Peermade and many coffee estates were abandoned. George Baker soon moved back to lower country to Kottayam to embark on his outstanding particular achievement—reclamation of mangrove swamps to form a coconut plantation on the edges of Vembanad Lake at Kumarakom.

⁹ Ibid., p. 9

By, 1886 only twelve planters remained, six having left the previous year. The prospects of planting coffee looked poor.¹⁰ By 1905 there only 500 acre of coffee under cultivation in the district. By 1868 the work of forest department had grown to such an extent that the department had control over the procurement of beeswax, cardamom, black wood, ebony, teak, sandal wood and even elephants. Travancore state had a monopoly over these good and dispute with east india company were common. Cultivation cardamom had, of course been encouraged by the Travancore kings for over almost a century and the nayar brigades were send up to the hills between 1849 and 1896, were they would be stationed at frontier stations of Thavalams such as valakkappara near kumily. Meanwhile JD Munro extended his interest beyond coffee to take charge of forestry work 8in cardamom hills. As the government of Travancore had earlier already broadened their monopoly of forest produces, a new post of superintend and magistrate of cardamom hills was created to supervise the cultivation and collection of cardamom, prevent theft of forest produce and see that growers paid their dues. JD Munro was the superintend. He was also expected to trap elephants and act as magistrate who was later taken over by Robert Baker the sixth Baker brother. He died untimely of a malaria attack aged 32 in 1877.¹¹

Emergence of Tea Plantations

During the British rule the whole of the Kerala was surveyed for geographic features like humidity and temperature. It was found that Peermade was best suitable for the cultivation of tea. Also the coffee plantations were all destroyed due to the leaf

¹⁰ V. Nagam Aiya, *The Travancore State Manual Vol. 1*, Gazatters Department of Kerala, Trivandrum, 1999, p. 14

¹¹ George Abraham, op. cit., p. 311

disease. All this made the planters clear the coffee plants and plant tea bush. For well growth tea require an altitude of 1000 meter above sea level.¹²

The first record of commercial cultivation tea in Peermade was in penshrust estate, were F.M Parker opened 25 acres in 1875. At first, the new clearings were planted with Assam seeds, G.L. Ackworth planed the whole of Aranakal, deepened division with it. Later a road had to be cut up to it from the coffee curing yard. Planting at that time was still very much in the experimental stage and various crops were tried to find the best substitute for coffee. Cinchona was widely planted between 1870 and 1880 when quinine was selling ten to twelve shillings and ounce. The last of Glenmary estate's cinchona trees were cut down in 1914.

Fairfield had been opened by a Mr. Crawford. Tea was first planted in 1882. In 1906 the estate was owned by the honorable Booth Willbraham, who sold a share in the property to RP. Rossier, who managed the estate. Another part owner at the time was lady Bertha Dawkins. The Assam seeds had been obtained from castefield in Nilgiriwere a planter named Bruce had settled there after some years in Assam. The owner of Mount Estate, CJ.Maltby and also F.G Richardson bought seeds from castefield and used to grow seed bearers from which the supplied the needs of the other planters, and for several years the sale of seeds throughout Travancore was a profitable source of income.

The plantation industry in India was stimulated by the trade boom in Britain in 1860 increasing the demand of tea, sugar and other commodities while the openings of the Suez Canal in 1869 improved trade conditions between east and west. These developments were reflected in changing conditions in plantation industry were, although proprietary planters remained in majority, in 1890 joint stock companies appeared in

¹² Gerge Thengummoottil, op.cit., P. 37

Mundakkayam , Peermade ,and Periyar. Coffee planting needed little capital, land was cheap and manufacturing simple, cultivation and labour seasonal. Tea was a different matter. The planters who remained in the district struggled through the years after coffee was adversely affected from 1885, living hand to mouth, still hopeful of a windfall that would help the replenish their resources.¹³

Already in 1834 the government had appointed a commission to study the prospects of tea cultivation in India, but unfortunately they overlooked the merits of indigenous tea and advised the import of seed from China. In 1835 boxes of plants send from Calcutta to the Nilgiris, and at the same times to the Coorg, Mysore and to the Agri-horticulture society in Madras. These plants had been raised from seed brought from China and were the source of the Peermade hybrid China, the seeds of which were obtained from the Neelgiris. This experiment using China tea and Chinese methods of manufacture not a success.

Always on the lookout for profitable new lines in trade and industry the government through its representatives continued to take lively interest to in this new plantation crop. General Cullen, Resident in Travancore, noted in 1859-“The tree thrives well in Travancore territory..... I first met it within the coffee plantations of Mr. Huxham in the year 1841 on the root from quilone to courtallam, at a farm called Culdoorty. Some ten to fifteen trees from twenty two twenty five and thirty feet high. I procured plants from Mr. Huxham and put them down in an experimental spice garden which I established some twelve years ago at thousand feet on hill in south Travancore”. He goes

¹³ Rittu Mathew Siby,op. cit., p. 28

on to draw the attention of the government to the cardamom hills as especially suited to tea cultivation.¹⁴

Many of them tried to carry on by selling part of their land or by mortgaging their estates. A case to point out were the owners of Newlands and Bonami was in 1887 held by Frank Watts, VeerswamiNaickar and pechiappaNaickar, shares who five years later sold their shares to Howard Eagan and R.S. Imary. Almost immediately the new owners mortgaged the property to James Darragh, a merchant prince of the west coast who made a fortune as the first exporter of copra to European ports. In 1894, we find 364 acres under coffee assigned to Rev. J. page, procurator of St. Joseph College Trichinapoly who appointed J.E. Piggot as their manager. According to Piggot, in 1899 all three estates were in a semi-abandoned condition owing to ravages of Malaria, and it may be that the Jesuites found the property and unprofitable legacy, for in 1912 they disposed it in August 1913. They conveyed the property to Wallardie Tea Estate Company Ltd part of Messer's Harrison & Cross field Ltd.¹⁵

Heather Lovatt writes: 'Munro cleared the main path from Peermade to the west coast town through which cardamom and coffee was carried by bullock, and then went on to cut bridle paths throughout Peermade making his way to Elappara and along Cheenthalar Valley. He and his cousins lived in bamboo huts, put up by Mannans, the roofs thatched with lemon grass, the leaves brought down to four feet from the ground to protect them from monsoon gales. Until the cart track was cut their food was brought up from Kottayam by head load and it consisted solely of rice, as they all were handy with a gun and there was no shortage for game. J.D Munro was particularly keen on Shikar and

¹⁴ Ibid., p.11

¹⁵ George Abraham, Op. cit., p. 357-358

his interest took him far afield until he reached the high ranges of Munnar by way of Cheenthalar. At the request of Travancore and the report dated 8th March 1877, can be seen today in the office of Deviculam Taluk office. The explorations to the impenetrable regions lead the Turner brothers to play an important part in opening of Kannan Devan Hills in 1878.

Munro came back to Ashley estate where he died in 1895 aged sixty three being paralyzed two previous years. In his time J.D. Munro used his connection with the royalty. And the stage was well set for planters to invest at the right crop suitable for global demand. At the same time his foresight of preservation of valuable forest produce while plantation establishments are pursued is commendable. This was clear in his survey submitted on his prospects of north Travancore. By 1893 planters wielded a great deal of enthusiasm to try tea with their capital and lobbied extensively for wasteland to be opened up. However tea estates need large investments, causing small time planters to move out. The Travancore hills became more able by 1902s and waves of settlers were upon the hill planting tea which succeeded.¹⁶

Emergence of Rubber Plantations

The first successful attempt however was started by a band of planters who formed the 'periyar syndicate' in 1902 with Messers, J.J. Murphy, J.A. Hunter, K.E. Nicoll and C.M.F. Ross, who commenced prospecting for rubber land on the banks of periyar river. A small plot was opened in Mankulam on the western precipices of the kannan divan hills, J.J. Murphy in 1901 which is said to have failed due to high elevations. In August 1902 Messers, J.A. Hunter, K.K. Nicoll Thomson commenced

¹⁶ Rittu Mathew Siby, op. cit., pp. 29-30

planting at Thattekad in the erstwhile Travancore state that was the first rubber estate in south India to come into existence.¹⁷

Rubber was experimentally planted around Peermade and was concluded that the place was not suitable for rubber plantation. Continuous rain and strong winds destroyed the soft wood trees like rubber trees. As a result rubber is not grown around Peermade, though little grown on the slopes of Western Ghats around Peermade, around the mundakkayam valley.

JJ Murphy was an Irish planter who was the first to try Rubber plantations at Peermade. He was born in Dublin in a family of shippers and bankers. That in a way set JJ Murphy free, at the age of 29. And there was the whole wide, wild world before him. Murphy's interest turned to rubber. Since 1872 the India office in London had been trying to introduce hevea rubber plants in India without any success. But Murphy, along with three associates, established the first rubber plantation in the country at a place called Alwaye. Then in 1904, the man went for his own private rubber plantation at Yendayar, the place that was to be his home till death.

At Yendayar Murphy planted tea as well, and scored another first by organizing pepper cultivation on plantation pattern. Till then, like cardamom, pepper too was procured from wild growth and small farmers. The Irishman was an enlightened employer. Once he told the planter's association of which he was the chairman, "so long as we pay fair rates and look after our coolies well, we need not worry much." At once time I used to visit the mundakkayam club, which Murphy established, rather frequently. I heard the following story there.

¹⁷ George Abraham, op. cit., p.521

When the First World War began, Murphy went to Madras to enlist. The officer concerned pointed out that the age limit for requirement was 40. The Irishman was around 42 then. He was upset, but there was nothing any one could do about his majesty's regulations. Murphy told the officer, "very well, but don't blame me if you lose the bloody war", and walked out. JJ Murphy died on May 9, 1957. He was buried at yendayar.¹⁸

Emergence of cinchona Plantation

Cinchona is a type of plant planted in Peermade hills. It is used as a medicine for malaria. Malaria is always a big problem. Many people died due to the severity of the disease. This disease, which is transmitted by Anopheles mosquitoes, spreads rapidly in the plantation areas. Cinchona was planted for the protection from this disease. The bark product obtained from this was used as an antidote.¹⁹

Emergence of Cardamom Plantation

Cardamom grows mostly at an altitude of 1500m above sea level usually in the wild. It was collected by tribes and sold in the local markets. Cardamom cultivation was not profitable in a large scale though some casual planters grew cardamom in a small scale. During the 18th century there was a decrease in the demand for cardamom due to overproduction in Sri Lanka.

¹⁸ George Thengumoottil, op. cit., p. 36

¹⁹ Personal interview with Mr. Sunil Abraham, Secretary, St. George CSI Church, Peermade, on 1/12/2020

Now cardamom is cultivated in large scale around Peermade. The ever growing demand for spices in Europe has give big money to cardamom planters. The other spices like Pepper, Ginger, Clove, Turmeric etc are grown in small amount near Peermade.²⁰

Major Plantation Companies

We find the frame of history in the references of the day to day developments of the two companies floated in the following years. The year 1897 was an important landmark in the history of the district for it was in that years that the Travancore Tea Estates company was registered with an authorized capital of 1,50,000 pounds. ²¹Among the seven founding members were H.M. Knight and William Mackenzie, owners of bonami estate, who had interest in other estates. Mackenzie had left India after opening the Talliyar estate with John Payne in 1887. He was back in Talliyar from 1938 as a manager still being a director of T.T. Estates.

The Tyford and Ashley Tea Estates Company Ltd

Four well known estates namely, Tyford, Vembanad, Ashley and Bison Valley, are historical interesting as they belongs to the oldest plantations. The first of these properties were originally obtained by Rev. Mr. Baker, who arrived in Travancore in 1819, and they remain in the possession of the Bakers till the present time. Another family deserves the mention, however, in connection with these estates, as the Ashley and Bison Valley were opened by Mr. JD Munro, who was a contemporary of Mr. Baker and it is interesting to note that descendents of these pioneers are signatories to the document of the formation of the Tyford and Ashley Tea Estates Company Ltd. Vambanad factory is considered as

²⁰ Ibid., p. 35

²¹ George Abraham Pottamkulam, OP.Cit., P.317

the finest in the district which can handle 7, 00,000 ib of made tea. The Ashley factory can handle 3, 00,000ib of tea in the course of a year.²²

Travancore Tea Estate Company

1897 was an important landmark in the history of the district for it was in that year that the Travancore Tea Estate Company was registered with an authorized capital of \$150, 000. Among the seven founding members were H. M Knight and William Mackenize, owners of Bon Ami who has had interests in other estates. William Mackenize had left India some years earlier after opening Talliar Estate in the high range, but knight become the first chairman. Rutherford had no experience of South India but while Ceylon had written a number of standard textbooks on planting.²³ There was a close association of interests between South India and Ceylon and for many years subsequently it was the practice to recruit both staff and labour with Ceylon experience.

The first estates acquired by the new company were Bon Ami, Mount Munjamullay, and Koliekanam, whose previous owners held the majority shares. The company also applied to government for direct grants of land, and in 1899 the areas now covered by Injikadu, Pasumullay and Nellikai were bought by them. During 1897 Thengakal was bought from the Revs. Leo Base and Joseph page, in 1898 pambanar which consisted of woolbedding division owned by Mrs. R. S. Imray, and Brighton division owned by the Reverends Leo Base and Joseph Page Granby, whose original title deed was dated 1877, was acquired by the company from Edward Harley in 1899.²⁴

The Peermade Tea Company Ltd.

²² George Abraham Pottamkulam, op. cit., p.370

²³ George Abraham Pottamkulam, op. cit., p.371

²⁴ Ibid. p.14

A Syndicate of planters in the neighborhood of Peermade acquired the cheenthalar estate of 2250 acres in 1911 and they developed and planted 750 acres in the following year. The property together with its then existing crops, were sold in 1914, to the Peermade. Tea co ltd whose registered office is at Cochin. The directors are Messer's pierce Leslie and co. ltd. The manager, T. C Forbes, is assisted by Mr. T. S. Corner and about 600 coolies are employed throughout the year. It is intended that 2000 acres will be opened up, planted with dark leaved north Indian indigenous tea, an acre of ground bearing 2600 bushes cheenthalar property is drained in a systematic manner. The annual rainfall is 160 inches.²⁵

Central Travancore Planters Association

During those years, there were a few opportunities for planters to meet and discuss their problems. In the hills they had to rely on their own resources for recruitment of labour and the organization of their estates. During the 1880 yearly race meetings were held by coffee planters at Trivandrum which was within easy reach of Ashambo, the major coffee area in south Travancore. Here as many as sixty planters and their wives gathered to celebrate planter's week, which included dinner given by maharaja which coincided with the annual general meeting of the Travancore planters association. Once or twice Peermade planters sent their representatives to Trivandrum, but the journey was long and uncomfortable.

As the number of planters in Peermade grew, it seemed feasible to form a local association and it was done at the suggestion of Harry Clark and Mr. F.M. Parker in 1874 when Peermade planters association came into being. Meetings were held in turns in members' bungalows but these meetings did not take place regularly. Sometimes not once

²⁵ Ibid., p.15

a year, in fact it happened only when planters wanted something from government. Ashamboos were badly hit by coffee leaf diseases and from that time on Peermade grew in importance at the expenses of the south.²⁶

By 1894 it was doubtful whether the Travancore Planters Association could muster as many as twenty men for one of their meetings, and it was then that G. L. Ackworth, the owner of Arnakal, who was Hon. Secretary of the Peermade Association, that the Travancore planters association change to south Travancore and the kannandevan association style itself north Travancore . his idea was to bring the name of Travancore and “Travancore Tea” more before the public. However, only his own association adopted the suggestion.²⁷

²⁶ George Abraham Pottamkulam, op.cit., p.354

²⁷ Ibid. pp.17-18

Chapter - III

RE-CONFIGURATION A BI PRODUCT

There are lot of changes were happened as an after effects of the European Arrival in the High Range soil. The improvement of road was one of the main effects of the advent of Europeans. Besides of the roads there are some other another important development also happened in another infrastructure facilities. The socio cultural changes were also happened in the total life of these peoples when the European arrival and the establishment of roads open a wide scale migration from Tamil areas and Travancore areas also. British building style and transport facilities were also imposed on the highland regions. This chapter will discuss the overall impact in the High Range areas after colonial expedition or the after the introduction of Plantations.

Immigration of Labour Force

Before the establishment of UPASI, Labour Department in 1914, recruitment of labour was a very haphazard business. Most of the people who lived in the district were engaged in the tea industry, which employed 6838 people. In the early days coffee cultivation was widespread in the Peermade areas. So there was no need for more workers in these areas. But later the expansion of Tea cultivation required more workers. This created a crisis for the planters. ¹Then they turned their attention to the Travancore outlying states and considered Tamil Nadu. The workers brought in by Kangani masters and Writers. They are also given a special commission.²

¹ Heather Lovatt and Peter De Jong, *History of Plantation in Peermade and Vandiperiyar*, , p. 28.

² Vishnu V. S, *Adiniveshathinte Semithery Vazhikal: Pallikkunnile Europe(M)*, Unpublished M.A Dissertation Submitted to M.G University, Kottayam, 2018, p. 84

The workers mainly came from Palani, Nagarcoil, Madurai and Tirunelveli. Poverty and starvation in Tamil Nadu in 1870 were the cause of significant migration of Tamil workers. In the early days, the number of malayalee workers was less than that of Tamils. The means of transport for Tamil workers to Peermade was via Cumbum and Teni.³ Absconding of labour was still a problem, but thanks to the UPASI Labour Department, recruitments was better regulated and if a worker bolted, the department helped to trace him and send him back to the estate, and to recover the advances outstanding against them.⁴ Agreements among planters to prevent crimpling had cut down the number of inter estate disputes. But the effect on this, in the absence of labour unions, was to diminish the liberty of the labourer still further.

Much of the difficulties in connection with the labour arose from the practice of giving advances as an inseparable part of enlistment; in fact it was impossible to persuade a plainsman to go to the hills without an advance of money. Only occasionally if a man had a large family working, did he realize his ambition of returning to his village with enough money to buy his own plot of land to settle down. Instead the enlisted worker, generally lived from day to day, spending what little cash he had for drinking and gambling, and numerous festivals and ceremonies which they hoped would make life more auspicious for him. He received no monthly wage, but issued weekly *Selavu* cash 6-8 *Anasto* buy his curry stuffs. On most of the states, he was credited with his weekly earnings, debited the cost of rice and cash advances, paid the balance due only clearing his debts to the *Kanganis*, who had recruited him, at the end of ten months for which he had been enlisted.⁵

³ Vishnu V. S, Op. Cit., p. 84

⁴ Rittu Mathew Siby, Op. Cit., p. 32

⁵ Rittu Mathew Siby. Op. Cit., p. 33

Specialized Craftsman

Most of the Malayalees and Tamils are wage labourers in the plantation areas. In addition, there was the section of Stone workers and Masons. During these periods, the specialized craftsman required for built roads, estate lines, Factories, borders in plantations and to construct culverts to prevent erosions. According to the British architectural tradition, the construction work was done using granite at that time. In addition, their style was combined with local style and made with the help of local workers. Other occupations were Kanganis, Drivers and Painters.⁶

Labour Camps

Labour camps popularly known as ‘Layams’ or estate lines. Layams is a special building built for the accommodation of plantation workers. The labour lines came to exist from the beginning of the coffee



Figure 3.1. 100 years old Estate Layam in Peermade. Photograph taken by reasercher.

plantations the labour lines are the houses located near to the plantations. The construction of the labour lines

started in 1840s and 1850s the lines varied in length, but were often as long as 100 yards. It was divided in to several tiny rooms, usually containing 6 to 8 people. By 1860s the standard of the labour lines changed and the lines now consists 6 to 10 rooms, each averaging about 150 square feet and contain 10 to 20 people. The labour lines helped the planters a steady supply of labour and it reduce the problem of bolting of labour.⁷

⁶ Vishnu V. S, Op. Cit., p. 85

⁷ Personal Interview with Mrs. Paattiyamma, Glen Mary Estate, Peermade.

The remarkable level of hierarchy existed in the estates. At the top of the organizational level there was the planter, the *Periyadorai* (big master), immediately behind him the European Assistant, the *Sinnadorai* (small master), who lived in the smaller bungalow. Below them were the native staff consisting of *kanakkapillai*, and others who ran the office. They lived in the quarters allotted to them. Beneath the staff was the 'Head Kangani', who had an overall charge of the labours. He had large rooms at the end of the lines. Beneath him was the *sesilarakanganyies* (Assistant Supervisor), those in charge of the various labour gangs. They had rooms within the lines that were superior to the labourers, but inferior to the Head Kangani. The worker quarters within the lines tended to be, by gang which was then organized by caste and village origin. A racial divide was present in the Estates.⁸

Estate Bazaars

Estate bazaars are the place where workers and their households get their daily necessities. Everything that need for an Estate can be found at the Estate Bazaars. The minimum price in the bazaars is 3 *Annas*. The bazaars were known in the name of Estates. The major Estate Bazaars in Peermade are Bon Ami, Pambanar and Glenmary.⁹ At the beginning of the century, steps had been taken to free labourers from the dependence on writers who, at one time controlled all their food supplies. Bazaars had been set up at Bon Ami and Pambanar, and the latter, which was very popular, was extended in 1903 when it was expected to bring in a rental of 800/- for T. T. Estates. Robert Imray, who was in charge of Manjumallay, was advised to open a similar one for his coolies.

⁸ Jijo Jayaraj, *Tea In Munnar: Tracing the History of Ecological Imperialism*, Unpublished M.A Dissertation Submitted to M.G University, Kottayam, 2012, p. 77

⁹ Personal Interview with Mr. Babu K, Glen Mary Estate, Peermade.

Bon Ami and Pambanar bazaars were burned to the ground in 1932 as precautionary measure to prevent plague. The vandipperiya bazaar luckily had mere space where a few Muslim traders came from Ceylon. There was then little money to buy clothes, the most a man owned was probably a dhoti, and his wife a couple of sarees. Rice was the staple diet of the labourers and was supplied at subsidized rates by the estates at 16 and half paise per *Edangazhito* as against paise in the open market. In 1951 the controlled price of rice was 83 paise per *Edangazhi*,¹⁰

Road Networks and Transportation

The basic development of Peermade also began during the period of British plantation industry. The construction of the bullock cart road from Kottayam to Peermade started in 1871 and was completed in 1872. By 1885, the bullock cart road reached Gudalur via Vandipperiya and Kumily. Bridges were built at Mundakkayam in 1903 and at Vandipperiya in 1907. J. D. Munroe constructs the road from kuttikkanam to cheenthalar via elappara.¹¹

The first mention in history of the facts of roads having been made was in 926 M. E., under the supervision of Rama Iyendalawa, when several good roads were opened for the convenience of the militia chiefly and for traffic and passengers as well. It should be borne in mind that traffic was conveyed on bullocks and donkeys before, cart roads being wholly unknown except on this side of fifty years, unlike the flat country of pandy which afforded natural facilities for cart traffic all the year round except during the rains and until the crops were cut, after which the whole land became fit for cart traffic and was covered with cart tracks in all directions. But on this coast that natural facility being out

¹⁰ George Abraham Pottamkulam, Op. Cit., p. 365.

¹¹ Vishnu V. S, Op. Cit., p. 55

of the question, the so called roads were merely open tracks intended for foot travelers, the nobility travelling only on horseback or plan keens.¹²

There were no roads in Travancore until 1860 when a cart road was built from Trivandrum through Aramboly Pass before this all transport except close to the backwaters was done by coolyporterage, a system still used many years later.¹³ In 1860, a Public Works Department was set up and this marked the beginning of an ambitious programmed in road building, the road between Kottayam and Gudalur being one of the first constructed. It was started in 1871 and completed thirteen years later at the cost of nearly four lakhs. Works on the Vandiperiyar Bridge began in 1902. Even with this road travelling was far from easy. Piggot took two days to reach Peermade from Alleppey where he came ashore from his steamer in a country craft, through rough surf.

In no time several British planters settled along the hills and started plantations clearing the forests. There were nearly ten estates around Peermade but the roads connecting them were not in a good condition. The road connecting Mundakkayam and Peermade was still the elephant corridor, a narrow route, which was not properly maintained.¹⁴

Coffee and Tea grown in Peermade was at first transported by pack bullocks and bandies to Kottayam and from there went by wallum to Alleppey for shipment per pound. Estates in Vandiperiyar sent their tea to Tuticorin, 210 miles distant by road and rail, and to facilitate the T. T. E. bought land in Cumbum in 1912 to build a company store. At the beginning of the century there were just over two thousand miles of cart roads in the state,

¹² V. NagamAiyya, *The Travancore State Manual Volume 3*, Government Press, Trivandrum, p. 217

¹³ Ibid., p. 38

¹⁴ George Thengumoottil, Op. Cit., p.14

of which over three hundred miles were maintained by planters. In those days the average cost of upkeep of a mile of road was Rs. 135/- per annum and, as the Government was always short of revenue, once roads had been built there was no much done to maintain them so that C. T. P. A. meetings recorded a perennial list of complaints about their condition.¹⁵

J. A. Richardson was also having trouble, for the breakdown of carting arrangements had held up transport of manure to S. I. T. E. estates, but fortunately he had already arranged to bring out two three motor lorries from England to carry goods and passengers between Mundakkayam and Kottayam. These arrived in 1912 and were so successful that two larger ones were ordered. He had hoped that these bigger lorries could be used to take tea down to Mundakkayam but, when the time came to try them out it was found that they could not climb the ghaut, his next idea was that it might be possible to send tea down by a ropeway.¹⁶

The road started from the foothills, present day 35th Mile, ascending to the peak of the hill and then moving along its brim to reach Peermade crossing present day Murinjappuzha, overlooking Peruvandanam. The present day road is a reconstruction of the road which was destroyed by the flood and landslide of 1924. The construction of a good road became an important topic of discussion, so as to carry goods and passengers up and down the hill. The widths of the tracks were increased so that carts could be pulled by horse. Estate Managers and the rich were the first lucky ones to ride horse cart along the narrow roads. There were horse sheds at Peermade and Mundakkayam.¹⁷

¹⁵ Ibid., p. 39

¹⁶ Ibid., p. 40-41.

¹⁷ George Thengumoottil, Op. Cit., p.14

Meanwhile people were still going up and down the ghat by bullock cart in 1923, and then on to Kottayam in a bus that had turn round and go up the hills in reverse, if the supply of petrol in the tank happened to be low. Horses were commonly used on the estates. Travelling at night, of course has its own hazards as there was always a chance of meeting elephants especially on the way to Thengakal and Moongalar, were the road ran close to either banks of Periyar river, and in the patch of swamps below Pasumallay near Ayyappancoil.

K. K. Road

One of the earliest road in the Travancore and the work was taken up by Dewan Sir Madhava Row, the road from Kottayam to Peermade being first finished in 1047 M. E. and that from Peermade to Gudalur in 1060 M. E. As the road passes right across the Travancore hills its construction involved enormous labour, time and money. The first section took nearly 8 years and the second 13 years to finish, the two together costing nearly 4 lakhs of rupees.¹⁸ This road passes through the villages of Kanjirappilly, Mundakkayam and Peermade in Travancore and from Gudalur the line has been extended by the British Government, to Kumily, Cumbum and Periyakulam. All the rivers and streams except the Periyar had been, the most important being that at Mundakkayam. This road was a grand in aid road. The Kottayam-Kumily Road was also known as 'Peermade Ghat Road'. The road descended to Gudallur, Cumbum and Teni in Tamil country, Teni was connected via Andipetti, Uslampetti and Madurai to Tuticorin Port on the East Coast. Kottayam was connected to Alappey, the chief port of Travancore, through inland water ways. Alternatively tea from Peermade could be taken to Cumbum and from there to Tuticorin. It was the first Road from the west to the Ghats. The

¹⁸Rittu Mathew Siby, Op. Cit., p. 50

construction of this road begins in 1860 and completed in 1880. The Government initiated the construction of this road after in the Narration of Richard Collins a CMS missionary who visited this road around 1840s.¹⁹

Cars to Peermade

J. A. Richardson was the first man to bring his Napier car to Peermade, driving it along the narrow cart road from Mundakkayam. But after its first momentous appearance at Peermade it was lodged at Mundakkayam and rarely driven to Peermade until 1915 as the cart road was scarcely motor able. J. A. Richardson was a planter who arrived from the district of Piggott in 1905.²⁰

The Mundakkayam & Peermade Motor Transport and Aerial Ropeway Co., Ltd.

Kuttikkanam is about a kilometer up the hill than Mundakkayam. To make transport simple, Richardson proposed for a ropeway to Mundakkaym from Kuttikkanam. The Mundakkayam Peermade Motor Transport and Aerial Ropeway Co., Ltd. were accordingly formed in 1914 with Richardson as Chairman, and he immediately ordered a survey to be made for a ropeway. But unfortunately the First World War broke out simultaneously and the ship bringing the machinery for the rope way was destroyed by the opponents in 1916 at the Mediterranean.²¹

The plans for the ropeway did not dissolve out and in 1924 the rope way was constructed. But it proved that it was intractable to carry along the ropeway and it was

¹⁹Rittu Mathew Siby, Op. Cit., p. 4

²⁰ George Thengumoottil, Op. Cit., p. 15

²¹ Ibid., p. 39

abandoned within a few years. The rope way started from a spot near the palace at Kuttikkanam along Peruvandanam down the hill to. Even today the remains of the old rope way can be found at Boyce Estate of Mundakkayam and the sheds and loading area at Kuttikkanam. Meanwhile people were still going up and down the ghat by bullock cart.²² In 1923 and then on a bus service started to Kottayam that had to turn round and go up the hills in reverse. If the supply of petrol in the tank happened to be low, Horses were used in the estates. From the year 1924 tea from Vandiperiyar was sent to the rail head at Bodi(Tamilnadu), a journey that took about a week.

St. George C. S. I. Church

The C. S. I. Church at Peermade was built by the support of the planters was many of the pioneers are laid to rest. J. D. Munro is the prominent among them. Built in the 18th century European style, the church bears a testimony to the culture of the pioneer planters. Surrounded by dreamy cypress trees and lots of flowering plants is the building overlaying mild gothic architecture.²³ The church mission society property register tells us that from 10th February 1869



Figure 3.2 csi Church Pallikkunnu.
Photograph taken by reasercher

the Diwan of Travancore granted to Rev. Henry Baker Jr, as the representative of the C. M. S, lease to perpetuity of land to the extent of 15 acres and 62 cents in Peermade Hills until 1899, at an annual rent of about Rs. 12, after which time the time the rent could be revised. The area borders on Hope and Stagbrook estates. The Peermade church seemed anonymous until 1913 in spite of a missionary background of the earliest planters who initiated the building of the church, when the name St. George was chosen. It was that

²²George Thengumoottil, Op. Cit., p. 17

²³ George Abraham Pottamkulam, Op. Cit., p. 329

year Hope Gill, then bishop of Travancore and Cochin, decided to inaugurate a new system of church administration by empowering the members to elect their own officers and administer and hold church funds.²⁴

The church was built by the British 149 years ago and has the shape of a cross in the sky view. Anglican worship is still practiced here. The church, built exclusively for Europeans, was also used by Rev. Henry Baker Jr. to provide worship services for Tamil workers. But Tamil workers were not allowed to attend European worship services at the church. 22 Indian pastors have served here till his death in 1901. He was the only Indian to buy his body in the British Cemetery after being a priest for 13 years.²⁵

Contrary to popular Christian beliefs, the horse's body is buried here. But the white horse Downy is the horse of J D Munro, who contributed to the expansion of the plantation industry in the high ranges. In the early days of the plantation industry, transportation was limited, but he regularly rode through the bad roads of the high range, through Munnar, Melukavu and Mundakkaym. He chose Pallikkunnu church cemetery to pay his last respect after the death of his beloved horse.

Evolution of Communication System

Travancore had its own postal service known as the Anchal Department and issued its own stamps. The sirkarAnchal is one of the oldest institutions in Travancore kingdom. It was established much before the introduction of Postal communication by the Postal Department. ShungoonnyMenon in his 'History of Travancore' state that in 1784. His HighnesRamavarmma after his returns from Rameswaram and improved the Anchal and established it on better principles. An anchal has to carry stipulated quantity of

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ Vishnu V. S, Op. Cit., p.57

articles as to cover specific distance and then have led to entrust the same to another ‘Anchal.’ Some type of a relay arrangement would continue till the article had reached destination.

In the initial years the planters alienated from the outside world. The tea gardens were located in the remotest of the areas. There was a little chance for outside communication. The only way of communication was through the ‘Anchal’ service provided by the Travancore Government. The runners took the mail from one place to another. But this was considered not practical to high range.²⁶

Community Life of Europeans

J. E. Piggot, brother in law of the Buxton Laurie, was one of the several planters brought in from Ceylon to work for the new companies. He arrived in India in 1898, and was Superintend of Kudakarnam for a short while before moving down the in penury in Nagercoil, supported by a pension from the Planters Benevolent Fund, Piggott was asked by the Secretary of the C. T. P. A. Bob Coglan, if he would write down his memories of planting life at this time. It was a kind thought for the lonely old man loved a yarn and was only too happy to remember his days on Kudua: soon there arrived a sheaf of pages covered in his small, neat handwriting, every other word carefully underlined to give force to his observations.²⁷

With no money to spar for necessary buildings there was then no district club, the custom was for everyone to spend the first part of the weekend at Bon Ami and move to Penshurst estate where they were entertained by the Parkers. New Year’s Day was celebrated with a trek up the Annan Thampi hills. Two third of the way up the mountain

²⁶ Jijo Jayaraj, Op. Cit., p. 84

²⁷ Ibid., p. 20

the party left Kuduvakarnam tea estate border and took a track through the jungle that led round to the other side of the mountains, where they camped on the slab rock above Koliakanam. From here there is a view of Devicolam near Munnar where the tea could be clearly be seen through a telescope brought up for the purposes. Catering on these occasions cannot have been easy as there was only one small shop at Pambanar offering a meager selection of dry stones, onions, eggs, goat, Sambar deer meat and fish from Periyar River. Picnics in those days were elaborate events; the fruit of fruit careful planning. Servants went ahead to make fire, boil water for Tea and get things ready, so that by the time the main party arrived the cloth was spread and silver laid out.²⁸

The first day of the “picnic” passed in a tennis tournament on the bungalow tennis court, while Mrs. Parker directed the household, kindly freeing Piggott for his duties as host. Education was generally neglected, in 1906 87% of the population of Travancore were illiterate-but Mrs. Parker ran a school on Panshurst for the labourers children, and the Imrays offered to pay Rs. 10/- each month towards the salary of a teacher on Bon Ami. Ackworth made a similar offer on Arankal, but it was not until 1919 that the T. T. E. introduced schools on company estates, and even then these were simply buildings with a paid attendant to watch the children while their mothers worked.²⁹

Most of the planters took immense pride in their gardens, Blue gum, Spathodia and Norfolk pines, Tulip trees were all planted and the landscaped gardens had excellent lawns and shrubberies. J. S. Wikie was responsible for introducing Cypress to the district. Ackworth planted fine mahogany in the garden of Arankal, with each visit to Bangalore or the Nilgiris. Planters returned with new varieties of roses; the exchange cuttings of shrubs and in this way fine azaleas, hibiscus and camellias spread through the district.

²⁸ George Abraham Pottamkulam, Op. Cit., p.321.

²⁹ Ibid., p.21.

Peermade Club

Peermade Club is a typical planters club of the 1920s with much heritage and history. Golf was always been popular here. The popular Peermade course was opened in 1924 on land loaned by Tyford and Bon Ami estates and forming part of Peermade club. Before this, Peermade planters used, for many years a course behind the doctor's bungalow. However this course was abandoned in 1924. The Peermade course consisted of nine holes and was designed and laid out by Frank Bisset and J. S. Wilkie. It was a hilly course and spotting, the 9th hole needed a long straight drive or the ball was lost. The views from the course were attractive, overlooking the high range. Visit to the club for golf can be arranged on prior notice or accomplished by a member.³⁰

Hospitals

By 1917 dispensaries had been set up on all the T. T. Estates, in 1911 the Grant in Aid hospital at Bon Ami had been rebuilt and there was a similar hospital in Arankanall. In 1925 the latter was replaced by a hospital at Granby, for which T. T. Estate set aside 2500 pounds. In 1921 to 1925, the medical facilities were improved as it was realized that the key to establishing a settled labour force lay in the workers' health. In 1934, the doctor at Granby was sanctioned to use of a car, a Baby Austin and he was also given an operating theatre.³¹

Public Offices

³⁰George Abraham Pottamkulam, Op. Cit., p.350.

³¹George Abraham Pottamkulam, Op. Cit., P. 364.

As well as the Residents House, and the C. M. S Compound at Church Hill, there was a Magistrates Court at Arunday, a two roomed building which was later demolished to make room for the Taluk office. Only minor suits might be heard there; civil suits involving sums of more than Rs. 400/- had to Kanjirapally for disposal.

In 1894 a Telegraph Office was opened in Peermade. The Government of India, which was responsible for this, insisted on guaranteed net revenue of Rs. 1800/- per annual, of which the planters as chief beneficiaries agreed to pay one third. There seems to have been no difficulty in ensuring this revenue, and in 1899 the guarantee was dispensed with.³²

Telephone Network

With the advent of the 'magneto telephone' system in Europe and America, the company installed the latest equipment in 1908. Over a period, the essential stations were connected by this internal telephone system. The switchboard operator could make up to a 100 connections at a time. The network was operated by crank phones. Old planters would swear to the excellence of these systems, because there was some one of you could scream at, when things went wrong! Another advantage was that the operator was able to tell you if somebody was out of the district, gone to the club etc. the Magneto Telephone system worked with commendable efficiency until the Integrated Digital System replaced it some 10 years ago.³³

³² Ibid., pp. 22- 23

³³ Rittu Mathew Siby, Op. Cit., p. 115

CONCLUSION

The entire work was concentrated about the history of Peermade during British era. The findings and realities which is collected and presented in the work was history of Travancore also. The area was different one because the culture blended with Malayalam and Tamil. The aim of the work was to establish the history of Peermade under British rule.

The arrival of Europeans in the Highrange soil started a new era in the history of Highranges. The new era recorded a wide change or it is a chain of changes. The developments and changes made by the Europeans is helped for forming a community life in Peermade.

The work includes main three core chapters. This chapter will discover the history of Peermade. The first chapter entitled as "Peermade the native ecology" It includes the ecological features of Peermade. Geographical position, climate, soil, flora and fauna. Etc. Basically the first chapter gives the ecological background of Peermade. The peermade is noticed for its geography. The first chapter include the position, area, types of soil, climate features forest and their types geological features and flora and fauna etc. From the above mentioned points gives a complete account of ecological importance of Peermade. Peermade is a hilly region and noted for its fruitfulness. It was the main reason find by Baker choose the location for plantation. The original dweller of the land was Tribal people, which leave in hilly ranges. Mainly Malappandarams and Malayarayans. The adivasi settlement "plackathadam" Was the main adivasi settlement in early days. There is no evidence for the origin of the name plackathadam. There existed another adivasis like malappulayan, orali, etc. The writings and findings from the chapter give an complete account of the native dwellers.

Another important feature of the Peermade was the "Grass lands". The lower slopes of the hills was the main plot for grass vegetation. The distribution of rain also a part in formation of grass lands. The first chapter prvides information like the origin of Peermade ecology and geography etc. The findings of such areas cover all the corners of Peermade and it's ecological features.

The chapter two entitled as "Peermade on its transformation" This chapter is discussing about the coming of plantation in Peermade and development of major planting companies. The history of plantation industry begins 18th century onwards. This chapter point out the growth and development of plantation industry in highranges. The emergence of tea, coffee plantation crops. The missionary Baker was the first men who started coffee plantation in elappara in 1860. The plantation History and emergence of several estates was completely depicted in this chapter. As per the name of this chapter it is an era of transformation of peermade as a native land. The coffee plantations replaced by some tea plantations. The Peermade have geographic peculiarities that are favourable for tea cultivation. The first tea estate was "Penshrust" Which was opened in 1875. The coffee plants replaced by tea plants, due to leaf disease in coffee plants. The increased demand for tea and coffee products paved the way for emergence of number of estates. The entire chapter provides complete history of plantation industry. The emergence of planters association on tea and coffee companies.

The production and export of tea and coffee products paved way the way for developing road transport and Bullock carts was the first goods career. The change of Peermade started through the development it's of several companies.

The third chapter discusses about the infrastructure facilities which developed due to the arrival of Europeans. The major one was the road networks. This enabled the migration of people from other states like Tamilnadu and several locations of Travancore. Another change which is depicted in building style and transport facilities. The entire chapter will discuss the overall impact in the high range areas after the introduction or expedition of Europeans. Introduction of plantation was the main case of immigration of labour force. The tea and coffee companies recruit more and more people to the plantation for labour. The workers include special categories which was stone workers, masons, etc. This type of workers mainly concentrated in building, bordering of plantations and construction of labour lines. The other occupations include kanganis, drivers and painters. The introduction of labour lines or "Layam" Was another part of labour. Layam are special type of building built for the accommodation of labours. The Peermade began to develop due to the emergence of plantations the first form of local market existed in the form of estate bazaars. Bon ami and Pambanar were the famous bazaars. This burned due to prevent plague.

The very important Development factor was the road network and transportation. The first road was Bullock cart road from kottayam to Peermade. This was started in 1871 and completed in 1872. The road network then developed through several stages. This network helped to develop Peermade as a small town. The products from tea factories were first transported through Bullock carts. The people were sitting going up and down the ghut by Bullock carts in 1923. One of the earliest road in the Travancore kingdom was KK Road. This road passes through villages of kanjirappilly, mundakkkayam and Peermade in Travancore and from Gudalur. The line has been extended by the British Government to Kumily, Cumbum and Periyakulam. The development of road network in the Travancore Kingdom started a new history of Transportation. The Beginning was Bullock carts and then later introduced cars to travel. J. A Richardson was the first man to bring his Ford Napier car to Peermade. He was a planter who arrived from the district of Piggott in 1905.

From the above development, it can be calculated that the emergence plantation industry had the major part in developing facilities of peermade taluk. Another important transportation method was Rope way system. Richardson was the first men who introduced rope way system from Kuttikkanam to Mundakkkayam. The responsibility has taken up by the mundakkayam peermade motor transport and areal ropeway co. Ltd. But unfortunately the first world War broke out simultaneously and the ship bringing the machinery for rope way was destroyed by opponents in 1916 at Mediterranean. The plan for the rope way did not dissolve out and in 1924 the rope way was constructed but it proved that was impossible to carry along the ropeway and it was abandoned within a few years.

The development in health and medicine were also introduced by Europeans to bring a surplus production. Introduction of dispensaries it was done in 1911, T&T estates for the treatment of labours worked in the plantations. 1921 to 1925 the medical facilities were improved as it was realized that the key to establishing settled labour it must be ensure or improve workers health. Public offices were another part of development as well as the resident's house and the C. M. S compound at church Hill. And a two room office and it was demolished to construct a Taluk office the introduction was the Telegraph office was another public office to

Develop communication facilities in the Travancore kingdom. The introduction of communication system in Travancore developed due to improve communication facilities it enabled fast communication of information and it worked both domestic and international ways. The network was operated by operators with trunk phones. The magneto Telephone system worked with commendable efficiency until the integrated digital system replaced by some 10 years ago.

The development of Peermade Taluk took a random change with the invention of plantation industries. The plantation industry was the important factor for changes and developments. The route of these changes is the estates, labour lines, Bazzars, Transport and Tele communication system etc. These factors emerged due to the introduction of plantation. The arrival of Europeans in the high ranges, the modern technologies in production, Transportation and Tele communication system changed the existing infrastructure of Peermade.

Now concluding with the findings and information understood the colonial mode of production the developments and facilities provided by the planters or the colonialists during their expedition. The History of colonial era in High ranges depicted a lot of changes conflicts and struggles to modify their own life with the exploitation of colonial rulers. The life of common people was fully exposed within the work. In other words it is an enquiry to the colonial life or rule in the high range land. The colonial rulers used the workers to make or their life and labour to increase surplus production. They provide no only developments also Demerits. They changed the entire geography of the land clearing of forests and introduction of plantation. Exploited the common men's life, using the lives of people they make maximum profits and exported Raw materials to their home land. The entire work will cover all the corners of life of common people during British era in Peermade.

APPENDIX - I

PERSONAL INTERVIEW

1. ഇവിടെ കൂടിയേറിയവരിൽ കൂടുതലും തമിഴരായിരുന്നോ?
അതെ. ഇവിടെ വന്നവരിൽ കൂടുതലും തമിഴരായിരുന്നു. തേനി, നാഗർകോവിൽ എന്നിവിടങ്ങളിൽ നിന്നാണ് കൂടുതലും ആളുകൾ എത്തിരുന്നത്.
2. നാട്ടിൻപുറത്ത് നിന്നും ഇവിടേക്കുവരാനുള്ള കാരണങ്ങൾ എന്തെല്ലാമായിരുന്നു?
തമ്പുരാക്കന്മാരുടെ അടിമത്തവും പിന്നെ കൂലിയില്ലാത്ത അവസ്ഥയുമോക്കെയായിരുന്നു കാരണം. പിന്നെ ജോലിയും കുറവായിരുന്നു. വീട്ടിലെ പട്ടിണിയും ഒരു കാരണമായിരുന്നു.
3. പണ്ടത്തെ കാക്കാനിമാരുടെ പേരുകൾ ഓർക്കുന്നുണ്ടോ?
അങ്ങനെ ഓർക്കുന്നില്ല. ഒരാളുടെ പേര് അറിയാം. കൊട്ടൻകക്കാണി എന്നാരുനുപേര്.
4. ഇവരായിരുന്നോ കൂലികൂട്ടി തന്നു കൊണ്ടിരുന്നത്?
അല്ല. ഇവരായിരുന്നു സായിപ്പിൻ്റെ കയ്യിൽ നിന്നു കൂലിവാങ്ങിത്തന്നിരുന്നത്.
5. നിങ്ങൾ ഉപയോഗിച്ചിരുന്ന ലയങ്ങൾക്ക് അന്നത്തെ കാലത്ത് പാടുകളുണ്ടായിരുന്നോ?
ഇല്ല. സൗജന്യമായി ഉപയോഗിക്കാവുന്നതായിരുന്നു.
6. അന്നത്തെ കാലത്തുള്ളത്തിൻ്റെ ലഭ്യത കുറവുണ്ടായിരുന്നോ.
ഇല്ല. പലയിടങ്ങളിലായി കിണറുകൾ ഉണ്ടായിരുന്നു.
7. കീടനാശനികൾ ഇന്നാണോ കൂടുതലായി ഉപയോഗിക്കുന്നത്?
അല്ല. അന്നും ഉപയോഗിച്ചിരുന്നു.
അന്നത്തെ അത്രേം മാരകമായ കീടനാശിനികൾ ഇന്ന് ഉപയോഗിക്കുന്നില്ല എന്നു പറയാൻ.
8. വിത്ത് കൊളുത്ത് ആകണമെങ്കിൽ എത്ര നാളേണം?
3,4 മാസം വേണ്ടിവരും.
9. അന്നത്തെ കുട്ടികൾക്കു വിദ്യാഭ്യാസം ലഭിച്ചിരുന്നോ?
ഇന്നത്തെ നഴ്സറി പോലുള്ള സംവിധാനം അന്നുണ്ടായിരുന്നു. പിൽക്കാലത്ത് എന്ന് പേര്.
10. ജോലി സമയം എത്ര മണിക്കൂർ ആയിരുന്നു?
8 മുതൽ 11 മണി വരെയും അതുകഴിഞ്ഞ് 1 മണി മുതൽ 4 മണി വരെയും ആയിരുന്നു സമയക്രമം. പുരുഷന്മാർ ക്രാവിലെ 6 മണി മുതൽ വൈകിട്ട് 5 മണി വരെയും ആയിരുന്നു.

11. അസ്ത്രങ്ങളിൽ എല്ലാസൗകര്യങ്ങളും ഉണ്ടായിരുന്നോ?
ഇല്ല. എല്ലാസൗകര്യങ്ങളും ഇല്ലായിരുന്നു. ശൗചാലയം ഒരു പ്രശ്നമായിരുന്നു.
12. ലയങ്ങളിൽ കുടിവെള്ളമുണ്ടായിരുന്നോ?
ഉണ്ടായിരുന്നു. കുടിവെള്ളം ആവശ്യത്തിനുണ്ടായിരുന്നു.
13. ഏതെങ്കിലും രീതിയിലുള്ള ഉപദ്രവങ്ങൾ അന്ന് ഉണ്ടായിരുന്നോ?
ഇല്ല. അങ്ങനെയൊരു ഉപദ്രവങ്ങൾ ഒന്നും ഇല്ലായിരുന്നു.
14. ലയത്തിലേക്കുള്ള സൗകര്യങ്ങൾ ക്ഷേപണി എന്നേയും പ്രക്ഷോഭങ്ങൾ ഉണ്ടായിട്ടുണ്ടോ?
ഉണ്ട്. ചെറിയ രീതിയിൽ ഉണ്ടായിട്ടുണ്ട്.
അത് അടിസ്ഥാന സൗകര്യങ്ങൾ ക്ഷേപണിയിലായിരുന്നു.
15. ലയങ്ങളിൽ എന്നേയും പ്രശ്നങ്ങൾ ഉണ്ടായാൽ ശിക്ഷാനടപടികൾ ഉണ്ടാകുമോ?
ശിക്ഷാനടപടികൾ ഇല്ലായിരുന്നു. കമ്പനിയിലെ പെട്രോൾ പകരം കൺഗ്ഗാണിമാർ ഇടപ്പെട്ട് പ്രശ്നങ്ങൾ തീർത്തിരുന്നു.
16. കൺഗ്ഗാണിമാർ മലയാളികളായിരുന്നോ?
മലയാളികളും തമിഴരും ഉണ്ടായിരുന്നു.
17. നല്ലയാത്രാ സൗകര്യങ്ങൾ ഉണ്ടായിരുന്നോ?
ഇല്ലായിരുന്നു. കമ്പനികൾക്ക് ആദ്യം കാളവണ്ടികൾ ഉണ്ടായിരുന്നു. സായിപ്പന്മാർക്കും വണ്ടികൾ ഉണ്ടായിരുന്നു. എന്നാൽ തൊഴിലാളികൾക്ക് ഇല്ലായിരുന്നു. മൂണ്ടക്കയത്ത് നിന്നും ഒന്നോരണ്ടോ ബസ്സുകൾ ഉണ്ടായിരുന്നു.
18. ഇവിടെ എസ്റ്റേറ്റ് ബാസാറുകൾ ഉണ്ടായിരുന്നോ?
ഉണ്ടായിരുന്നു. പാമ്പന്മാർ ആയിരുന്നു ഇവിടുത്തെ പ്രധാനമാർക്കറ്റ്. അത് പണ്ടു മുതലേ ഉള്ളതായിരുന്നു.
19. പണ്ട് തമിഴ്നാട്ടിൽ നിന്നു വന്നവർ ഇപ്പോഴും ഇവിടെ ഉണ്ടോ?
ഉണ്ട്. E.M.S. ന്റീയും പട്ടാണുപിള്ളയുടെയും കാലത്ത് അവർക്ക് പട്ടയം നൽകി ഇവിടെ സ്ഥിരതാമസമാക്കി.
20. തെയ്യകൃഷിക്ക് മുൻപ് ഇവിടെ എങ്ങനെയായിരുന്നു?
തെയ്യലവരുന്നതിനുമുമ്പ് ഇവിടെ കാപ്പികൃഷിയിലായിരുന്നു. അതിനും മുൻപ് ഇവിടെ വനമായിരുന്നു. ബ്രിട്ടീഷുകാർ വന്നതിന് ശേഷമാണ് ഇവിടെ നല്ലരീതിയിൽ ആകിപ്പുറത്തത്.
21. മുൻപ് സമരങ്ങൾ ഉണ്ടായിട്ടുണ്ടോ?
ഉണ്ട്. കുറച്ചു സമരങ്ങൾ ഉണ്ടായിട്ടുണ്ട്. കാളവണ്ടി സമരം ആയിരുന്നു പ്രധാനപ്പെട്ടത്.
22. സമരം ചെയ്തവരെ ഉപദ്രവിച്ചിരുന്നോ?

ഉപദ്രവിച്ചിരുന്നു.പലരീതിയിലുംസമരംചെയ്തവരെഉപദ്രവിച്ചിരുന്നു.

23.ഒരുഏക്കറിൽഎത്രതൊഴിലാളികൾഉണ്ടായിരിക്കും.?

ഏകദേശം 700തൊഴിലാളികൾകാണും.

24.തുടക്കകാല്ത്ത്ജോലികൾപ്രയാസകരമായിരുന്നോ?

വീട്ടിലെജോലിയുംഎസ്റ്റേറ്റിലെജോലിയുംകൂടിയാകുമ്പോൾ കുറച്ചുപ്രയാസകരമായിരുന്നു.

25.കുട്ടികളെന്നോക്കാൻആവെല്ലോംഉണ്ടായിരുന്നോ?

ഉണ്ടായിരുന്നു.അവരെസായിപ്പ്തിരഞ്ഞെടുത്തിരുന്നു.കുട്ടികൾക്ക്കമ്പനിവകപാലുംകുറുക്കുംകൊടുത്തിരുന്നു.

26.അന്നത്തെസായിപ്പുമാർഎങ്ങനെഉള്ളവരായിരുന്നു?

സായിപ്പുമാർപാവങ്ങളായിരുന്നു.

തൊഴിലാളികൾക്ക്പലസഹായങ്ങളുംചെയ്തിരുന്നു.

27.എന്തേലുംഅസുഖങ്ങളോക്കെഉണ്ടായാൽഎന്താരുനുംചെയ്തിരുന്നത്?

അസുഖങ്ങൾപൊതുവേകുറവായിരുന്നു.പിന്നെആളുകളുടെ ഇടയിൽതന്നെനാട്ടുവൈദ്യംഉണ്ടായിരുന്നു.സായിപ്പിന്റെആശുപത്രിയുംഉണ്ടായിരുന്നു.അന്നത്തെവലിയരോഗംമലേറിയആയിരുന്നു.അതിന്കൊയ്നചെടിയിൽനിന്നുണ്ടാക്കുന്നമരുന്ന്ഉപയോഗിച്ചിരുന്നു.

APPENDIX II

MAP



Map1: Plantation map of Peermade, taken from *The Path to the Hills History of the Plantations of Western Ghats, Southern India a Journey along the Plantations and its Tourist destinations*, George Abraham Pottamkulam, Stayhomz, Kottayam, 2011, p. 377

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