

**THE MOPLAH REBELLION OF 1921-22 AND ITS GENESIS**

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ABSTRACT

This thesis is an attempt to interpret the rebellion staged in 1921-22 by part of the Muslim community of the Malabar District of the Madras Presidency, a community known as the 'Moplahs' or 'Mappillas'. Since, it is here argued, this challenge to British rule was a consequence of the impact of that power on social relations in rural Malabar starting with the earliest period of British control of the area, the genesis of the rising is traced from the cession of Malabar to the East India Company in 1792.

Chapter 1 constitutes an investigation both of social relations in rural Malabar under the impact of British rule and of the limits of Moplah response under conditions in which rebellion was impracticable. Chapter 2 tries to elaborate the sources of tension between the Moplah and British rule and to demonstrate the conditions under which Moplah disaffection might assume the form of insurrection. Chapters 3 and 4 seek to indicate how the Khilafat-non-co-operation campaign undertaken under the auspices of the Indian National Congress in Malabar in 1920-21 came to trigger the Moplah rebellion of 1921-22. Chapter 3 probes the foundation in interest of the association of the Moplah with the Malabar nationalist movement, Chapter 4 how the tensions of this association determined its fundamental character as one of the assimilation of the nationalist movement to Moplah prescription. Chapter 5 in analysing the salient characteristics of the 1921-22 rebellion attempts to show how much they were determined by traditional rural Moplah patterns of mobilisation rather than by those of the nationalist agitation of 1920-21.

PREFATORY NOTE

This thesis is an attempt to give not a narrative account, but an interpretation of the Moplah Rebellion of 1921-22 and its genesis. Soon after the suppression of the rebellion an official who played an outstanding part in that work, the Superintendent of Police for South Malabar, R.H. Hitchcock, produced a history of the rising, evidently based on official reports and his own first-hand experience. Hitchcock's history, though an invaluable source, is little more than a policeman's blow-by-blow account of the events of 1921-22. Other accounts of those events by participants in them have appeared in recent years in the Malayalam language (see bibliography). The most notable is K. Madhavan Nayar's Malabar Kalapam. The Moplah Rebellion, 1921 by C. Gopalan Nair was the work in 1923 of a retired Deputy Collector of Calicut with no access to official records and is based on items appearing in the contemporary South Indian press. The only important works of scholarship giving attention to the rebellion appear to be the theses of Stephen F. Dale and Dattatraya N. Dhanagare. The former devotes to the rebellion a chapter of his thesis on the Moplahs between 1498 and 1922. For this chapter his sources are Hitchcock and C. Gopalan Nair. Dr. Dhanagare also devotes a chapter of his thesis on various Indian 'peasant movements' to the Moplah Rebellion. This chapter is based mainly on secondary sources. The present thesis is evidently the only work on the Moplah Rebellion and its genesis drawing on a wide range of primary



materials including the mass of official records in the India Office Library and the Madras Record Office, private papers, newspaper sources, memoirs, court proceedings and interviews.

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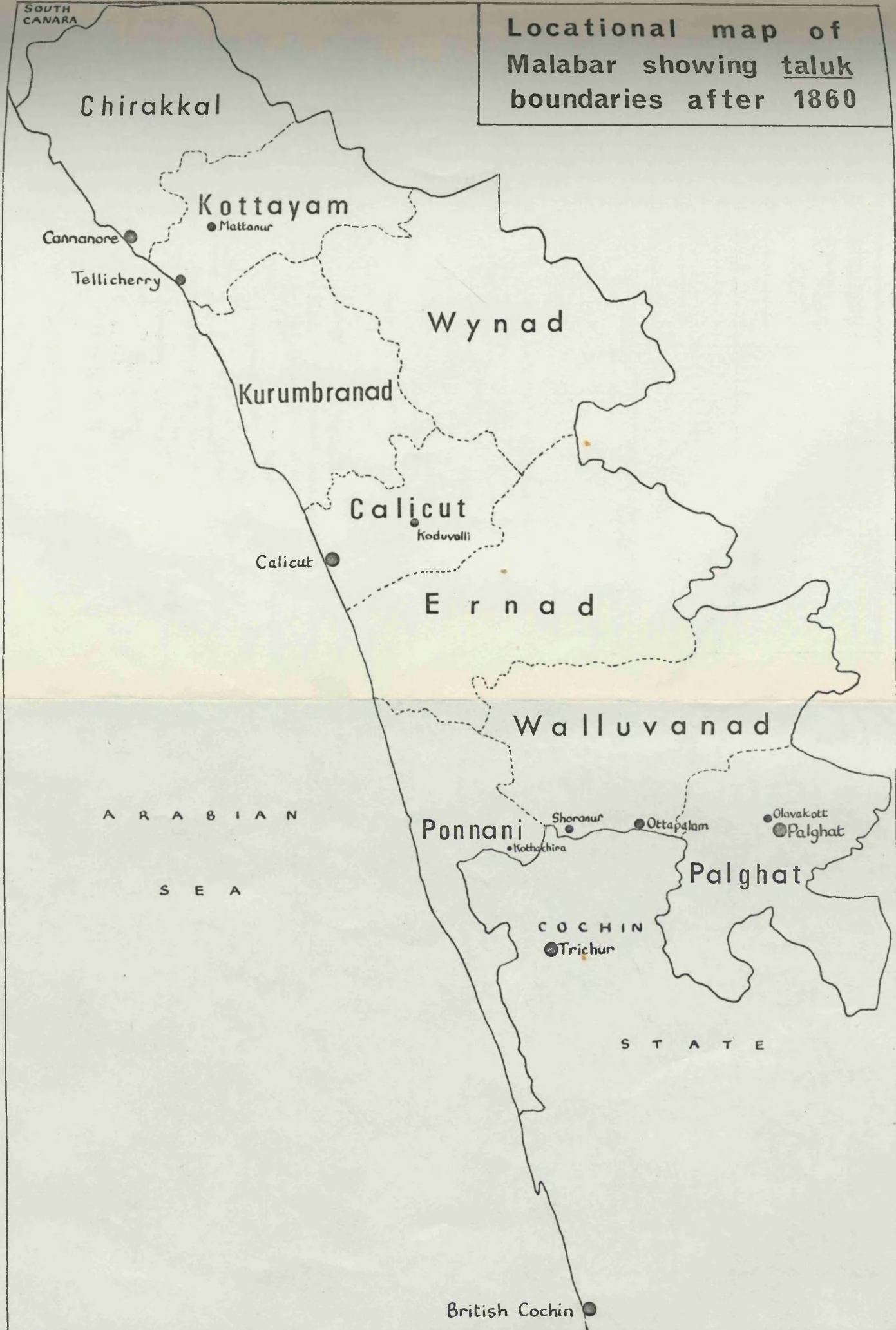
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ABBREVIATIONS

BePolP	Bengal Political Proceedings
BM	British Museum, London
BMP	Bombay Military Proceedings
BPSP	Bombay Political and Secret Proceedings
BRP	Bombay Revenue Proceedings
CSAS	Centre for South Asian Studies, Cambridge
DW	Defence Witness
GS	General Staff
ILP	India Legislative Proceedings
IOL	India Office Library, London
KDCA	Kozhikode District Court Archives
MBRP	Madras Board of Revenue Proceedings
MCWP	Madras Court of Wards Proceedings
MHCA	Madras High Court Archives
MJP	Madras Judicial Proceedings
MLP	Madras Legislative Proceedings
ML(G)P	Madras Law (General) Proceedings
MNNR	Madras Native Newspaper Reports
MPP	Madras Public Proceedings
MRO	Madras Record Office
MRP	Madras Revenue Proceedings
NAI	National Archives of India, New Delhi
NLS	National Library of Scotland, Edinburgh
PRO	Public Record Office, London
PW	Prosecution Witness
RS, LR & A	Revenue Settlement, Land Records and Agriculture
UTCL	United Theological Colleges Library, Bangalore

Locational map of Malabar showing taluk boundaries after 1860

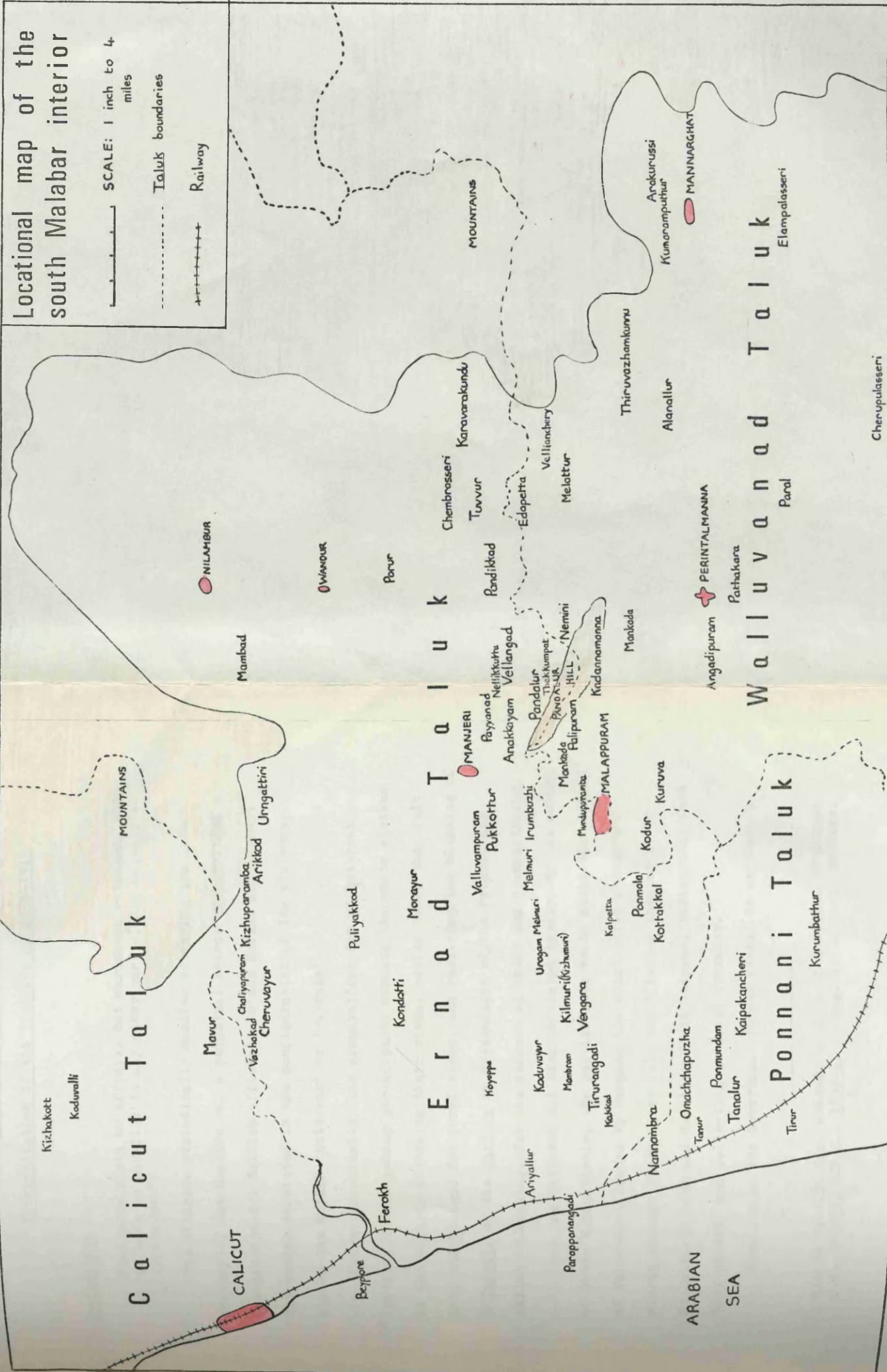


# Locational map of the south Malabar interior

SCALE: 1 inch to 4 miles

Taluk boundaries

Railway



Kizhakkott  
Koduvalli

CALICUT TALUK

Mambad  
Mavur  
Obalivayaram  
Kizhuparamba  
Arikkad  
Ungattini  
Cheruvayur

Puliyakkod

Kondatti

Manayur

ERNAD TALUK

Valluvampuram

Pukkottur

Anakkiyam

Vellangad

Pandalar

Thakkumpat

Pinnakur

Nemini

Mankada

Palipuram

Kandanamma

Mankada

PONNANI TALUK

Kurumbathur

Kodur

Kuruva

Kalpasta

Ponnala

Kottakkal

Bojipore

Feroth

Parappanangadi

Ariyallur

Nannambra

Tanur

Omachidappuzha

Ponnundam

Tanalur

Kajipakancheri

Tinur

Arabian SEA

MANJERI

Rayanad

Nellikuttu

Randikkad

Chembrasser

Tuvur

Edopetta

Velliandery

Melattur

Thiruvazhankunnu

Alanallur

Arakurussi

Kumaraputhur

MANNARGHAT

Elampalasseri

Cherupalasseri

PERINTALMANNA

Angadipuram

Pathakara

Paral

WALLUVANAD TALUK

Cherupalasseri

Cherupalasseri



## CHAPTER 1

### The Moplah Outbreak:

#### Interpretation of the Violence of 1836-1919

##### Definition

"not mere riots or affrays, but murderous outrages, such as have no parallel in any other part of Her Majesty's dominions."<sup>1</sup>

The violence periodically manifested during the 19th century by the Moplahs was a perpetual source of horrified fascination for British officials in the Madras Presidency. The wonder consisted in the configuration of the violence, styled the Moplah 'outbreak' or 'outrage'.

Characteristically, the preparations for an outbreak involved the intending participants donning the white clothes of the martyr, divorcing their wives, asking those they felt they had wronged for forgiveness, and receiving the blessing of a Tangal, as the Sayyids or descendants of the Prophet are called in Malabar, for the success of their great undertaking.

Once the outbreak had been initiated openly, by the murder of their Hindu victim, the participants would await the arrival of Government forces by ranging the countryside paying off scores against Hindus they felt had ill-used them or other Moplahs, burning and defiling Hindu temples, taking what food they needed, and collecting arms and recruits.

Finally, as the Government forces closed in on them, a

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<sup>1</sup> Minute by J.D. Sim, member, Council of Governor of Madras, n.d., P/403, MJP No. 1606-A, 28 Aug. 1874, no p. numbers.

a sturdy building was chosen for their last stand. Often the mansion of some Hindu landlord (frequently the residence of one of their victims) was selected, but Hindu temples, mosques, and other buildings were also used, the main criterion being, apparently, to avoid being captured alive. As a Moplah captured at Payyanad temple in 1898 put it, it was decided to die there "as it was a good building and we were afraid lest we would be shot in the legs and so caught alive".<sup>1</sup>

By the time the Government forces had surrounded them, the outbreak participants had worked themselves into a frenzy by frequent prayers, shouting the creed as a war-cry and singing songs commemorating the events of past outbreaks, especially that of October 1843 in which 7 Moplahs armed mainly with 'war knives' scattered a heavily-armed detachment of sepoys with their charge. The climax of the drama came when they emerged from their 'post' to be killed as they tried to engage in hand-to-hand combat.

Divergences from this ideal pattern<sup>2</sup> were frequent, but the essence of the Moplah outbreak, demarcating it from other forms of violence, resided in the belief that participation was the act of a shahid or martyr and would be rewarded accordingly. As one outbreak participant (who receded at the last moment and was captured) said in explanation of why he and his associates

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1 Statement of Thasheri Unni Ali, 4 Apr. 1898, in Court of Special Asst. Magistrate, Malabar, P/5506, MJP Nos. 1737-40, 11 Nov. 1898, p. 23.

2 Sketches of the Moplah outbreak are also given in C.A. Innes, Malabar Gazetteer, Vol. I, p. 82 and in T.W. Arnold, 'Mappillas', Encyclopaedia of Islam, Vol. III, p. 261.

'went out' (i.e. participated in the outbreak):

"I have heard people sing that those who ... fight and die after killing their oppressors, become shahids and get their reward. I have heard that the reward is 'Swargam' (Paradise)".<sup>1</sup>

The pattern of the Moplah outbreak was dictated by the fact that participants had no intention of evading the heavy hand of justice. On the contrary, their objective was to compass their own destruction by hurling themselves in a suicidal charge against the forces sent to deal with them. In the words of a wounded Moplah captured at Manjeri temple in 1896:

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1 Statement of Ambat Aidross, 16 Mar. 1896, L/PJ/6/422, 996/96, p. 15. See also statements of captured outbreak participants Pottanthodika Alevi (P/5506, MJP Nos. 1737-40, 11 Nov. 1898 pp. 24-25) and Moideen (P/327/22 MJP No. 794, 1 Dec. 1849 p. 4774); statement of an outbreak leader's father quoted in report of T.L. Strange, Special Commissioner in Malabar, 25 Sept. 1852 (P/327/60, MJP No. 483, 23 Aug. 1853, p. 4549); statement of a Moplah divine, Kalakandattil Mammuni Mussaliar (10 Mar. 1915) who was approached on the subject (for confirmation) by three would-be shahid in 1915 (MJP Nos. 2080-84, 3 Sept. 1915 [Conf.], p. 50, Kozhikode Archives); statement of Kolekalattil Kunhamathu Haji, 10 Mar. 1915, ibid., p. 49; memorandum of Sayyid Abdu Rehman Bin Muhamad Hamid Mulla Koya Tungal to A.E. Havelock, Governor of Madras, 7 Apr. 1898, MJP No. 996 (Conf.), 28 June 1898, p. 11, MRO; C.A. Galton, Acting Malabar Magistrate to Chief Sec., 6 June 1884 (Conf.), MJP Nos. 1605-11, (Conf.), 2 July 1884, p. 8, MRO; deposition of Poolookooyil Mamy, 12 Oct. 1885, Malabar Collectorate Records, Vol. No. 7347/2, p. 448, MRO; statement of Maylangi Karamel Moidin Kutty, 2nd prisoner, Case No. 14, Bhavat Case, 14 Feb. 1856, Malabar Collectorate Records, Vol. No. 7347, p. 506, MRO.

"We came to the temple intending to fight with the troops and die. That is what we meant to do when we started."<sup>1</sup>

The defining characteristic of the Moplah outbreak was devotion to death.

### Analysis

The Moplah outbreak was of spasmodic but not rare occurrence from 1836 to 1919. Between these dates there also occurred what the authorities assumed were abortive outbreak plots as well as disturbances in which Moplahs embarked on what at first resembled disorders of the outbreak kind but in which, because of the retraction of the participants, no attempt to die fighting was ever made.<sup>2</sup> Even when such cases are excluded 29 separate occasions can be distinguished in which Moplahs sought actively their own death.<sup>3</sup>

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1 Statement of Aruvirallan Muttha, 13 Mar. 1896, report of H.M. Winterbotham, member, Madras Board of Revenue, 10 Apr. 1896, L/PJ/6/422, 996/96, p. 12. See also R.H. Hitchcock, 'Mappilla outbreak of 1915' n.d., MJP Nos. 2080-84, 3 Sept. 1915 (Conf.), p. 78, Kozhikode Archives; statement of Valia Mannil Chekkutty, n.d., report of H.M. Winterbotham, 10 Apr. 1896, loc. cit., p. 18; deposition of Poovangaden Checku, 13 Oct. 1855, Malabar Collectorate Records, Vol. No. 7347, p. 40, MRO; examination of Chayottil Achoomah, 3 Oct. 1855, Malabar Collectorate Records, Vol. No. 7346, p. 395, MRO; examination of Karamil Attah Coyah, 17 Oct. 1855, ibid., p. 536; deposition of Poolookooyil Mamy, 12 Oct. 1855, Malabar Collectorate Records, Vol. No. 7347/2, p. 448 MRO; examination of Pathothy Oomah, 1 Oct. 1855, of Chakungurl Aliamoo Mopla, 5 Oct. 1855, and of Vettumvittel Kallatel Karri Oomah, 22 Sept. 1855, Malabar Collectorate Records, Vol. 7347/1, pp. 251-52, 334 and 352-53, MRO; deposition of Chomeyil Coonhee Pokoo, 25 Oct. 1855, ibid., p. 556; deposition of Pooychirry Patooma, 8 Nov. 1855, ibid., p. 648; 'The Wurrola chit (anonymous writing) written for the perusal and information of Walluvanaad Tahsildar', n.d., no signature but left by the shahid of the December 1843 outbreak, P/326/35, MJP No. 69, 27 Jan. 1844, pp. 286-87.

2 For a summary of these putative plots and quasi-outbreaks see appendix 2.

3 For a summary of these 29 outbreaks see table p.16.

SUMMARY OF THE 29 MOPLAH OUTBREAKS OF 1836-1919<sup>1</sup>

16

<u>Date</u>	<u>Location</u> (all Ernad or Walluvanad taluks unless otherwise stated)	<u>Victims</u>		<u>Partici- pants</u> (all Moplahs)
		<u>Caste</u>	<u>Class</u>	
26 Nov. 1836	Pandalur	1 Kanisan (astrologer caste)	Unknown	1 (killed)
15 Apr. 1837	Kalpetta	1 Mussad (Brahmin)	<u>Jenmi</u>	1 (killed)
5 Apr. 1839	Mankada	1 Hindu	<u>Peon</u> (a low-rank- ing village-level Government serv- ant; a club- bearer)	2 (killed)
6 Apr. 1839	Mankada	1 Hindu	<u>Jenmi</u>	1 (captured)
19 Apr. 1840	Irumbuzhi	1 Nair	Unknown	1 (killed)
5 Apr. 1841	Pallipuram	2 Nambudiris 1 Nair	1 <u>jenmi</u> , 1 depen- dent of the jenmi & 1 adviser of the jenmi	9 (killed)
13 Nov. 1841	Koduvayur	2 Nairs	1 <u>jenmi</u> 1 <u>peon</u>	11 (killed)
27 Dec. 1841	Pallipuram	2 Nairs	1 adhigari's son 1 unknown	8 (killed)
19 Oct. 1843	Tirurang- adi	2 Nairs	1 <u>jenmi</u> (formerly an <u>adhigari</u> ) & 1 <u>adhigari</u>	7 (killed)
11 Dec. 1843	Pandikkad	1 Mussad 1 Nair	1 <u>jenmi</u> & <u>adhigari</u> and his servant	10 (killed)
26 May 1849	Exact loca- tion un- known. Sher- nad <u>taluk</u> (later wes- tern Ernad)	1 Nair	Unknown	1 (killed)
25 Aug. 1849	Pandikkad	1 Tien 1 Brahmin 3 Nairs	1 'cultivator', 1 priest & guest of a <u>jenmi</u> , 1 ser- vant of a <u>jenmi</u> , 1 <u>peon</u> , 1 'culti- vator' & petty shopkeeper	65 (64 killed, 1 captured)

(continued)

5 Jan.1851	Payyanad	1 Nair	Gomastah (taluk-level government servant)	1 (killed)
22 Aug.1851	Wankada	4 Nairs 1 Nambudiri 1 Hindu	1 rich <u>kariastan</u> ( <u>jenmi's</u> land agent) & ex- <u>adhigari</u> , 1 servant of the <u>kariastan</u> , 1 <u>mukia-stan</u> (elder of a village) & <u>kanamdar</u> (tenant), 1 money-lender, 2 <u>jenmis</u>	19 (killed)
4 Jan.1852	Mattanur (Kottayam taluk, North Malabar)	12 Nambudiris, 2 Pattars' (non-Malayali Brahmins), 2 Nairs, 3 Cherumar	2 <u>jenmis</u> , 10 family of <u>jenmis</u> , 2 visitors in <u>jenmi</u> house, 3 slaves of <u>jenmi</u> , 2 unknown	15 (killed)
9 Aug.1852	Koduvally (Kurumbra-nad taluk, later in Calicut taluk, North Malabar)	1 Nambudiri	Unknown	3 (killed)
16 Sept. 1853	Angadipuram area	1 Nambudiri	Moneylender	2 (killed)
12 Sept. 1855	Anakkayam (the home of the gang leader)	1 European 1 Nair	1 District Magistrate, 1 servant of <u>jenmi</u>	3 (killed)
4 Feb.1864	Melmuri	1 Nair	Teacher	1 (captured)
7 Sept. 1873	Paral	2 Nairs	1 priest, 1 <u>jenmi</u>	9 (8 killed, 1 captured)
9 Sept. 1880	Melattur	1 Cheruman	Field labourer	1 (killed)
27 Dec. 1884	Urangattiri	1 Tien, 1 Embrandiri (Brahmin)	1 cooly, 1 unknown	11 (killed)
1 May 1885	Omachchappuzha (Ponnani taluk, South Malabar)	6 Cherumar	1 field labourer & his family	12 (killed)

11 Aug.1885	Melattur	1 Nair	<u>Jenmi</u>	1 (captured)
31 Mar.1894	Vellangad- Pandikkad	5 Nairs, 1 Cheruman, 1 Hindu	1 <u>jenmi</u> , 1 servant of a <u>jenmi</u> , 1 land agent, 1 slave of a Nair	34 (32 killed, 2 captured)
25 Feb.1896	Chembras- seri	2 Nairs, 1 Tattan(gold- smith <u>caste</u> )	1 <u>jenmi</u> , 1 land agent, 1 unknown	99 (94 killed, 5 captured)
1 Apr. 1898	Pandikkad	1 Nambudiri	<u>Jenmi</u>	12 (captured)
28 Feb.1915	Karuvara- kundu	1 European	District Magistrate	5(4 killed, 1 captured)
6 Feb. 1919	Mankada- Pallipu- ram	3 Nambudiris 1 Embrandiri (Brahmin), 1 Pattar (Brahmin), 2 Nairs	2 <u>jenmis</u> , 2 guests of <u>jenmis</u> , 1 retainer of <u>jenmi</u> , 2 members of <u>adhigari</u> 's family	7 (killed)

1 The chief sources for this summary are report of T.L. Strange, Special Commissioner in Malabar, 25 Sept. 1852, loc. cit., pp. 4513-20; P/325/62, MJP 11 June 1839, p. 4989-92; P/325/64, MJP 20 Aug. 1839, pp. 6863-66; P/326/8, MJP 22 Apr. 1841, pp. 1896-1911 and MJP 11 May 1841, pp. 2244-47; P/326/13, MJP 17 Dec. 1842 pp. 5117-53; P/326/15, MJP No. 15, 4 Jan. 1842, pp. 53-63 and MJP No. 37, 8 Feb. 1842, pp. 344-74; P/326/33, MJP No. 684, 14 Nov. 1843, pp. 6454-77; P/326/35, MJP No. 69, 27 Jan. 1844, pp. 193-292; P/326/36, MJP No. 187, 8 Mar. 1844, pp. 722-61; P/327/19, MJP No. 503, 7 Aug. 1849, pp. 2574-78; P/327/20, MJP No. 846, 4 Sept. 1849, pp. 2958-83; P/327/21, MJP 11 Sept. 1849, pp. 3783-909 and MJP 10 Oct. 1849, pp. 4031-33; P/327/22, MJP No. 794, 1 Dec. 1849, pp. 4726-5048; P/327/35, MJP No. 116, 25 Feb. 1851, pp. 436-47; P/327/39, MJP No. 558, 8 Sept. 1851, pp. 2813-21; P/327/41, MJP No. 700, 20 Nov. 1851, 3703-815; P/327/44, MJP No. 123, 17 Feb. 1852, pp. 609-78; P/327/45, MJP No. 138, 24 Feb. 1852, pp. 749-59; P/327/51, MJP No. 716, 6 Nov. 1852, pp. 4546-701; P/327/60, MJP No. 33, 23 Apr. 1852, pp. 4494-511; P/327/61, MJP No. 581, 3 Oct. 1853, pp. 5116-21 and MJP No. 33, 22 Sept. 1853, pp. 5057-58; P/328/6, MJP No. 716, 3 Oct. 1855, pp. 3574-677; P/328/13, MJP No. 424, 25 Apr. 1856, pp. 2284-348; P/328/10, MJP No. 85, 28 Jan. 1856, pp. 418-565; P/328/47 MJP No. 979, 4 July 1864, pp. 843-51; P/401, MJP No. 1486, 17 Sept. 1873, pp. 893-902, MJP No. 1575, 1 Oct. 1873, pp. 1012-13 and MJP No. 1669, 18 Oct. 1873, pp. 1073-74; P/1580, MJP No. 2500, 19 Oct. 1880, pp. 1229-40; P/2634, MJP No. 1039, 21 Apr. 1885, pp. 65-66 and MJP Nos. 1169-74, 2 May 1885, pp. 5-31; P/2635, MJP No. 2725, 8 Oct. 1885, pp. 1-23 and MJP No. 3499, 30 Dec. 1885, pp. 77-85; P/4621, MJP Nos. 2186-92, 8 Sept. 1894, pp. 93-143; L/PJ/6/422, 996/96, pp. 1-23; L/PJ/6/433, 2060/96, MJP No. 1567, 30 Sept. 1896, pp. 1-138; P/5506, MJP Nos. 1737-40, 11 Nov. 1898, pp. 18-44; MJP Nos. 2080-84, 3 Sept. 1915(Conf.), pp.4-85, Kozhikode Archives; L/PJ/6/1608, 4582/19, MJP No. 1310, 9 June 1919, pp. 4-35.

In all 29 cases except 3<sup>1</sup>, the number of participants ranged from a single Moplah to 19. The final total depended partly on how quickly the outbreak was suppressed, since usually the initiators were joined by recruits as the outbreak took its course. As one Malabar Collector observed, with some exaggeration however: in putting down outbreaks it was essential to act expeditely since "every day's delay doubles [the participants'] numbers".<sup>2</sup> Thus, in the case of the 1896 outbreak, which was prolonged exceptionally for several days, the number of participants grew to a record 99 and others appear to have been on their way to join when the gangs<sup>3</sup> were rapidly destroyed, only 5 being taken alive. Of the 352 participants in the 29 outbreaks only 24 failed to achieve their end, and this includes the 12 forced to surrender in the very exceptional and significant case of the

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1 These exceptions were the outbreaks of August 1849 (65 participants), 1894 (34) and 1896 (99). See Appendix C, W. Robinson, Head Asst. Magistrate, Malabar to H.V. Conolly, Malabar Magistrate, 18 Oct. 1849, P/327/22, MJP No. 794, 1 Dec. 1849, pp. 4964-5012; H. Bradley, Acting Malabar Magistrate to Chief Sec., 16 May 1894, P/4621, MJP Nos. 2186-92, 8 Sept. 1894, pp. 93-94; report of H.M. Winterbotham, 10 Apr. 1896, loc. cit., p. 1.

2 R.B. Wood, Acting Malabar Magistrate to Chief Sec., 23 Dec. 1910, MPP No. 71, 19 Jan. 1911, p. 8, MRO. See also report of J.F. Hall, Malabar Magistrate, 25 Apr. 1919, L/PJ/6/1608, 4582/19, MJP No. 1310, 9 June 1919, p. 20; 'Account of the Mappilla Outbreak in the Malabar District of the Madras Presidency, Feb.-Mar. 1915', annexure to Govt. of Madras to Sec. of State, 5 May 1915, L/PJ/6/1360, 2230/15 in 1003/15, p. 3; A. MacGregor, Malabar Magistrate to Chief Sec., 11 Sept. 1873, P/401, MJP No. 1486, 17 Sept. 1873; W. Robinson, Head Asst. Magistrate to H.V. Conolly, Malabar Magistrate, 18 Oct. 1849, P/327/22, MJP No. 794, 1 Dec. 1849, p. 4953.

3 There were two gangs in this outbreak, a major one of 92 participants and a minor one of 7. The latter was trying to join up with the former. Report of H.M. Winterbotham, 10 Apr. 1896, loc. cit., p. 1.



1898 disturbance.<sup>1</sup>

An indication of the type of man who participated in outbreaks is conveyed by the remarks of the District Magistrate responsible for the disarming in 1885 of the taluks (administrative divisions of a 'district') in which outbreaks occurred, a policy measure adopted in the hope of making the disorders less frequent and formidable.<sup>2</sup> He observed that "persons of undoubted social status",<sup>3</sup> and those of "respectability and substance" (i.e. those paying at least Rs. 200 in assessment due to Government) were normally exempt from the general confiscation.<sup>4</sup> In fact, one report summed up the social background of the participants in the largest of all the outbreaks, that of 1896, as "field-labourers, porters, timber-floaters, mendicants, and others of the lowest class, living from hand to mouth".<sup>5</sup> It is

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1 See below p.45.

2 W. Logan, Malabar Magistrate, to Chief Sec., 10 June 1885, P/2635, MJP No. 1727, 1 July 1885, p. 1; Logan, Malabar Manual, Vol. I, p. 565.

3 Logan to Chief Sec., 30 June 1885, P/2635, MJP No. 1830, 13 July 1885, p. 35.

4 W. Logan to Chief Sec., 1 May 1885, P/2634, MJP No. 1337, 21 May 1885, p. 98. See also Logan to Chief Sec., 30 June 1885, P/2635, MJP No. 1830, 13 July 1885, p. 35.

5 Report of Winterbotham, 10 Apr. 1896, loc. cit., p. 6. It was a matter of common observation that it was the 'lower classes' of Moplahs who were the most 'fanatical' of their community. See for example Basel German Evangelical Mission, 67th Report of the Society in South-Western India for the year 1906, p. 81, UTCL; P. Grant, Malabar Magistrate to Chief Sec., 9 Dec. 1859, P/328/31, MJP No. 1702, 22 Dec. 1859, p. 402; Conolly to T.L. Strange, Special Commissioner, Malabar, 14 May 1852, P/327/55, MJP No. 56, 27 Jan. 1853, pp. 182-83; C. Collett, Asst. Magistrate, Malabar, to Conolly, 28 Feb. 1853, P/327/59, MJP No. 379, 2 July 1853, p. 3792; Conolly to Chief Sec., 29 Dec. 1841, P/326/15, MJP No. 15, 4 Jan. 1842, p. 59.

recorded that the net value of the property of the dozen participants in the May 1885 outbreak amounted to a mere Rs. 205<sup>1</sup> and though this gang was probably rather exceptional in being so uniformly propertyless it is nevertheless true, as one investigator noted in 1853, that "many of this class of offenders [had] no property, and non [had] much."<sup>2</sup> Indeed, report after report on Moplah outbreaks indicates that the great majority of participants were wage-workers, poor tenants and the like with a sprinkling of mullas of barely-distinguishable economic standing, criminals on the point of having their careers cut short by authority, the chronically-diseased and men who were rather more comfortably-off but who often had experienced economic decline. It was calculated that in the 1896 affair more than three-quarters of those involved were "more or less really poor", 2 or 3 per cent "comfortable" and

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1 H.M. Winterbotham, Acting Malabar Magistrate to Chief Sec., 10 July 1886, P/2855, MJP No. 2236, 23 Aug. 1886, p. 72.

2 Report of T.L. Strange, 25 Sept. 1852, loc. cit., pp. 4618-19. For further observations and evidence that the great majority of outbreak participants were of low social and economic status see P. Grant, Malabar Magistrate to Chief Sec., 16 June 1859, P/328/30, MJP No. 867, 25 June 1859, p. 292; H. Frere, Sessions Judge, Tellicherry to Sec., Judicial, 13 Oct. 1853, P/327/63, MJP No. 714, 30 Nov. 1853, p. 5965; H.V. Conolly, Malabar Magistrate, to Sec., Judicial, 30 Sept. 1851, P/327/41, MJP No. 700, 20 Nov. 1851, p. 3707; report of W. Robinson, Head Asst. Magistrate, Malabar, 18 Oct. 1849, P/327/22, MJP No. 794, 1 Dec. 1849, pp. 4909 and 4950; petition of Kolathur Ukkandunni Variyar [a big Hindu landlord of Walluvanad taluk] to Acting Chief Sec., n.d., P/1093, MJP No. 522, 21 Mar. 1876, p. 397; W. Logan 'Report on Malabar Land Tenures', Govt. of Madras, Malabar Special Commission, 1881-82, Vol. I, p. lxxi; V.A. Brodie, Acting Head Asst. Magistrate, Malabar to C.A. Galton, Acting Malabar Magistrate, 5 Apr. 1884, MJP Nos. 1605-11 (Conf.), 2 July 1884, p. 6, MRO; Galton to Chief Sec., 6 June 1884 (Conf.), ibid., p. 12; C.A. Innes, Acting Malabar Magistrate to Sec., Judicial, 29 Mar. 1915, MJP Nos. 2080-84 (Conf.), 3 Sept. 1915, p. 22, Kozhikode Archives.

the rest youths living with, and more or less supported by their parents.<sup>1</sup> In fact, although men of almost any age might be found in the ranks of outbreak participants, young men predominated. An average age of  $22\frac{1}{4}$  years was calculated for the August 1849 gang,<sup>2</sup> whilst in the 2 of 1896 about 30 per cent of the participants were in their teens, 40 per cent in their twenties, 20 per cent in their thirties and only 7 per cent between the ages of 40 and 60.<sup>3</sup>

All the 'victims'<sup>4</sup> of the 29 outbreaks were Hindus, with the exception of 2 Collectors of Malabar, H.V. Conolly, who was murdered in 1855, and C.A. Innes, who narrowly escaped the same fate in 1915. The incident in 1851 in which a Moplah, discontented with an arrangement concerning family property, stabbed 5 of his own relatives and announced his intention of dying as a martyr is not included in the 29 outbreaks since there appears to be no evidence that he 'sought actively his own death'.<sup>5</sup>

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1 Report of F. Fawcett, Police Supt., Malabar, 5 June 1896, L/PJ/6/433, 2060/96, MJP No. 1567, 30 Sept. 1896, pp. 101-03.

2 Report of W. Robinson, 18 Oct. 1849, loc. cit., p. 4909.

3 Report of J.T. Gillespie, Acting Special Asst. Magistrate, Malabar, 26 Apr. 1896, L/PJ/6/433, 2060/96, MJP No. 1567, 30 Sept. 1896, pp. 38-47. For the youth of most shahid see also A. MacGregor, British Resident, Travancore and Cochin (MacGregor had previously been Collector in Malabar) to Chief Sec., 19 Jan. 1881, Govt. of Madras, Malabar Land Tenures, p. 26; report of T.L. Strange, 25 Sept. 1852, loc. cit., p. 4587.

4 Some intended victims escaped with their lives, a few even without physical injury. See for example H.V. Conolly, Malabar Magistrate to Sec., Judicial, 12 Oct. 1849, P/327/22, MJP No. 794, 1 Dec. 1849, p. 4729.

5 Report of H.V. Conolly, 23 July 1851, P/327/38, MJP 29 July 1851, pp. 2504-05.

Of the 82 Hindu victims the caste status of 78 is determinable. Of these, 63 were members of high castes (23 Nambudiri Brahmins, 6 non-Malayali Brahmins and 34 others, very largely Nairs) and the other 15 of castes ranking below Nairs in the hierarchy, 11 being Cherumar, traditionally agrestic slaves in Malayali society.

Something of the class background of 72 of the Hindu victims is known. 19 were rich jenmis (landlords) and/or moneylenders, 4 were kariastans (land agents) and advisers of jenmis, 18 guests, retainers, servants and similar dependants of jenmis, 10 members of jenmis' families, 5 village headmen (where not definitely known to be jenmis as well, as headmen in Malabar villages usually were) and 4 other Government officials, making a total of 58 known to be themselves powerful figures in the Malabar countryside, or directly associated with such. Of the 12 remaining victims whose class status is known, 3 were labourers, 5 members of one labourer's family, one priest, 2 'cultivators' and one teacher.

Of the 29 jenmis and moneylenders and their families who fell victim to Moplah outbreaks 20 were Nambudiri Brahmins and 8 Nairs, with one of unknown caste, whilst the 11 agents and officials comprised one Nambudiri, 9 Nairs and one unknown. This restriction of those victims classifiable as 'powerful' to the high Hindu castes was not fortuitous. Malabar, and especially that part where outbreaks occurred, was throughout this period pre-eminently the land of the big Nambudiri Brahmin jenmi and the Nair official. As Sir Charles Turner, Chief Justice of the Madras High Court, in 1885 said of the traditional Malayali

fable that Parasu Rama had created Kerala (south-western India, including Malabar) exclusively for the Brahmins to hold as jennis, it "was no doubt invented to give colour to the claim which the Brahmin asserted and which to a very considerable extent he certainly enjoyed," that the right to hold jennom property was his alone.<sup>1</sup> Nearly all the big jennis were in fact high-caste Hindus. The earliest British administrators in Malabar referred to "the Namboory Brahmins and Nayrs" as the "primary landholders" of the district,<sup>2</sup> whilst in 1915 Collector Innes gave figures showing that the 86 biggest landlord families, owning many hundreds of thousands of acres and paying about a fifth of the total land revenue, were all high-caste Hindus except 2 Moplahs, one Tien and one Goundan.<sup>3</sup> A similar investigation in 1881-2 showed that of 829 'principal jennis' (defined as holding not less than a 100 pieces of land in an amsom or 'parish'), 370 were Nambudiris, 339 Nairs, 61 Rajahs, 9 non-Malayali Brahmins, 8 Tiers, 4 other Hindus, 1 European and 37 Moplahs. Significantly, in the outbreak zone of the Ernad and Walluvanad taluks, 'principal jennis' were even more exclusively

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1 Minute on Malabar Land Tenures Draft Bill, pp. 21-22.

2 Report of Joint Commission from Bengal and Bombay, 1792-93, Vol. I, p. 173. See also A. Walker, 'History of Malabar', n.d. but probably the start of the 19th century, Vol. 3, p. 339, Walker Papers, 184a2; Malabar Commission to Board of Revenue, 28 July 1801, P/286/65, MBRP, 10 Aug. 1801, p. 9253; 'Answers to Questions respecting the Revenue', enclosure in Robert Taylor, Chief of Tellicherry Factory to Malabar Commission, 18 Aug. 1792, G/37/11, Tellicherri Factory Records, p. 154.

3 C.A. Innes, 'Strictly Confidential Note on the Malabar Tenancy Legislation', P/35 (Conf.), MRP No. 3021, 26 Sept. 1917, p. 25.

identifiable with the high Hindu castes, for the total of 292 comprised 173 Nambudiris, 96 Nairs, 20 Rajahs and a mere 2 Moplahs.<sup>1</sup>

Moreover, the powerful<sup>2</sup> and often hereditary<sup>3</sup> post of adhigari (amsom headman) was very frequently in the hands of a member of the joint family of a rich jenmi of the

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- 1 W. Logan, 'Report on Malabar Land Tenures', Govt. of Madras, Malabar Special Commission, 1881-82, Vol. I, p. lvi. See also the great predominance of high-caste Hindu names among the signatories to the papers in which the principal landholders acquiesced in the settlement principles of 29 June 1803, Treaty CCXLIII, W. Logan (ed.), A Collection of Treaties etc. Part II, p. 355. For an estimation in the 1920s that out of 200,000 Moplahs in the outbreak area 'less than 5' were jenmis, see oral evidence of V. Kunhi Moyi Haji Sahib Bahadur, President, Ernad Taluk Board, 30 Nov. 1927, Govt. of Madras, Report of Malabar Tenancy Committee, 1927-28, Vol. I, pp. 601 and 604. The extreme paucity of Moplah jenmis in south Malabar was a point made by Chirakkal Raja Raja Varma, Elaya Raja, petition as president of a 'general meeting' at Cherukunnu, Chirakkal, north Malabar, 26 Feb. 1899, P/5732, MLP No. 53, 24 Apr. 1899, p. 22.
- 2 See the details of revenue, magisterial and police duties of the Malabar adhigari in J. Cameron, Asst. Collector, Malabar, 'Report on the Village of Chevayur, 1866', para. 18, Kozhikode Archives; W.E. Underwood, Acting Principal Collector, Malabar to Board of Revenue, 2 Oct. 1839, MBRP, 6 Mar. 1843, Vol. 1850, p. 3749, MRO; 'Sunnud to a Hoblee Daishutheekaree', enclosure in H.S. Graeme, Malabar Commissioner to James Vaughan, Principal Collector, 20 May 1823, P/277/68, MRP, 17 June 1823, p. 1822. See also H.A. Stuart, Census of India, 1891, Madras, Vol. I, pp. 7-8.
- 3 H.S. Graeme, Malabar Commissioner to Chief Sec., 1 Mar. 1823, P/277/66, 11 Mar. 1823, p. 900; Chief Sec. to Graeme, 11 Mar. 1823, ibid., p. 901; C. Collett, Sub-Collector, Malabar to Malabar Collector, 1 Mar. 1856, P/328/23, MJP No. 381, 1 Apr. 1857, pp. 39-40; T.L. Strange, Malabar Commissioner to H.V. Conolly, Malabar Magistrate, 7 Aug. 1852, P/327/54, MJP No. 56, 27 Jan. 1853, p. 372.

amsom.<sup>1</sup> As one Malabar official remarked in 1856, in his district an adhigari was not "a mere headman of a petty village consisting of a few hundred huts ... and inhabited by his equals in poverty" but was "or ought to be a man of considerable landed property, of respectable and old family."<sup>2</sup> Under these circumstances the caste background of the adhigaris of Malabar tended to an important degree to reflect that of the jenmis, with a very high proportion of high-caste Hindus and relatively few Moplahs. In 1851, after a period in which Collector H.V. Conolly had deliberately tried to increase the number of Muslims in the public services,<sup>3</sup> Moplahs still held only 22 of the 81

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- 1 A.F. Pinhey, Malabar Collector to Sec., Commissioner of Revenue Settlement and Director of Land Records and Agriculture, 1 June 1902, P/6445, MRP No. 754, 23 Aug. 1902, p. 440. Unlike the regular public establishment of tahsildars and other taluk servants, the government representatives at 'village' level were not prohibited from acquiring landed property in the area under their charge, Acting Sec., Board of Revenue to Malabar Collector, 7 Dec. 1843, Malabar Collectorate Records No. 7513, Inward Letters in the Revenue Dept., Oct.-Dec. 1843, p. 147, MRO.
- 2 C. Collett, Sub-Collector, Malabar, to Malabar Collector, 1 Mar. 1856, P/328/23, MJP No. 381, 1 Apr. 1857, pp. 39-40. See also W. Robinson, Head Asst. Collector to H.V. Conolly, 7 July 1852, P/310/66, MBRP 25 Apr. 1853, p. 5205; J. Cameron, Asst. Collector, Malabar, 'Report on the Village of Chevayur, 1866', para. 18, Kozhikode Archives; remarks of C.A. Innes, Acting Malabar Magistrate, 10 Mar. 1915, on South Malabar Police Administration Report, Govt. of Madras, Administration Reports of the Madras Police, 1914, p. 83 and the discussion of the establishment of the adhigari system below p. 93.
- 3 Conolly to Chief Sec., 16 Feb. 1842, P/326/15, MJP 7 Mar. 1842, p. 593; 'Notes on certain paragraphs of letter of T.W. Goodwyn /Subordinate Judge, Malabar/ to Government, 31 Dec. 1849', by H.V. Conolly, Malabar Collector, 19 Nov. 1849, P/327/26, MJP No. 19a, 11 Jan. 1850, p. 562; petition of Koonatha Enoodeen Cootty to Governor of Madras, 2 Jan. 1856, Malabar Collectorate Records, Vol. 7345, p. 525, MRO. See also Conolly to Sec., Judicial, 26 Feb. 1852, P/327/47, MJP No. 384, 11 June 1852, p. 2584 for continuing efforts in this direction after 1851.

adhigari posts in the 'fanatic taluks' of Ernad, Shernad and Walluvanad, where the Moplah population was estimated at 81 per cent of the Hindu total.<sup>1</sup> When Conolly took charge of Malabar in 1840 there were apparently only two fixed and eight acting Moplah adhigaris in the three taluks.<sup>2</sup> A similar or even more marked disproportion of Hindus existed in the other village-level posts of menon (accountant) and peon (club-bearer),<sup>3</sup> whilst the higher levels of the administration and the judiciary were especially heavily weighted with Nairs and other high-caste Hindus. Conolly's figures in the early 1850s indicated that of 330 higher-grade appointments in the Malabar administration only seven were held by Moplahs.<sup>4</sup> In the same period it was pointed out

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1 Conolly to Sec., Judicial, 16 Oct. 1851, P/327/42, MJP No. 720, 2 Dec. 1851, pp. 4340-41. 'Shernad' or 'Chernad' was a taluk in south-west Malabar until in 1860 it was merged with 'Ernad' to form a new taluk which retained the latter name. See recommendations for the redistribution of taluks in Malabar (accepted by Govt. of Madras), C. Pelly, member, Board of Revenue, to Sec., Revenue, 26 Dec. 1859, P/282/75, MRP No. 112, 23 Jan. 1860, p. 138. In 1908 C.A. Innes noted that Malabar adhigaris were often Nambudiris, Malabar Gazetteer Vol. I, p. 105 whilst the Collector in the same year observed that the majority of village headmen were Nairs, W. Francis, Acting Malabar Collector to Chief Sec., 30 July 1908, P/9561, MJP No. 2214, 12 Oct. 1914, p. 16.

2 Note of Conolly on petition of 29 Hindus of Ernad, Walluvanad and Shernad, 12 Aug. 1851, P/327/42, MJP No. 720, 2 Dec. 1851, p. 4348. For the hostility of important British officials in Malabar to the inducting of Moplahs into public office in the district in the early 19th century see the comment of Major Alexander Walker, Commissioner in Malabar 1800-01, below p. 176.

3 Conolly to Sec., Judicial, 16 Oct. 1851, P/327/42, MJP No. 720, 2 Dec. 1851, p. 4341; Conolly to T.L. Strange, Special Commissioner, 10 Sept. 1852, P/327/54, MJP No. 56, 27 Jan. 1853 pp. 399 and 403.

4 Conolly to Strange, 10 Sept. 1852, P/327/54, MJP No. 56, 27 Jan. 1853, p. 399.



that the native judges were chiefly Hindus,<sup>1</sup> whilst the police force in the 'fanatic' taluks was made up of 72 per cent Hindus and 28 per cent Muslims.<sup>2</sup> The marked under-representation of Moplahs in the Malabar police force continued for the rest of the outbreak period of 1836-1919.<sup>3</sup>

One striking feature of the Moplah outbreak was its virtual restriction to only one part of the area of Malabar inhabited by Moplahs. With only 3 exceptions, every outbreak took place in the rural parts of interior south Malabar (and of the remaining 26 all but one<sup>4</sup> in Ernad taluk or northern Walluvanad). The 3 exceptions comprise 2<sup>5</sup> in the rural interior of north

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1 Minute of J.F. Thomas, member, Govt. of Madras, 3 Nov. 1852, P/327/60, MJP No. 483, 23 Aug. 1853, pp. 4696-97. For other observations that (high-caste) Hindus dominated the judiciary and the administration see C. Collett, Joint Magistrate in charge of Malabar, to Chief Sec., 15 Sept. 1855, P/328/6, MJP No. 716, 3 Oct. 1855, p. 3626; H. Wigram, Officiating District Judge, South Malabar, to Chief Sec., 8 Nov. 1883, Govt. of Madras, Malabar Land Tenures, p. 18; proceedings of general meeting of the Himayathul Islam Sabha (also known as the Mappilla Sabha), 20 May 1894, P/4621, MJP Nos. 2186-92, 8 Sept. 1894, pp. 122-23; memorandum of Sayyid Abdu Rehman Bin Muhamad Hamid Mulla Koya Tangal to A.E. Havelock, Governor of Madras, 7 Apr. 1898, MJP No. 996 (Conf.), 28 June 1898, MRO; Lt. Gen. Commanding the Forces, Madras to Adjutant-General in India, 26 Apr. 1900 (Conf.), MJP Nos. 1000-01 (Conf.), 23 July 1900, p. 49, MRO.

2 Conolly to Strange, 10 Sept. 1852, P/327/54, MJP No. 56, 27 Jan. 1853, p. 595.

3 See table p. 29.

4 The May 1885 outbreak which occurred in Ponnani taluk. See W. Logan, Malabar Magistrate to Chief Sec., 17 July 1885, P/2635, MJP No. 2725, 8 Oct. 1885, p. 44a.

5 Those of January 1852 (Kottayam taluk) and August 1852 (Kurumbranad taluk). After the rearrangement of taluk boundaries in 1860 the area of this outbreak was within Calicut taluk. See H.V. Conolly to Sec., Judicial, 28 Jan. 1852, P/327/44, MJP No. 123, 17 Feb. 1852, p. 609 and T.L. Strange, Malabar Commissioner to Sec., Judicial, 16 Oct. 1852, P/327/51, MJP No. 716, 6 Nov. 1852, p. 4547.

TABLES TO SHOW THE NON-MOPLAH DOMINANCE IN THE PERSONNEL OF  
THE MALABAR POLICE FORCE FOR CERTAIN YEARS BETWEEN 1865 AND 1915<sup>1</sup>

	Inspectors			Constables		
	Total	Moplahs	Non-Moplah Muslims	Total	Moplahs	Non-Moplah Muslims
1865-66	20	1	0	952	88	180
1866-67	19	0	0	874	89	169
South 1867-68	20	1	1	834	85	132
Malabar 1868-69	20	1	1	826	98	130
1869-70	19	1	1	759	80	118
1870-71	19	1	1	697	81	106

	Officers			Men		
	Total	Moplahs	Non-Moplah Muslims	Total	Moplahs	Non-Moplah Muslims
1873-74	30	1	0	1157	66	153
1876	34	2	0	1479	81	151
1877	35	2	0	1678	90	138
1878	35	3	0	1608	89	129
1879	36	3	0	1592	75	142
1880	36	3	0	1568	84	142
1881	35	3	0	1551	91	135
1882	32	3	1	1393	86	126
1883	35	2	1	1376	91	122
1884	34	2	1	1365	93	119
1885	41	2	1	1463	105	111
1886	40	3	1	1399	95	111
1887	31	2	1	1385	90	107
Malabar 1888	38	2	1	1374	83	96
1889	38	1	1	1378	91	83
1890	38	2	1	1372	96	76
1891	37	1	2	1328	87	78
1892	37	1	2	1322	78	78
1893	36	1	2	1328	80	71
1894	35	2	3	1364	87	85
1895	35	2	2	1388	93	79
1896	35	2	3	1452	106	75
1897	205		29	1275		166
1898	203		27	1278		157
1899	196		23	1278		149
1900	188		22	1277		152
1905	185		19	1264		142
South 1910	61		9	1172		148
Malabar 1915	64		8	1189		198

<sup>1</sup> Government of Madras, Administration Reports of the Madras Police, 1892-1915; Government of Madras, Report on the Administration of the Madras Presidency, 1865-91.

Malabar and one in which Moplahs from interior south Malabar made their way to the residence of District Magistrate Conolly in Calicut town to butcher him and thereby openly initiate their outbreak.

This phenomenon of geographical restriction was not the least of the enigmas the Moplah outbreak presented to perplexed British administrators, for whom the fact that Pandalur Hill happened to be located roughly in the centre of the outbreak zone came to assume obsessive proportions. "I have puzzled for twenty-five years why outbreaks occur within fifteen miles of Pandalur Hill and cannot profess to solve it", was the lamentation of H.M. Winterbotham in his report on the outbreak of 1896.<sup>1</sup>

#### Interpretation. Part 1, Official Rationale

For decades this startling phenomenon of the Moplah outbreak presented British administration with the most taxing problem of interpretation, a problem it seemed necessary to solve if appropriate policy measures were to be adopted.

Since so many of the attacks involved the selection of victims who were rich landlords or their agents and since so many of their assailants were men in social positions vulnerable to the adverse exercise of their economic and social power, it seemed obvious to ascribe Moplah outbreaks to antagonism between landlord and tenant, or landlord and labourer. As Malabar Magistrate H.V. Conolly put it in 1844:

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<sup>1</sup> Report of H.M. Winterbotham, 5 May 1896, L/PJ/6/433, 2060/96, MJP No. 1567, 30 Sept. 1896, p. 62.

"The most ready supposition on hearing of such atrocities committed by the lower on the higher ranks of society is that the people have been driven to desperation and forced to take the law into their own hands by some intolerable tyranny".<sup>1</sup>

What strengthened the presumption was the fact that on the occasions when the grievance of outbreak participants were recorded, a sense of oppression by landlords, buttressed by the courts and local administration, figured prominently. Thus, the participants in the December 1843 Pandikkad outbreak, which was directed against overbearing local notables, complained that "it is impossible for people to live quietly while the Atheekarees [adhigaris] and Jemmies ... treat us in this way."<sup>2</sup> Again, the leader of the 1849 gang, Athan Gurikal, left behind a document in which he claimed that the behaviour of landlords in collusion with public servants, "the majority ... being of Hindoo caste", was a source of grievance to "the Mussalmen inhabiting the inland part of Malabar".<sup>3</sup>

One of the main ways in which landlords were felt to be

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- 1 Conolly to Sec., Judicial, 2 Jan. 1844, P/326/35, MJP No. 69, 27 Jan. 1844, p. 266. Conolly was not at this time ready to subscribe to such a theory though later (see for example Conolly to Sec., Judicial, 28 Jan. 1852, P/327/44, MJP No. 123, 17 Feb. 1852, p. 623) he seems to have changed his mind.
- 2 "The Wurrola chit (anonymous writing) written for the perusal and information of Walluvanaad Tahsildar", no date or signature, left behind in the house in which the shahid had 'taken post', P/326/35, MJP No. 69, 27 Jan. 1844, p. 286.
- 3 "Writing of Syed Assan, Manjery Athan and all the others who have taken possession of Manjery temple", n.d., P/327/22, MJP No. 794, 1 Dec. 1849, p. 4784. For examples in the latter part of the 1836-1919 outbreak period see statement of Trasherri Unni Ali, 4 Apr. 1898, in Court of Special Asst. Magistrate, Malabar, P/5506, MJP Nos. 1737-40, 11 Nov. 1898, pp. 22-23 and Chek Haji's petition to Malabar Collector, Exhibit B in J.F. Hall, Malabar Magistrate to Sec., Home (Judicial), 25 Apr. 1919, L/PJ/6/1608, 4582/19, MJP No. 1310, 9 June 1919, pp. 25-26.

behaving oppressively was their use of eviction recognised by the courts. One specific method of exercising these powers which was especially resented, and which became popular with jenmis in the course of the outbreak period,<sup>1</sup> was by the granting of melcharths, or 'overleases' by which the jenmi virtually sold (sometimes by literally putting it up for auction<sup>2</sup>) to a third party the right to oust and replace one of his tenants. Thus, a Moplah captured in 1896 gave as a reason for the outbreak the grievance that "poor folks who have only two or three paras of land are ejected and put to trouble by the grant of melcharths over their heads".<sup>3</sup>

Almost without exception, every British official concerned with interpreting the Moplah outbreak was prepared to concede that all was not well with landlord-tenant relations in Malabar, and the grievance over insecurity of tenure was repeatedly stressed by them. However, explaining outbreaks as anti-jenmi

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1 See below p. 206.

2 C.A. Innes, 'Strictly Confidential Note on the Malabar Tenancy Legislation', loc. cit., p. 21; decree of Court of Adawlut in Malabar Zillah, Original Suit No. 172 of 1834, Moottee's Court, Appeal Suit No. 147 of 1834, Judge's Court, South Malabar, KDCA.

3 Statement of Puzhutini Kunyayu, 14 Mar. 1896, L/PJ/6/422, 996/96, p. 12. See also statement of Kaidhavalappan Kunyalan, 14 Mar. 1896, ibid., p. 16. For other instances of the rôle of the melcharth grievance in causing outbreaks see Conolly to Chief Sec., Judicial, 30 Apr. 1841, P/326/8, MJP No. 363, 11 May 1841, pp. 2244-46 and Govt. Order No. 2186, 8 Sept. 1894, P/4621, MJP Nos. 2186-92, Sept. 1894, p. 134. For examples of direct evictions helping to cause outbreaks see J. Twigg, Acting Special Asst. Magistrate, to Malabar Magistrate, 7 Nov. 1885, P/2625, MJP No. 3499, 30 Dec. 1885, p. 83 and Chek Haji's petition to Malabar Collector [1919], loc. cit., pp. 25-26.

manifestations posed difficult problems with which those Malabar Collectors most responsive to tenant grievance grappled with only very partial success. In particular, since Hindu tenants and labourers admittedly suffered quite as much, if not more, from the great power of the big jenmi, why were outbreaks confined to the Muslim community? Moreover, why should some of the assaults have been directed against Hindus who were not only not landlords, but members of the slave caste at least as vulnerable to the exercise of jenmi power as many of the assailants themselves? Failure by those who stressed the agrarian explanation for outbreaks adequately to answer such questions undermined their case for legislation to grant occupancy rights to tenants, a measure they urged as essential if the Moplah problem were to be solved.<sup>1</sup>

The shortcomings of the case presented by the 'pro-tenant' school of Malabar Collectors were seized on by the Government of Madras which, in this period at least, was most reluctant to intervene in agrarian relations in Malabar in favour of the tenant. Would-be reformers were fully conscious that before any meddling with the powers of the jenmi could be considered it was incumbent on them "to show some political necessity for interference."<sup>2</sup> The neglect of Collector Innes to show any such thing when he presented his case for legislation in 1917

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1 W. Logan, 'Report on Malabar Land Tenures', loc. cit., Vol. I pp. lxxx and lxxxi; Logan to Chief Sec., 7 Jan. 1881, Govt. of Madras, Malabar Land Tenures, p. 26; H.M. Winterbotham, Malabar Magistrate to Chief Sec., 14 Feb. 1890, P/4011, MJP No. 2530, 11 Dec. 1891, p. 67.

2 Report of Madhava Rao Commission to advise the Govt. of Madras on legislation on Malabar land tenures, 17 July 1884; Govt. of Madras, Malabar Land Tenures, p. 122. See also minute of Justice Brandt, enclosure in Acting Register of High Court of Judicature at Madras to Chief Sec., 20 July 1885, ibid., p. 227.

met with this response from the Board of Revenue:

"Mr. Innes speaks of the janmis of Malabar as a 'political force on the side of Government'. In the Board's opinion there can be no doubt that tenancy legislation of the kind now suggested would be a grave political mistake, as it would alienate this force from the Government, and the Government could not count on receiving from the tenants anything in the way of gratitude to replace this loss."<sup>1</sup>

The Board strongly recommended that the question of tenancy legislation for Malabar should be dropped and the Government of Madras readily agreed.<sup>2</sup>

As early as 1852, when the outbreak situation had become so serious that a Special Commissioner, T.L. Strange, had been appointed to ascertain the cause of outbreaks, the local Government had hinted at another interpretation of the phenomenon and a different policy approach when it issued Strange with his instructions. He was to bear in mind that his "grand object" should be "to secure to the Nair and Brahmin population the most ample protection and safety possible against the effect of Moplah fanaticism".<sup>3</sup> With such a direction, perhaps it is not

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1 Reference from the Board of Revenue (Land Revenue) No. 2105-A/Gt. 15-2/C. 30, 1 May 1917, P/35 (Conf.), MRP No. 3021, 26 Sept. 1917, p. 6. In 1911 Innes himself had spoken of "the political value of a strong body of wealthy land-owners" such as the big Malabar jenmis whom he regarded as "thoroughly loyal", C.A. Innes, Acting Malabar Collector to Sec., Commissioner of Land Revenue and Forests, 26 Aug. 1911, P/9579, MRP (Conf.) No. 9, 2 Jan. 1914, p. 26. See also Innes, 'Strictly Confidential Note on the Malabar Tenancy Legislation', loc. cit., p. 35. For another expression of the impolicy of interfering with the power of a loyal group like the Malabar jenmis see Sir Charles Turner, Chief Justice, Madras High Court, Minute on Malabar Land Tenures Draft Bill, p. 60.

2 Govt. Order No. 3021, P/35 (Conf.), MRP 26 Sept. 1917, p. 6.

3 Minute No. 123, 17 Feb. 1852, P/327/44, MJP p. 678.

surprising that Strange came to the conclusion that outbreaks were not due to agrarian grievance but that "the most decided fanaticism ... has furnished the true incentive to them", adding that the "pride and intolerance fostered by the Mahomedan faith, coupled with the grasping and treacherous, and vindictive character of the Moplahs in these districts drawn out to its worst extent have fomented the evil and it may be said to lie at the root thereof".<sup>1</sup>

As an 'explanation' for the Moplah outbreak this posed more questions than it answered. In particular, why should the Muslims of two Malabar taluks have reacted fanatically to their religion when so many Muslim communities, including those in the rest of Malabar, admittedly did not? The claim that it was the 'character' of these particular Muslims to react in this way in itself explained nothing.

Moreover, the attributing of outbreaks to religious fanaticism itself posed policy problems for Government. British administrators in India tended to believe that interference in the religious affairs of the people was more likely to stir up trouble than allay it. As was said of an 1896 proposal to regulate the teaching of the ulema:

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<sup>1</sup> Report of T.L. Strange, 25 Sept. 1852, loc. cit., p. 4587 and 4591.



"Any real attempt to control religious teaching and preaching would be viewed as persecution, and we should have sedition preached on the hill-tops, in the depths of the jungle, and in dens and holes in the earth".<sup>1</sup>

Even so, the Government did act on Strange's report. Its representatives in Malabar had already persuaded one of the leading Ernad Tangals, Syed Fazl, the Mambram Tangal, who was suspected of fomenting outbreaks, to remove himself to Arabia.<sup>2</sup> But its main policy instruments were the repressive Moplah Acts of 1854. Formulating a repressive policy to deal with men whose very aim was death was not found to be an easy task. However, the Moplah Acts provided for the banning of the Moplah war knife, the deportation without trial of anyone suspected of intending to participate in an outbreak, the confiscation to Government of the property of participants, and the levying of fines on the inhabitants of localities involved in the disturbances.<sup>3</sup> This last provision was especially significant. It

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1 Report of Winterbotham, 5 May 1896, loc. cit., p. 64. See also minute of D. Elliott, member, Council of Governor of Madras, 15 Apr. 1853, P/327/60, MJP No. 483, 23 Aug. 1853, p. 4735; W. Logan, Malabar Magistrate to Chief Sec., 7 Feb. 1885, P/2634 MJP Nos. 1169-74, 2 May 1885, p. 27; Govt. Order No. 1169, 2 May 1885, ibid., p. 31; uninitialled side-note by an official of the Govt. of Madras on memorandum of Sayyid Abdu Rehman Bin Muhamad Hamid Mulla Koya Tangal to Governor of Madras, 7 Apr. 1898, MJP No. 996 (Conf.), 28 June 1898, p. 12, MRO; C.A. Innes, Malabar Magistrate, to Sec., Judicial, 29 Mar. 1915, MJP Nos. 2080-84, 3 Sept. 1915, (Conf.), pp. 29 and 36, Kozhikode Archives; R.H. Hitchcock, Supt. of Police, South Malabar, 'Report on the Mappilla Outbreak of 1915', 30 Mar. 1915, ibid., p. 69.

2 Conolly to Sec., Judicial, 20 Mar. 1852, P/327/45, MJP No. 216, 26 Mar. 1852, p. 1152.

3 W.P. Williams, The Acts of the Legislative Council of India relating to the Madras Presidency from 1848 to 1855, pp. 294-96.

reflected the conviction of all Government servants in Malabar that the great majority of Moplahs were sustaining outbreaks by their sympathy with them. The remark of Collector Conolly in 1843 that it seemed evident that the Moplahs' "real sympathies were always enlisted on the side of the Criminals" was typical,<sup>1</sup> whilst in 1849 Conolly remarked that seldom did "a Moplah of the lower order" pass the grave of any participant in earlier outbreaks "but in silence and with an attitude of devotion, such as is usual in this district in passing a mosque", adding that "despite the prohibition of the authorities, ceremonies are from time to time secretly performed in their remembrance to an admiring audience".<sup>2</sup> The memory of a number of the most audacious shahid bands was kept alive in popular songs composed

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1 Conolly to Sec., Judicial, 4 Nov. 1843, P/326/35, MJP No. 69, 27 Jan. 1844, p. 216. See also Conolly to Chief Sec., n.d., P/326/13, MJP 17 Dec. 1842, p. 5130; W. Robinson, Acting Joint Magistrate to Conolly, 16 Jan. 1852, P/327/44, MJP No. 59, Jan. 1852, pp. 317-18; Case No. 18, Govt. versus Pulipalikel Pucker, 14 Feb. 1856, Malabar Collectorate Records, Vol. 7347, p. 576, MRO; T. Clarke, Malabar Magistrate, to Chief Sec., 25 Feb. 1856, P/328/13, MJP No. 424, 25 Apr. 1856, p. 2285; H. Wigram, Officiating District Judge, South Malabar, to Chief Sec., 8 Nov. 1883, Govt. of Madras, Malabar Land Tenures, p. 16; H. Bradley, Acting Malabar Magistrate, to Chief Sec., 16 May 1894, P/4621, MJP Nos. 2186-92, 8 Sept. 1894, p. 99; J.T. Gillespie, Acting Special Asst. Magistrate, Malabar to Malabar Collector, 26 Apr. 1896, L/PJ/6/433, 2060/96, MJP No. 1567, 30 Sept. 1896, p. 15.

2 Conolly to Sec., Judicial, 28 July 1849, P/327/19, MJP No. 503, 7 Aug. 1849, pp. 2574-78. See also Court of Joint Magistrate, Malabar, Calendar Case No. 20 of 1883, 20 June 1883, Regina v. Kalathil Kunholan, MJP Nos. 1605-11 (Conf.), 2 July 1884, p. 59, MRO; W. Robinson, Acting Malabar Magistrate to Chief Sec., 19 Feb. 1858, P/328/26, MJP No. 254, 25 Feb. 1858, p. 327.

in their honour.<sup>1</sup>

It would be natural to enquire, in view of this frequently-noticed sympathy for the shahid on the part of the great mass of Ernad Moplahs, more especially the lower social orders,<sup>2</sup> whether the Moplah community of the outbreak zone, or at least an important section of it, was gaining in any way from outbreaks. Though there is no record of any thorough investigation of this question by the Government of Madras, it was clear that it was hoped the policy of fining would mean the community as a whole, and more particularly its richer and more influential members who were to be the especial target of the fines,<sup>3</sup> would come to believe it must lose whenever an outbreak occurred, and act accordingly.<sup>4</sup>

In fact, the record shows that the frequency of outbreaks

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1 Conolly to Sec., Judicial, 12 Oct. 1849, P/327/22, MJP No. 794, 1 Dec. 1849, p. 4757; 'Ballad composed to Commemorate the events attending the Cutting off of the Head of Kapraat Paniker', appendix 6, ibid., p. 4815.

2 For evidence on this point see Conolly to Chief Sec., n.d., P/326/13, MJP 17 Dec. 1842, p. 5130; W. Robinson, Head Asst. Magistrate to Conolly, 18 Oct. 1849, P/327/22, MJP No. 794, 1 Dec. 1849, p. 4951; C. Collett, Sub-Collector, Malabar, to Conolly, 20 Sept. 1841, P/327/41, MJP No. 700, 20 Nov. 1851, p. 3744; Case No. 14, Bhavat Case, Govt. versus Pulkooiyi Moyee and Maylangi Karamel Moidin Kutty, 14 Feb. 1856, Malabar Collectorate Records, Vol. No. 7347, p. 509, MRO.

3 See the comments of T.L. Strange on section 6 of his draft Moplah Act No. 1, Strange's report, 25 Sept. 1852, loc. cit., p. 4626.

4 Hand-notes by W. Robinson, Acting Malabar Magistrate, n.d., on letter to him from Major Haly, Commandant, Malabar Police Corps, 24 June 1857, Malabar Collectorate Records Vol. 7379, Police Letters 1857, p. 352, MRO.

did decline after the passing of the Acts. From 1836 to 1854 when the measures were enacted, 17 outbreaks occurred. From 1855 to 1887, when a change of policy was effected, the total was only 7. In the first period (of 18 years) outbreaks occurred at a rate of almost one every year, in the second period (of 32 years) one every 4 or 5 years.

The administration began to feel their aim of rendering outbreaks "comparatively unimportant and unfrequent"<sup>1</sup> was being achieved. Even so outbreaks did continue, and when in 1880 an anonymous petition was received setting out tenant grievances, especially regarding eviction, and threatening that "the severity of the oppression of the Malabar landlords will lead to great disturbances, at which a great number of people will lose their lives ..... disturbances and bloodshed of a kind unknown in Malabar",<sup>2</sup> another Special Commissioner, W. Logan, was appointed, this time to investigate Malabar land tenures.<sup>3</sup>

Logan argued that the Moplah outbreak was the outcome of administrations imposing through the courts their British agrarian preconceptions on a state of society fundamentally different from that of their homeland. By recognising the jenmi as the absolute owner of his holding and "therefore free

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1 Minute No. 123, 17 Feb. 1852, P/327/44, MJP p. 678.

2 "Petition purporting to be addressed by certain Mussulmans, Nayars, Tiyyans and men of other castes inhabiting Malabar", 14 Oct. 1880, Govt. of Madras, Malabar Land Tenures, pp. 14-15.

3 Govt. Order No. 281, MJP, 5 Feb. 1881, ibid., p. 28.

to take as big a share of the produce of the soil as he could screw out of the classes beneath him" the British had, Logan claimed, presented him with powers which were not customary in Malabar.<sup>1</sup> Logan pressed in vain for occupancy rights to be conferred on certain categories of tenant, to curb jenmi power. The Government was not prepared to accede to this demand, but instead passed the Compensation for Tenants' Improvements Act of 1887, providing for payment by jenmis, in the event of their resorting to eviction, of what was intended to be the "full market value"<sup>2</sup> of improvements made by tenants at rates determined by Court Commissioners. The hope was that this requirement would impose "a check on the arbitrary exercise of the power of eviction".<sup>3</sup>

In fact, although it was reported in 1894 that the Act had, on the whole, "worked ... favourably for the tenants",<sup>4</sup> it failed in its purpose of securing to them the full market value of their improvements on eviction. The wording of the Act had resulted in a number of court decisions which laid down that the compensation payable was to be determined on the basis of the cost of making the improvement rather than (what

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1 'Report on Malabar Land Tenures', Govt. of Madras, Malabar Special Commission, 1881-82, Vol. I, p. xvii.

2 C.G. Master, President, Committee on Malabar Land Law to Acting Chief Sec., 9 Feb. 1886, forwarding draft Bill, P/2820, MLP No. 37, 19 Feb. 1886, p. 5.

3 Govt. of Madras, Malabar Land Tenures Committee Report, 22 Feb. 1887, p. 5.

4 Report of H. Bradley, Acting Malabar Collector, 31 Jan. 1894, P/4621, MJP No. 2374 (Conf.), 1 Oct. 1894, p. 2.

was normally far higher) the price it would fetch on the open market.<sup>1</sup> To replace the 1887 Act an amended Bill was prepared in 1898 which was in effect a compromise based on both methods of determining the amount of compensation awardable<sup>2</sup> and this measure became law in 1900 in the teeth of jenmi opposition.<sup>3</sup>

Although even the considerably-strengthened Act of 1900 still, to the dissatisfaction of the tenantry,<sup>4</sup> failed<sup>5</sup> to secure to the Malabar tenant what had been promised him in 1886, the full market value of his improvements on eviction, administrators of widely-differing sympathies were agreed that the new legislation was a not-unimportant weapon in the hands of the tenant.<sup>6</sup>

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1 Bill No. 6 of 1898, Statement of Objects and Reasons by H.M. Winterbotham, P/5502, MLP No. 80, 10 Dec. 1898, p. 28.

2 Bill No. 6 of 1898, to Secure to Tenants in the Malabar District Compensation for Improvements, ibid., p. 8.

3 Resolution I, carried unanimously at meeting of Kerala Mahajana Sabha (a jenmi organisation), held at Chalapuram Palace, 18 Feb. 1899, P/5732, MLP No. 20, 2 Mar. 1899, p. 2.

4 See for example Memorial of Father Kuriyakkos and the Kanom (see definition below p.90) tenants of Chowghat to Governor-in-Council, Madras, 4 July 1915, P/35 (Conf.) MRP No. 3021, 26 Sept. 1917, p. 1.

5 See for example W. Francis, Acting Malabar Collector to Sec., Commissioners of Land Revenue, 24 Oct. 1909, P/8541, MJP No. 308, 25 Feb. 1910, p. 6; C.A. Innes, 'Strictly Confidential Note on the Malabar Tenancy Legislation', loc. cit., p. 22.

6 See for example the view of C.A. Innes, 'Strictly Confidential Note on the Malabar Tenancy Legislation', loc. cit., p. 9, and those of two officials less clearly identified with the tenants' cause, A.F. Pinhey, Malabar Collector (conf. report of 20 May 1902, P/6457, MBRP RS, LR & A No. 121, 3 July 1902, p. 5) and N. MacMichael, Special Settlement Officer, Malabar (report of 10 June 1904, P/7175, MBRP RS, LR & A No. 93, 10 Apr. 1905, p. 23).

Certainly the Court of Wards administration of the estate of one big Malabar jenmi, the Kavalappara Nair, found the 1900 Act a very real obstacle to their desire to terminate the leases of certain of their tenants in 1902-03.<sup>1</sup> Moreover, the difficulties faced by the jenmi were further increased in the late 19th century by two Acts of 1896, one for the registration of jenmis and the other concerning rent recovery.

The Jenmi Registration Act was the outcome of a High Court ruling which rendered it necessary that the old Malabar practice since the beginning of the century of settling the land revenue with occupants who were not proprietors<sup>2</sup> should be discontinued and that the jenmis should be ascertained, registered and made

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1 A.F. Pinhey, Malabar Collector and Agent to Court of Wards to Sec., Court of Wards, 6 Feb. 1903, P/6678, MRP No. 596, 13 June 1903, p. 5.

2 See for example J. Strachey, Collector Tellicherry, Darmapatam, Randaterra and Mahe, to Sec., Board of Revenue, n.d., P/286/56, MBRP 19 Mar. 1801, p. 2993 and 2995; G.W. Gillio, Collector, Calicut and Beypour, to Sec., Board of Revenue, 14 Apr. 1801, P/286/58, MBRP 27 Apr. 1801, pp. 4745-46; Murdoch Brown, a planter with long experience of Malabar, to Sec., Board of Revenue, 9 May 1801, P/286/60, MBRP May 1801, p. 5805; Malabar Commission to Board of Revenue, 28 July 1801, P/286/65, MBRP 10 Aug. 1801, p. 9229; Thomas Warden, Malabar Collector to Board of Revenue, 16 June 1813, P/290/71, MBRP 1 July 1813, p. 6392 and 6407-08; Warden, ex-Collector, Malabar to Board, 3 Oct. 1818, P/292/82, MBRP 12 Oct. 1818, p. 13308; report of H.S. Graeme, Malabar Commissioner, n.d., P/277/55, MRP 16 July 1822, para. 1353; resolution of Board of Revenue No. 2755, 13 Nov. 1882, P/2133, MRP No. 459, 18 Apr. 1883, p. 181. The chief reason for the decision in the earliest period of British rule not to collect the Government's dues directly from the jenmi seems to have been the fact that at that time jenmom property was very often heavily encumbered with debt and the landlords generally in no economic position to ensure the satisfaction of the revenue demand, see below p.179.

primarily responsible for the revenue.<sup>1</sup> The implementation of this measure produced a chorus of complaints from the jenmis which the Collector, A.F. Pinhey regarded as "for the most part genuine",<sup>2</sup> about the difficulties presented by their new role of revenue-collector.<sup>3</sup> Pinhey himself had found as Agent in Malabar to the Court of Wards that during the latter's administration of the estate of the Kavalappara Nair, profits had been reduced as a consequence of the initial operation of the Jenmi Registration Act.<sup>4</sup> The Act was all the more unwelcome to the jenmi since it came just before a new settlement of the Malabar land revenue at the turn of the century enhanced the total

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- 1 J. Grose, member, Council of Governor of Madras, Statement of Objects and Reasons, Jenmi Registration Bill, 2 Oct. 1895, L/PJ/6/408, 1909/95.
- 2 Report of 25 Oct. 1902, P/6458, MBRP (RS, LR & A) No. 273, 18 Dec. 1902, pp. 2-4. See also report of F.C. Parsons, Special Settlement Officer, Malabar and South Canara, 18 Mar. 1901, P/6223, MBRP (RS, LR & A) No. 252, 11 Oct. 1901, p. 4 and P/6211, MRP No. 917, 1 Oct. 1901, p. 25.
- 3 See for example petition of Puthia Kovilagam Viathen Sridevi, alias the Valia Thamburatti, n.d., P/6925, MBRP (RS, LR & A) No. 73, 4 Mar. 1904. Pinhey in his 25 Oct. 1902 report, loc. cit. pp. 2-4 said that similar complaints were being received from other jenmis. For jenmi opposition to the measure before it became law see memorial of K.C. Manavikraman Rajah, Hon. Sec., Kerala Mahajana Sabha, Calicut, n.d., L/PJ/6/412, 25/96 and J.W.F. Dumergue, Acting Malabar Collector to Commissioner, Revenue Settlement and Director, Land Records and Agriculture, 16 Mar. 1892, P/4237, MBRP (RS, LR & A) No. 402, 31 May 1892, p. 8.
- 4 A.F. Pinhey, Malabar Collector and Agent to Court of Wards to Sec., Court of Wards, 25 Oct. 1902, P/6678, MRP No. 596, 13 June 1903, p. 3. For further details of the problems with which the Registration Act presented the jenmi see report of Pinhey, 20 May 1902 (Conf.) P/6457, MBRP (RS, LR & A) No. 121, 3 July 1902, p. 5 and administration report of Punnathur estate for fasli (harvest year) 1317 (1907-08), by W. Francis, Acting Malabar Collector, 24 Oct. 1908, P/8011, MCWP No. 195, 11 Dec. 1908, p. 3.



assessment by 76 per cent.<sup>1</sup> Moreover the problem of recovering this heavier Government demand from the tenants was exacerbated by the removal from the Malabar jenmi of the power of distraint by an 1896 Act, the provisions of which the jenmi for years continued to challenge,<sup>2</sup> excluding the district from the operation of the Madras Rent Recovery Act of 1865.<sup>3</sup> As the Government of Madras pointed out in 1895:

"it is in the highest degree inexpedient that this summary power of distraint should be allowed in Malabar. Every exercise of it by Hindu janmis, or, as will generally be the case, their land agents, who are a generally low class of men, on their Moplah tenants is likely, owing to the Strained relations existing between them in many places, to lead to a repetition of those outbreaks of which there have been several regrettable instances within the last few years."

In fact, if the Malabar jenmi were to have the same powers of distraint commanded by landlords in the rest of the Presidency the local Government was not prepared to "be responsible for the peace of the district".<sup>4</sup>

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1 Govt. Order No. 883, P/6006, MRP 29 Aug. 1900, p. 1096.

2 See for example petition of Mannarghat Mupil Nayar, 30 May 1903, P/6680, MRP No. 1091, 30 Oct. 1903, p. 558 and Govt. Order No. 917, 1 Oct. 1901, P/6223, MBRP (RS, LR & A) No. 252, 11 Oct. 1901, pp. 16-20; Manorama 2 June 1902, MNNR 1901-02, L/R/15/110, p. 206; Kerala Patrika, 24 June 1905, MNNR 1905-06, L/R/15/112, p. 240; question of Raja Vasudeva Raja Valia Nambidi of Kollengode, 22 Jan. 1907, Questions and Answers at the Meetings of the Council of the Governor of Fort St. George, 1893-1908, Vol. II, p. 291. The provision had aroused hostility in the jenmi Press whilst it was still a Bill, see Manorama, 21 Oct. 1895, and 28 Oct. 1895, MNNR 1894-95, L/R/15/107, pp. 316-18.

3 See 'An Act to limit the local extent of the Madras Rent Recovery Act VIII of 1865', L/PJ/6/412, 25/96.

4 Letter No. 2521, 25 June 1895, (Conf.), Acting Sec., Govt. of Madras to Sec., Govt. of India, Revenue and Agriculture Dept., L/PJ/6/408, 1909/95, p. 3. The Government of India concurred; see their reply, No. 2299 (Conf.), 7 Aug. 1895, ibid.  
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Thus, very largely for political reasons, a series of legislative measures was undertaken in the late 19th century which, whilst still leaving the jenmi "a power in the land",<sup>1</sup> made the exercise of that power more uncertain. Meanwhile, after two bad disturbances in the earlier 1890s, outbreaks came to an end for an unprecedented 17-year period with the remarkable outcome to the abortive affair of 1898.<sup>2</sup>

Like most outbreaks, that of 1898 departed from the ideal pattern in several ways. In particular the initiators probably had no settled intention of becoming shahid in the period of preparation for what at first was simply an assault on a big Nambudiri jenmi by timber carters aggrieved at the payment they had received from him and the beating he had had meted out to them when they protested. When the jenmi was actually killed in the course of the assault, the gang appear to have decided to die as martyrs and the affair then took the course of a normal outbreak. The late decision to become shahid was probably not unique and seems to have been a feature of outbreaks on previous occasions, notably that of November 1841.<sup>3</sup>

What was very significant however was the way the affair ended. When the Government forces arrived at the temple selected for the last stand, they found it surrounded by three

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1 Conf. report of A.F. Pinhey, 20 May 1902, loc. cit., p. 6.

2 See reports of G.W. Dance, Malabar Magistrate, 19 Apr. 1898 and L. Vibert, Acting Special Asst. Magistrate, 14 Apr. 1898, P/5506, MJP Nos. 1737-40, 11 Nov. 1898, pp. 18-31.

3 Conolly to Sec., Judicial, 29 Dec. 1841, P/326/15, MJP No. 37, 8 Feb. 1842, p. 346.

or four hundred Moplahs, led by a local Tangal, in the process of trying to induce the gang's surrender, which was in fact effected.

Quite apart from any persuasive power of the Tangals who parleyed with the gang<sup>1</sup> it is clear that the continuation of the outbreak by means of the final suicidal charge became impossible once several hundred Moplahs had separated the gang from its objective, hand-to-hand combat with the Government forces. The British administration, whose servants in Malabar had openly despaired of ever being able to devise a method of capturing outbreak participants alive<sup>2</sup> had been witness to a pacific demonstration of the power of numbers of which Gandhi himself might have been proud. As G.W. Dance, the Collector, pointed out in his report, such a thing had never before been known in the history of Moplah outbreaks and yet this had happened in Payyanad, an amsom ('parish') notorious for its outbreak record and this after the gang had murdered an unpopular Hindu

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1 In view of the number of times the unsupported remonstrances of Moplah divines had in the past failed to have any effect on intending shahid (see below p.75) it seems unlikely that those who went out to die in 1898 were stayed by the Tangals.

2 Conolly to Chief Sec., n.d., P/326/13, MJP 17 Dec. 1842, pp. 5127-28; Conolly to Sec., Judicial, 23 Dec. 1843, P/326/35, MJP No. 69, 27 Jan. 1844, p. 249. See also Winterbotham's report of 10 Apr. 1896, loc. cit., p. 3; W. Logan, Malabar Magistrate to Chief Sec., 17 July 1885, P/2635, MJP No. 2725, 8 Oct. 1885, p. 7.

jenmi.<sup>1</sup>

The British had for decades been familiar with the widespread support, both overt and covert, for outbreaks on the part of Ernad Moplahs. That this striking demonstration in the heart of the outbreak zone indicated a shift in attitude within the community seems even more likely when the following 17 years of freedom from outbreaks are considered. As one British official had perceived in 1896, "until outbreaks become unpopular with the Moplahs as a body, they will not cease."<sup>2</sup>

Interpretation. Part 2, Thesis

The manifest support for outbreaks on the part of the great mass of Ernad Moplahs, more especially "among the lowest orders"<sup>3</sup> seems to have been rooted in resentment at the exercise by high-caste Hindus of massive power based ultimately on a virtual monopoly of land-ownership.

Malabar in this period was a country in which land-ownership was restricted to a very small proportion of the population. According to the censuses of 1901 and 1911 only

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1 Report of G.W. Dance, 19 Apr. 1898, P/5506, MJP No. 1737-40, 11 Nov. 1898, p. 18. On the reputation of Payyanad see H.V. Conolly, Malabar Magistrate to T.L. Strange, Malabar Commissioner, 10 May 1852, P/327/54, MJP No. 56, 27 Jan. 1853, p. 587; W. Robinson, Acting Malabar Magistrate to E.C.G. Thomas, Special Asst. Magistrate, 29 Dec. 1856, P/328/23, MJP No. 588, 19 May 1857, p. 345.

2 Report of H.M. Winterbotham, 5 May 1896, loc. cit., p. 66.

3 Report of W. Robinson, Head Asst. Magistrate, Malabar, 18 Oct. 1849, P/327/22, MJP No. 794, 1 Dec. 1849, p. 4951.

some 5 to 6 per cent of the total population 'working' in agriculture were land-owners.

Land-ownership in the Malabar agricultural  
working population 1901 and 1911<sup>1</sup>

	1	2	3
	<u>Land-owners</u>	<u>Total employed in agriculture (land-owners, tenants, farm servants and field labourers)</u>	<u>Percentage of column 1 to column 2</u>
1901	46,040	809,616	5.7
1911	38,478	754,787	5.1

The district was also one in which large land-ownership especially was very largely confined to the high Hindu castes.<sup>2</sup> What was described by Rajah Sir T. Madhava Rao (by no means an opponent of the principle of landlordism<sup>3</sup>) as "an extraordinary ..... a stringent and systematic monopoly of land" by the big jenmis was "well fortified by law on all sides", including the law of primogeniture and the system of joint families, the law providing for adoption in the case of failure of heirs and that debarring the jenmi from making gifts of land.<sup>4</sup> Above all it

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1 W. Francis, Census of India, 1901, Vol. XV-A, pp. 231-33;  
J. Chartres Molony, Census of India, 1911, Vol. XII, Pt. 2,  
pp. 140-42.

2 See above p.24.

3 See "Additional Remarks of Madhava Row", n.d., Govt. of Madras, Malabar Land Tenures, p. 190 and pp. 202-03, in which he spoke strongly against any abolition of landlordism.

4 "Note by Raja Sir T. Madhava Row, being a brief statement of the exceptional circumstances of the Malabar district, demanding exceptional treatment", n.d., enclosure to appendix F(c), Govt. of Madras, Malabar Land Tenures Committee Report, pp. 29-30. See also extract from report of Mr. Thackeray, (Commissioner in Malabar and Canara) 4 Aug. 1807, W.K. Firminger (ed.), The 5th Report from the Select Committee of the House

was fortified by the jenmi's strong traditional aversion to the sale of land, noted by all officials from the earliest period of British rule.<sup>1</sup> This withholding of the smallest portions of the major source of subsistence, of power and even of the means of religious practice, was sometimes manifestly resented by Moplah outbreak participants. As the spokesman of the August 1851 gang bitterly remarked of the difficulty the Kolatur Moplahs were experiencing in trying to obtain a site for a mosque from their Nair landlord, "what is the loss to the Nairs and Numboories if a piece of ground capable of sowing five

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of Commons on the Affairs of the East India Company, 28 July 1812, Vol. III, p. 297; Major A. Walker, The Land Tenures of Malabar, Report of 20 July 1801, p. 62; report of H.S. Graeme, Malabar Commissioner, n.d., P/277/55, MRP 16 July 1822, para 1185; minute of T.L. Strange, Judge, Court of Sadr Adawlat, n.d., P/282/72, MRP No. 729, 30 May 1859, p. 165; W. Logan, 'Report on Malabar Land Tenures', Malabar Special Commission, 1881-82, Vol. I, p. cvii; Sir Charles Turner, Minute on Malabar Land Tenures Draft Bill, p. 60; Logan's 'Reply to Objections made to Alternative Land Reforms Scheme', 17 Nov. 1884, Govt. of Madras, Malabar Land Tenures, p. 210; A.F. Pinhey, Malabar Collector to Sec., Court of Wards, 21 Mar. 1904, P/7172, MCWP No. 79, 21 Sept. 1905; F.B. Evans, Malabar Collector to Sec., Commissioners of Land Revenue, 13 Dec. 1917, P/10449, MRP No. 3265, 17 Sept. 1918, p. 22; M. Kelu Nambiar, An Epitome of the Malabar Law and Land Tenure, pp. 11-14; P.R. Sundara Aiyar, A Treatise on Malabar and Aliyasanthana Law, pp. 7, 11-14, and 212; H. Wigram, A Commentary on Malabar Law and Custom, pp. 3, 4-5 and 52.

1 See for example, Major A. Walker, The Land Tenures of Malabar, Report of 20 July 1801, p. 11; Board of Revenue to Govt. of Madras, 16 Aug. 1813, appendix to Govt. of Madras to Court of Directors, 25 Aug. 1813, L/E/3/234, Revenue Letters from Madras, p. 225; minute of Board of Revenue, 5 Jan. 1818, P/292/53, MBRP, p. 48; J. Sullivan, President, Board of Revenue, Report on the Provinces of Malabar and Canara, 29 Jan. 1841, p. 24, Kozhikode Archives; W. Logan, 'Report on Malabar Land Tenures', loc. cit., Vol. I, p. lxxiii; A.F. Pinhey, Malabar Collector to Sec., Court of Wards, 6 Feb. 1903, P/6678, MRP No. 596, 13 June 1903, p. 5.

Parrahs of seed be allotted for the construction of a Mosque?

Let those hogs [the soldiers] come here, we are resolved to die".<sup>1</sup>

But it was the power to manipulate the British legal system to the disadvantage of the tenantry that the jenmi land monopoly conferred that was most consciously resented by the Ernad Moplah. T.L. Strange in his report of 25 September 1852 as Special Commissioner in Malabar noted that 5 of the relatives of the August 1851 outbreak participants when examined subsequently to the disturbance said "they had been taught to believe that if a poor man had been evicted from land it was a religious merit to kill the landlord".<sup>2</sup> W. Robinson, in his report of 18 October 1849, went so far as to say of the total destruction of one big jenmi's papers (a frequent event in Moplah outbreaks) that it was "so natural a step for a set of ignorant Moplah had [lads?] taught from the [sic] childhood to look on these as the weapons with which the Nair and Raja Jenmies ... were ruining their Caste in the Courts and elsewhere, that their preservation had been to me unaccountable."<sup>3</sup>

Where reports on Moplah outbreaks are detailed enough, time after time it is found that participants (or their families)

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1 "Memorandum of the conversation between the Walluvanad Tahsildar and the fanatics", 28 Aug. 1851, P/327/41, MJP No. 700, 20 Nov. 1851, p. 3774.

2 Loc. cit., p. 4560. See also Case No. 14, Bhavat Case, Govt. versus Pulkooyi Moyee and Maylangi Karamel Moidin Kutti, 14 Feb. 1856, Malabar Collectorate Records, Vol. No. 7347, pp. 510-11, MRO.

3 Loc. cit., p. 4939. See H.V. Conolly, Malabar Magistrate to Sec., Judicial, 4 Nov. 1843, P/326/35, MJP No. 69, 27 Jan. 1844, p. 214 for confirmation of this Moplah feeling that Hindu jenmis were threatening them in this way.

had suffered from the attempt of a jenmi to exploit his powers under the British legal system at the expense of his tenants. The case of the Nair jenmi who changed the terms of one of his Moplah tenant families from a rent of 59 per cent of the net produce to one of 77 per cent for a doubling of the annual expenditure of labour and found himself as a result the objective of an outbreak led by one of the family<sup>1</sup> is merely one of the best-documented instances.<sup>2</sup> In another case in which a Moplah verumpattomdar (simple tenant) found himself, as a result of jenmi demands, in hopeless debt, this captured outbreak participant had said of his motives for 'going out':

"I thought within myself, 'I cannot stand the disgrace of these people his jenmis filing suits and putting me in jail. There are some who are preparing to die as Sahids. I will go and join them and make an end of it.'"<sup>3</sup>

Almost certainly throughout the outbreak period of 1836-1919 (and before) the presence of large numbers of rural dwellers

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1 H.V. Conolly to T.L. Strange, 30 Sept. 1852, P/327/51, MJP No. 716, 6 Nov. 1852, pp. 4661-62 and 4667-69.

2 For other examples see above p.32 and H. Bradley, Acting Collector, Malabar to Chief Sec., 16 May 1894, P/4621, MJP Nos. 2186-92, 8 Sept. 1894, p. 97; W. Robinson, Head Asst. Magistrate to Conolly, 18 Oct. 1849, P/327/22, MJP No. 794, 1 Dec. 1849, pp. 4893-94; W.A. Underwood, Acting Malabar Magistrate to Chief Sec., 24 July 1839, P/325/64, MJP 20 Aug. 1839, p. 6865.

3 Statement of Ambat Aidross, 16 Mar. 1896, in report of H.M. Winterbotham, 10 Apr. 1896, L/PJ/6/422, 996/96, p. 14.



without land to cultivate on their own behalf<sup>1</sup> and therefore only too ready to compete for leases, placed the jenmi in a strong position to increase his exactions from the tenant. Though many other employment categories of the landless in the Malabar countryside, such as 'porters' and 'general labourers', no doubt helped intensify the competition for land leases, the size of the agricultural labourer population, notoriously great in Malabar of all parts of South India, provides some indication of this land hunger.

Size of agricultural labourer population  
(actual workers) in Malabar, 1901 and 1911<sup>2</sup>

	1 <u>Number of field labourers and farm servants</u>	2 <u>Percentage of column 1 to total population working in agriculture</u>
1901	500,197	61.8
1911	457,459	60.7

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1 Callenguel Cunhy Coroo, an inhabitant of Malabar, to Major Alexander Walker, formerly Commissioner in Malabar, 28 Apr. 1808, 'Native Letters', Walker Papers, 181d17; G.W. Gillio, Judge and Magistrate, South Malabar to Chief Sec., P/322/68, MJP 9 June 1812, p. 3023; Conolly to Sec., Judicial, 24 Nov. 1843, P/326/37, MJP No. 277, 20 Apr. 1844, p. 1337; Conolly's reply to T.L. Strange's comment on his Memorandum No. 107, P/327/59, MJP No. 379, 2 July 1853, p. 3758; report of T.L. Strange of 25 Sept. 1852, loc. cit., p. 4593; W. Logan, 'Report on Malabar Land Tenures', loc. cit., Vol. I, p. xxxvi; C.A. Galton, Acting Malabar Collector to Sec., Board of Revenue, 6 Nov. 1883, P/2368, MRP No. 859, 16 July 1884, p. 269; K. Imbichunni Nair, District Munsiff, Palghat to District Judge, South Malabar, 27 Feb. 1907, P/7702, MJP No. 1080, 14 June 1907, p. 7; A. Edgington, Acting District Judge, South Malabar, to Registrar, High Court, 12 Aug. 1911, P/9579, MRP No. 9 (Conf.), 2 Jan. 1914, p. 6; C.A. Innes, Acting Collector, Malabar to Sec., Commissioner of Land Revenue and Forests, 26 Aug. 1911, ibid., p. 23.

2 W. Francis, Census of India, 1901, Vol. XV-A, pp. 231-33; J. Chartres Molony, Census of India, 1911, Vol. XII, Part 2,

It was the jenmi's exploitation of this favourable market situation to increase rents and other dues such as fees taken for the renewal of leases which was a source of resentment for those who suffered from it. British administrations by permitting the jenmi to take as much as the market would permit from his tenants<sup>1</sup> had introduced a conception of landlord rights, described as "securing<sup>7</sup> to the Natives the full disposal of their property",<sup>2</sup> conflicting sharply with what the Malabar

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p. 140-42. Earlier census figures for agricultural labourers are not strictly comparable with those for 1901 and 1911.

- 1 That Malabar jenmis did in fact exploit this power cannot be doubted. At least as early as 1834 jenmis were apparently auctioning the titles of their kanam (see below p. 90) tenants to the highest bidder. See decree of Court of Adawlut in Malabar Zillah, Original Suit No. 172 of 1834, Moftee's Court Appeal Suit No. 147 of 1834, Judge's Court, KDCA. See also W. Logan, 'Report on Malabar Land Tenures', loc. cit., Vol. I, pp. xxxviii, xxxix and xlv; petitions Nos. 4, 38, 50, 54, 63, 85, 333, 831 and 868, 'Register of Petitions Received', ibid., Vol. III, pp. 2-125; Sir Charles Turner, Minute on Malabar Land Tenures Draft Bill, p. 62.
- 2 Capt. A. Walker, Military Secretary to General Stuart, 24 Aug. 1799, Wellesley Papers, Add. 13682, p. 103. Walker, one of the most outstanding figures in the early British administration of Malabar (see below, Chapter 2) became the author in 1801 of a classic work on Malabar land rights (see Bibliography). It is clear that practically from the first the general assumption of British administrators in Malabar was that the jenmi was equivalent to a landlord on the British model with all the property rights that that entailed. See for example J.W. Wye, Collector of Velatre, Shernaad, Betutnaad and Parapanaad to Board of Revenue, 4 Feb. 1801, P/286/53, MBRP 16 Feb. 1801, pp. 1651-52; J. Strachey, Collector, Tellicherry, Darmapatam, Randaterra and Mahe, to Sec., Board of Revenue, n.d., P/286/56, MBRP 19 Mar. 1801, pp. 2967-68; extract from report of Mr. Thackeray, 4 Aug. 1807, W.K. Firminger (ed.) The 5th Report from the Select Committee of the House of Commons on the Affairs of the East India Company, 28 July 1812, Vol. III, p. 296; minute of Board of Revenue, 5 Jan. 1818, P/292/53, MBRP, pp. 45-47; W. Robinson, Acting Malabar Collector to Sub-Collector in charge, Coimbatore, 9 Feb. 1857, P/328/22, MJP No. 246, 27 Feb. 1857, p. 346; Sir Charles Turner, Minute on Malabar Land Tenures Draft Bill, p. 23.

tenant considered legitimate. The "different intelligent Natives" interrogated by Major Walker at the beginning of the 19th century were categorical that the jenmi might not raise the patom ('rent') fixed on the land.<sup>1</sup> On paddy land in particular, where the annual crop out-turn was liable to little fluctuation, upto the early period of British rule 'rents' remained unchanged for periods of a century or more.<sup>2</sup> In 1801 Major Walker in his famous treatise on Malabar land tenures described the way in which 'rents' in Malabar were determined according to fixed customary shares between the jenmi and the 'tenant' in the estimated net produce of the plot in question.<sup>3</sup> In fact some four decades later one Government servant found that "the prescriptive jenmi-pattom ['landlord's rent'] of a great portion of the landed property

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1 'Account of Malabar', Section 10, Walker Papers, 184c9, p. 592.

2 Thomas Warden, Malabar Collector to Board of Revenue, 20 Apr. 1815, P/291/38, MBRP, 1 May 1815, p. 4328. See also J. Strachey to Sec., Board of Revenue, n.d., P/286/56, MBRP 19 Mar. 1801, pp. 2974-75; Warden to Board of Revenue, 3 Oct. 1818, P/292/82, MBRP 12 Oct. 1818, pp. 13307-08; report of H.S. Graeme, Malabar Commissioner, n.d., P/277/56, MRP, 16 July 1822, para 1145; examination of the Kartnaud Rajah, 15 Oct. 1819, appendix CC to ibid., P/277/59, question and answer No. 25; T.H. Baber, Evidence given before the House of Lords, March and April 1830, Concerning Various Matters Relating to Malabar, Canara, etc., p. 8.

3 Major A. Walker, The Land Tenures of Malabar, Report of 20 July 1801, p. 14. See also W.G. Farmer's 'Report on nature of ancient Malabar Tenures and of Rent and Revenue in Malabar', 25 Feb. 1793, Govt. of Madras, Malabar Land Tenures, p. 152.

... in South Malabar still lived in the villagers' memories."<sup>1</sup> Even in 1881-82 W. Logan, during his investigations as Commissioner, still found "how familiar even the most illiterate of the agriculturalists" were with the shares of the produce due respectively to landlord and tenant according to custom, and that they could usually "say at once what the shares are of any particular bit of land ... though the shares now actually paid as 'rent' are very much greater".<sup>2</sup>

Of course, Logan was one of the foremost of the 'pro-tenant' school of British officials in Malabar whose views were strongly challenged by those administrators more sympathetic to the jenmi interest, who argued that rents and other jenmis' dues had been determined by contract in the district long before the coming of British rule. However, one of the most emphatic of the pro-jenmi officials, J.A. Thorne, on assuming control of the estate of the Zamorin of Calicut as Collector under the Court of Wards discovered from estate records that, "Every field of wet land in the Zamorin's estate [had] its 'purathana (ancient) janmapattam' fixed - that is to say, the amount which the Zamorin

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1 Note by Sir William Robinson on Collection of Documents appended to Commissioner's Report, 16 June 1882, appendix G (2), Govt. of Madras, Malabar Land Tenures Committee Report, pp. 88-89. Robinson was recollecting his experiences in the period when he first served in Malabar in the 1840s.

2 'Report on Malabar Land Tenures', loc. cit., p. xxviii. See also T. Kunhi Raman Nair, High Court Judge, Trivandrum to Chief Sec., Govt. of Madras, 7 Aug. 1883, Govt. of Madras, Malabar Land Tenures, p. 67.

[claimed] as his due on the land."<sup>1</sup> Moreover even Sir Charles Turner the most outstanding champion of the jenmi cause was obliged to concede in his cogent Minute on Malabar Land Tenures (1885):

"I do not mean to say that custom was excluded by contract, but that written contracts made in reference to custom were generally if not universally adopted in dealings respecting land."<sup>2</sup> (My stress, C.W.)

No-one, even among the apologists for the jenmi, seems ever to have argued, if he had any kind of a reputation for objectivity to lose, that the determination of rents purely and simply with reference to what the market would bear was anything other than an innovation of British rule. Long after the British assumed control of Malabar, virtue in a jenmi was still being reckoned in terms of any traditionalist resistance to the temptation to take a competition rent or renewal fee.<sup>3</sup> In a petition of 1887 a large group of inhabitants of Ernad and Walluvanad pressed their conviction that in "former times, the landlords of Malabar did not either evict their tenants or enhance the rent of their property as long as the latter satisfied the customary demands of the former".<sup>4</sup> In 1918 one

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1 J.A. Thorne, Estate Collector, Zamorin's Estate to Sec. to Commissioner, Court of Wards, n.d., P/10455, MRP No. 3121, 4 Sept. 1918, p. 2.

2 P. 30.

3 See, for example, the definition of a 'good' jenmi given in the Malabar Land Tenures Committee Report, p. 6 and U.B., 'A Nair Chief: Romance of the house of Kavalapara', New India, 25 Sept. 1915, p. 11; H. Wigram, Officiating District Judge, South Malabar to Chief Sec., 8 Nov. 1883, Govt. of Madras, Malabar Land Tenures, p. 18.

4 "Petition of Achir Tatikazil Moiden of Malabar Amsham, Walluvanad Taluk, and 59 others (inhabitants of Ernad and Walluvanad), 22 Sept. 1887, an abstract translation", P/3286, MLP No. 23, 11 Mar. 1888, p. 21.

jenmi source was prepared to "endorse the sentiment that a profiteering insistence by janmis on their rights is opposed to custom and unfair to the tenants". It was admitted that Malayali custom enjoined on the jenmi that his tenant's "ancient pattam-profit should not be curtailed" but that "every person acting in the capacity of a janmi is now suspected" of defiance of such local custom.<sup>1</sup> Another group of jenmis in a startlingly candid petition of 1888 contrasted the pre-British period with the "vigorous competition for lands which now exists" observing that whereas in "former times the jenmi had little inducement to turn out a tenant ... at the present day ... the jenmi is exposed to pecuniary temptations which sorely try his traditional spirit of respecting the possession of long-standing tenants".<sup>2</sup> When the same petitioner naïvely asked, "Surely the jemmies do not deserve to be blamed for this?",<sup>3</sup> she was evidently not fully informed of the anti-jenmi feelings of the Ernad Moplah who with 83 others petitioned Government in 1887 on behalf of the Malabar tenants who were said to "suffer a good deal of hardship" at jenmi hands. Significantly these

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1 J.A. Thorne, Collector, Zamorin's Estate to Sec., Commissioner to Court of Wards, n.d., P/10455, MRP No. 3121, 4 Sept. 1918, p. 24.

2 "Petition of the Valia Thamburathi of Keyake Covilagam and other Jemmies of Malabar to Secretary, Legislative Council, 28 January 1888", P/3286, MLP No. 11, 27 Jan. 1888, p.16. Similar admissions were made in 'Petition of the Jenmis of Malabar', signed by Kilakodat Kunhi Sankaran Valiya Nambyar and Chandrot Kunhi Chandu Nambyar, 3 Mar. 1888, P/3286, MLP No. 38, 19 Apr. 1888, p. 11.

3 'Petition of the Valia Thamburathi ...', 28 Jan. 1888, loc. cit.

same petitioners indicated their estimation of the shared responsibility for the condition of the tenant when they threatened that if a favourable order were not obtained they could not "but attribute" their "miseries to Her Majesty the Queen!"<sup>1</sup>

British administration in Malabar had conferred on the jenni what the Moplah tenant saw as unjust powers of land-ownership, was extremely reluctant, despite the advice of many of its own servants most familiar with the district, to legislate to curb the exercise of those powers and, on the contrary, was prepared to use the most exceptional repressive legislation to suppress the challenge to that power. Little wonder then, that almost throughout the 19th century the Ernad Moplah evinced little inclination to rely on appeals to justice from the administration for curbing landlord power. A British District Superintendant of Police with much experience of Malabar towards the end of the century noted that the Ernad Moplahs had "an insane idea that Europeans hate them and want to destroy them".<sup>2</sup> The countervailing force against jenni power had to be

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1 "Petition of Katangal Virankutti and 83 others, inhabitants of Ernad, 7 October 1887", P/3286, MLP No. 1, 10 Jan. 1888, p. 1. See also W. Logan, 'Report on Malabar Land Tenures', loc. cit., Vol. I, p. xl and lxxi.

2 Report of F. Fawcett, 5 June 1896, loc. cit., p. 112. That the Ernad Moplahs considered that the authorities viewed them with misgivings is suggested by a report of A. Pinhey, Malabar Magistrate to the Govt. of Madras, 7 Jan. 1903, MJP No. 347 (Conf.), 11 Mar. 1903, p. 6, MRO. Nor can it be said that Moplah suspicions were utterly paranoid. In 1902 one unnamed member of the Madras Secretariat had minuted on a proposal to facilitate the extension of Moplah places of worship: "In their Moplah ignorance, poverty and smouldering fanaticism, is it not just as well that there are not any more mosques?" Minute of 23 Jan. 1902, MJP No. 407, 7 Mar. 1902, (Conf.), p. 6, MRO. For an examination of the strained relations between the Moplah and the British see Chapter 2.

one generated by the tenants and labourers themselves.

The creation of such a force would seem necessarily to involve making the main resource of these groups, their superior numbers, a reality by combination. In Malabar circumstances made this especially difficult. Not only was the bulk of the rural population illiterate<sup>1</sup> and engaged in work which confined relations with others within a very narrow compass,<sup>2</sup> but, as every observer always noted, they also inhabited a district of isolated houses in which even the degree of human interaction which life in a nucleated village normally fostered was apparently lacking.<sup>3</sup> It would appear that, unlike many other parts of the Madras Presidency, Malabar was an area with

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1. Even by 1921 only 12.68 per cent of the total Malabar population and 6.2 per cent of the Moplahs were literate, G.T. Boag, Census of India, 1921, Vol. XIII, Pt. I, pp. 124 and 127.
  - 2 Precise figures for how many individuals were necessary for each agricultural task in Malabar during this period are rare. However it is known that in the 1860s it required only 2 or 3 coolies for the extremely laborious job of preparing land for rice cultivation (J. Cameron, Report on the Village of Chevayur, 1866, para. 9), whilst a 20th century source quotes a figure of 4 labourers for ploughing a field and only one for digging pits for coconut seedlings (statement of Punathil Chozi, n.d., a tenant of Villiapalli amsom, Kurumbranad taluk, enclosure in Narayanaswami Aiyar, District Munsif, Badagara to Malabar Collector, 28 Dec. 1907, P/8541, MJP No. 308, 25 Feb. 1910, pp. 23-24).
  - 3 See for example Report of Joint Commission of 1792-93, Vol. I, p. 111; J.W. Wye, Collector of Velatre, Shernaad, Betutnaad, and Parapanaad, to Board of Revenue, 4 Feb. 1801, P/286/53, MBRP 16 Feb. 1801, p. 1666; unheaded, undated enclosure in John Law, Collector of Ernad to Sec., Board of Revenue, P/286/54, MBRP 2 Mar. 1801, p. 2 of enclosure opposite p. 2394; William Macleod, Principal Collector, Malabar to Board of Revenue, 19 Oct. 1801, P/286/78, MBRP 28 Jan. 1802, pp. 1124-25; proceedings of Board of Revenue, 16 Jan. 1815, P/291/31, MBRP, p. 957; report of H.M. Winterbotham, 5 May 1896, L/PJ/6/433, 2060/96, MJP No. 1567, 30 Sept. 1896, p. 66.



no common village rights or cultivation in common.<sup>1</sup> As the Collector observed in 1820, whereas in a number of other parts of the Presidency the cultivation of land was

"the Interest of every Inhabitant of the Village, all having a general Interest in the whole ... in Malabar self interest alone influences the Cultivator. He is perfectly indifferent to what his nearest neighbour is doing. He is at liberty to cultivate the whole or any part of his land according as his Industry, Caprice or Idleness actuates him. No one can or will interfere with him as long as he pays his Revenue."<sup>2</sup>

Moreover, the isolation of the typical inhabitant of rural Malabar would be increased by the notoriously poor means of communication in the district (especially in the wild, less thickly populated country in the heart of the outbreak zone<sup>3</sup>) as well as by poverty.

For the Muslim section of the population however an important compensating factor for these obstacles to combination would have been its unsegregated structure of religious association (especially its congregational form of worship) as compared with that of the Malayali Hindus which must have been partly responsible for the greater sense of intra-community

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1 Thomas Munro, Commissioner in Malabar to Chief Sec., n.d., P/277/7, MRP 30 Sept. 1817, p. 2600; 'Replies from Mr. F.W. Ellis, Collector of Madras, to the Mirasi Questions', 30 May 1816, Govt. of Madras, Papers on Mirasi Right Selected from the Records of Government, p. 179.

2 J. Vaughan to Board of Revenue, 31 Aug. 1820, P/293/63, MBRP 18 Sept. 1820, p. 7790.

3 C. Collett, Joint Magistrate, Malabar to T. Clarke, Malabar Magistrate, 31 Jan. 1856, P/328/15, MJP No. 552, 22 May 1856, p. 3342; V.A. Brodie, Acting Head Asst. Magistrate, Malabar to Acting Malabar Magistrate, 24 May 1884, MJP Nos. 1605-11, 2 July 1884, p. 19, MRO; report of H.M. Winterbotham, 10 Apr. 1896, L/PJ/6/422, 996/96, p. 2.

solidarity and, therefore, independence from local non-Muslim authority of the Moplah often remarked by the British in Malabar.<sup>1</sup> Certainly, among the many uses made of the mosque by outbreak participants, its utility as an aid to confederation emerges clearly in many outbreaks. With most disturbances each band of shahid was drawn largely from single mosque congregations from which, indeed, on occasions, the gang proceeded directly to the commission of the initial act of blood.<sup>2</sup> It is known that the leader of the December 1884 outbreak had, sometime before it was perpetrated, made a solemn oath to become a shahid before the congregation of Churott mosque from which his confederates were largely recruited and which displayed active sympathy with the 'fanatics' whilst the Government force was giving chase.<sup>3</sup> In the case of the quasi-outbreak

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1 See, for example, A. Walker, 'Essay on Malabar', 1798/?/ pp. 119-20, Walker Papers, 182c5; Thomas Warden, Malabar Collector, to Board of Revenue, Sept. 1815, P/291/53, MBRP 25 Sept. 1815, pp. 11078-79; report of T.L. Strange, 25 Sept. 1852, loc. cit., p. 4613; T. Clarke, Malabar Magistrate to Chief Sec., 24 Dec. 1855, P/328/10, MJP No. 36, 14 Jan. 1856, pp. 96-97; C. Collett to Clarke, 15 Dec. 1855, ibid., p. 119; W. Logan, 'Report on Malabar Land Tenures', loc. cit., Vol. I, pp. ix, xvii and xxv.

2 See, for example, details of the outbreak which started near Mootacherrah mosque in Nov. 1841 (Conolly to Sec., Judicial, 17 Dec. 1841, P/326/15, MJP No. 37, 8 Feb. 1842, p. 346 and Conolly to Sec., Judicial, n.d., P/326/13, MJP 17 Dec. 1842, p. 5129) and that in Kadannamanna desam from which the shahid of August 1851 sortied to murder the kariasthan Komu Menon (C. Collett to Conolly, 20 Sept. 1851, P/327/41, MJP No. 700, 20 Nov. 1851, pp. 3712-14). A further case, occurring after the outbreak period was the Pukkotur incident of August 1921, see below p.267 and statement of Palakal Karunakara Menon, son of Kirathadasan, late Nilambur Tirumulpad, 10 Aug. 1921, G.R.F. Tottenham (ed.), The Mapilla Rebellion, 1921-22, p. 35.

3 W. Logan, Malabar Magistrate, to Chief Sec., 7 Feb. 1885, P/2634, MJP Nos. 1169-74, 2 May 1885, pp. 10 and 25.

at Kizhumuri in June 1884 the plotters for a month before the attack took to sleeping in their mosque, constantly praying together and planning the project in an upper-storey room.<sup>1</sup> In 1894 it was reported that details of the plot which came to fruition in the outbreak of that year were arranged in Vellangad mosque in eastern Ernad.<sup>2</sup> The 1885 Ponnundam outbreak was plotted at a mosque after services by members of one congregation who are said to have attained a level of organisation involving the passing of resolutions and the collecting of subscriptions to meet expenses.<sup>3</sup> Even when British officials were led to assume a different basis for the Moplah confederation which was normally the necessary organisational preliminary to the outbreak it seems highly likely that the conjecture was fallacious. Thus, in the case of an abortive outbreak in March 1884 the assertion of one of those responsible for the investigation of the disturbance that the mere fact of the two participants being neighbours afforded them "every opportunity for meeting and discussing" the outbreak plot seems questionable, especially when it is considered that they lived almost half a mile apart in the wild and jungly amsom of Chembrasserri. On the other hand the significance for purposes of combination of

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1 Reports of J. Twigg, Acting Special Asst. Collector, Malabar, 9 July 1884 and C.A. Galton, Acting Malabar Magistrate, 16 Sept. 1884, P/2401, MJP Nos. 2776-81, 1 Nov. 1884, pp. 3 and 5.

2 H. Bradley, Acting Malabar Magistrate to Chief Sec., 14 June 1894, P/4621, MJP Nos. 2186-92, 8 Sept. 1894, p.126.

3 P. Karunakara Menon, Deputy Magistrate, Southern Division to W. Logan, Malabar Collector, 1 July 1885, P/2635, MJP No. 2725, 8 Oct. 1855, p. 6.

the fact that both men attended the same mosque seems to have escaped the official concerned.<sup>1</sup>

It would also appear that the congregational form of worship of the Moplahs could actually work as a factor encouraging a re-arrangement of the traditional dispersed settlement pattern of Malabar. Thus it has been observed that whereas the Malabar Hindus have "small houses each with its own compound spread over the countryside with no communal centre" the Moplah "tends to live in close villages and hamlets centred on his mosque."<sup>2</sup> This greater tendency of Moplahs to live in closer proximity to one another must be attributed also to the fact that, unlike most Hindu castes of Malabar, Moplahs quite commonly engage in trade,<sup>3</sup> often of an extremely petty nature and supplementing

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1 V.A. Brodie, Acting Head Asst. Magistrate, Malabar to C.A. Galton, Malabar Magistrate, 24 May 1884, MJP Nos. 1605-11, 2 July 1884, pp. 19 and 34, MRO.

2 Comments by E.H. Colebrooke, who as a police officer played an important part in the suppression of the 1921-22 rebellion, on Mr. Hitchcock's Report on the same, n.d. Mss. Eur. Fl61, box 4, p. 2. See also W. Robinson, Insp.-Gen. of Police to Chief Sec., 21 May 1860, P/328/33, MJP No. 672, 30 May 1860, p. 321; Pandit Wishnu Shastri, Vice-Principal Rishi Kula, Hardwar to B.L. Satidas, 11 Sept. 1922, in B.L. Satidas (ed.) Mopla Rebellion of 1921, p. 29. The Pandit spent some time in Malabar organising relief work at the time of the 1921-22 rebellion.

3 C.A. Innes, Malabar Gazetteer, p. 190; W.R. Cornish, Report on the Census of the Madras Presidency, 1871, Vol. I, p. 353; J. Cameron, Asst. Collector, Malabar, Report on the Village of Chevayur, 1866, para. 3, Kozhikode Archives; notes of T.L. Strange, 1 Sept. 1853, P/327/57, MJP No. 154, 16 Mar. 1853, p. 2231; report of H.S. Graeme, Malabar Commissioner, n.d., P/277/56, MRP 16 July 1822, para. 22; T. Warden, Malabar Collector to Board of Revenue, 15 Sept. 1807, P/288/65, MBRP 1 Oct. 1807, p. 7720; Murdoch Brown to Malabar Commission, 13 July 1798, P/286/58, MBRP 20 Apr. 1801, p. 4335.

income from agricultural work. In 1921 the percentage of Moplah workers engaged in trade in foodstuffs (except fish) and bazaar trade (the two major categories of trade in the Census returns) was 11.1, far higher than that of any major Hindu caste in the district.<sup>1</sup> Rural Moplahs not infrequently lived in 'streets' of houses forming the local bazaar.<sup>2</sup> Of course such nucleation of settlement was itself an indication of the higher pitch of human intercourse commerce entailed compared with the form of agriculture practised in Malabar. In fact it would seem that assembly on a purely secular basis intruded on a regular basis into the seclusion of the life of the lower orders in the south Malabar interior almost solely through such traffic. Significantly the promotion of association through the market-place is an intermittent feature of the history of the 'fanatic zone' Moplah in the outbreak period. It was at fairs in Ernad such as that of Wandur that the

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1 G.T. Boag, Census of India, 1921, Vol. XIII, Pt. I, pp. 216-22.

2 Interviews with E.H. Colebrooke, 21 Aug. 1974 and Sir Thomas Austin, Sub-divisional Magistrate in Malabar in 1921, 20 Mar. 1974; Malabar Central Relief Committee, Report of Work, October 1921-November 1922, p. 2; re-examination of V. Saidali, 29 Aug. 1922, P.W. No. 1, Court of Special Judge, Calicut, Sessions Case No. 134 of 1922, Referred Trial No. 149 of 1922, p. 17, MHCA; H. Moberly, Acting Malabar Collector to Sec., Commissioner of Revenue Settlement, Land Records and Agriculture, 27 Feb. 1895, P/4839, MRP No. 530, 9 Aug. 1895, p. 159; report of Graeme, n.d., P/277/56, MRP 16 July 1822, para 30; paper by R. Coward, Collector of Koormernaund, n.d., in Coward to Board of Revenue, 24 Feb. 1801, P/286/55, MBRP 9 Mar. 1801, p. 2695; unheaded, undated enclosure in John Law, Ernad Collector to Board of Revenue, 5 Feb. 1801, P/286/54, MBRP 2 Mar. 1801, p. 2 of enclosure opposite p. 2394.

celebrated Moplah malefactor Athan Gurikal<sup>1</sup> exercised the magisterial authority he had assumed to himself.<sup>2</sup> The Mussaliars (a kind of Moplah moulvi or Muslim divine) who broadcast the order of Syed Fazl, the Mambram Tangal that no Moplah should show deference to high-caste Hindus in the choice of form of the second person in speech<sup>3</sup> found the market-place a more suitable pulpit than the mosque for publishing a message not solely intended for Muslim ears.<sup>4</sup> Even recruitment to bands of shahid might not have been unaffected by the facilities bazaars provided for human contact. Thus it would seem not without significance that all participants in the outbreak of 1873 as well as in a putative plot to 'go out' in 1879 lived in Toothakal bazaar, Paral amsom,<sup>5</sup> whilst it is certain that the final decision to become shahid of a considerable number of members of the large gang of 1896 was taken in direct consequence of confabulation at the weekly Wandur shandy (market) on 25 February in that year.<sup>6</sup> Similarly, an attempt to recruit

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1 See below p. 85.

2 W. Robinson, Head Asst. Magistrate to Conolly, Malabar Magistrate, 18 Oct. 1849, P/327/22, MJP No. 794, 1 Dec. 1849, p. 4865.

3 See below p. 133.

4 Examination of Cootussa before T.L. Strange, 11 May 1852, P/327/56, MJP No. 154, 16 Mar. 1853, p. 1675; Strange to Conolly, 29 July 1852, ibid., p. 1575.

5 A. MacGregor, Malabar Magistrate to Chief Sec., 26 Sept. 1873, P/401, MJP No. 1575, 1 Oct. 1873, p. 1012; G. McWatters, Acting Malabar Magistrate, 30 June 1879, P/1427, MJP No. 1656, 16 July 1879, p. 1050.

6 Report of H.M. Winterbotham, 5 May 1896, L/PJ/6/433, 2060/96, MJP No. 1567, 30 Sept. 1896, p. 53; report of F. Fawcett, 5 June 1896, ibid., p. 101.

shahid for the February-March 1915 outbreak seems to have been made<sup>1</sup> at one particular annual nercha or religious festival which, attracting thousands of Moplahs every year, had "degenerated into nothing more or less than a fair".<sup>2</sup>

Even so the rôle of exchange in the fostering of combination among rural Moplahs was probably, as the above instances suggest, but supplementary to that of devotion. The kind of Moplah most exposed to the former influence, the man whose source of income was primarily trade, would not normally be so exposed to the full direct power of the jenmi and made only the most sporadic appearance in the ranks of outbreak participants.<sup>3</sup> Indeed in 1849 District Magistrate Conolly expressed the opinion that the Moplah trading community of Malappuram deep in the 'fanatic zone' was remarkable for its tranquillity in the midst of its fanatic rustic neighbours.<sup>4</sup> Of the 99 shahid of 1896 only one was found to be in trade and this

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1 C.A. Innes, Acting Malabar Magistrate to Sec., Judicial, 29 Mar. 1915, MJP Nos. 2080-84, 3 Sept. 1915 (Conf.), pp. 18-20 and 21, Kozhikode Archives; statement of Karipali Ayamoo, 14 Mar. 1915, ibid., p. 54.

2 R.H. Hitchcock, Supt. of Police, South Malabar, 'Report on the Mappilla Outbreak of 1915', 30 Mar. 1915, ibid., p. 63; Hitchcock, 'The Kappil Nercha', 29 Mar. 1915, ibid., p. 75.

3 However 3 of the 12 shahid of May 1885 were petty traders, P. Karunakara Menon, Deputy Magistrate, Southern Division to W. Logan, Malabar Magistrate, 1 July 1885, P/2635, MJP No. 2725, 8 Oct. 1885, pp. 1-3.

4 Conolly to Acting Sec., Judicial, 11 Dec. 1849, P/327/24, MJP No. 850, 18 Dec. 1849, p. 5995. For details of a trading and small cultivator family of Malappuram which was one of the comparatively rare pro-British Moplah families in Ernad during the 1921-22 rebellion see interview 12, appendix 1.

'petty bazaarman'<sup>1</sup> may well have been a member of one of the myriad Ernad Moplah families drawing sustenance from a combination of petty hawking, coolie work, small-scale cultivation and the like.<sup>2</sup> Although such families did contribute considerably to outbreak bands<sup>3</sup> it seems certain that with the low level of commercial activity which, at least until the 20th century,<sup>4</sup> characterised the south Malabar interior, trade could not be crucial in promoting the confederation necessary for resisting the growth of jenmi power. Administrators and others in the earliest period of British rule had been struck by the paucity of fixed facilities for marketing in the rural hinterland of

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1 J.T. Gillespie, Acting Special Asst. Magistrate to Malabar Magistrate, 26 Apr. 1896, L/PJ/6/433, 2060/96, MJP No. 1567, 30 Sept. 1896, pp. 38-47.

2 See for example W. Logan, 'Report on Malabar Land Tenures', loc. cit., Vol. I, p. xxiv; J.A. Thorne, Collector, Zamorin's Estate to Sec., Commissioner of Court of Wards, n.d., P/10455, MRP No. 3121, 4 Sept. 1918, p. 13; F.B. Evans, Malabar Collector to Sec., Commissioners of Land Revenue, 13 Dec. 1917, P/10449, MRP No. 3265, 17 Sept. 1918, p. 23.

3 'List of Participants', appendix C, W. Robinson, Head Asst. Magistrate to Conolly, 18 Oct. 1849, P/327/22, MJP No. 794, 1 Dec. 1849, pp. 4978, 4980 and 4987; 'Ballad composed to commemorate the events attending the cutting off of the head of Kapraat Paniker', appendix No. 6, Conolly to Sec., Judicial, 12 Oct. 1849, ibid., p. 4820; Conolly to Sec., Judicial, 23 Jan. 1851, P/327/35, MJP No. 116, 25 Feb. 1851, p. 442; Collett to Conolly, 20 Sept. 1851, P/327/41, MJP No. 700, 20 Nov. 1851, p. 3729 and 3735; H.M. Winterbotham, Acting Special Asst. Magistrate to Malabar Magistrate, 16 Apr. 1877, P/1094, MJP No. 1134, 5 May 1877, p. 589; deposition of Kilekatha Bevee, 24 June 1879, in G. McWatters, Acting Malabar Magistrate to Acting Chief Sec., 30 June 1879, P/1427, MJP No. 1526, 27 June 1879, pp. 1055-56; W. Logan, Malabar Magistrate to Chief Sec., 7 Feb. 1885, P/2634, MJP Nos. 1169-74, 2 May 1885, pp. 8-10; J.F. Hall, Malabar Magistrate to Sec., Home (Judicial), 25 Apr. 1919, L/PJ/6/1608, 4582/19, MJP No. 1310, 9 June 1919, p. 23.

4 See below p. 243.



Malabar.<sup>1</sup> Moreover, despite the remedial efforts of certain early Collectors,<sup>2</sup> as late as 1894 it was observed that important weekly markets at which the surplus produce from the land could be sold were few and far between.<sup>3</sup> The Moplals (and others) from the more affluent coastal towns who scoured the countryside for custom appear to have engrossed the wholesale trade in grain, coconuts, areca and pepper.<sup>4</sup> In consequence the bazaar trade in Malabar was characterised by the retailing of salt fish, vegetables, curry stuffs, glass bangles etc. by petty and often ephemeral shopkeepers.<sup>5</sup> The ramifications of commerce in the south Malabar interior were neither as widespread nor as deeply-rooted in the life of its Muslim inhabitants as those of religion, through which alone could challenge

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1 W. Macleod, Principal Collector, Malabar to Board of Revenue, 19 Oct. 1801, P/286/78, MBRP 28 Jan. 1802, p. 1125; J.W. Wye, Collector of Velatre, Shernad, Betutnad and Parappanad to Board of Revenue, 4 Feb. 1801, P/286/53, MBRP 16 Feb. 1801, p. 1666; 'Form to be observed in ascertaining the topography and population of the Ceded Districts', enclosure in Malabar Commissioners to Chief of Tellicherry Factory, 30 July 1792, Tellicherry Records G/37/11, p. 151.

2 W. Macleod to Board of Revenue, 19 Oct. 1801, loc. cit.; W. Macleod to Sub-Collectors, 7 July 1802, Malabar Records, Vol. 2308, p. 149, MRO; W. Sheffield, Principal Collector, Malabar to Board of Revenue, 25 Apr. 1830, P/297/46, MBRP 6 May 1830, p. 5009; E. Smith, Sub-Collector to Malabar Collector, 26 Dec. 1833, P/299/30, MBRP 13 Feb. 1834, p. 1158.

3 H. Moberly, Special Settlement Officer, Malabar and South Canara to Sec., Commissioner of Revenue Settlement and Director of Land Records and Agriculture, 24 May 1894, and F.C. Parsons, Special Settlement Officer, Malabar and South Canara to same, 28 Oct. 1896, P/6006, MRP No. 883, 29 Aug. 1900, pp. 836 and 1033.

4 Parsons to Sec., Commissioner of Revenue Settlement and Director of Land Records and Agriculture, 28 Oct. 1896, ibid., pp. 836, 845 and 1033.

5 H. Moberly to Sec., Commissioner of Revenue Settlement etc., 24 May 1894, ibid., p. 836.

to the power of the jenmi be mounted.

The opportunities for Moplahs achieving a greater degree of independence from the power network linking Hindu jenmis and officialdom and for mounting challenge to that network, would be increased by the existence of a Moplah ulema capable of playing a sanctioning and even a leadership rôle to the extent that they derived their income from the contributions of the faithful. Indeed some British officials and many Malayali Hindus went so far as to ascribe an originating or manipulative function to the Moplah Tangals who were alleged by one administrator in 1896 to "have been at the bottom of most of the outbreaks".<sup>1</sup>

There is certainly plenty of evidence of Moplah divines sanctioning and, sometimes (as in August 1849 and 1873<sup>2</sup>) actually leading outbreaks. Apparently, it was Syed Fazl's favourite

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1 Minute of J. Grose, member, Council of Governor of Madras, 18 Aug. 1896, L/PJ/6/433, 2060/96, MJP No. 1567, 30 Sept. 1896, p. 131. For similar expressions of suspicion that Muslim divines were fomenting outbreaks see C.A. Innes, Acting Malabar Magistrate to Sec., Judicial, 29 Mar. 1915, MJP Nos. 2080-84, 3 Sept. 1915 (Conf.), p. 36, MRO; report of T.L. Strange, Malabar Commissioner, 25 Sept. 1852, loc. cit pp. 4525-26 and 4600; note of W. Robinson on Taramal Kunhi Koya in 'Tabular Statement of State Prisoners of Malabar', compiled by G.A. Ballard, Malabar Magistrate, 3 Mar. 1863, P/328/43, MJP No. 872, 5 June 1863, p. 641; J. Twigg, Acting Special Asst. Collector to Acting Collector, Malabar, 22 Aug. 1884, P/2401, MJP Nos. 2776-81, 1 Nov. 1884, pp. 13 and 15-16; C. Karunakara Menon, 'The Mappilla Problem', The Madras Review, Vol. III, No. 9, May 1897, pp. 182 and 185.

2 W. Robinson, Head Asst. Magistrate to Conolly, 18 Oct. 1849, P/327/22, MJP No. 794, 1 Dec. 1849, p. 4910; Malabar Magistrate to Chief Sec., 12 Sept. 1873, P/401 MJP No. 1486, 17 Sept. 1873, p. 897.

text (and one which he refused to retract publicly to save himself from deportation in 1852) in his Friday orations at the mosque at Mambram, where he was the leading Tangal from 1844 to 1852, that it was no sin but a merit to kill a jenmi who evicted.<sup>1</sup> It was clearly necessary for intending shahid to have religious sanction for their taking the path of 'martyrdom' through the violence of the outbreak, and it was deemed most important to receive the blessing of the Mambram Tangal or of some other Moplah divine before 'going out'.<sup>2</sup>

This dispensation to commit homicide in the name of Islam came very often to be retailed ceremonially through one of the two traditional Moplah votive rites known as the nercha and the maulhud.<sup>3</sup> The form of these services in which the devotee

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1 Information given by C. Kanaran, late Deputy Collector, Malabar, to W. Logan, Govt. of Madras, Malabar Special Commission, 1881-82, Vol. II, p. 48; W. Logan, Malabar Magistrate to Chief Sec., 13 Dec. 1880, Govt. of Madras, Malabar Land Tenures, p. 19. Kanaran had had immediate charge of the negotiations resulting in Sayed Fazl's departure for Arabia.

2 H.V. Conolly to Sec., Judicial, 12 Oct. 1849, P/327/22, MJP No. 794, 1 Dec. 1849, p. 4750; Col. C.A. Porteous, Insp.-Gen. of Police to Chief Sec., 25 July 1894, P/4621, MJP Nos. 2186-92, 8 Sept. 1894, p. 132. See also Conolly to Sec., Judicial, 2 Jan. 1844, P/326/35, MJP No. 69, 27 Jan. 1844, p. 261; W. Logan to Chief Sec., 7 Feb. 1885, P/2634, MJP Nos. 1169-74, 2 May 1885, p. 13.

3 See for example Malabar District Magistrate to Chief Sec., 7 Oct. 1865, P/328/52, MJP No. 1550, 31 Oct. 1865, p. 1783; C. Collett, Joint Magistrate, Malabar, notes on Karaparamba Case No. 15, Govt. versus Malakel Mamu and 11 others, 14 Feb. 1856, Malabar Collectorate Records, No. 7347, p. 518, MRO. The term nercha would appear to signify simply a vow-taking ceremony (see Col. C.A. Porteous, Insp.-Gen. of Police to Chief Sec., 25 July 1894, P/4621, MJP Nos. 2186-92, 8 Sept. 1894, p. 131; deposition of Kodeanparambatha alias Candaraparambatha Moossa Cooty, 30 Oct. 1855, Malabar Collectorate Records, No. 7347/2, p. 493) whilst a maulhud seems to have been, for the Ernad Moplah, a votive service which usually was meant to be celebrated in honour of some

might secure the vouchsafing both of the success of his mission and of a place in paradise was well-suited to the purposes of the Moplah preparing to become an outbreak participant.<sup>1</sup> However the significance of the adaptation of the nercha and the maulhud to the requirements of the Moplah outbreak did not consist only in the consecrating function of these rites. The vital need for unwavering adhesion to a course of action which for success had to culminate in slaughter in hand-to-hand combat of each and every participant was supplied by the votive aspect of the ceremonial. It was a deadly sin to draw back from the commitment undertaken in the eyes of God and his witnesses.<sup>2</sup>

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deceased person (see Malabar Magistrate to Chief Sec., 7 Oct. 1865, P/328/52, MJP No. 1550, 31 Oct. 1865, p. 1783; statement of K. Viran, Sexton of Oravanaparote Mosque, Nemini, 29 Sept. 1865, ibid., p. 1790; W. Logan, Malabar Magistrate to Chief Sec., 7 Feb. 1885, P/2634, MJP Nos. 1169-74, 2 May 1885, p. 12). A maulhud would appear to be one type of nercha ceremony (see depositions of D.Ws. Nos. 1 and 4, Chemmala Koyamu and Thekakara Ayamad, 14 Nov. 1922, Case No. 27A of 1922, Court of Special Judge, Calicut, Referred Trial No. 7 of 1923, pp. 24-25, MHCA; deposition of Coydaparambatha alias Caudaruparambatha Mamoo, 30 Oct. 1855, Conolly murder investigation/ Malabar Collectorate Records, No. 7347/2, pp. 497-98; deposition of Tattarakel Markkar Cootty, 23 Sept. 1855, ibid., p. 534).

- 1 C. Collett, Joint Magistrate, Malabar, notes on Poodiangady Case No. 7, Govt. versus Carutha Kunjussa and 8 others, 14 Feb. 1856, Malabar Collectorate Records, Vol. No. 7347, p. 315; Malabar Magistrate to Chief Sec., 7 Oct. 1865, P/328/52, MJP No. 1550, 31 Oct. 1865, p. 1783.
- 2 W. Logan, Malabar Magistrate to Chief Sec., 7 Feb. 1885, P/2634, MJP Nos. 1169-74, 2 May 1885, p. 13; Malabar Magistrate to Chief Sec., 7 Oct. 1865, P/328/52, MJP No. 1550, 31 Oct. 1865, p. 1783; deposition of K. Viran, Sexton of Oravanaparote Mosque, 29 Sept. 1865, ibid., p. 1790; statement of C. Koya, another Nemini Moplah, 29 Sept. 1865, ibid., p. 1791; F. Fawcett, Supt. of Police, South Malabar, report of 5 June 1896, L/PJ/6/433, 2060/96, MJP No. 1567, 30 Sept. 1896, p. 99. Compliance with the resolution to die as a shahid was also encouraged by the contempt shown by the entire Moplah community for the minjina shahid, the devotee who failed to carry through his resolve, see for example C.A. Innes, Malabar

But if the nercha or maulhud became an oath-taking ceremony for the intending shahid, their transaction during the rite with the officiating Moplah divine was not confined to the giving and receiving of religious sanction. The oblatory aspect<sup>1</sup> of the use of traditional Moplah ceremony by the outbreak participant was a token that the dependence on priestly dispensation of the man intending to 'go out' made him no mere creature of the ulema. Where their source of livelihood was from the Moplah community, the dependence of the Tangals on the population supporting outbreaks was as great as that of the intending martyr on the Tangals.

In fact where documentary evidence of some reliability is available to illuminate the relationship between the ulema and their Moplah congregations, there emerges a picture quite different from that painted by those officials most convinced of the evil power of the former over the latter. There seems little doubt that the power of each Moplah divine tended to be confined to a highly-localised jurisdiction ultimately dependent on the goodwill and material support of his following. As early as

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Gazetteer, Vol. I, p. 83; report of Fawcett, 5 June 1896, loc. cit., p. 103; 'The Song of Alungal Kandi', in F. Fawcett, 'War Songs of the Mappilas of Malabar', Indian Antiquary, Vol. XXX, 1901, p. 507; W. Robinson, Acting Malabar Magistrate to H.D. Cook, Calicut Session Judge, 1 Oct. 1857, P/328/24, MJP No. 1359, 16 Oct. 1857, p. 144; Conolly to Chief Sec., 13 Jan. 1842, P/326/15, MJP No. 37, 8 Feb. 1842, p. 359.

1 See appendix C, W. Robinson, Head Asst. Magistrate, Malabar to H.V. Conolly, Malabar Collector, 18 Oct. 1849, P/327/22, MJP No. 794, 1 Dec. 1849, p. 4965; H. Bradley, Acting Malabar Magistrate to Chief Sec., 16 May 1894, P/4621, MJP Nos. 2186-92, 8 Sept. 1894, p. 99.

1800-01 it had been noted by one acute observer that in south Malabar the Moplah 'clergy' was generally supported entirely by the contributions of their followers.<sup>1</sup> The enquiry into the outbreak of February 1915 revealed that in the 'fanatical' south Malabar interior Mussaliars (moulvis) were chosen and fed by the Moplahs of the locality where they held sway.<sup>2</sup> It was also reported, in 1896, that the appointment of a Moplah mullah vested in the congregation he was to serve.<sup>3</sup> In the specific instance of Edapetta in Walluvanad taluk for example, it was discovered that the Angadipuram Tangal, who was supposed to exercise "some vague sort of supervision" over the religious affairs of the amsom was, in 1911, able to remove its kazi only with the consent and approval of the local mosque congregation.<sup>4</sup> No less a figure than the religious head of the majority section<sup>5</sup> of the Moplah community, the Makhdam Tangal of Ponnani, outside of a comparatively small part of Ponnani taluk, had no disciplinary authority over either mosque congregations or their officials. Among the Moplahs there was, as Collector C.A. Innes put it, nothing equivalent to a church with church discipline

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1 Francis Buchanan, A Journey from Madras through the Countries of Mysore, Canara and Malabar, Vol. II, p. 422.

2 R.H. Hitchcock, Supt. of Police, South Malabar, 'Report on the Mappilla Outbreak of 1915', 30 Mar. 1915, MJP Nos. 2080-84, 3 Sept. 1915 (Conf.), p. 69, Kozhikode Archives.

3 Report of H.M. Winterbotham, 5 May 1896, L/PJ/6/433, 2060/96, MJP No. 1567, 30 Sept. 1896, p. 52.

4 C.A. Innes to Sec., Judicial, 29 Mar. 1915, MJP Nos. 2080-84, 3 Sept. 1915 (Conf.), p. 36, Kozhikode Archives.

5 See below p.79.

and church organisation.<sup>1</sup> Even where the fame of a Moplah divine secured him adherents beyond the purely local realm his dependence on his following could still be most marked. This indeed appears to have been the case with the Mambram Tangals themselves who were reported to have had "no apparent property" but professed to be fakirs and were supported by "the voluntary oblations of their followers".<sup>2</sup> If it were really true that the doctrine of the Moplah outbreak had originated with the Mambram Tangals,<sup>3</sup> they were catering for the needs of their adherents. As District Magistrate W. Logan observed in 1885 of the Moplah priesthood generally:

"They are so circumstanced that, to retain their hold on the people and to secure the comfortable incomes derived from them, they are forced to go with them in this popular movement."<sup>4</sup>

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- 1 Innes to Sec., Judicial, 29 Mar. 1915, loc. cit., p. 36. See also demi-official report of F.B. Evans, Special Civil Officer for the Martial Law Area of 1921-22, G.R.F. Tottenham (ed.), The Mapilla Rebellion, 1921-22, p. 237.
- 2 H.V. Conolly to Sec., Judicial, 4 Nov. 1843, P/326/35, MJP No. 69, 27 Jan. 1844, p. 197. See also J. Vaughan to Sec., Judicial, 29 Apr. 1817, P/323/31, MJP 29 Apr. 1817, p. 1082. For other evidence of the material dependence of the ulema on their Moplah congregations see report of T.L. Strange, 25 Sept. 1852, loc. cit., p. 4594; examination of Syed Mahomed Tangul, 21 Sept. 1849, appendix No. 3, Conolly to Sec., Judicial, 12 Oct. 1849, P/327/22, MJP No. 794, 1 Dec. 1849, p. 4804.
- 3 T.L. Strange to H.V. Conolly, 29 July 1852, P/327/56, MJP No. 154, 16 Mar. 1853, p. 1610.
- 4 Logan to Chief Sec., 17 July 1885, P/2635, MJP No. 2725, 8 Oct. 1885, p. 7. Logan's proposals to provide for releasing the Moplah ulema from financial dependence on their congregations by legislative enactment were rejected, Govt. Order No. 2725, 8 Oct. 1885, ibid., p. 8. In 1864 Malabar was reported to be one of the few districts in Madras Presidency in which kazis enjoyed no emoluments from Govt. Sec., Board of Revenue to Sec., Revenue Dept., 12 Aug. 1864, P/328/42, MJP No. 1251, 19 Aug. 1864, p. 1072. See also Malabar Magistrate to Chief Sec., 6 Oct. 1864, P/441/15, MJP No. 1356, 20 Aug. 1867, p. 1785.

That it was not the Moplah laity which was much constrained in the pursuit of what was considered to be in the interests of the community by the ties binding Moplah congregations to the ulema is not infrequently suggested by the history of Moplah 'fanaticism'. In the 1880s it was reported that when a group of Ernad Moplahs, in collision with their jenmi over their acquisition of a mosque site, found that, after applying to "several Arab priests" for their ruling on the question of the inviolate sanctity of the mosque, the opinion was that it might be removed if ordered by the King, this verdict proved so unpalatable to those who had asked for it that "they tore up the paper publicly in the village street to show their contempt for the ruling."<sup>1</sup> Moreover instances sometimes occurred in which outbreak participants refused to heed the appeals of Tangals to surrender.<sup>2</sup> The Moplah laity was indeed very often more radical than the ulema in its attachment to and interpretation of what the British supposed to be a movement initiated by the old Mambram Tangal (Syed Fazl's father). When, in 1852 Syed Fazl issued an injunction that, for the better observance of the Sabbath, there should be no ploughing on Fridays by Moplahs, some of his followers went beyond his instructions and broke the ploughs of Nairs who

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1 W. Logan, 'Report on Malabar Land Tenures', loc. cit., Vol. 1, pp. lxxii-lxxiii. For the secular aspect of the Moplah's attitude to the mosque see below p.248.

2 Govt. of Madras to Sec. of State, 5 May 1915, annexure, 'Account of the Mappilla Outbreak in the Malabar District, Feb.-Mar. 1915', L/PJ/6/1360, 2230/15 in 1003/15, p. 3; H.D. Cook, Head Asst. Magistrate to Conolly, 28 Dec. 1843, P/326/35, MJP No. 69, 27 Jan. 1844, p. 272; Conolly to Chief Sec., Judicial, 13 Jan. 1842, P/326/15, MJP No. 37, 8 Feb. 1842, p. 362.



would not cease work.<sup>1</sup> Another of the Tangal's orders, that every Moplah should use the polite form of the second person when conversing with Nairs only when the latter used the same was similarly exceeded. As Conolly noted

"The low Moplah, never over-courteous in his manner, is pleased at an order which brings (as he thinks) his superiors in rank and education to his own low level"

and resorted to the familiar in response to either form.<sup>2</sup> Most significant of all, on the occasion in 1852 of Syed Fazl's final removal from Malabar, which officials had thought might result in a rising of 5,000 Moplahs<sup>3</sup> and which in fact was marked by a crowd of 7-8,000 "showing strong signs of grief at his departure", the Tangal's behaviour was "prudent and politic". He "did all that was in his power to avoid popular excitement by remaining in his house" out of sight of the crowds for as long as possible, even altering his itinerary and retrieving a perilous situation as the concourse swelled with each mile.<sup>4</sup>

If consciousness of the might of the ruling power was capable of encouraging such notable circumspection on the part of a divine as notorious for his combativeness as the constituency on which he was dependent, it is of no surprise that, where from

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1 H.V. Conolly to Sec., Judicial, 11 Feb. 1852, P/327/45, MJP No. 125, 20 Feb. 1852, p. 696. Unfortunately there is only the briefest mention of this affair in the records.

2 Ibid., pp. 694-95.

3 H.V. Conolly to Sec., Judicial, 29 Jan. 1852, P/327/44, MJP No. 89, 6 Feb. 1852, p. 436. See also Conolly to Sec., Judicial, 26 Feb. 1853, P/327/59, MJP No. 379, 2 July 1853, p. 3701.

4 H.V. Conolly to Sec., Judicial, 20 Mar. 1852, P/327/45, MJP No. 216, 26 Mar. 1852, pp.1154-55.

the first the Moplah priesthood had acknowledged British supremacy by securing a substantial annual retainer, it showed a discrimination in matters of sedition which was legendary. At the earliest stage of British rule in Malabar an undertaking of loyal adhesion to the Government interest was secured from the influential Tangal of Kondotti in western Ernad by the grant of a remission of land revenue dues worth Rs. 2734 per annum.<sup>1</sup> In the time of the rule of Tippu Sultan in Malabar the Kondotti Tangal "in consideration of his sanctity as pretended but really to bind the Mappillas by his means to the Cirkar [Government]" had obtained the elimination of his lands from the revenue accounts.<sup>2</sup> After 1792 "it was thought expedient to assure [the Tangal] that whilst he evinced himself attached to the Company by" trying "to keep the Mappillas obedient the indulgence shown him by Tippu" would not be forfeited.<sup>3</sup> In fact practically throughout the subsequent period of British rule successive Kondotti Tangals proved to be astute enough always to impress the authorities with their devotion to the Raj.<sup>4</sup> In the period

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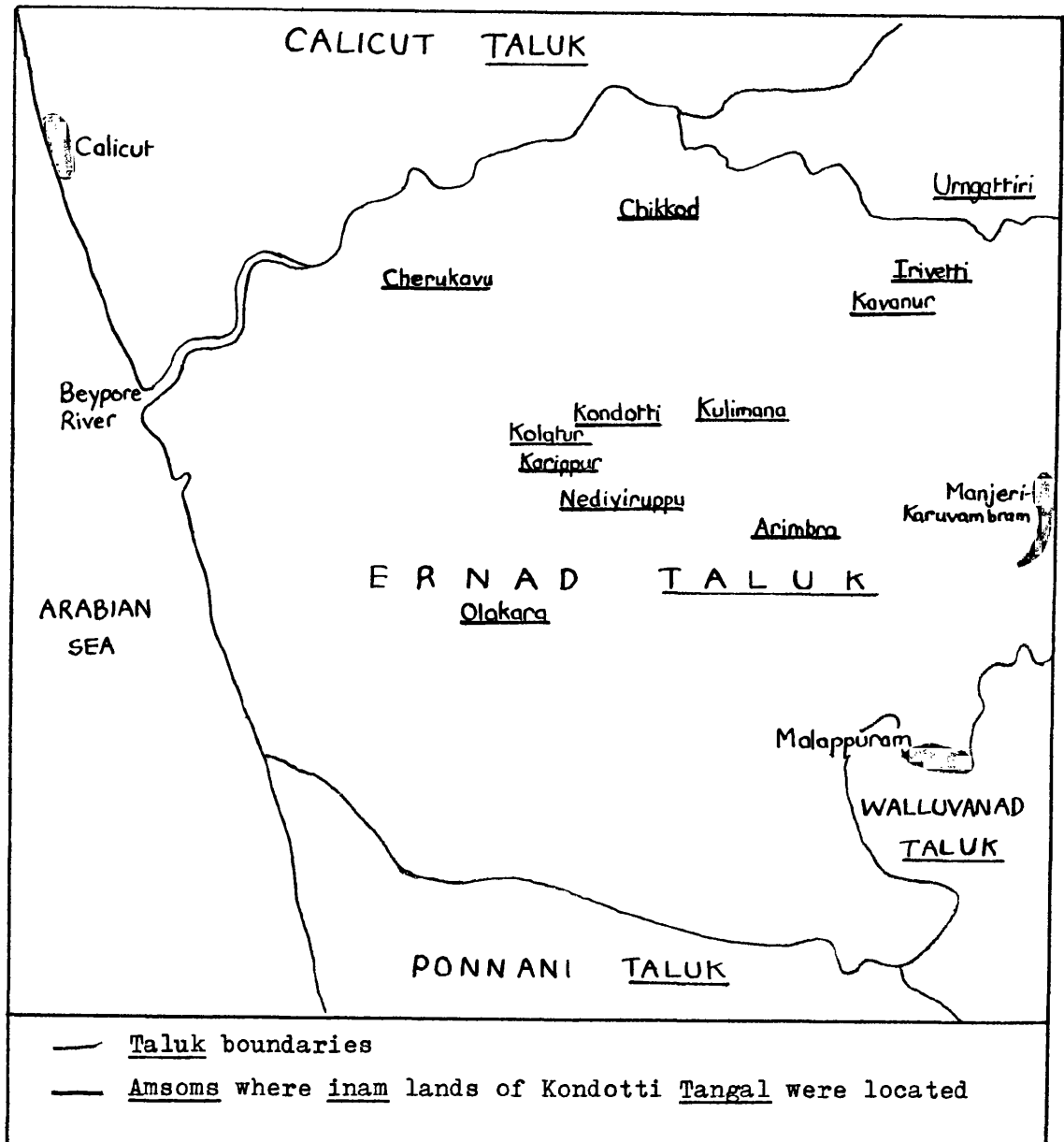
1 Officiating Inam Commissioner to Acting Sec., Revenue, 5 Oct. 1865, P/283/18, MRP No. 2474, 12 Oct. 1865, p. 3388.

2 W.G. Farmer, Malabar Supravisor, to J. Stevens, Supt., Southern Districts, 2 Oct. 1793, enclosure in R.B. Wood, Acting Collector, Malabar to Sec., Commissioners of Land Revenue, 6 Jan. 1910, P/8552, MRP No. 490, 14 Feb. 1910, p. 66.

3 Ibid. See also G. Waddell, Southern Supt. to Conduddy Tangul, 23 Jan. 1800, P/381/10, BPSP, 26 Feb. 1800, p. 863.

4 Conduoty Tangul to Malabar Commission, 4 Feb. 1800, P/117/6, BePolP, 24 Apr. 1800, item 9; Mahomed Baker to Malabar Commission, 16 Feb. 1800, P/117/9, BePolP 19 June 1800, item 4; W. Logan, Malabar Manual, Vol. 1, p. 501; Govt. Order No. 2474, P/283/18, MRP 12 Oct. 1865, p. 3389; R.B. Wood, Acting Malabar Collector to Sec., Commissioners of Land Revenue, 16 May 1909 and 6 Jan. 1910, P/8552, MRP No. 490, 14 Feb. 1910, pp. 2 and 65.

MAP TO SHOW THE LOCATION OF THE INAM LANDS OF  
THE KONDOTTI TANGAL<sup>1</sup>



1 Title deeds given to Ishtiyak Shah Valiya Tangal of Kondotti in 1866, enclosure in R.B. Wood, Acting Collector Malabar to Secretary, Revenue, 16 Sept. 1909, P/8552, MRP No. 490, 14 Feb. 1910, pp. 3-5.

1836-1919 the Kondotti Tangals were generally successful in ensuring that none of their adherents were implicated in the periodic Moplah outbreaks<sup>1</sup> in the suppression of which the Kondotti faction indeed sometimes participated.<sup>2</sup> Certainly Kondotti faction Moplahs were normally exempted from the fining under the Moplah Act of amsoms implicated in outbreaks.<sup>3</sup> Under such circumstances relations were strained with the rest of the Moplah population of interior south Malabar,<sup>4</sup> sometimes called the 'Ponnani faction' from their nominal allegiance to the

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1 Conolly to Sec., Judicial, 21 Dec. 1849, P/327/26, MJP No. 19A, 11 Jan. 1850, p. 415; T.L. Strange, Special Commissioner, Malabar to Sec., Judicial, 25 Sept. 1852, P/327/60, MJP No. 483, 23 Aug. 1853, p. 4606; W. Robinson, Acting Malabar Magistrate to Chief Sec., 5 Nov. 1856, P/328/19, MJP No. 105, 5 Nov. 1856, p. 4518; W. Logan to Chief Sec., 6 Aug. 1885, P/2635, MJP Nos. 2201-02, 24 Aug. 1885; report of F. Fawcett, Supt. of Police, South Malabar, 5 June 1896, L/PJ/6/433, 2060/96, MJP No. 1567, 30 Sept. 1896, p. 97.

2 See below p. 249.

3 H. Bradley, Acting Malabar Magistrate to Chief Sec., 14 June 1894, P/4621, MJP Nos. 2186-92, 8 Sept. 1894, p. 127; W. Logan to Chief Sec., 7 Feb. 1885, P/2634, MJP Nos. 1169-74, 2 May 1885, p. 28; H.M. Winterbotham, Acting Malabar Magistrate to Chief Sec., 10 July 1886, P/2855, MJP No. 2236, 23 Aug. 1886, p. 72.

4 H.V. Conolly, Malabar Magistrate to Register to Court of Foujdaree Udalat /Chief Criminal Court/, Madras, 11 Dec. 1849, P/327/26, MJP No. 19A, 11 Jan. 1850, pp. 388-90 and 395; 'Urzee /memorial/ of Mosseliar Agate Oony Pokra, Mosseliar Manjery Oony Cootay Koorikul, Waliapidiakel Oony Koonjalan Choondya, Moothikul Enny and 32 other principal inhabitants of Mussalman Caste residing in Pyanaad amsom' to Conolly, n.d., enclosure in ibid., p. 398; W. Logan to Chief Sec., 7 Feb. 1885, P/2634, MJP Nos. 1169-74, 2 May 1885, p. 10; C.A. Innes, Malabar Gazetteer, Vol. 1, pp. 192-93.

Valiya Jaratingal Tangal of Ponnani,<sup>1</sup> which anathematised the Kondotti Moplahs as Shiahhs, a term rejected by the latter.<sup>2</sup> In fact any doctrinal differences between the two factions appear to have been minimal<sup>3</sup> and the attraction of the Kondotti sect seems to have been more especially to those Ernad Moplahs whose interests seemed to dictate a less reckless method of attempting to resolve grievance than via the 'fanatical' outbreak. The Kondotti faction would appear to have provided a home for many of the more well-to-do Moplahs,<sup>4</sup> a small minority in Ernad. In fact the sect was never able to attract more than a relatively small proportion of the total Muslim population of interior south Malabar. In 1853 the Kondotti Moplahs amounted to what was estimated to have been 30,000 souls, some 20-25 per cent of the Muslim population of the 'fanatic zone',<sup>5</sup> whilst two decades later 14.9 per cent of the Muslims of Ernad taluk were returned in the 1871 census as 'Shiahhs' this presumably being taken as

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- 1 C.A. Innes, Malabar Gazetteer, Vol. 1, pp. 192-93; W. Logan, Malabar Manual, Vol. I, p. 198; Francis Buchanan, A Journey from Madras through the Countries of Mysore, Canara and Malabar, Vol. II, pp. 421-422.
  - 2 C.A. Innes, Malabar Gazetteer, Vol. 1, pp. 192-93; W. Logan, Malabar Manual, Vol. I, pp. 198-99.
  - 3 C.A. Innes, Malabar Gazetteer, Vol. 1, pp. 192-93.
  - 4 H.V. Conolly, Malabar Magistrate to Register, Court of Foujdaree Udalat /Chief Criminal Court/, Madras, 11 Dec. 1849, P/327/26, MJP No. 19A, 11 Jan. 1850, p. 388.
  - 5 T.L. Strange, Special Commissioner, Malabar to Sec., Judicial, 25 Sept. 1852, P/327/60, MJP No. 483, 23 Aug. 1853, p. 4595; Conolly to Strange, 10 Sept. 1852, P/327/54, MJP No. 56, 27 Jan. 1853, p. 450.

equivalent to 'Kondotti Moplahs'.<sup>1</sup> Most of the sect were in fact concentrated in and around Kondotti itself where the Tangal's inam lands were located.<sup>2</sup> When the British bought the Kondotti Tangal they made certain of the loyalty of only a small proportion of the 'fanatic zone' Moplahs, for the great majority of whom on the contrary financial control of the ulema in their own hands provided a means of promoting confederation against the officially-sustained jenmi power.

Nevertheless, there existed important limits to the facility with which even the Moplah tenantry could combine without external assistance. Most ulema, especially in interior south Malabar, had a level of economic standing and a range of experience and contact which was little different to that of the rural mass.<sup>3</sup> On the other hand, nearly all those who did stand out in these respects and who might therefore be more likely to attract a considerable following, the important Tangals of the towns and religious centres in the coastal zone, were primarily in contact with the coastal Moplahs who were a

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1 W.R. Cornish, Report on the Census of the Madras Presidency, 1871, Vol. I, p. 349. For another low estimate of the proportion of Kondotti Moplahs in Malabar's population see W. Logan, Malabar Magistrate to Chief Sec., 17 July 1885, P/2635, MJP No. 2725, 8 Oct. 1885, p. 2.

2 C. Collett, Joint Magistrate, Malabar to Chief Sec., 21 Sept. 1855, P/328/6, MJP No. 716, 3 Oct. 1855, p. 3592; C.A. Innes, Malabar Gazetteer, Vol. I, p. 415. See map p.78. Inams were assignments of Govt. rights in land. In Malabar, where land was very largely private property, inams were usually assignments of the Govt. assessment.

3 See for example report of J.F. Hall, Malabar Magistrate, 25 Apr. 1919, L/PJ/6/1608, 4582/19, MJP No. 1310, 9 June 1919, p. 15; Conolly to Chief Sec., 13 Jan. 1842, P/326/15, MJP No. 37, 8 Feb. 1842, p. 362.

more prosperous commercial community having, the British were sure, "no sympathy with the Moplah agriculturalist".<sup>1</sup> Whilst this estimate is doubtless exaggerated it is certainly true that the Moplahs of the coastal towns had little to gain and, after the promulgation of the Moplah Acts, a good deal about which to be apprehensive from the effects of the Moplah outbreak. Thus in 1894 in a fatwa (judgement) condemning that year's outbreak a kazi of Calicut laid emphasis on the fact that the urban areas of the coast were free from these disturbances which occurred only in the rural interior where the Muslims were less "respectable".<sup>2</sup>

The second important limitation to the extent to which Moplahs were likely to combine on anything more than the most fleeting basis was probably the size of mosque congregations. According to Moplah belief it would appear that a quorum of 40 people was essential for a congregation in a principal mosque,<sup>3</sup>

1 H. Wigram, Officiating District Judge, South Malabar, to Chief Sec., 8 Nov. 1883, Govt. of Madras, Malabar Land Tenures, p. 17. See also Francis Buchanan, A Journey from Madras through the Countries of Mysore, Canara and Malabar, Vol. II, p. 471; proceedings of general meeting of the Himayathul Islam Sabha of Calicut, 20 May 1894, P/4621, MJP Nos. 2186-92, 8 Sept. 1894, p. 122 (in which this body of Calicut Moplahs described the Moplah rural population as "not better than beasts"). This feeling was apparently to some extent reciprocated by "the low class Moplah" of Ernad, see for example F.C. Parsons, Acting Malabar Collector, to Chief Sec., 13 June 1898, MJP No. 996 (Conf.), 28 June 1898, MRO.

2 Fathwa of Mussapla Akath Mulla Koya Tangal, Kazi of Calicut, n.d., P/4621, MJP Nos. 2186-92, 8 Sept. 1894, p. 123. On the gulf between the Calicut Moplahs and those of the 'fanatic zone' see also A.R. Knapp, Acting Malabar Collector to Insp.-Gen. of Police, 7 Sept. 1906, P/7418, MJP No. 1772, 31 Oct. 1906, p. 100.

3 H.V. Conolly to Sec., Judicial, 24 July 1852, P/327/48, MJP No. 44, 24 July 1852, p. 3158.

but figures for 1831 and 1851 seem to indicate an average of the order of 400 Moplahs per mosque for Malabar as a whole.<sup>1</sup> Probably the figure would be smaller for rural areas like the outbreak zone. With possibly no more than a hundred or so adult males per congregation, it would seem that the religion of the Moplahs normally promoted a degree of regular intercourse sufficient for combination on only a limited, localized scale.

It would seem likely that combination on such a scale would present a strictly limited range of alternative forms of action against jenmi power. There is plenty of evidence of resistance to the payment of rent among Moplah tenant communities when labouring under a sense of grievance. The records of the Guruvayur Devaswom section of the Zamorin's estate, which was under Court of Wards administration for several years from 1914 resound with the complaints of Estate Collectors about amsoms ('parishes') of Ernad Moplah tenants "notorious for default in the payment of rents".<sup>2</sup> How readily Moplah tenants might act in concert was revealed by Logan who noted at the outset of his Commission in 1881, "signs that the Mappilla

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1 Report of T.L. Strange, 25 Sept. 1852, loc. cit., p. 4593. Figures for the "Province of Velletenade", apparently what was later to become the south Malabar taluk of Bettutnad, for the beginning of British rule indicate a similar number of Moplahs per mosque, see 'Form to be observed in ascertaining the Topography and population of the Ceded Districts', enclosure in Malabar Commission to Chief of Tellicherry Factory, 30 July 1792, G/37/11, Tellicherry Factory Records p. 151.

2 Administration report for fasli (harvest year) 1330 (1920-21), 11 Oct. 1921, P/ 11116, MCWP No. 44, 16 Nov. 1921, p. 1.



portion of the population would have readily seized any pretext for stopping the payment of rent, and if such a movement had been once commenced, the example would have spread contagiously". But such apparently spontaneous large-scale co-ordinations (as with the huge crowds which gathered when Syed Fazl left Malabar) seem to have been transient, unstable phenomena in the absence of a level of organization which the unaided rural Moplah of the outbreak zone was incapable of achieving. Logan evidently found no great difficulty in scotching such movements with cautions whenever they appeared.<sup>1</sup> Under conditions in which British power seemed ever ready and able to intervene in strength it would appear that the forms of anti-jenmi action generated by the Ernad Moplahs themselves had of necessity to be those involving the mobilization of relatively small numbers.

Combination on this limited scale produced forms of action, varieties of 'normal' crime especially, which are common to perhaps any rural society in which mass organization is not feasible. Government servants in the district sometimes expressed the conviction that a proportion of crime in Malabar, especially crimes of violence, had its origin in agrarian trouble,<sup>2</sup> and apart from common murder of local notables by

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1 W. Logan, 'Report on Malabar Land Tenures', loc. cit., Vol. I, p. iv.

2 Remarks of C.A. Innes, Malabar Collector, 19 Feb. 1914, on the Police Administration Report of South Malabar for 1913, P/9560, MJP No. 1771, 19 Aug. 1914, p. 20. For specific instances of this type of crime see Own Correspondent, Trichur, Hindu, 28 July 1921, p. 3; W. Logan, Malabar Magistrate, 'Note to Police Administration Report, 1882', 21 Mar. 1883, Govt. of Madras, Administration Reports of the Madras Police, appendix C, p. xvii; Logan, 'Note on the Police Administration Report for 1885', n.d., ibid., appendix C, p. xv; Logan to Chief Sec., 27 May 1887, P/3046, MLP No. 27, 4 July 1887, p. 1.

small groups, such as three Moplahs who in 1865 killed an important moneylender,<sup>1</sup> Moplahs supplied most of the gang robbers (dacoits) of the district.<sup>2</sup> In times of dearth dacoities would be committed by starving people for food, as in 1897 when one British official observed that "the Mappillas, who suffered the most by far, are not those to sit down under that kind of adversity which consists in starvation while fat Hindu landlords had plenty".<sup>3</sup> At least one outstanding example of what E.J. Hobsbawm has called 'social banditry'<sup>4</sup> is recorded with the case of Manjeri Athan Gurikal, grandson of a Moplah of the same name who had led a rebellion against the British at the beginning of the century.<sup>5</sup> This second Athan Gurikal was an idle young man (of a Moplah family of status in greatly reduced circumstances) who, "of athletic figure, and of much resolution and pride",<sup>6</sup>

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1 Judgement, High Court of Judicature, Madras, 21 Oct. 1865, Case No. 166, 1865, MJP No. 1550, 31 Oct. 1865, p. 1903.

2 H.V. Conolly, Malabar Magistrate to Chief Sec., 30 Apr. 1841, P/326/8, MJP 22 Apr. 1841, p. 2246; memorandum of H.V. Conolly, 25 Mar. 1852, P/327/56, MJP No. 154, 16 Mar. 1853, p. 1506; W. Robinson, Acting Malabar Magistrate to Acting Chief Sec., Judicial, 11 July 1857 (draft), Malabar Collectorate Records, Vol. 7379, Police Letters 1857, p. 456, MRO; Capt. F. Hole, Supt. Police, Malabar to Insp.-Gen. of Police, 25 Nov. 1876, P/1094, MJP No. 17, 4 Jan. 1877, p. 16; H.A. Stuart, Acting Insp.-Gen. of Police to Chief Sec., 31 Mar. 1898, P/5505, MJP No. 819, 25 May 1898, p. 79.

3 F. Fawcett, Supt. of Police, Malabar, to Insp.-Gen. of Police, 28 Jan. 1898, P/5505, MJP No. 819, 25 May 1898, p. 90.

4 Primitive Rebels, p. 5.

5 W. Robinson, Head Asst. Magistrate to Conolly, 18 Oct. 1849, P/327/22, MJP No. 794, 1 Dec. 1849, p. 4855. See also Chapter 2.

6 Report of T.L. Strange, 25 Sept. 1852, loc. cit., p. 4548.

secured a living for his gang by levying 'protection money' from rich jenmis, but who also set himself up as a champion of the oppressed Moplahs, amongst whom he enjoyed great prestige.<sup>1</sup> Thus among the Robin Hood-style 'righting of wrongs' attributed to the Gurikal<sup>2</sup> include action against a menon (village accountant) who had refused to refund a Rs 30 bribe he had received from a Moplah woman and against an adhigari for allegedly wronging a Moplah over a revenue matter.<sup>3</sup>

But throughout the period, Moplah resistance to the rural establishment constantly gravitated towards the form of the outbreak. This persistence over many decades of the outbreak as the chief form of action may well have been because it entailed the wreaking of the maximum degree of terror with the minimum resources, for nothing was more chilling to the local Hindus than the thought of frenzied fanatics for whom death not only held no fears but was eagerly sought. Perhaps it was partly because "the Moplah [was] only formidable when under the effects of fanaticism"<sup>4</sup> that the despised coolie and abused tenant was attracted to such a suicidal form of action in which

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1 Conolly to Sec., Judicial, 22 Sept. 1849, P/327/21, MJP 2 Oct. 1849, p. 4031; Conolly to Sec., Judicial, 12 Oct. 1849, P/327/22, MJP No. 794, 1 Dec. 1849, p. 4741.

2 The term signifies a teacher in the use of arms, a marksman, and this was indeed Athan Gurikal's calling. Report of T.L. Strange, 25 Sept. 1852, loc. cit. p. 4548.

3 Report of W. Robinson, 18 Oct. 1849, loc. cit., pp. 4867 and 4873; T.L. Strange, Commissioner, Malabar to Sec., Judicial, 29 Nov. 1852, P/327/54, MJP No. 56, 27 Jan. 1853, p. 231.

4 H.V. Conolly to Sec., Judicial, 29 Nov. 1851, Moplah Outrages Correspondence, Vol. I, p. 223.

even war-like Nairs in possession of arms "rushed into the jungle, climbed trees, and ... descended into wells leaving their wives and children and their property at the mercy of [a] gang" of outbreak participants.<sup>1</sup> Certainly the terrorisation of the Hindu was not merely an incidental effect of the outbreak as far as the Ernad Moplah was concerned. This, for example, seems to have been the import of the remark of one of the participants in the February-March 1915 outbreak to a Tien in Alanallur (Walluvanad taluk) bazaar who, instead of bolting at the approach of the 'fanatics' merely turned aside into the jungle to let them pass. The shahid is reported to have demanded of him "'Don't you know who we are?'" and slashed him with his sword.<sup>2</sup> As the Government of Madras commented about the same time, the Moplah derived real satisfaction "from his power to reduce the local Hindu to a state of nervousness."<sup>3</sup>

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- 1 Report of H. Bradley, Acting Magistrate, Malabar, 16 May 1894, P/4621, MJP Nos. 2186-92, 8 Sept. 1894, p. 109. For further evidence of the terror occasioned among Malayali Hindus by the threat of Moplahs on the rampage see Conolly to Sec., Judicial, 4 Nov. 1843, P/326/35, MJP No. 69, 27 Jan. 1844, p. 217; W. Robinson, Acting Joint Magistrate, Malabar to H.V. Conolly, Malabar Magistrate, 16 Jan. 1852, P/327/44, MJP No. 59, Jan. 1852, pp. 319-20; H. Moberly, Malabar Magistrate to Chief Sec., 2 July 1895, MPolP No. 459 (Conf.), 11 July 1895, MRO; report of H.M. Winterbotham, 10 Apr. 1896, L/PJ/6/422, 996/96, p. 7; reports from District Magistrate, Malabar, weeks ending 27 Jan. and 3 Feb. 1915, MJP No. 360, 18 Feb. 1915 (Conf.), pp. 63 and 72, MRO; C.A. Innes, Acting Malabar Magistrate to Sec., Judicial, 29 Mar. 1915, MJP Nos. 2080-84, 3 Sept. 1915, (Conf.), p. 15, Kozhikode Archives.
- 2 C.A. Innes, Acting Malabar Magistrate to Sec., Judicial, 29 Mar. 1915, MJP Nos. 2080-84, 3 Sept. 1915 (Conf.), p. 15, Kozhikode Archives.
- 3 Chief Sec., Govt. of Madras, Judicial to Sec., Govt. of India, Home, demi-official, conf., 2 Mar. 1915, Fortnightly Reports for 1915, MRO.

However, the main strength of the outbreak form was that the inevitable death of all the participants meant that direct retaliation by the powerful was made impossible. As long as men could be found who preferred the rewards of Paradise to life, a means of resistance could be employed which was not subject to the main disadvantage of other forms of action, like common murder, dacoity and 'social banditry', in which relatively small, and therefore vulnerable, numbers were involved. Thus, the Moplah outbreak seems to have been essentially a peculiar form of rural terrorism which functioned as what, in the circumstances, was probably the most effective means of curbing the enhanced power of the jenmi, for the earthly benefit of Moplahs who themselves did not become participants. As one British official was able to perceive as early as 1843 the outbreak was "organized to strike terror into the Nayrs holding Jenmem property".<sup>1</sup>

Naturally, in the context of the Moplah outbreak, the term 'organization' must not be understood in sophisticated modern terms. Though most outbreaks were preceded by a degree of calculation and arrangement<sup>2</sup> giving certain scope for the exercise of an elementary leadership talent, the success of such paroxysms of violence was predicated on the incitation through ceremony and song of a wild spirit of holy wrath drawing on the tradition of the armed vindication of Ernad Islam in the face of high-caste

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1 H.D. Cook, Head Asst. Magistrate, Malabar to Conolly, 28 Dec. 1843, P/326/35, MJP No. 69, 27 Jan. 1844, p. 282.

2 See above p. 62 for example.

Hindu power.<sup>1</sup> The frenzy which was therefore intrinsic to the Moplah outbreak did not conduce to elaborate management. The adventitious element in this form of resistance to jenmi power was prominent, no more so than in the explication of Moplah grievance via such interlocution as was possible between outbreak participants and the forces sent against them and through the occasional 'writings' left by shahid in their chosen 'posts'.<sup>2</sup> Even so the fact that shahid cast themselves in the rôle of defenders of Islam, and the local community in which it had expression, created some kind of crude mechanism by which the Moplah outbreak might prove responsive to popular feeling. The éclat which, as British observers so frequently noted,<sup>3</sup> was so eagerly sought and not uncommonly achieved<sup>4</sup> by the typical shahid band provided some prospect of the outbreak being directed along lines favoured by the Ernad Moplahs at large.

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1 This tradition was of course partly the creation of the history of the outbreak itself, see for example 'Ballad Composed to Commemorate the events attending the Cutting off of the Head of Kapraat Paniker', appendix 6, report of W. Robinson, 18 Oct. 1849, loc. cit., pp. 4821-22 and 4830. However the growth of the tradition is traceable back to an even earlier period, see below pp. 167 and 245.

2 See above pp. 31.

3 Conolly to Chief Sec., 13 Jan. 1842, P/326/15 MJP No. 37, 8 Feb. 1842, p. 361; Conolly to Sec. to Govt., 4 Sept. 1849, P/327/21, MJP 11 Sept. 1849, p. 3793; C. Collett, Joint Magistrate, Malabar to Chief Sec., 24 Sept. 1855, P/328/6, MJP No. 716, 3 Oct. 1855, pp. 3662-63; W. Logan, Malabar Magistrate to Chief Sec., 7 Feb. 1885, P/2634, MJP Nos. 1169-74, 2 May 1885, p. 23; Logan to Chief Sec., 17 July 1885, P/2635, MJP No. 2725, 8 Oct. 1885, p. 3.

4 J.W.F. Dumergue, Acting Malabar Magistrate to Chief Sec., 13 Nov. 1891, P/4011, MJP No. 2477, 3 Dec. 1891, p. 17; report of H.M. Winterbotham, 10 Apr. 1896, loc. cit., p. 2.

It has been suggested that the outbreak was merely a form of action instigated by the more influential elements among the Moplahs for their own ends.<sup>1</sup> The fact that shahid were usually men from the lowest echelons of rural society drew from one member of the Madras Government of 1851 the following remark:

"It is not in the ordinary nature of things ... that men of this description should originate and take the lead in such acts; they may follow when incited by the example of men of a higher grade or, they may be made the tools of such men, but I cannot look upon these murders as their own spontaneous acts."<sup>2</sup>

In particular it has been claimed that the social conflict of which the outbreak was an expression was "only the culmination of the constant struggle of the wealthy kanamkar to get possession of the land."<sup>3</sup>

Kanamkar, or 'kanamdars', held land from jenmis for terms of twelve years, making a loan to the jenmi at the beginning of this period and recovering the interest on the loan from the annual rent due to the jenmi, who received the balance which was called the purappad.<sup>4</sup> Some kanamdars, such as the family of one outbreak participant in 1851 which held one and a half acres on kanam and also worked as coolies,<sup>5</sup> were clearly of a status little

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1 Report of T.L. Strange, 25 Sept. 1852, loc. cit., p. 4626.

2 Minute of J.F. Thomas, member, Council of Governor of Madras, 18 Oct. 1851, P/327/41, MJP No. 700, 20 Nov. 1851, p. 3795.

3 Sir Charles Turner, Minute on Malabar Land Tenures Draft Bill, p. 60.

4 Lewis Moore, Malabar Law & Custom, p. 143; C.A. Innes, Malabar Gazetteer, Vol. I, pp. 305-06.

5 C. Collett to H.V. Conolly, 20 Sept. 1851, P/327/39, MJP No. 558, 8 Sept. 1851, p. 3732. See also Sir Charles Turner, loc. cit., p. 70.

different from the usual 'fanatic'. Others however were substantial, powerful men, frequently Moplahs in the outbreak zone, jealous of the jenmi land monopoly which was an obstacle to their ambition and, indeed, often the means of their downfall. Moplah kanamdars who had gone from relative riches to destitution in a matter of years sometimes became participants in outbreaks.<sup>1</sup> The kanamdar certainly had every reason to look with favour on any movement directed against jenmis.

Moreover, the evidence for the influential rôle of kanamdars in the Moplah outbreak is strong. They clearly provided the leaders of a number of outbreaks, such as those in August 1849, 1896 and 1919,<sup>2</sup> and were strongly suspected of instigating or directing others. The shahid of 1894 were almost certainly instigated to their work chiefly by one Kalattil Unnian Haji, apparently a substantial kanamdar under pressure from his Brahmin jenmi, the burning of whose family temple constituted the opening act of violence of the Moplah gang.<sup>3</sup> In September 1880 the outbreak at Melattur was very likely incited by the chief Moplah of the locality, a wealthy kanamdar, against one of his jenmis

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1 Collett to Conolly, 20 Sept. 1851, loc. cit., pp. 3736-37; appendix C, W. Robinson, Head Asst. Magistrate to Conolly, 18 Oct. 1849, P/327/22, MJP No. 794, 1 Dec. 1849, pp. 4989-90.

2 W. Robinson, Head Asst. Magistrate to Conolly, 18 Oct. 1849, P/327/22, MJP No. 794, 1 Dec. 1849, p. 4855; report of H.M. Winterbotham, 5 May 1896, L/PJ/6/433, 2060/96, MJP No. 1567, 30 Sept. 1896, p. 61; report of J.F. Hall, Malabar Magistrate, 25 Apr. 1919, L/PJ/6/1608, 4582/19, MJP No. 1310, 9 June 1919, p. 17.

3 H. Bradley, Acting Malabar Magistrate to Chief Sec., 16 May 1894, P/4621, MJP Nos. 2186-92, 8 Sept. 1894, pp. 97, 102-04; Col. C.A. Porteous, Insp.-Gen. of Police to Chief Sec., 25 July 1894, ibid., p. 131; Govt. Order No. 2186, 8 Sept. 1894, ibid., p. 134.



and the kariastan of another at a time when both were in sharp conflict with the Moplah over land rights and dues.<sup>1</sup> As Logan realised,<sup>2</sup> the concept of the outbreak as a weapon used by kanamdars in their struggle against expanding jenmi power also helps explain the fact that outbreaks did not begin until 1836, several decades after the beginning of British rule (1792).

To some extent the start in 1836 of violent Moplah resistance via the outbreak to the power of the local high-caste Hindu magnates can probably be traced to changes introduced in the previous decade as a result of the Commission in Malabar of H.S. Graeme. Graeme, a Judge of the Southern Court of Circuit, was deputed in 1818 to investigate the revenue administration of Malabar and introduce a new system of police and magistracy.<sup>3</sup> It was the claim of Logan that the enquiry into actual rents which was recommended by Graeme as a basis for his scheme of settling the revenue assessment on wet cultivation and which was begun in 1823 and continued intermittently until 1843, was calculated to set landlord and tenant at strife.<sup>4</sup> Indeed in 1804

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1 G. McWatters, Acting Malabar Magistrate to Chief Sec., 5 Oct. 1880, P/1580, MJP No. 2500, 19 Oct. 1880, pp. 1233-35; W. Logan, Malabar Magistrate to Chief Sec., 7 Dec. 1880, ibid., MJP No. 3002, 28 Dec. 1880, p. 1419-20. For other likely examples see J. Twigg, Acting Special Asst. Magistrate to Logan, 7 Nov. 1885, P/2625, MJP No. 3499, 30 Dec. 1885, pp. 82-83 and Collett to Conolly, 20 Sept. 1851, loc. cit., pp. 3750-51.

2 'Report on Malabar Land Tenures', loc. cit., Vol. I, p. xvii.

3 Sec. to Govt. to H.S. Graeme, 3rd Judge, Provincial Court, Southern Division, 10 Feb. 1818, P/277/9, MRP, pp. 283-84.

4 Report of Graeme, n.d., P/277/55, MRP, 16 July 1822, para 1186; W. Logan, 'Report on Malabar Land Tenures', loc. cit., Vol. I, p. xvii.

the Court of Directors had cautioned the authorities in the district against such investigations which "might perhaps excite jealousies"<sup>1</sup> and lead to embarrassing disturbances at a time when, with the Pychy Rajah still in rebellion, the foundations of British power were still insecure. It is not impossible that, as Logan argued, the enquiry of 1823-43 into the terms on which lands were rented itself confronted the various interests in the Malabar countryside for the first time with the British régime's innovations in landlord rights which only then began to be enforced in earnest.<sup>2</sup> However it seems more likely that the chief reasons for the burgeoning of jenmi power in this period lie elsewhere.

A visit to Malabar in 1817 had convinced Sir Thomas Munro, then Commissioner for the revision of establishments, of the necessity for creating in the district a system of servants of the Government at village level which would be of political advantage to the Company. As Munro put it:

"Our security requires that we should have a body of Head men of Villages interested in supporting Our Dominion."<sup>3</sup>

From the best-informed inhabitants of the district Munro gathered that the ancient usage of Malabar had indeed provided for a system of headmen of 'desams' ('villages') the personnel of which was supplied by the chief land-owners or jenmis.<sup>4</sup>

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1 Court of Directors to Govt. of Madras, 24 Aug. 1804, Revenue Letters to Madras, L/E/3/670, pp. 159-60.

2 'Report on Malabar Land Tenures', loc. cit., Vol. II, pp. 46-47.

3 Thomas Munro, 1st Commissioner to Chief Sec., n.d., P/277/7, MRP 30 Sept. 1817, p. 2587.

4 Ibid., pp. 2563 and 2567.

Munro, believing that the Company's rule held out "nothing to encourage any class beyond the lower ones" which, he was convinced, would in any case, "always follow the impulse given by their superiors,"<sup>1</sup> was in favour of encouraging the latter by the resurrection of the old village system in modified form.<sup>2</sup> This recommendation was embodied in the final report in 1822 of H.S. Graeme<sup>3</sup> whose system of amsom ('parish') headmen or adhigaris, selected largely from the ancient class of incumbents, the large land-owners, lasted throughout the outbreak period of 1836-1919 and beyond.<sup>4</sup> The implementation of Graeme's proposals in the years immediately after 1822 placed the headship of 'villages' for the first time in British Malabar in the hands of Government appointees entrusted with extensive powers of revenue collection, policing and magistracy.<sup>5</sup> It was the exercise of these powers which during the period 1836-1919 attracted both

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- 1 The same estimate of the tractability of the lower orders had been recorded as early as 1803 by R. Rickards, then Malabar Collector (to Lord Clive, Governor-in-Council, 27 Mar. 1803, P/275/63, MRP 15 Apr. 1803, p. 1366).
- 2 Munro to Chief Sec., n.d., loc. cit., pp. 2587 and 2599. See also H.S. Graeme, Malabar Commissioner to J. Vaughan, Collector, Malabar, 13 May 1819, P/293/22, MBRP 3 June 1819, p. 7055.
- 3 See P/277/55-59, MRP 16 July 1822.
- 4 Graeme to Vaughan, 20 May 1823, P/277/68, MRP 17 June 1823, p. 1752; Graeme to Chief Sec., 21 Dec. 1822, P/277/65, MRP 24 Jan. 1823, p. 371.
- 5 Graeme to Chief Sec., 1 Aug. 1820, P/277/38, MRP 29 Aug. 1820, pp. 3280-81. The proposal to assign to adhigaris these "very large powers" and the possibility of their abuse were apparently matters of some anxiety to the Court of Directors, Court to Govt. of Madras, 18 May 1825, E/4/931, Revenue Despatches, pp. 623-24.

the occasional concern of British Collectors<sup>1</sup> and the less casual hostility of outbreak participants<sup>2</sup>. Indeed, within a few years of the introduction of the new village system a protest against its operation was heard from the heart of the 'fanatic zone'. In 1828 a petition from inhabitants of Pandalur, claiming to speak for the feelings of "the people of all parts of the Country" complained of the gross misuse by the new village headmen of their new powers. In language which was to be echoed by intending shahid in the outbreak period the petitioners observed of those placed in authority over them:

"These people are called our protectors but they have become our spoilers ..... to these people however authority is given and if your Petitioners complain ... they will not be able to stand against the influence of the Money and the power of their adversaries, and these people and the Police Executioners supported by false witnesses and false complaints, will punish your petitioners with stripes and fetters."<sup>3</sup>

The possibility of the new village system becoming an instrument of oppression of the rural population in the hands of the new headmen had in 1817 been brought in the strongest terms to the notice of Munro by some of the "best informed Nairs" who had "long been Revenue Servants". At that time, however, Munro was confident that there was no cause for concern since the

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1 Conolly to Sec., Judicial, 2 Jan. 1844, P/326/35, MJP No. 69, 27 Jan. 1844, p. 268. See also W. Francis, Acting Collector, Malabar to Chief Sec., 30 July 1908, P/9561, MJP No. 2214, 12 Oct. 1914, pp. 15-16.

2 See above p. 31.

3 'The Petition of the Mussalmans, Nayars, Tiyars, and other people inhabiting the village of Pandalur in the Villagery and District of Manjery, Talook of Yernaud in Malayalam', to Governor of Madras, n.d., P/296/61, MBRP 28 July 1828, pp. 7067-69. There appears to be no extant record of how, if at all, this petition was finally dealt with by the authorities.

jenmis who would be called on to fill the post of headman were, he considered, "in general much reduced in their circumstances, many of them [being] very poor."<sup>1</sup> In fact the real significance of the introduction of Graeme's village system into Malabar in the 1820s is that it came as a useful aid in a period when the jenmi was in the process of rebuilding his fortunes which, since the earliest period of British rule had been in a most parlous state.

Before 1792 Malabar had been subject to invasion and control by the Muslim rulers of Mysore, and large numbers of the Hindu jenmis had fled. Before doing so, they had had to make what bargains they could with their Moplah kanamdars who thereby acquired large kanam ('mortgage') claims on the land.<sup>2</sup> On their return in the wake of the British in 1792, the jenmis, whether they were at first fully conscious or not of the rights of absolute landlord they had on paper acquired, were in practice so heavily in debt to the kanamdars that they in any case lacked the means necessary to enforce those rights. Moreover it would appear that in the early part of the 19th century the likelihood of jenmis being able to redeem their 'mortgages' was reduced by the heavy demand of the land tax<sup>3</sup> which was deductible

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1 Munro to Chief Sec., n.d., P/277/7, MRP 30 Sept. 1817, pp. 2591-92.

2 See below p. 180.

3 Comment of H.S. Graeme, Commissioner, Malabar, in 'Mr. Baber's and Mr. Wilson's remarks on Mr. Graeme's proposed Regulation, with Mr. Graeme's replies', n.d., enclosure in Graeme to Board of Revenue, 14 Jan. 1822, P/294/13, MBRP 14 Feb. 1822, p. 1365; report of Graeme, n.d., P/277/56, MRP 16 July 1822, paras 1155 and 1359.

from the jenmi's share of the produce.<sup>1</sup> Certainly the earliest decades of the century form a period when a universal estimation of the prostration of the jenmi<sup>2</sup> coincided with evidence of the heavy pressure of a burdensome land revenue assessment.<sup>3</sup> Both Graeme and Munro were anxious that the demand levied by Government on the annual agricultural out-turn in Malabar should not be such as to leave the jenmi without substance. As Munro put it:

"In order ... to preserve so useful a class of men as the landlords, it is necessary to leave them a rent, and to revise our assessment for this purpose and lower it where too high."<sup>4</sup>

To achieve this end Graeme's proposal for a general reduction in the land revenue demand in Malabar was sanctioned. Though this reduction was never effected<sup>5</sup> the real burden of the assessment was in practice mitigated by a rise in the price of

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1 Proceedings of Board of Revenue, 16 Jan. 1815, P/291/31, MBRP p. 920; Thomas Warden, Malabar Collector to Board, 16 June 1813, P/290/71, MBRP 1 July 1813, p. 6409; R. Rickards, Principal Collector, Malabar to Lord Clive, Governor-in-Council, 27 Mar. 1803, P/275/63, MRP 15 Apr. 1803, p. 1366.

2 See below p. 180.

3 See for example T. Warden, Collector Malabar, to Board of Revenue, 16 June 1813, P/290/71, MBRP 1 July 1813, p. 6409; proceedings of Board of Revenue, 16 Jan. 1815, P/291/31, MBRP, p. 888; Warden to Board, 29 Jan. 1817, Revenue Collection Report for fasli (harvest year) 1225 (1815-16), P/292/16, MBRP 10 Feb. 1817, p. 1825; J. Vaughan, Malabar Collector to Board, 13 Feb. 1818, P/292/59, MBRP 23 Feb. 1818, p. 2830; report of H.S. Graeme, Malabar Commissioner, n.d., P/277/56, MRP 16 July 1822, para 1150; T.H. Baber, Evidence given before the House of Lords, March and April 1830 . . ., p. 34. T.H. Baber's experience of Malabar was continuous from 1798 to 1824, and then 1827-28, ibid., p. 5.

4 Minute of President [Munro], P/277/60, MRP 16 July 1822, p. 1872.

5 C.A. Innes, Malabar Gazetteer, Vol. I, pp. 333-36.

grain in Malabar which began during the time of Graeme's Commission in Malabar (1818-22).

For a number of years upto the time of Graeme's Commission the weight of the land revenue burden was intensified by low prices for agricultural produce,<sup>1</sup> since the percentage the assessment bore to the patom ('rent') was inversely proportional to selling prices.<sup>2</sup> As Special Commissioner William Logan accepted in 1881-82, for a number of years after 1805-06, when the assessment which with no fundamental alteration persisted until the end of the century was imposed, the revenue burden in the context of contemporary prices was "oppressive".<sup>3</sup> Price statistics for Malabar for the first half of the 19th century are by no means plentiful. However the data which are available indicate that a dramatic rise in grain prices at the close of the second decade of the century inaugurated a period of much higher prices than those prevailing in the previous ten years. From 1819 to 1837 Malabar grain prices seem to have been at a general level some 50 per cent higher than that of 1809-18.<sup>4</sup>

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1 T. Warden to Board of Revenue, 16 June 1813, loc. cit., p. 6409; Warden to Board, 29 Jan. 1817, loc. cit., p. 1825; report of Graeme, n.d., loc. cit., paras. 1174, 1295 and 1416-18; examination of 4 menons (village accountants) of Calicut taluk, 21 Jan. 1820, appendix AA, ibid. P/277/59, question and answer No. 37; T.H. Baber loc. cit., p. 34; examination of Malcolm Lewin, a Govt. servant in Malabar from 1819 to 1825, 10 May 1832, 'East India Company's Affairs, III, Revenue (Vol. IV)', Parliamentary Papers, Vol. XI, Paper 735III, 1831-32, p. 240. .

2 Examination of the Cherikkal Rajah, 2 Feb. 1820, appendix D, report of Graeme, loc. cit., P/277/58, question and answer No. 17. See also W. Logan, 'Report on Malabar Land Tenures', loc. cit., Vol. I, p. lxvii.

3 W. Logan, 'Report on Malabar Land Tenures', loc. cit., pp. lxxviii and lxxxix.

4 See graph p.99.

Graph to show price movement of  
paddy (2nd sort) in Malabar 1809-37  
 (see tables p.100 )

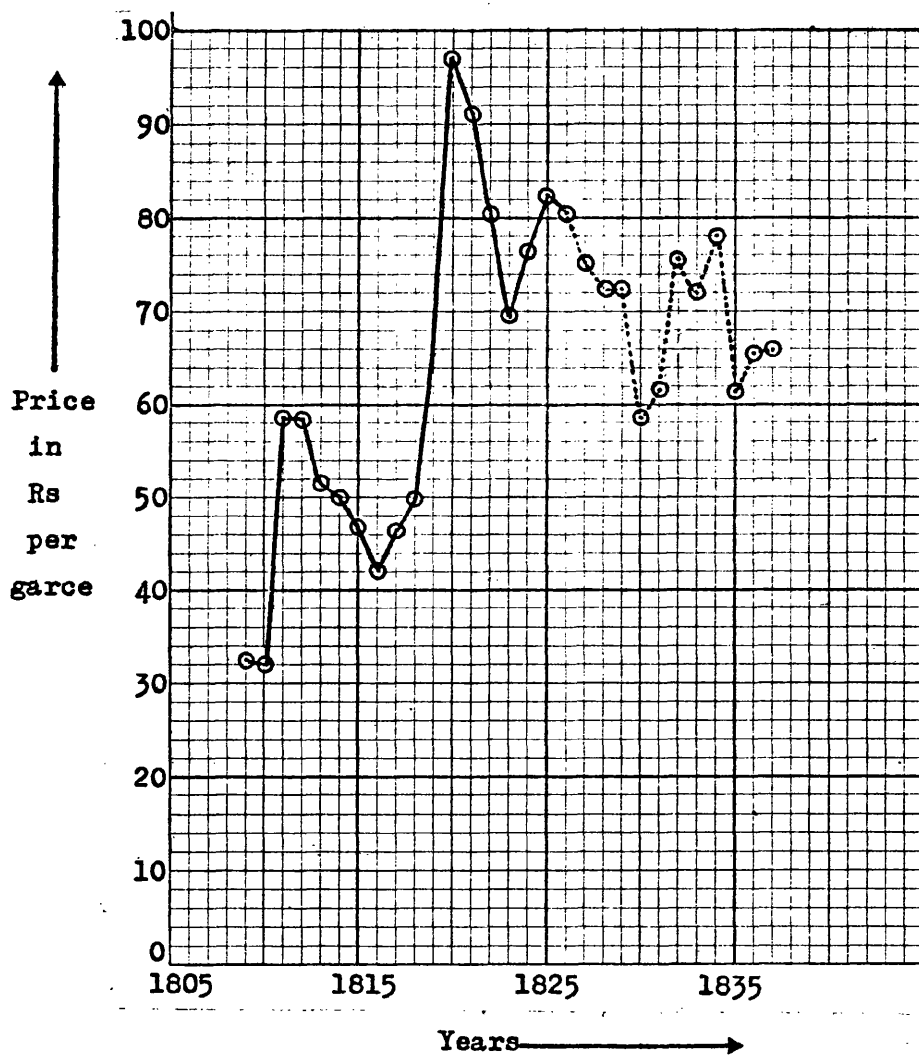




TABLE 1

Price of 2nd sort paddy in Malabar, R-A-P per garce,  
April figures (plotted on graph p. 99)

1809	32-8-3	1818	49-7-10
1810	32-0-8	1819	65-7-10
1811	58-6-9	1820	97-2-2
1812	58-3-9	1821	91-3-4
1813	51-14-1	1822	80-10-4
1814	50-1-10	1823	69-1-1
1815	47-1-2	1824	76-8-6
1816	42-1-2	1825	82-9-6
1817	46-3-10	1826	80-7-4

Source: MBRP, Vol. 241, M.R.O.

TABLE 2

Table to show the origin of 1826-37 section of graph p. 99

<u>Year</u>	<u>Rs per moora</u> <sup>1</sup>	<u>Annual change</u> <u>in price (Rs)</u>	<u>Percentage</u> <u>change</u>	<u>Price of 2nd sort</u> <u>paddy Rs per</u> <u>garce (April)</u> <sup>2</sup>
1826-27	1.396	-0.089	-6.3	80.458
1827-28	1.307	-0.053	-4.06	75.388
1828-29	1.254	-0.001	0	72.328
1829-30	1.253	-0.235	-18.75	72.328
1830-31	1.018	+0.052	+ 5.11	58.768
1831-32	1.070	+0.243	+22.7	61.768
1832-33	1.313	-0.066	- 5.02	75.808
1833-34	1.247	+0.105	+8.42	72.003
1834-35	1.352	-0.290	-21.42	78.073
1835-36	1.062	+0.072	+6.78	61.323
1836-37	1.134	+0.008	+0.705	65.483
1837-38	1.142			65.945

1 Average price of grain (rice and paddy) exported by sea and land from Malabar, statement E in F. Clementson, Principal Collector, Malabar to Board of Revenue, 31 Mar. 1838, MBRP 6 Mar. 1843, Vol. 1850, p. 3730, M.R.O.

2 Table I gives price for 1826-27 which provides basis for prices in subsequent years. Plotted on graph p.99.

Though there seems to be a complete absence of price sequences for the period 1838-44 there is no doubt that the grain price level of the preceding years was maintained.<sup>1</sup> A period of declining prices in 1845-51 was succeeded by very rapid inflation which by the late 1850s had taken grain prices to levels from which they never again descended to those of the first half of the 19th century.<sup>2</sup>

It seems likely that the rise in the price of grain which set in during the period after 1818 was of great importance in the re-emergence of jenmi power in the Malabar countryside. Only when prices began to rise above the low levels prevailing in 1809-18 and the revenue burden was in consequence reduced in real terms,<sup>3</sup> could the jenmi begin to pay off his debts to the kanamdar who only then would begin to appreciate that British rule meant a resurgence of jenmi power. Certainly at least as

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1 See for example W.E. Underwood, Acting Principal Collector, Malabar to Board of Revenue, 16 Oct. 1839, P/302/16, MBRP 28 Nov. 1839, p. 17813; H.V. Conolly, Acting Principal Collector, Malabar to Board of Revenue, 10 Oct. 1840, P/303/6, MBRP 1 Apr. 1841, p. 4561; Conolly to Board, 10 Nov. 1841, P/303/30, MBRP 6 Dec. 1841, p. 18109; Conolly to Board, 31 Oct. 1842, P/304/25, MBRP 16 Jan. 1843, p. 1292; Conolly to Board, 8 Nov. 1843, P/304/56, MBRP 7 Dec. 1843, p. 19028; Conolly to Board, 30 Sept. 1845, P/306/11, MBRP 27 Oct. 1845, p. 14060. These Jamabandi (Revenue Settlement) reports for the period 1838-39 to 1844-45 give no specific price statistics but like all Malabar Jamabandi reports upto this period merely indicate the price movement compared with the previous year.

2 See graph p. 102.

3 Certainly by 1832 it would seem that the land revenue in Malabar began to be collected with facility, F. Clementson, Principal Collector to Govt. of Madras, 31 Mar. 1838, MBRP 6 Mar. 1843, Vol. 1850, p. 3699, MRO. See also J. Sullivan, President, Board of Revenue to Chief Sec., 29 Jan. 1841, ibid., Vol. 1849, p. 3629.

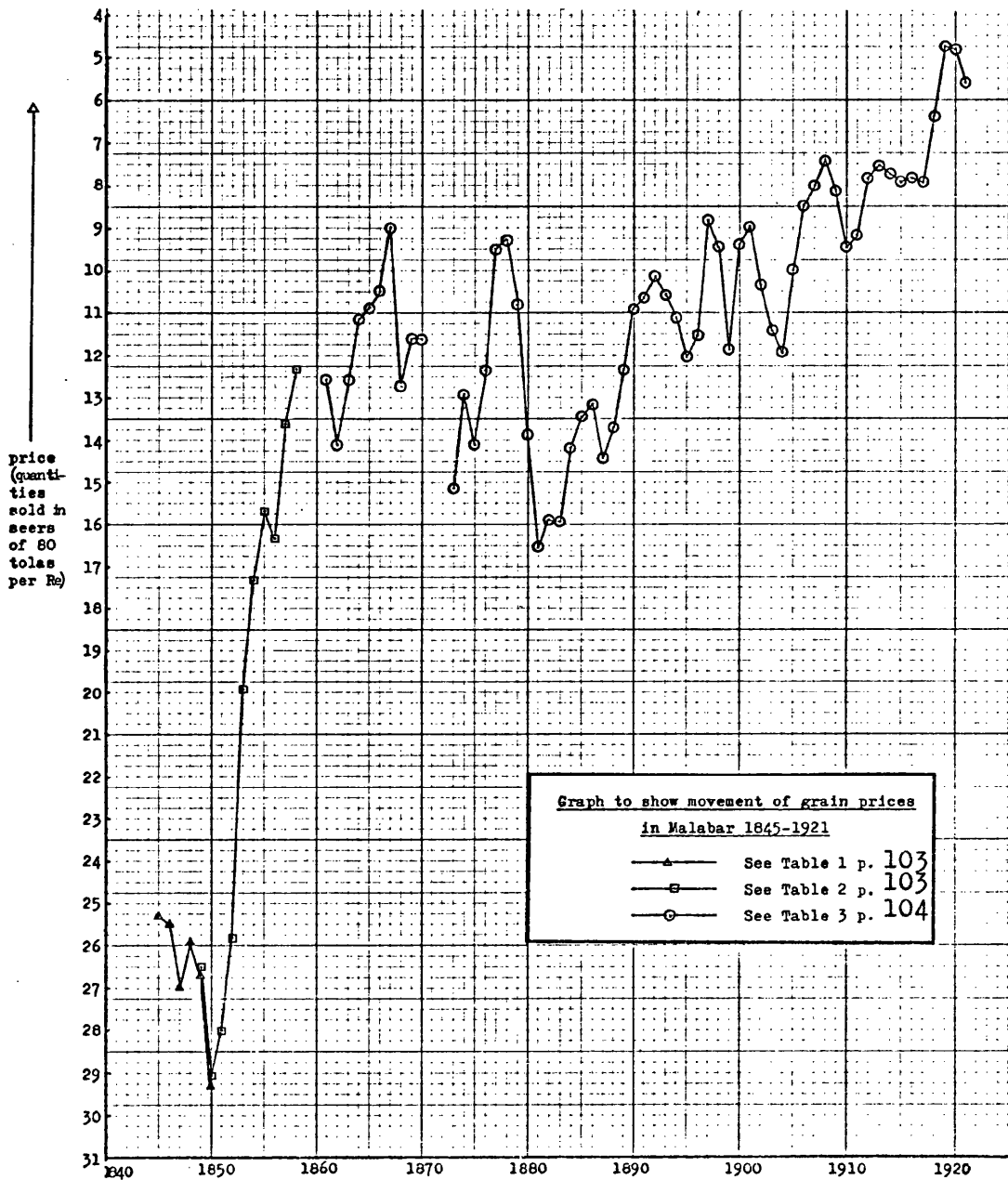


TABLE 1

Average market price of 'grain' in Malabar faslis 1255 to 1260  
(1845-46 to 1850-51)

<u>Year</u>	<u>Price, Rs per garce</u>	<u>Quantities sold, seers per Re*</u>
1845-46	178	25.3
1846-47	177	25.5
1847-48	167	27.0
1848-49	174	25.9
1849-50	169	26.7
1850-51	154	29.3

\* plotted on graph p. 102.

Source: H.V. Conolly, Malabar Collector to Board of Revenue,  
 22 Nov. 1851, P/310/13, MBRP, 15 Jan. 1852, p. 997.

Conversion of Rs/garce(x) to seers/Re(y):  $\frac{4510}{x} = y$

TABLE 2

Price of grain in Malabar faslis 1259 to 1268  
(1849-50 to 1858-59)

<u>Year</u>	<u>Price 2nd sort paddy (Rs/garce)</u>	<u>Price 2nd sort rice</u>	<u>Quantities sold, 2nd sort rice (seers/Re)*</u>
1849-50	79	170	26.5
1850-51	71	155	29.1
1851-52	73	161	28.0
1852-53	75	175	25.8
1853-54	99	226	19.9
1854-55	114	261	17.3
1855-56	131	288	15.7
1856-57	120	277	16.3
1857-58	140	332	13.6
1858-59	164	367	12.3

Source: Statement A, J.D. Sim, Secretary, Board of Revenue to  
 President of the Military Finance Commission, 26 Dec. 1859,  
 P/314/53, MBRP, 26 Dec. 1859, pp. 550-51.

\*Plotted on graph p. 102.

TABLE 3

Price of rice (common) in Malabar, 1861-1921  
(plotted on graph p. 102)

<u>Year</u>	<u>Quantities sold, seers of 80 tolas per Re</u>	<u>Year</u>	<u>Quantities sold, seers of 80 tolas per Re</u>
1861	12.54	1892	10.16
1862	14.14	1893	10.58
1863	12.54	1894	11.13
1864	11.14	1895	12.01
1865	10.93	1896	11.52
1866	10.50	1897	8.79
1867	9.00	1898	9.49
1868	12.75	1899	11.82
1869	11.57	1900	9.38
1870	11.57	1901	8.99
1871	-	1902	10.32
1872	-	1903	11.44
1873	15.10	1904	11.94
1874	12.88	1905	10.00
1875	14.09	1906	8.50
1876	12.34	1907	8.02
1877	9.49	1908	7.41
1878	9.29	1909	8.18
1879	10.78	1910	9.45
1880	13.88	1911	9.22
1881	16.56	1912	7.85
1882	15.83	1913	7.52
1883	15.87	1914	7.75
1884	14.17	1915	7.90
1885	13.45	1916	7.85
1886	13.16	1917	7.94
1887	14.43	1918	6.37
1888	13.70	1919	4.75
1889	12.35	1920	4.80
1890	10.86	1921	5.64
1891	10.66		

Sources: Government of India, Prices and Wages in India,  
11th, 19th and 37th issues.

early as 1834-35 the Moplah kanamdar was being faced with eviction suits brought against him in the local courts by the Hindu jenmi.<sup>1</sup>

The actual origin of the Moplah outbreak is a matter of conjecture, but the phenomenon certainly seems to have appeared at a time when the kanamdars found it useful, it undoubtedly continued with the support of such men, and<sup>2</sup> it would seem to have disappeared temporarily in 1898 when it no longer served the interests of this group.

Even so, it cannot be said that the outbreak was 'nothing but' a weapon of the substantial kanamdar, and that the men (of whatever social and economic status) who actually devoted themselves to death were mere tools. The outbreak was far too popular with the great mass of Ernad Moplals, and especially the poorest, for this to be true. As District Magistrate Conolly said of the doctrine that the murderer of an evicting jenmi would be entitled to Paradise, such notions were "far easier sown than rooted out amongst a wild people and that exhortation from superiors, other than spiritual, are of little avail against a popular faith".<sup>3</sup>

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1 W. Logan, 'Report on Malabar Land Tenures', loc. cit., Vol. II, pp. 46-47. For examples of such suits see decree of Court of Adawlut in Malabar Zillah, Original Suit No. 533 of 1834, Mooftee's Court, Appeal Suit No. 121 of 1835, Judge's Court; decree of Court of Adawlut in Malabar Zillah, Original Suit No. 172 of 1834, Mooftee's Court, Appeal Suit No. 147 of 1834, Judge's Court and decree of Court of Adawlut in Malabar Zillah, Original Suit No. 137 of 1833, KDCA.

2 See below p. 142.

3 H.V. Conolly to Sec., Judicial, 29 Nov. 1851, Moplah Outrages Correspondence, Vol. I, p. 227. See also Conolly to Chief Sec., 13 Jan. 1842, P/326/15, MJP No. 37, 8 Feb. 1842, p. 364. That the Moplah's 'spiritual superiors' also lacked the degree of control Conolly assumed is suggested in the discussion above, p. 75.

Nor is this surprising when the material gains to be derived from 'fanaticism' were so widespread. Apart from the plunder of Hindu mansions (often left abandoned in the prevailing panic engendered by an outbreak) by large numbers of Moplah neighbours<sup>1</sup> and the mass destruction of jenmis' deeds and moneylenders' accounts,<sup>2</sup> "the tendency of an outbreak [was] to benefit the Moplahs as a class" since, as one British official pointed out, it "keeps their name up; deters many landlords from enforcing their legal rights; and supplies temporary employment on easy terms to many hundreds of Moplah 'guards'".<sup>3</sup> (When 'fanatics' were on the rampage, many Moplahs quartered themselves as 'guards' on the terrified inmates of jenmi mansions demanding and receiving such 'high feeding' and 'presents' that their hosts were heartily glad to see their backs.<sup>4</sup>) When terrorism

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1 See for example Conolly to Sec., Judicial, 30 Sept. 1851, P/327/41, MJP No. 700, 20 Nov. 1851, p. 3706; W. Robinson, Acting Joint Magistrate, Malabar, to H.V. Conolly, Malabar Magistrate, 16 Jan. 1852, P/327/44, MJP No. 59, Jan. 1852, p. 318; Conolly to Sec., Judicial, 28 Jan. 1852, ibid., MJP No. 123, 17 Feb. 1852, p. 610; H. Bradley, Acting Malabar Magistrate to Chief Sec., 16 May 1894, P/4621, MJP Nos. 2186-92, 8 Sept. 1894, p. 99; Bradley to Chief Sec., 6 June 1894, ibid., p. 118.

2 See petition of Kolathur Ukkandunni Variyar, n.d., P/1093, MJP No. 522, 21 Mar. 1876, p. 397; Conolly to Sec., Judicial, 30 Aug. 1851, P/327/39, MJP No. 558, 8 Sept. 1851, p. 2817; Conolly to Sec., Revenue and Judicial, n.d., P/327/21, MJP, 11 Sept. 1849, pp. 3906-07.

3 Report of H.M. Winterbotham, 5 May 1896, loc. cit., p. 66.

4 Ibid., p. 53. Moplahs even fostered rumours of impending outbreaks with the purpose of securing employment as 'guards', W. Robinson, Head Asst. Magistrate to Conolly, 18 Oct. 1849, P/327/22, MJP No. 794, 1 Dec. 1849, p. 4870. For other methods of turning the terror of the propertied to Moplah advantage by extortion see F. Fawcett, Supt. of Police, South Malabar, report of 5 June 1896, L/PJ/6/433, 2060/96, MJP No. 1567, 30 Sept. 1896, p. 113.

is effected in the name of a community all its members stand to gain (or, of course, lose) from the consequences. As W.

Logan remarked in 1885:

"the exaltation of the Mappilla religion carries with it the exaltation of the Mappilla class, and the exaltation of the Mappilla class secures very material advantages for that class in dealing with their landlords. A Hindu landlord has NO FEAR when setting the courts to work to oust, or raise the rent of a Hindu tenant; but he thinks twice - nay, three times and more - before using the advantages of his position in dealing with his Mappilla tenants. The Hindu cultivators are rapidly retrograding, the Mappillas are rapidly advancing under such circumstances. If the Mappillas gave up committing outrages, they would speedily be in respect of power over their Hindu landlords on the same footing as Hindus. Hence as a class they one and all rejoice when an outrage occurs."<sup>1</sup>

The feeling that the constant threat of Ernad Moplahs breaking out engendered in the Hindu that an outbreak might be sparked off by any cause however slight<sup>2</sup> may be presumed to have given pause to any non-Muslim in a position to exercise power over the Moplah. It was the impression of H.V. Conolly in 1849 that this "fear of the Hindoo in these Moplah Talooks [the 'fanatic zone'] acts as a great check against much abuse and that as a general rule he does not press for his rights with the same energy here as he would in a more quiet part of the Country."<sup>3</sup>

As the great jenmis of the south Malabar interior at this time

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1 W. Logan, Malabar Collector, to Chief Sec., 10 June 1885, P/2635, MJP No. 1727, 1 July 1885, p. 2. The 'rapid advance' Logan claimed for the Moplah tenant would appear to have been something of an exaggeration.

2 Conolly to Sec., Judicial, 4 Nov. 1843, P/326/35, MJP No. 69, 27 Jan. 1844, pp. 216-17.

3 Remarks of Conolly on 'Writing of Syed Assan, Manjery Athan and all the others who've taken possession of Manjeri Temple', appendix 2, Conolly to Sec., Judicial, 12 Oct. 1849, P/327/22, MJP No. 794, 1 Dec. 1849, p. 4787.



frequently told one British official "' we have abandoned rights and property, and are obliged to act in defence of our lives'".<sup>1</sup> There seems little doubt that the Moplah tenant was liable to be treated more leniently than a Hindu cultivator by jenmis in the zone of fanatical Moplah outbursts.<sup>2</sup>

Nor can it be argued that, because the actual cultivating tenant (usually a verumpattomdar, a simple tenant having no mortgage claim on the land) often held the jenmi's land via a sub-leasing kanam tenant, it was only the kanamdar intermediary who stood to gain from the apprehension of the possible consequences of evicting a Moplah the terrorisation of the jenmi produced. In very many instances the actual cultivator in the 'fanatic zone' held direct from the jenmi without intermediaries.<sup>3</sup>

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1 W. Robinson, Head Asst. Magistrate to Conolly, 18 Oct. 1849, P/327/22, MJP No. 794, 1 Dec. 1849, p. 4947.

2 J. Hewetson, Acting District Magistrate, Malabar to Chief Sec., 2 May 1896, L/PJ/6/433, 2060/96, MJP No. 1567, 30 Sept. 1896, p. 10; B. Kanaran Nayar, District Munsif, Bettatpudiyangadi to W. Logan, Malabar Collector, 10 June 1885, Govt. of Madras, Malabar Land Tenures, p. 224; report of T.L. Strange, 25 Sept. 1852, loc. cit., p. 4585.

3 T. Warden, Malabar Collector to Board of Revenue, Sept. 1815, P/291/53, MBRP 25 Sept. 1815, p. 11060; W.G. Underwood, Acting Head Asst. Collector to W. Logan, Collector and Agent to Court of Wards, Malabar, 3 July 1878, P/1248, MBRP No. 2733, 8 Oct. 1878, p. 8891; resolution No. 1039, P/2143, MCWP No. 1039, 12 Apr. 1883, p. 3; C. Sankaran Nair, 'Note on Minute of Sir Charles Turner', n.d., enclosure No. 2 to appendix F(d), Govt. of Madras, Malabar Land Tenures Committee Report, p. 47; A.F. Pinhey, Malabar Collector to Sec., Court of Wards, 23 Oct. 1902, P/6683, MCWP No. 9, 13 Jan. 1903; administration report of Zamorin's Estate, for fasli 1331 (1921-22), P/11367, MCWP No. 5, 31 Jan. 1923, p. 25; interview, Manjeri, 28 Dec. 1974 with Manjeri Karnopad whose family in 1921 were jenmis with both kanamdars and verumpattomdars directly under them.

Moreover the fact that when a jenmi evicted his tenant the sub-lessees under the latter were also liable to be turned out ensured that even where the classic pattern of Malayali agrarian sub-leasing, jenmi-kanamdar-verumpattomdar, obtained, the last link in the chain was by no means immune from the exercise of power by the first.<sup>1</sup> Further, even the Moplah field labourer would not fail regularly to be brought into direct contact with the powerful jenmi, though the latter normally did not cultivate except through tenants.<sup>2</sup> Apart from the very high incidence of coolie work and the leasing-in of land in the same family,<sup>3</sup> very many labourers tended to find themselves regular supplicants at the portals of the big jenmi for loans of grain

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1 Petition 222, Register of Petitions Received, Govt. of Madras Malabar Special Commission, 1881-82, Vol. III, p. 39; W. Logan 'Report on Malabar Land Tenures', ibid., Vol. I, p. lxii.

2 'Answers given by certain intelligent Natives', n.d. [beginning of 19th century], section 10, 'Account of Malabar', p. 592, Walker Papers, 184c9; B. Hobhouse, 'Report on the disturbed State of the province of Malabar', 4 Apr. 1804, Mss Eur E261, p. 150; T. Warden, Malabar Collector to Board of Revenue, 12 Nov. 1814, P/291/23, MBRP 21 Nov. 1814, p. 13574; 'Examination of the Narwallies, Daishwalies and other principal inhabitants of Yernaud Talook', 30 Apr. 1819, enclosure Z, answer 6, report of H.S. Graeme, loc. cit., P/277/58; C. Kunhi Kannan, Asst. to Special Commissioner, 'Note on the Agriculture and Horticulture of Malabar', Govt. of Madras, Malabar Special Commission, 1881-82, Vol. II, p. 387; minute of Justice Sundara Aiyar, enclosure in Register, High Court to Sec., Revenue, 31 Oct. 1911, P/9579, MRP No. 9 (Conf.), 2 Jan. 1914, p. 5.

3 Appendix C, report of W. Robinson, 18 Oct. 1849, loc. cit., pp. 4995, 4999 and 5007; J.A. Thorne Collector, Zamorin's Estate to Sec., Commissioner of Court of Wards, n.d., P/10455, MRP No. 3121, 4 Sept. 1918, p. 12; W. Logan 'Report on Malabar Land Tenures', loc. cit., Vol. 1, p. lxxvi. Logan (ibid.), spoke of "the intimate relations which exist between cultivators and laborers, particularly in the grain-producing taluks".

to keep hunger at bay. The Moplah coolie who perpetrated the August 1885 outbreak not only worked as a labourer for its victim but also periodically tried to borrow paddy from him.<sup>1</sup> Moreover, the labourer and the jenmi land-monopolist impinged through the need of the former to acquire a house-site, with the compound which was customarily attached in Malabar.<sup>2</sup> Significantly the shahid spokesman who in August 1851 held forth so bitterly on the high-caste monopoly of land<sup>3</sup> was no substantial kanamdar intermediary but a coolie who, besides being a recipient of food loans from a local jenmi moneylender, had been in conflict over the use of his garden plot with the agent of the jenmi to which it belonged.<sup>4</sup>

It might also be said that the directing towards the substantial Moplah in particular of the policy under the Moplah Acts of fining amsoms concerned in outbreaks,<sup>5</sup> was not calculated to make the richer kanamdar in the period after 1854, more enthusiastic about the commission of outbreaks than his more indigent neighbours. In the latter part of the outbreak period

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1 Logan to Acting Chief Sec., 22 Nov. 1885, P/2625, MJP No. 3499, 30 Dec. 1885, p. 77; statement of Parot Unni Mammad [the captured 'fanatic'], 14 Aug. 1885, ibid., p. 80.

2 A.F. Pinhey, Malabar Collector to Sec., Commissioner of Revenue Settlement, 25 Oct. 1902, P/6458, MBRP (RS, LR & A) No. 273, 18 Dec. 1902, p. 1.

3 See above p. 49.

4 C. Collett to Conolly, 20 Sept. 1851, P/327/41, MJP No. 700, 20 Nov. 1851, pp. 3727-28. Both the moneylender and the agent fell victim to this outbreak. The 'shahid's' father was a tenant cultivating  $1\frac{1}{4}$  acres, but the son, who was 25 years old and married, lived separately (ibid.).

5 See above p. 36.

the more prosperous Moplahs who sometimes were the means of thwarting outbreak plots by passing information in secret to the authorities<sup>1</sup> must often have included the more substantial kanamdar. Even so the big kanamdar, especially if desperate and reduced to hopeless debt, might still (and in fact certainly did<sup>2</sup>) often calculate that the risk of suffering the consequences of the implementation of the Moplah Acts were outweighed by the gains to be registered by the terrorisation of the jenmi.

Moreover, although Government, through the Moplah Acts, attempted to persuade the Ernad Moplah he must lose as a consequence of outbreaks, there is abundant evidence that his inflammability won him concessions from the administration. Under the régime of District Magistrate Conolly in Malabar in the 1850s the local court in Ernad was under specific instructions that in the event of the issue of an order for the eviction of a tenant who was a Moplah the matter should be brought to the notice of the authorities for an attempt to compromise the situation before final orders were passed.<sup>3</sup> The Court of Wards Manager of the Guruvayur Devaswom estate in 1915-16 withdrew one set of eviction suits on the grounds that a situation "bound to result in wholesale eviction of Ernad Mappilas, could not be

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1 See below p. 141.

2 See above p. 91.

3 Memorandum of H.V. Conolly (to T.L. Strange), 30 Mar. 1852, appendix A in Conolly to Board of Revenue, 30 Sept. 1853, P/311/29, MBRP 20 Mar. 1854, p. 4071. How the efforts of the local authorities to compromise such affairs might, when the possibility of 'fanatical' outbreaks was involved, be of advantage to the Moplah tenant interest is revealed in one case in which H.V. Conolly in 1854-55 thwarted one big Walluvanad jenmi. For details see memorial of Shoola Panny, the Moothor Variar, n.d., P/282/46, MRP 15 Jan. 1885, pp. 235-39 and Conolly to Sec., Revenue, 5 Feb. 1855, P/328/1, MJP No. 161, 2 Mar. 1855, p. 880.

allowed to culminate."<sup>1</sup> The fact that, apart from the special case of the planter taluk of Wynad, Ernad was the only major Malabar taluk for which the District Board budget showed an excess of expenditure over receipts was clearly because, as the Collector insisted in 1902, there should be no stinting of funds in the 'fanatic zone'.<sup>2</sup>

Malabar District Board Budget 1901-02<sup>3</sup>

<u>Taluks</u>	<u>Receipts (Rs)</u>	<u>Expenditure (Rs)</u>	<u>Net Balance (Rs)</u>
Chirakkal	48,915	43,100	+5,815
Kottayam	37,718	26,832	+10,886
Kurumbranad	45,535	32,503	+13,032
Calicut	40,820	36,446	+4,372
Ernad	53,994	63,846	-9,852
Walluvanad	56,568	46,232	+10,336
Ponnani	72,293	55,318	+16,975
Palghat	92,858	74,397	+18,461
Wynad	24,864	71,957	-47,093
Cochin	259	287	-28

Further, although the administration was careful to refrain from "issuing formal orders on the subject" since it was "not advisable for the public to know that any steps are taken in the

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1 Administration Report of J.A. Thorne for fasli 1325 (1915-16) 18 Oct. 1916, P/100/40, MCWP No. 55, 9 Dec. 1916, p. 10.

2 Conf. report of A.F. Pinhey, 20 May 1902, P/6457, MBRP (RS, LR & A) No. 121, 3 July 1902, pp. 5-6.

3 Ibid.

special favour of these ['fanatic zone'] Moplahs", it is a fact that in the late 19th century "religious issues" involving Moplahs in the taluku liable to outbreaks were taken out of the hands of the very largely high-caste Hindu officials who would normally be responsible for trying them and entrusted to the (European) Special Assistant Magistrate in charge of Ernad and Walluvanad.<sup>1</sup> The policy which was a mark of the Magistracy in Malabar of H.V. Conolly from 1840 to 1855 of increasing the number of Moplah local government servants in south interior Malabar<sup>2</sup> owed its vigour to the expectation that outbreaks would thereby be counteracted.<sup>3</sup>

With so many and often widespread benefits to be gained it did not need leaders and instigators from the ranks of the substantial kanamdars before a 'fanatical' disturbance could occur. Of the June 1884 Kizhumuri disturbance, here excluded as an outbreak only because the participants failed to go through with their intention to 'die fighting', District Magistrate Logan noted:

"the outrage does not seem to have been planned for the benefit of any particular Mappilla. It was seemingly planned by poor people and carried out by poor people."<sup>4</sup>

In the outbreak of August 1852 three young "day labourers" tried to deal with the Nair jenmi who had moved the father of

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1 F.C. Parsons, Acting Malabar Collector to Chief Sec., 13 June 1898, MJP No. 996 (Conf.), 28 June 1898, MRO.

2 See above p. 26.

3 W. Robinson, Head Asst. Magistrate to Conolly, 18 Oct. 1849, P/327/22, MJP No. 794, 1 Dec. 1849, p. 4954; Robinson, Acting Malabar Magistrate to Chief Sec., 28 Dec. 1856, P/328/22, MJP No. 238, 26 Feb. 1857, p. 280.

4 Logan to Chief Sec., 13 Feb. 1885, P/2634, MJP No. 628, 10 Mar. 1885, p. 21.

one of the 'fanatics', a verumpattomdar, from a plot he had held for many years.<sup>1</sup> No kind of rôle appears to have been played by any kanamdar. The Moplah outbreak was a popular phenomenon, whatever use the substantial kanamdars made of it and despite the haphazard influence they might occasionally exercise over it when the opportunity arose to thwart, by acting the informer, plots they deemed not to their advantage. If the ebb and flow of the Moplah outbreak can be correlated with the changing requirements of the kanamdar intermediary, this is hardly less so in the case of the needs of social groups among the rural Moplals far more numerous and disadvantaged. Throughout the whole 19th and early 20th century period of Moplah defiance of the powerful high-caste Hindu, the effect of the failure of British government to intervene decisively to curb jenmi power, was to subordinate the differences in circumstance among the Ernad Moplals to the one overriding consideration of challenging landlord ascendancy.

### Interpretation. Part 3, Problems

The above thesis may be applied to three problems Moplah outbreaks pose: (a) where they occurred, (b) whom they involved and (c) when they happened.

(a) The fact that, with few exceptions, outbreaks occurred in interior south Malabar rather than in north Malabar or the

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<sup>1</sup> Notes by T.L. Strange on a letter from H.V. Conolly, 30 Sept. 1852, and T.L. Strange to Sec., Judicial, 16 Oct. 1852, P/327/51, MJP No. 716, 6 Nov. 1852, pp. 4694 and 4579; urzee (memorial) of E. Shangara Menon, Head Police Officer, Kurumbranad, n.d., P/327/59, MJP No. 379, 2 July 1853, p. 3851-52.

coastal zone (the two other areas where a rural Moplah population existed under British rule) was probably because the type of agriculture in the latter regions made the tenant far less vulnerable to the adverse exercise of jenmi power than in the former. Whilst interior south Malabar was primarily a paddy-growing area, the north (and the coastal strip<sup>1</sup>) was one in which garden cultivation of crops such as the coconut dominated. The Special Settlement Officer for Malabar gave figures in 1904 showing that the ratio of wet cultivation (paddy) to garden land in the four northern taluks of Chirakkal, Kottayam, Kurumbranad and Calicut was 59:100 whilst for Ernad and Walluvanad it was 203:100.<sup>2</sup>

The significance of these figures lies in the fact that the rents jenmis were able to impose on wet lands were normally far more burdensome than on garden cultivation. As Special Commissioner Logan pointed out, it was "notoriously the grain-crop cultivators who were worst off".<sup>3</sup> The fact that the yield of gardens was extremely sensitive to the quality of

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1 See for example maps opposite p. xxi, W. Logan, 'Report on Malabar Land Tenures', loc. cit., Vol. I; report on classification of Ernad taluk, N. MacMichael, Special Settlement Officer, Malabar, 31 Jan. 1903, P/9328, MBRP (RS, LR & A) No. 132, 20 Apr. 1903, p. 2; resolution of Board of Revenue No. 1636, 28 May 1909, P/8541, MJP No. 308, 25 Feb. 1910, p. 80.

2. N. MacMichael to Revenue Settlement, Land Records and Agriculture Dept., 10 June 1904, P/7175, MBRP (RS, LR & A) No. 93, 10 Apr. 1905, p. 28. This contrast between north and south Malabar, rooted as it was in a difference in physical character, was of very long standing, see for example Malabar Commission to Board of Revenue, 28 July 1801, P/286/65, MBRP 10 Aug. 1801, p. 9226.

3 'Report on Malabar Land Tenures', loc. cit., Vol. I, pp. xxi and xxxv.



husbandry<sup>1</sup> had "taught many of the Janmis that they cannot rack-rent gardens as they can grain lands".<sup>2</sup> The attempt of the jenmi to maximize his gains at the expense of his garden tenant merely resulted in the latter taking as much as he could from the garden and thus ruining it. Thus, in 1916-17 the Court of Wards Manager of the Guruvayur Devaswom estate observed that tenants of garden lands were always the most difficult to deal with in regard to affairs concerning rent payment.<sup>3</sup> An agriculturalist in north or coastal Malabar was consequently far less likely to have to resort to violence to curb jenmi power than the tenant in the outbreak zone. Indeed, social divisions appear to have been sharper in the latter where the jenmi was more likely to be a 'big man' clearly distinguishable from the rest of the population. Logan in 1882 gave figures for 'principal' jenmis (those holding 100 or more pieces of land in any one amson or parish') which show that whilst Ernad

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- 1 See for example 'Revenue Survey of Randaterra' undertaken by Murdoch Brown, n.d., by orders of the Malabar Commission, 23 Feb. 1799, enclosure C2 in J. Strachey to Board of Revenue, n.d., P/286/56, MBRP 19 Mar. 1801, pp. 3039-43; report of H.S. Graeme, Malabar Commissioner, n.d., P/277/56, MRP 16 July 1822, paras. 1166 and 1168; W. Logan, 'Report on Malabar Land Tenures', loc. cit., Vol. I, p. xxi; H. Moberly, Special Settlement Officer, Malabar and South Canara to Sec., Commissioner of Revenue Settlement and Director of Land Records and Agriculture, 24 May 1894, P/6006, MRP No. 883, 29 Aug. 1900, p. 870.
- 2 Logan, 'Report on Malabar Land Tenures', loc. cit., Vol. I, pp. xxi, xxxiv and xxxv. See also C.A. Innes 'Strictly confidential note on the Malabar Tenancy Legislation', P/35 (Conf.), MRP No. 3021, 26 Sept. 1917, p. 28.
- 3 Administration Report for fasli 1326 (1916-17), 8 Nov. 1917, P/10251, MCWP No. 55, 14 Dec. 1917, p. 2. See also report for fasli 1327 (1917-18), 21 Nov. 1918, P/10688, MCWP No. 10, 21 Jan. 1919, p. 2; J.A. Thorne, Collector, Zamorin's Estate to Sec. to Commissioner, Court of Wards, n.d., P/10455, MRP No. 3121, 4 Sept. 1918, p. 17.

and Walluvanad had 15.6 per cent of the total number of jenmis in Malabar they had 35.5 per cent of 'principal' jenmis.<sup>1</sup> It was always claimed that in north Malabar land was more widely distributed and that the same person was often both a tenant and a landlord.<sup>2</sup> The outbreak zone was located in that part of the area of Malabar, the southern interior, in which the jenmi stood out most clearly as an oppressor.

Even so, why was it possible to narrow down the main area of Moplah outbreaks to that part of the south Malabar interior within, as H.M. Winterbotham had correctly observed in 1896,<sup>3</sup> some 15 miles of Pandalur Hill? The map (p.118 ) reveals that

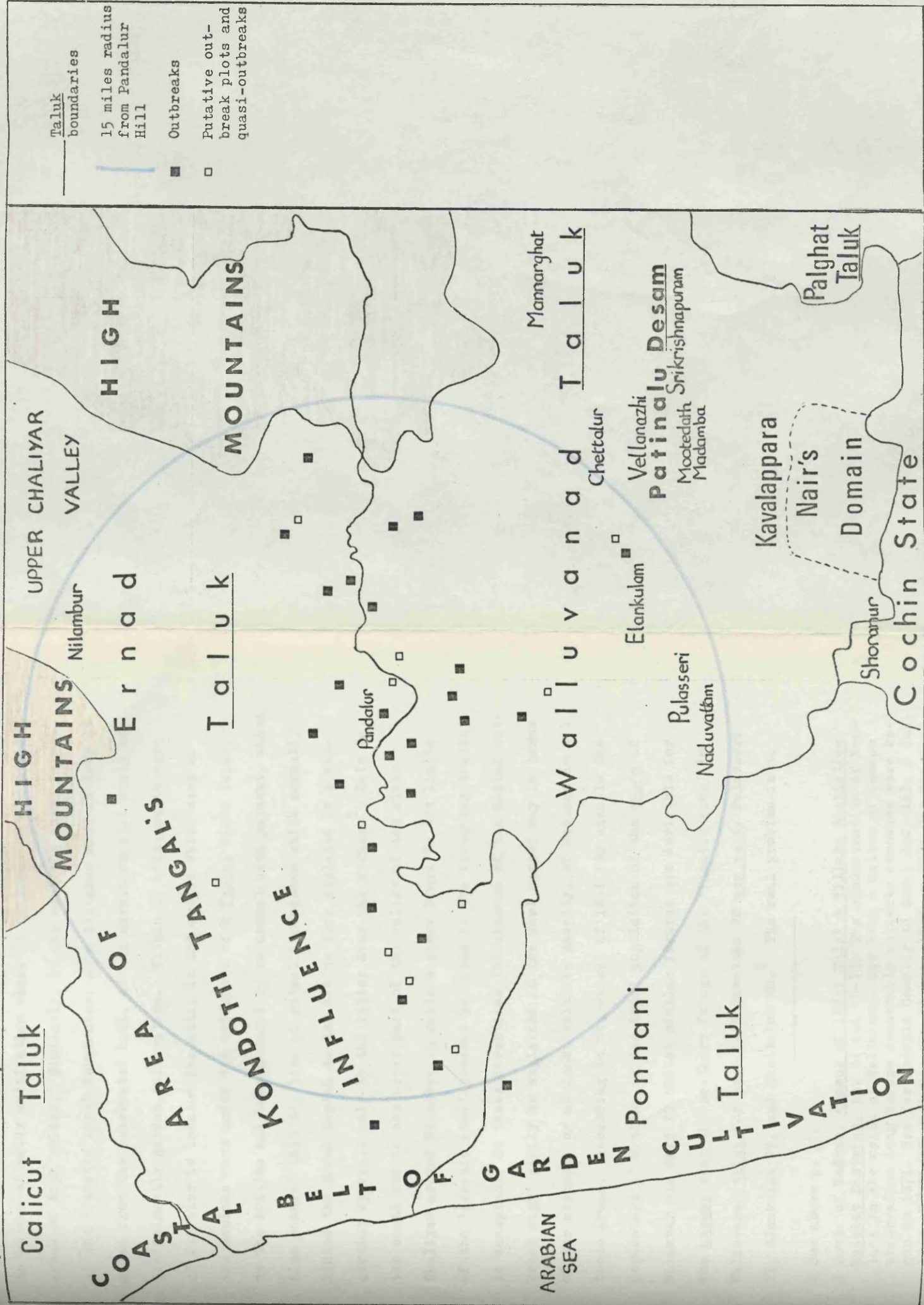
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1 'Report on Malabar Land Tenures', loc. cit., Vol. I, p. lvii. See also report of H.S. Graeme, Malabar Commissioner, n.d., P/277/55, MRP 16 July 1822, para. 1568.

2 District Munsif, Badagara to District Magistrate, 28 Dec. 1907 in an inquiry concerning the working of the Tenant's Compensation Act, P/8541, MJP No. 308, 25 Feb. 1910, p. 19. See also T. Kunhi Ramen Nair, High Court Judge, Trivandrum to Chief Sec., Govt. of Madras, 7 Aug. 1883, Govt. of Madras, Malabar Land Tenures, p. 65; note by Varanakkott Krishnan Namputiripad, enclosure No. 1, Appendix F(f), Govt. of Madras, Malabar Land Tenures Committee Report, p. 60; note by T.V. Anantan Nair, enclosure No. 2, appendix F(f), ibid., p. 63; K.P. Sankara Menon, High Court Vakil to Acting Asst. Sec., 9 Apr. 1886, P/2820, MLP No. 89, 20 Apr. 1886, p. 16; C. Benson, Deputy Director, Dept. of Land Records and Agriculture (Agriculture Branch) A Statistical Atlas of the Madras Presidency Compiled from Existing Records, 1895, p. 40; H. Moberly, Special Settlement Officer, Malabar and South Canara to Sec., Commissioner of Revenue Settlement and Director of Land Records and Agriculture, 24 May 1894, P/6006, MRP No. 883, 29 Aug. 1900, p. 831; A.R.L. Tottenham, Acting Malabar Collector to Sec. to Commissioner, Revenue Settlement and Director of Land Records and Agriculture, 25 June 1903 (with reference to Calicut taluk), P/6680, MRP No. 1096, 3 Nov. 1903, p. 46; note by F.B. Evans on C.A. Innes' note on Tenancy Legislation for Malabar, n.d., P/35 (Conf.), MRP No. 3021, 26 Sept. 1917, p. 6.

3 See above p.30.

Map to show why the 'fanatic zone' was the area within 15 miles radius of Pandalur Hill



Taluk boundaries

15 miles radius from Pandalur Hill

Outbreaks

Putative outbreak plots and quasi-outbreaks

UPPER CHALIYAR VALLEY

HIGH MOUNTAINS

HIGH MOUNTAINS

HIGH MOUNTAINS

Ernad

Taluk

Mammanghat

Walluvanad Taluk

Chettalur

Vellanazhi

Patinalu Desam

Mootedath Srikrishnapuram

Madamba

Palghat Taluk

Kavalappara

Nair's Domain

Domain

Shoranur

Cochin State

Calicut Taluk

COASTAL BELT OF GARDEN CULTIVATION

KONDOTTI TANGAL'S INFLUENCE

Pandalur

Ponnani Taluk

ARABIAN SEA

on the north and east this zone of thirty miles amplitude ceases to be one of paddy cultivation where it impinges on steep-sided areas of high relief. Similarly, to the west the outer fringe of the 'fanatic zone' terminates, at a distance more or less 15 miles from the celebrated hill, at the narrow coastal strip of predominantly garden cultivation. Within 15 miles north-west of Pandalur is located Kondotti, in and around which many of the Moplahs were under the influence of a Tangal whose loyalty to the British had been secured by an annual cash payment, which also ensured that the ties of mutual dependence which normally linked the Ernad Moplah to the divine were replaced by a constraint operable only by the latter over the former.<sup>1</sup> Only to the south and in the upper part of the valley of the river Chaliyar around Nilambur in north-eastern Ernad do the limits of the 'fanatic zone' present problems if the foregoing thesis is accepted. In these directions the absence of the Moplah outbreak might easily be explained in the most direct way in terms of the absence, or at least relative paucity, of Moplahs in all these areas. According to the census of 1891 for example the percentage of Muslims in the total population of the amsom of Nilambur was only 22 whilst similar figures are derivable for the amsoms near the southern fringe of the 'fanatic zone' in Walluvanad taluk, for example Naduvattam 28 per cent, Pulasseri 27, Elamkulam 29, and Chettalur 20.<sup>2</sup> The real problem is to

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1 See above p. 77.

2 Govt. of Madras, Census of 1891: Taluk & Village Statistics, Malabar District, pp. 34 and 68-73. The concentration of Moplahs in the north of Walluvanad had been a matter of common observation long before reasonably accurate censuses were begun in 1871. See for example Conolly to Sec., Judicial, 2 Jan. 1844, P/326/35, MJP No. 69, 27 Jan. 1844, p.271. For the distribution of Hindus, Muslims and others in south Malabar see map p. 120.



# Population distribution map of religious communities in south Malabar, 1921

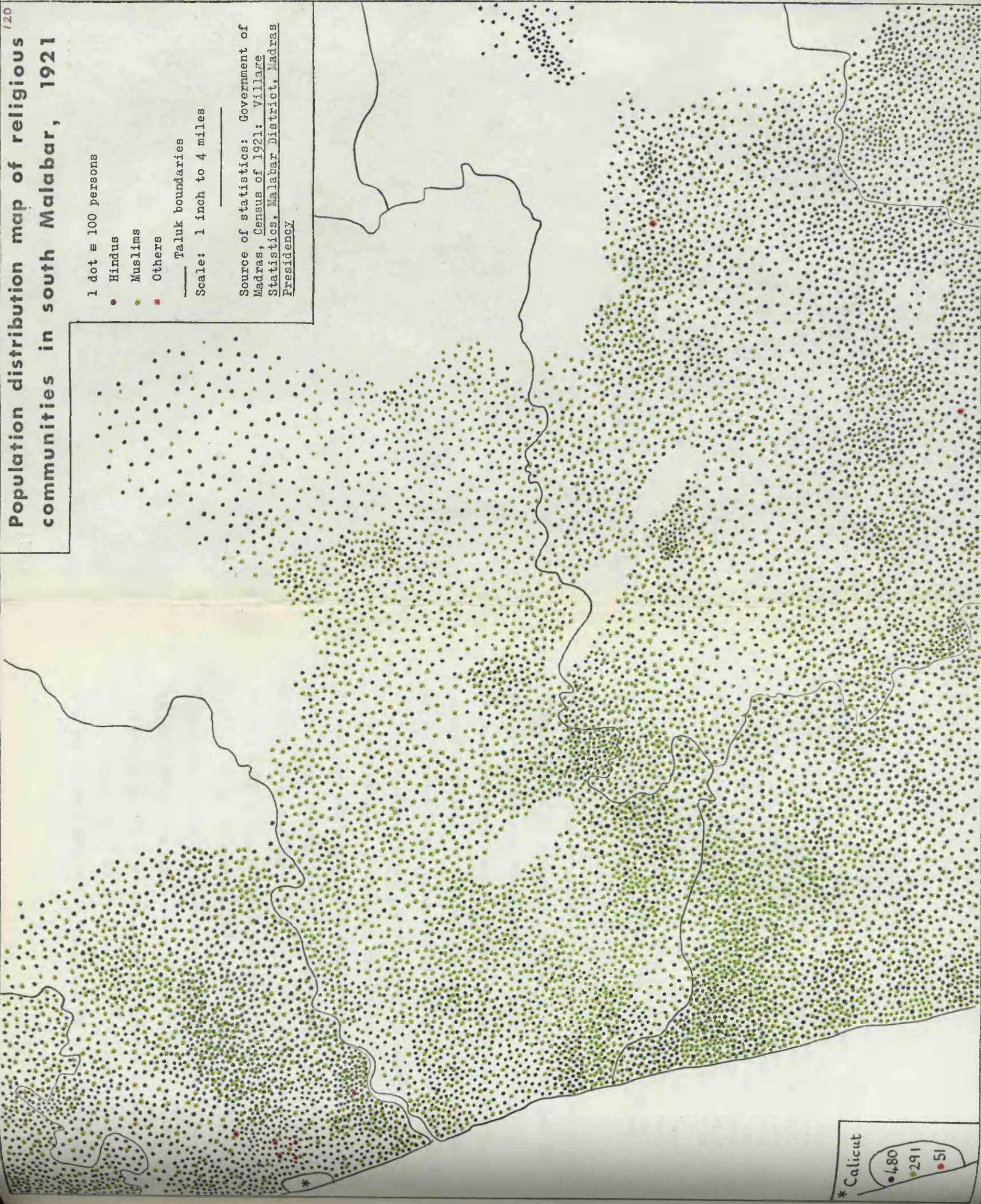
1 dot = 100 persons

- Hindus
- Muslims
- Others

— Taluk boundaries

Scale: 1 inch to 4 miles

Source of statistics: Government of Madras, Census of 1921: Village Statistics, Malabar District, Madras Presidency



\* Calicut  
 • 480  
 • 291  
 • 51



explain the small numbers of Moplahs in such areas of the south Malabar interior.

Almost certainly the answer must be sought in the policy, dating back in many cases at least to the beginnings of British rule, of local high-caste Hindu magnates narrowly restricting the residence of Moplahs within their domains. Thus, in 1852 Malabar Collector H.V. Conolly noted that Hindu jenmis were at times "very averse to the introduction of Settlers of the Mopla persuasion in their vicinity".<sup>1</sup> Conolly went on to observe that the Nilambur Tirumulpad, whose ancestors had been particularly prominent in the struggle in the 1790s of the Hindu landed interest against the Ernad Moplah,<sup>2</sup> was "a particularly difficult person to deal with in this matter" being prepared to have "the whole of the vast forest tracts in the rear of Nelumboor abandoned to nature and fever than allow a single Mopla to settle there".<sup>3</sup> Exactly the same policy is known to have been pursued in a number of parts of Walluvanad taluk where amsoms with few Moplahs made the local generation of outbreaks virtually

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1 Conolly to T.L. Strange, Special Commissioner, Malabar, 24 Apr. 1852, P/311/29, MBRP 20 Mar. 1854, p. 4054. See also Conolly to Strange, 10 Sept. 1852, P/327/52, MJP No. 56, 27 Jan. 1853, pp. 424-25.

2 Note by Mr. Smee, Malabar Commissioner [18 Mar. 1800?], P/381/12, BPSP 6 May 1800, p. 2463; Tachery Kauvil Tirumoolpaad to President of Malabar Commission, n.d., received 31 Mar. 1800, ibid., p. 2657; Major A. Walker to President, Malabar Commission, 17 Mar. 1800, folder 'Public and Private letters; Native letters and minutes, 1800', Box 1782-99, Walker Papers, 182d18; Walker to J. Spencer, Malabar Commissioner, 17 Mar. 1800, set of letters 'Guzerat [sic] 1800', Box 1782-99, ibid. For details of this struggle see Chapter 2.

3 Conolly to Strange, 24 Apr. 1852, P/311/29, MBRP 20 Mar. 1854, pp. 4054-55.

impossible. The best known example of the dedicated pursuit of such a policy was that of the Kavalappara Nair within whose limits in south Walluvanad around Shoranur no Moplah was even permitted to stay the night.<sup>1</sup> However, further north, closer to the immediate fringes of the fanatic zone in the area known as the 'Pathinalu Desam' (14 desams) comprising the amsoms of Mootedath Madamba, Srikrishnapuram and Vellanazhi the exclusion of Muslims was almost as complete. In this area as late as 1902 practically every inch of land was reported to be in the possession of temples or big Nambudiri jenmis whose aversion for the Moplah entailed an exclusion of that community so exacting that at the time they numbered only 28 in an area the total population of which amounted to more than 17,000.<sup>2</sup> For much of the area of Malabar to the south of the 'fanatic zone' comprising

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1 W. Logan, 'Report on Malabar Land Tenures', loc. cit., Vol. I, p. lxxiii; Swadesamitran, 15 Oct. 1895, L/R/15/107, MNMR 1894-95, p. 314; C.A. Innes, Malabar Gazetteer, Vol. I, p. 469; speech of Kavalappara Muppil Nayar, 2 Mar. 1922, extract from Legislative Assembly Debates, pp. 2713-18, L/PJ/6/1771, 2165/22. At least as early as 1800 it would appear that no Moplah lived in Kavalappara, see 'A rough calculation of [the population?]' in the Southern Division of Malabar' by J.W. Wye, 14 Apr. 1800, item 34, folder 1, unbound correspondence, 1800-03, Box II, Walker Papers, 180a2.

2 A.R. Loftus - Tottenham, Acting Special Asst. Collector, Malappuram Division to Malabar Collector, 8 Nov. 1902, P/6447, MRP No. 1177 (Conf.), 24 Dec. 1902, p. 8. By the end of the outbreak period the Moplah population of this area was not materially increased. The 1921 census showed only 66 Muslims in the 'Pathinalu Desam', see Govt. of Madras, Census of 1921: Village Statistics, Malabar District, Madras Presidency, pp. 68, 70 and 71.

Palghat taluk<sup>1</sup> and southern Walluvanad, it seems quite likely that the low proportion of Moplahs in the population in the period 1836-1919 was not unconnected with what was apparently the policy of very early British administrators, operating no doubt under the influence of the predilections of local Hindu chiefs. Thus it is known that at the start of the 19th century Thomas Warden, then Collector of the districts of 'Palghat, Congaad, Mannoor, Eddaterrah, Kavalappara and Naduvattam' (covering what was later to become Palghat taluk and south Walluvanad), but later responsible for the whole of Malabar from 1804 to 1816, was, on his own admission, operating a policy of discouraging any spread of Moplah settlement into his part of south Malabar on the grounds of the past record of the Malabar Muslim in the contest for Hindu land.<sup>2</sup> In short, Winterbotham's 'fanatic zone' was located within a few miles of Pandalur Hill simply because it so happened that this was the one part of Malabar where large numbers of rural Moplahs not of the Kondotti sect worked mainly wet lands.

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1 Palghat taluk was always an area of very few Moplahs. See for example C. Peile, Southern Supt. to Malabar Commission, 4 Mar. 1799, P/366/25, BRP 26 Nov. 1799, p. 1270. 'A rough calculation of the population? in the Southern Division of Malabar' by J.W. Wye, 14 Apr. 1800, item 34, unbound correspondence, 1800-03, folder 1, Box II, Walker Papers, 180a2, p. 3; report of H.S. Graeme, Malabar Commissioner, n.d., P/277/56, MRP 16 July 1822, para. 598. In 1921 only 4.2 per cent of the population of the taluk were Moplahs, G.T. Boag, Census of India, 1921, Vol. XIII, Pt. I, p. 160. Some of the Muslims of Palghat were not Moplahs, but Ravuthans, see below p. 201.

2 Warden to Board of Revenue, 19 Mar. 1801, P/286/56, MBRP 30 Mar. 1801, pp. 3500-01. For details of this contest see Chapter 2. Another advocate of the policy of erecting barriers to the spread of Moplahs into areas they had not yet penetrated was Major Alexander Walker, Commissioner in Malabar in 1800-01, see below p. 176.



(b) As already indicated, for the lower Hindu social orders there was no congregational form of religious organisation to compensate for the many obstacles to combination existing in rural Malabar. During the short-lived and unhappy régime<sup>1</sup> in Malabar of Collector Major William Macleod (1801-03) it would seem that there was an intention to make some attempt to encourage "such religious ceremonies as will frequently bring the Hindus together" with the purpose of countering the isolating effects of the scattered mode of settlement of the inhabitants.<sup>2</sup> Even so, whatever Macleod was able to achieve in this direction in his 17 months in Malabar, there can be no doubt that the Malayali Hindu continued to find in religion little scope for combination against the jenmi. On the contrary the capacity of those Hindus who occupied the same class positions of tenant and agricultural labourer vulnerable to the exercise of jenmi power as the Moplah to organise on an occupational or any other basis was actually limited by the observance of the demands of caste hierarchy and exclusiveness. Even among the degraded agrestic slave population the distinctions of caste were observed minutely. The different castes into which the slave population

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1 Macleod provoked a revolt in Malabar by his fiscal and monetary policies, see for example Macleod to Principal Sec. to Govt., 9 Mar. 1803, P/275/64, MBRP Apr. 1803, pp. 1438-39.

2 Macleod to Board of Revenue, 19 Oct. 1801, P/286/78, MBRP 28 Jan. 1802, pp. 1124-25; Luiz Mello [an inhabitant of Malabar], to Major A. Walker, 30 Mar. 1802, 'Native Letters', Walker Papers, 181d17. Though this scheme was directed against the Moplah trade monopolist (see above p. 63) for the benefit of the Hindu 'cultivator' Macleod claimed to have commercial (free trade) rather than political objectives in view.

of Malabar was sub-divided<sup>1</sup> observed different forms of worship and had their own "separate and peculiar customs".<sup>2</sup> Inter-marriage and inter-dining was prohibited<sup>3</sup> as was even the close approach of members of different slave castes. In the 1830s for example it was reported that in one part of north Malabar a 'Poolyan' (Pulayan or Cherumar) might not approach within 10 paces of a Vettuvan, a 'Parian' (Parayan) was obliged to remain the same distance from a 'Poolyan' and a 'Nyadee' (Nayadi) 12 paces from a 'Poolyan'.<sup>4</sup> Some years later Collector H.V. Conolly reported that the abhorrence of the Ernad Cherumar to the vicinity of the Nayadi was so great (being "equal ... to what is felt by the highest Cast Brahmin") that nothing could induce the former to work in any kind of proximity to the latter.<sup>5</sup> In north Malabar, where the rules of distance pollution seem to have been less rigidly observed,<sup>6</sup> Vettuvan and Pulayan agricultural labourers could be induced on one European-

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1 Apparently amounting to 6 in Ernad taluk and 4 in Shernad, see 'Answer to the Queries relative to the Slaves of the Soil given by the Mookiestans /mukiastans, elders of 'villages' of Ernad Talook', n.d., appendix 14 to J. Vaughan, Malabar Collector to Board of Revenue, 20 July 1819, P/293/28, MBRP 5 Aug. 1819, p. 9745; 'Answer ... Shernaad Talook', n.d., appendix 13 to *ibid.*, p. 9738.

2 Vaughan to Board, 20 July 1819, *loc. cit.*, p. 9674.

3 Report of H.S. Graeme, Malabar Commissioner, n.d., P/277/56, MRP 16 July 1822, para. 44.

4 According to Mr. F.C. Brown a planter of north Malabar, Govt. of India, Law Commission on Slavery in India, Report, p. 209.

5 H.V. Conolly, Malabar Collector to Acting Sec., Board of Revenue, 6 Apr. 1843, P/326/37, MJP No. 277, 20 Apr. 1844, p. 1359.

6 Report of H.S. Graeme, n.d., P/277/56, MRP 16 July 1822, para. 43.

owned estate to work together but after work the former invariably bathed before returning home when they "utter<sup>[ed]</sup> the usual cry <sup>[to]</sup> warn the coming Poolyan to quit the road and retreat the prescribed distance". The separation in almost all spheres of life of members of these two castes, equivalent in class status but differentiated in the ritual hierarchy, was described by the owner of the estate as follows:

"<sup>[The Vettuvans']</sup> houses are obliged to be 40 paces distant from the Poolians': they desert their houses when less. They will not frequent the same roads, nor buy at the same bazaar, there being a separate one kept by Mahomedans for the Poolians. Nor will the children intermix in each others games on a common play ground."<sup>1</sup>

Naturally where such prohibitions divided members of one 'polluting' caste from another the gulf between these and a Hindu labourer of a 'non-polluting' caste like the Tiens was virtually unbridgeable. In 1834 it was noted, in north Malabar, that although free and unfree labourers "mingle<sup>[d]</sup> daily at work" the latter might not approach, far less walk through, a village inhabited by the former.<sup>2</sup>

Far from presenting them with opportunities to resist jenmi power the religion of these groups bound them the more securely to their high-caste landlords. For the Hindu, there could be no possibility of sanction for and leadership of resistance to the rural magnates from his religious cardinals who,

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1 Testimony of F.C. Brown, n.d. in Govt. of India, Law Commission on Slavery in India, Report, p. 209.

2 'Answers of F.C. Brown <sup>[a Malabar planter]</sup>, January 1834, to questions drawn up by Board of Control on East India slavery', P/324/89, MJP 12 Aug. 1834, pp. 3897-98. See also report of cases tried by Joint Magistrate, Malabar under provisions of section LIV, Act VII of 1843 during July 1844, Malabar Collectorate Records, Vol. 7211, p. 179, MRO.

indeed, were often one and the same person. The fact that the low rural Hindu, far from exercising any economic control over his source of religious dispensation, was subject himself to a very material dependancy on that same source ensured that should he incur the displeasure of his Nambudiri Brahmin jenmi he was liable to an excommunication which was religious, social and economic. The Desa virodham (enmity of all the residents of the desam or 'village') and Svajana virodham (enmity of one's own caste people) which might be brought into play denied the excommunicant access to necessary religious facilities, wells and all kinds of village services. The "smallest show of independence" was "resented as a personal affront", and though the jenmi was liable to prosecution in such cases "it was found impossible to get the people to come forward to complain for fear of the utter consequences - eviction and ruin of families".<sup>1</sup>

Indeed the power of the big Malayali landlord over his Hindu dependants could be such that even towards the end of the out-break period of 1836-1919 one Malabar Magistrate admitted:

"It is hardly too much to say that in parts of the district the King's Writ does not run except with the kind permission of the local magnate, and private courts of justice are not uncommon."<sup>2</sup>

Indeed in 1822 it had been noted by H.S. Graeme, then Commissioner in Malabar, that the low-caste Hindu generally refrained

1 W. Logan, 'Report on Malabar Land Tenures', loc. cit., Vol. I, p. xxvi. See also ibid. pp. ix and xxv and Vol. II, p. 32; C.A. Innes, 'Strictly Confidential Note on the Malabar Tenancy Legislation', loc. cit., p. 33.

2 Remarks of C.A. Innes, 19 Feb. 1914 on South Malabar Police Administration Report for 1913, P/9560, MJP No. 1771, 19 Aug. 1914, p. 20. The great power of the jenmi over his Hindu dependants was often remarked from the beginning of British rule, see for example James Wilson, Collector, Cotiote etc. to Sec.,

from "appealing to a superior tribunal against the authority" of his jenmi.<sup>1</sup> Graeme attributed this reluctance not only to fear but also to the survival of a state of vassalage linking to the jenmi patrons (or tamburans) nearly all members of the Hindu castes below the rank of Nair, also a certain proportion Nairs themselves but, significantly, not the Moplahs.<sup>2</sup> In the period before the start of British rule in Malabar, Graeme was informed, the tamburan was bound to protect his adian (vassal) and procure redress for any wrong he might sustain whilst the adian was expected to be ready with his personal service at the tamburan's requisition, including on the occasion of the latter's personal quarrels.<sup>3</sup> Indeed, during British rule,

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Board of Revenue, 15 Feb. 1801, P/286/55, MBRP 5 Mar. 1801, p. 2578; A.R. Loftus - Tottenham, Acting Special Asst. Collector, Malappuram Division to Malabar Collector, 8 Nov. 1902, P/6447, MRP No. 1177, 24 Dec. 1902, p. 8; C.A. Innes, Malabar Gazetteer, Vol. I, p. 105.

1 Report, n.d., P/277/56, MRP 16 July 1822, para. 17.

2 Graeme's report, loc. cit., paras. 17, 18 and (in P/277/55) 1529. See also Lt. Col. K. Macpherson, O/C Malabar /to Govt. of Bombay/, 29 Dec. 1796, P/353/68, BMP 27 Jan. 1797, p. 147; Thomas Warden, Malabar Collector to Board of Revenue, Sept. 1815, P/291/53, MBRP 25 Sept. 1815, p.11102; J. Vaughan, Malabar Collector to Board of Revenue, 20 May 1819, P/293/21, MBRP 31 May 1819, p. 6851.

3 Graeme's report, loc. cit., para. 17. See also Capt. A. Walker, Military Sec. to General Stuart, 24 Aug. 1799, Wellesley Papers, Add 13682, p. 86; Walker to President, Malabar Commission, 22 Dec. 1796, 'Letter Book, 1796 and 1800', p. 30, Walker Papers, 181d12; Francis Buchanan, A Journey from Madras through the Countries of Mysore, Canara, and Malabar, Vol. II, p. 415; 'petition of the Valia Tham-burathi of Keyake Covilagam and other Jenmies of Malabar', 28 Jan. 1888, P/3286, MLP No. 11, 27 Jan. 1888, p. 16; 'petition of the Jenmis of Malabar' signed by Kilakodit Kunhi Sankaran Valiya Nambyar and Chandrot Kunhi Chandu Nambyar, 3 Mar. 1888, MLP No. 38, 19 Apr. 1888, p. 11.

at least as late as the end of the outbreak period, should a jenmi have any important project in hand his adian was expected to assist "'with his money if need be, with his testimony true or false, and on occasions with his strong right arm'".<sup>1</sup> Even so, there seems little doubt that this vassal relationship weakened under British rule which offered alternative means of protection to the adian and under which the jenmi was tempted to flout those customary obligations which might obstruct his exploiting new opportunities for maximising his return from the land.<sup>2</sup> It seems likely therefore that the deference the lower Hindu castes had formerly rendered to their tamburans partly through a sense of advantage to be gained was, as British rule progressed, increasingly exacted through the threat of the exercise of the power of the high-caste jenmi.

Of course it was open to any Hindu wishing to mitigate the formidable array of sanctions he was subject to at the hands of the jenmi to do so by becoming a Muslim. In fact the records are replete with the observations of British administrators that considerable numbers of low-caste Hindus were exploiting this opportunity,<sup>3</sup> whilst census returns indicate that the proportion

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1 C.A. Innes, Acting Collector, Malabar to Sec., Commissioners of Land Revenue and Forests, 26 Aug. 1911, P/9579, MRP No. 9 (Conf.), 2 Jan. 1914, p. 25. Innes was quoting a report of one of his (un-named) 'Divisional officers'.

2 W. Logan, 'Report on Malabar Land Tenures', loc. cit., Vol. II, pp. 8 and 31.

3 See for example 'Answers of F.C. Brown ...', January 1834, loc. cit., p. 3908; T.L. Strange's report of 25 Sept. 1852, loc. cit., p. 4593; memorandum of H.V. Conolly, Malabar Magistrate, n.d., enclosure in Conolly to Sec., Judicial, 26 Feb. 1853, P/327/59, MJP No. 379, 2 July 1853, p. 3711; H. Bradley, Acting Malabar Magistrate to Chief Sec., 6 June 1894,

of Muslims in the population of Ernad taluk rose from 48.97 per cent in 1871 to 59.19 per cent in 1921.

Percentage of Muslims in the total population  
of Ernad Taluk 1871-1921<sup>1</sup>

1871	1881	1891	1901	1911	1921
48.97	50.64	52.67	54.46	56.90	59.19

The material advantages from conversion for the Cherumar in particular were clear. In 1843 it was pointed out that by the custom of the country the pay of a Cheruman was less than that allowed to free labourers like Moplals,<sup>2</sup> and some two decades earlier it had been noted that the slave-owners themselves admitted that in south interior Malabar the differential was in the order of 10:13.<sup>3</sup> As late as 1893 it was reported by the

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P/4621, MJP Nos. 2186-92, 8 Sept. 1894, p. 120; F. Fawcett, 'Nayars of Malabar', Madras Government Museum Bulletin, Vol. III, No. 3, 1901, p. 190; F. Fawcett's report of 5 June 1896, loc. cit., p. 97; R.H. Hitchcock, Supt. of Police, South Malabar, 'Report on the Mappilla Outbreak of 1915', 30 Mar. 1915, MJP Nos. 2080-84, 3 Sept. 1915 (Conf.), p. 65, Kozhikode Archives.

- 1 W.R. Cornish, Report on the Census of the Madras Presidency, 1871, Vol. I, pp. 346-47; Govt. of Madras, Census of 1881: Villagewar Statements for Malabar, p. 8; Govt. of Madras, Census of 1891: Taluk and Village Statistics, Malabar District, p. 3; Govt. of Madras, Census of 1901: Village Statistics, Malabar, p. 22; Govt. of Madras, Census of 1911: Village Statistics, Malabar, p. 30; G.T. Boag, Census of India, 1921, Vol. XIII, Pt. I, p. 160.
- 2 H.V. Conolly to Sec., Judicial, 24 Nov. 1843, P/326/37, MJP No. 277, 20 Apr. 1844, p. 1339.
- 3 Report of H.S. Graeme, Malabar Commissioner, n.d., P/277/56, MRP 16 July 1822, paras 55, 56 and 58. See also Govt. of India, Law Commission on Slavery in India, Report, p. 216.

OCCUPATIONS OF THE MEMBERS OF TWO 'CASTES'IN MALABAR, 1921<sup>1</sup>

<u>Occupation</u>	<u>Mappilla %</u>	<u>Cheruman %</u>
Agricultural labourers	23.9	91.2
Basket makers and other workers in woody mats	-	3.2
Cultivators: owners and tenants	33.4	0.5
Fishing and selling fish	6.0	-
Other trade in foodstuffs	6.2	-
Sundry bazaar-keepers	4.9	-
Workers in coconut fibre and makers of rope etc. and dealers in textiles	3.6	-
Porters and messengers and miscellaneous labourers	3.4	-
Cart owners, drivers etc.	1.8	-
Landowners and tenants	1.8	-
Coffee, tea etc. plantation employees	1.2	-
Hotel keepers and servants	1.2	-
Tailors	1.0	-
Religion	1.3	-
Others	10.3	5.1
Total	100.0	100.0

1 G.T. Boag, Census of India, 1921, Vol. XIII, Pt. I, pp. 216-22.



Malabar District Magistrate that Cherumar in Ernad taluk were still receiving wages at a rate lower than that which other classes of agricultural labourer were entitled to.<sup>1</sup> Conversion to Islam also opened up the possibility of the Cheruman securing a means of livelihood less restricting than that of agricultural labourer to which he was very largely confined by the pressure of caste sentiment.<sup>2</sup> Even as late as 1921 it was reported that as many as 94.4 per cent of Malabar Cherumars were still engaged in the traditional occupations of the caste, agricultural labour and basket making. Whilst throughout the period 1836-1919 it was true to say, with the minimum hyperbole, that the "Malabar slave [could] not better himself by his labor"<sup>3</sup> the Moplah was by no means so narrowly restricted. Of course a low-caste convert also experienced a rise in the ritual hierarchy and was therefore not subject (at least to the same extent) to the humiliations which the low-caste Hindu was liable as a result of the belief that he polluted Brahmins and Nairs at a distance of several feet.<sup>4</sup> This is not to say that high-caste Hindus

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1 H. Bradley, Settlement Report of Malabar, 11 Dec. 1893, P/4643, MBRP (RS, LR & A) No. 126, 8 Mar. 1894, p. 225.

2 'Answers of F.C. Brown, January 1834 ...' loc. cit., p. 3884.

3 E.B. Thomas, Acting Judge, Calicut, to Register, Court of Sudr and Foujdaree Udalut, 24 Nov. 1841, P/326/16, MJP No. 117, 16 Mar. 1842, p. 115.

4 Report of H.S. Graeme, Special Commissioner, Malabar, n.d., P/277/56, MRP 16 July 1822, para 21; 'Answers of F.C. Brown, January 1834 ...', loc. cit., p. 3881; H.V. Conolly, Malabar Magistrate to Sec., Judicial, 26 Feb. 1853, P/327/59, MJP No. 379, 2 July 1853, p. 3679; minute of J.D. Sim, member, Council of Governor of Madras, n.d., P/403, MJP No. 1606-A 28 Aug. 1874; W. Logan, Malabar Manual, Vol. 1, A

always readily accepted the relaxation of caste restrictions the conversion of, say, a Cheruman to Islam was supposed to entail and collisions between low-caste converts and Nairs were sometimes the result.<sup>1</sup> For a brief period in 1852 the issue in fact seems to have reached something of a climax with Syed Fazl, the Mambram Tangal, using his influence to uphold the Moplah's insistence that all his caste-fellows should receive less contemptuous treatment than the Nair was accustomed to mete out to low castes. The campaign seems to have centred on the demand that the high-caste Hindu should not fail to make use of the respectful form of the second person when addressing Moplahs.<sup>2</sup>

What is of especial significance in this struggle was the readiness shown by the south interior Malabar Moplah community as a whole to rally to the support of low-caste converts suffering misuse at the hands of domineering Nairs.<sup>3</sup> As Logan stated in 1887, in the event of a Cheruman convert being

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p. 118; A.R. Loftus - Tottenham, Acting Special Asst. Collector, Malappuram Division to Malabar Collector, 8 Nov. 1902, P/6447, MRP No. 1177, 24 Dec. 1902, p. 10; C.A. Innes, Malabar Gazetteer, Vol. I, pp. 102-03.

- 1 Memorandum of H.V. Conolly, Malabar Collector, n.d., enclosure in Conolly to Sec., Judicial, 26 Feb. 1853, P/327/59, MJP No. 379, 2 July 1853, p. 3714; J.T. Gillespie, Acting Special Asst. Magistrate to Malabar Magistrate, 26 Apr. 1896, L/PJ/6/433, 2060/96, MJP No. 1567, 30 Sept. 1896, p. 26.
- 2 H.V. Conolly to Sec., Judicial, 11 Feb. 1852, P/327/45, MJP No. 125, 20 Feb. 1852, p. 694.
- 3 Memorandum of Conolly, n.d., enclosure in Conolly to Sec., Judicial, 26 Feb. 1853, P/327/59, MJP No. 379, 2 July 1853, p. 3714.

"bullied or beaten the influence of the whole Muhammadan community comes to his aid" and that "with fanaticism still rampant the most powerful of landlords dares not to disregard the possible consequences of making a martyr of his slave".<sup>1</sup> By becoming a Moplah a Cheruman labourer or "t'ien verumpattomdar was recruited to a body which functioned as a self-defence organisation of the rural subordinate whose ultimate weapon in this period was the outbreak. As Special Commissioner W. Logan observed in 1882 the association which had "all along headed the opposition to the Jennis" was the Moplah community of south interior Malabar.<sup>2</sup> Conversion certainly curbed the field of power of the Nambudiri and Nair landlords and this and the undoubted benefits the convert derived from membership of his new community must have been important elements in the striking zeal for proselytism for which the Moplah was renowned.<sup>3</sup> Moreover the earthly benefits of proselytism to the Moplah community of Ernad were sometimes made clear in more direct ways. When, in 1920, Moplah tenants of the Guruvayur Devaswam estate combined to attempt to prevent the making of any offer to re-lease the holding of a co-religionist which had been decreed for surrender, the Court of Wards

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1 W. Logan, Malabar Manual, Vol. I, p. 148.

2 'Report on Malabar Land Tenures', loc. cit., Vol. I, p. lxx.

3 See for example comment of Thomas Warden, ex-Collector, Malabar, in 'Mr. Warden's Remarks on Mr. Graeme's proposed Regulation, with Mr. Graeme's replies', n.d., enclosure in H.S. Graeme, Commissioner, Malabar to Board of Revenue, 14 Jan. 1822, P/294/13, MBRP 14 Feb. 1822, p. 1480; T.J. Knox, Joint Magistrate, Malabar to H.V. Conolly, Malabar Magistrate, 4 Dec. 1854, P/327/72, MJP No. 29, 12 Jan. 1855, p. 91; Basel German Evangelical Missionary Society, 63rd Report of the Society in South-Western India for 1902, p. 22, UTCL.

Manager to break the confederation had to influence a Hindu tenant to accept the lease.<sup>1</sup> The scarcely-attenuated ties of thralldom binding low-caste Hindu tenants and labourers to the jenmi helped ensure that the former, especially when Cherumar but not excluding higher castes, could on occasions be "apt and unresisting tools" in the hands of their masters.<sup>2</sup>

In most methods of resistance adopted by Moplahs to the local power structure, conversion tended to play a conspicuous part. In several outbreaks the pattern of action for participants was to murder those they regarded as oppressors of the rural Moplah and 'convert', forcibly or otherwise, any other Hindu who fell into their hands, these proselytes occasionally becoming members of the gang.<sup>3</sup> One Moplah gang in 1843 'went out' specifically to deal with a Nair, who was both a jenmi and an adhigari and who had angrily forced one of his female "outdoor menials" to apostatise, after her conversion had given her the temerity to dispense with the deference she had previously

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1 Administration Report for fasli 1330 (1920-21), 11 Oct. 1921, P/11116, MCWP No. 44, 16 Nov. 1921, p. 2.

2 E.B. Thomas, Acting Judge, Malabar to Register, Court of Sudr and Foujdaree Udalut, 5 Apr. 1841, P/326/8, MJP No. 418, 3 June 1841, p. 2398.

3 Report of H. Bradley, Acting District Magistrate, Malabar, 16 May 1894, P/4621, MJP Nos. 2186-92, 8 Sept. 1894, pp. 93-94, and 99; statement of J.T. Gillespie, Acting Special Asst. Magistrate, Malappuram, n.d., in report of H.M. Winterbotham, 10 Apr. 1896, L/PJ/6/422, 996/96, p. 25. See also deposition of Kellapen, a young Nair cultivator who narrowly escaped forcible conversion at the hands of the participants in the 1855 outbreak, 20 Sept. 1855, Malabar Collectorate Records, Vol. No. 7349/3, pp. 217-18, MRO; A.R. Knapp, Acting Special Asst. Magistrate to Acting Malabar Magistrate, 17 Apr. 1894, P/4620, MJP Nos. 1333-37, 1 June 1894, pp. 15-16.

been obliged to render him.<sup>1</sup> Conversion seems to have been an important weapon in the struggle against the jenmi.

No doubt for this reason, a number of outbreaks (such as those in December 1884, May 1885 and February-March 1915) were directed against lowly Hindus, for these were apostates who had reneged on their previous commitment to Islam,<sup>2</sup> an act which, seen as a threat to the community, was always well-calculated to inflame Moplah feeling.<sup>3</sup> It would seem that the outbreak

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1 H.V. Conolly to Sec., Judicial, 4 Nov. 1843, P/326/35, MJP No. 69, 27 Jan. 1844, p. 198.

2 Major F. Hole, Police Supt., Malabar to Insp.-Gen. of Police, 7 Jan. 1885, P/2634, MJP No. 1039, 21 Apr. 1885, p. 65; W. Logan, Malabar Magistrate to Chief Sec., 17 July 1885, P/2635, MJP No. 2725, 8 Oct. 1885, p. 44a; C.A. Innes, Acting Malabar Magistrate to Sec., Judicial, 29 Mar. 1915, MJP Nos. 2080-84 (Conf.), 3 Sept. 1915, p. 20, Kozhikode Archives; statement of Kolekalattil Kunhamathu Haji, 10 Mar. 1915, ibid., p. 49; statement of Vattamparambil Kunhi Mayan Haji, 10 Mar. 1915, ibid., p. 50.

3 H.V. Conolly, Malabar Magistrate to T.L. Strange, Special Commissioner, Malabar, 18 May 1852, P/327/60, MJP No. 33, 23 Apr. 1852, p. 4507; W. Robinson, Acting Malabar Magistrate to Acting Chief Sec., 8 Oct. 1857, P/328/24, MJP No. 1359, 16 Oct. 1857, p. 142; C.A. Galton, Acting Malabar Magistrate to Chief Sec., 16 Sept. 1884, P/2401, MJP Nos. 2776-81, 1 Nov. 1884, p. 4; statement of Aruvirallan Muttha, 13 Mar. 1896, report of H.M. Winterbotham on 1896 outbreak, L/PJ/6/422, 996/96, p. 11; R.H. Hitchcock, Supt. of Police, South Malabar, 'Report on the Mappilla Outbreak of 1915', 30 Mar. 1915, MJP Nos. 2080-84, 3 Sept. 1915 (Conf.), p. 66, Kozhikode Archives; C.A. Innes, Acting Malabar Magistrate to Sec., Judicial, 29 Mar. 1915 (Conf.), ibid., p. 21; Innes /to Govt. of Madras?/, 26 Dec. 1914, MJP No. 360, 18 Feb. 1915, p. 7, MRO; H. Bradley, Acting Malabar Magistrate to Chief Sec., Judicial, 25 Feb. 1894, MJP No. 568 (Conf.), 7 Mar. 1894, pp. 1 and 5, MRO; Correspondent, Calicut, New India, 18 Feb. 1922, p. 8; deposition of Palakaparambil Kolarveetil Koru, 1 Sept. 1922, P.W. No. 1, District Magistrate's proceedings, 1 Sept. 1922, MPP No. 542, 30 Sept. 1924, p. 3, MRO; Basel German Evangelical Missionary Society, 32nd Report of the Society for 1871, p. 13 and 73rd Report of the Society for 1912, p. 77, UTCL.

directed against the low-caste apostate was a particularly brutal and no doubt therefore a somewhat effective means of ensuring solidarity, of helping strengthen the 'horizontal' links between Moplah and Moplah at the expense of the 'vertical' bonds between the jenmi and his Hindu dependants. This is not to argue that Islam in Ernad was 'nothing but' a kind of proto-trade union or peasant league. However, it does seem to have been the medium through which functions, which in other circumstances are discharged by such bodies, were performed. But precisely because south Malabar Islam was not, like a peasant league, specifically designed to discharge these functions, the instrument proved to be clumsy and less than fully efficacious. The zeal of the typical outbreak participant for notoriety as a 'martyr to the faith'<sup>1</sup> was an indirect and uncertain form of guarantee that the outbreak would be directed along channels meeting with the approval of the Ernad Moplah community in general. The frenzied Moplah 'fanatic' was not always carefully discriminating in his choice of victim and the lives of a number of Hindus, such as a certain member of the goldsmith caste in the 1896 affair,<sup>2</sup> were attempted in outbreaks almost certainly merely because they were Hindus. In the same outbreak it is recorded that some of the shahid encamped in the great Manjeri temple on spotting one Kunhi Krishnan Nayar fired at him, calling out "'There goes a Kudimi (top-knot) man. Shoot

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1 See above p. 89.

2 Report of J.T. Gillespie, 26 Apr. 1896, loc. cit. p. 22.

him".<sup>1</sup> In other cases the religious form of the instrument may have permitted some Moplahs to attempt the murder of Hindus for personal reasons having nothing to do with jenmi oppression, claiming social and religious sanction for their crime by subsequently 'going out' as 'shahid'.<sup>2</sup> None of this however should obscure the undoubted fact that the outbreak was overwhelmingly<sup>3</sup> directed against the power network the Ernad Moplah felt was oppressing him. Moreover, incidents such as that in 1919 when, immediately after a murderous assault on an oppressive Nambudiri jenmi's wedding feast a Moplah gang released unharmed one Nambudiri on the grounds that he was said to be merely a poor guest going for meals<sup>4</sup>, indicate that the 'Moplah religious fanatic' was capable of a nice discrimination. Certainly the myth<sup>5</sup> that the Moplah who 'went out' tried to kill each and every Hindu he met does not bear scrutiny. The occasions when 'shahid'

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1 Statement of Valiya Mannil Chek, 29 Mar. 1896, report of H.M. Winterbotham, 10 Apr. 1896, L/PJ/6/422, 996/96, p. 20. Malayali Hindus, except for some low castes like the Cherumar and unlike the totally-shaven Moplahs, when shaving their hair left a tuft worn as a top-knot.

2 The putative outbreak plot of 1877 seems to have been such a case. See report of W. Logan, Malabar Magistrate, 25 Apr. 1877, P/1094, MJP No. 1134, 5 May 1877, pp. 586-98.

3 See figures given above, p. 23.

4 J.F. Hall, Malabar Magistrate to Sec., Judicial, 25 Apr. 1919, L/PJ/6/1608, 4582/19, MJP No. 1310, 9 June 1919, p. 5.

5 See for example A. MacGregor, Malabar Magistrate to Chief Sec., 3 Mar. 1873, P/401, MJP No. 384, 13 Mar. 1873, p. 198; 'Malabar and the Moplahs', a leaflet issued by the Madras Publicity Bureau, Parliamentary Papers, Vol. 26, Cmd. 1552, 1921, p. 40.

permitted Hindus to proceed unharmed were very numerous.<sup>1</sup>

However, it is most important to note that the outbreak was a weapon which could be of use only against infidel oppressors. Whatever sanctions a Moplah could use against Muslim tyrants, they could hardly include those derived from articles of faith which taught the sinfulness of the murder of a fellow believer.<sup>2</sup> On the contrary, there were several cases in which the enmity of a Moplah for one of his own religion who had oppressed him found outlet in outrage against Hindus. Thus, in the August 1849 outbreak which claimed several Hindus as victims one indigent young Moplah was led to 'go out' after his uncle had enriched himself at the expense of the participant's mother when the family property was divided.<sup>3</sup> In March 1884 Ossen Kutti Mammu, an Ernad Moplah verumpattomdar (simple tenant), threatened with eviction (for failure to pay rent) by both his Brahmin and his Moplah jennis, plotted an outbreak in which the former was to be the chief victim and the latter apparently

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1 See for example C.A. Innes, Acting Malabar Magistrate to Sec., Judicial, 29 Mar. 1915, MJP Nos. 2080-84 (Conf.), 3 Sept. 1915, p. 21, Kozhikode Archives; statement of Kantodiyil Kuttan, 12 Mar. 1915, *ibid.*, p. 51, L. Vibert, Acting Special Asst. Magistrate to Malabar Magistrate, 14 Apr. 1898, P/5506, MJP Nos. 1737-40, 11 Nov. 1898, p. 20; report of J.T. Gillespie, Acting Special Asst. Magistrate, Malabar, 26 Apr. 1896, L/PJ/6/433, 2060/96, MJP No. 1567, 30 Sept. 1896, pp. 19, 21 and 24; W. Logan to Chief Sec., 7 Feb. 1885, P/2634, MJP Nos. 1169-74, 2 May 1885, pp. 21-23.

2 As one of the Ernad Moplah ulema put it during the period of the 1921-22 rebellion:-

"According to the Mopla Koran killing of Moplas is prohibited."

Statement of Chackachamparambil Mammad Mulla, 22 July 1922, accused No. 1, Court of Special Judge, Calicut, Case No. 82 of 1922, Referred Trial No. 115, of 1922, p. 11, MHCA.

3 W. Robinson's report of 18 Oct. 1849, loc. cit., pp. 4981-82.



untouched.<sup>1</sup> Again, in 1915 three Moplahs, with grievances about what they regarded as the swindling behaviour of a Moplah 'lessor', though they assaulted him and burnt his house, then made as if to commit a 'fanatical' outbreak, killing a Tien and looting the houses of three Nairs who had given information to the authorities earlier in the year about an outbreak two of the three Moplahs were allegedly preparing.<sup>2</sup>

Under these circumstances the outbreak was of no use to the Moplah poor against that section of the Muslim rural community which was most likely to oppress them, the substantial Moplah kanamdar intermediaries who often stood between the jenmis and the verumpattomdars as tenants of the former and landlords in relation to the latter and who could rack-rent just as well as the jenmis.<sup>3</sup> The solidarity of community which was of such value to the Ernad Moplah in combatting high-caste Hindu power suppressed, at least in the context of the failure of British rule to act decisively to curb jenmi power, the incongruities in the entente between the big Moplah kanamdar and the rest of his co-religionists subordinate to the jenmi.

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1 C.A. Galton, Acting Malabar Magistrate to Chief Sec., 6 June 1884, (Conf.), MJP Nos. 1605-11, 2 July 1884, pp. 7 and 9, MRO; V.A. Brodie, Acting Head Asst. Magistrate, Malabar to Galton, 24 May 1884, ibid., pp. 20, 21 and 24.

2 Report of F.B. Evans, Malabar Magistrate, 22 Nov. 1915, P/11 (Conf.) MJP No. 3008, 6 Dec. 1915, p. 6. For another likely example see petition of Chek Haji, exhibit B in report of J.F. Hall, 25 Apr. 1919, L/PJ/6/1608, 4582/19, MJP No. 1310, 9 June 1919, pp. 25-26.

3 C.A. Innes, 'Strictly Confidential Note on the Malabar Tenancy Legislation', loc. cit., p. 34; W. Logan, 'Report on Malabar Land Tenures', Malabar Special Commission, 1881-82, Vol. I, pp. 1 and lxxx.

(c) As has been indicated, the outbreak persisted because the mass of Ernad Moplahs wanted it to. However, British policy from 1854 of fining amsoms which were involved in outbreaks and deporting many bread-winners as suspects diminished the return of the outbreak to the community. Indeed, after the passing of the Moplah Acts, it was not unknown for anxious Muslim inhabitants of the 'fanatic zone', more especially those with much property to lose, to seek to avoid the penalties of the special legislation by the disclosure of outbreak conspiracies to the authorities.<sup>1</sup> And yet, since the British were unwilling to tackle the root cause of the problem, the powers of the local high-caste hierarchy, and since there was little other means of resistance, outbreaks persisted, though on a more sparing scale.

That Moplahs hoped Government would be influenced to react favourably to their grievances seems indicated by the number of occasions on which Moplah 'writings', often left behind by outbreak participants themselves, complained of jenmi oppression and threatened worse outbreaks should Government continue to be supine. As Manjeri Athan Gurikal put it in his last testament,

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1 W. Robinson, Acting Malabar Magistrate to Acting Chief Sec., 8 Oct. 1857, P/328/24, MJP No. 1359, 16 Oct. 1857, p. 142; W. Logan, Malabar Magistrate to Officiating Chief Sec., 25 Apr. 1877, P/1094, MJP No. 1134, 5 May 1877, p. 588; W.G. Underwood, Acting Special Asst. Magistrate to Acting Malabar Magistrate, 22 June 1879, P/1427, MJP No. 1656, 16 July 1879, p. 1045; statement of K. Kunyunian, 22 June 1879, enclosure in ibid., p. 1047; C.A. Galton, Acting Malabar Magistrate to Chief Sec., 6 June 1884 (Conf.), MJP Nos. 1605-11, 2 July 1884, p. 11, MRO; W. Logan, 'Report on Malabar Land Tenures', loc. cit., Vol. I, p. lxxi; J.T. Gillespie, Acting Special Asst. Magistrate, Malabar to Malabar Collector, 26 Apr. 1896, L/PJ/6/433, 2060/96, MJP No. 1567, 30 Sept. 1896, p. 27.

referring to the machinations of certain "landlords and Rajahs", if these were "not put a stop to by the Sirkar, there will be ... no other alternative, but to cut off the heads of these Hindoos".<sup>1</sup> The outbreak must be seen partly as a peremptory demand for Government intervention. In view of this, it seems significant that, after the first, relatively modest gestures by Government to curb jenmi power through the legislative measures of 1887-1900<sup>2</sup> support for outbreaks dwindled until they were so dramatically ended for a 17-year period in 1898.

No doubt those most in favour of alternative forms of action to the outbreak would be those with most to lose from the fining it was liable to entail, the richer kanamdar intermediaries. This group would also have been that most able to afford the improvements the provision for compensation for which the 1887 and 1900 Acts intended to be a weapon of defence against the jenmi.<sup>3</sup> The influence of the substantial kanamdar intermediary in the Ernad Moplah community would certainly be considerable for though a tenant vis-à-vis the jenmi he was also landlord to numbers of under-tenants, many of them Muslims of course.<sup>4</sup> However it would be as much an error to over-

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1 'Writing of Syed Assan, Manjery Athan and all the others who've taken possession of Manjeri temple', appendix 2, Conolly to Sec., Judicial, 12 Oct. 1849, P/327/22, MJP No. 794, 1 Dec. 1849, p. 4788.

2 See above p. 40.

3 The limited extent to which the Act assisted "the lowest Moplahs" was noted by R.B. Wood, Acting Malabar Magistrate, to Insp.-Gen. of Police, 9 Oct. 1910, P/8786, MJP No. 87, 19 Jan. 1911, p. 16.

4 W. Logan, 'Report on Malabar Land Tenures', loc. cit., Vol. I, p. 1.

estimate the manipulative rôle of the more wealthy kanamdar in this instance as in the flush of the Moplah outbreak. As in the 19th century so in the period 1898-1915 far wider sections of the Ernad Moplah community than the kanamdar were interested in the prevailing forms of the resolution of grievance which became established. It was by no means only the substantial kanamdar who benefitted (at first) from the legislation of 1887-1900. Even the poorest tenant families, indeed even the average Malabar labourer with his hut and compound rented from the jenmi,<sup>1</sup> would presumably have been able to find the few annas needed for the expense of planting some fruit trees with which to erect some kind of barrier to eviction. However it is of some importance to note that the Tenant's Improvements Act applied to all those in a landlord relationship to others as well as all those in a tenant relationship.<sup>2</sup> Thus, the man who ought to have been most unambiguously the beneficiary of the Act was the actual cultivator who was landlord to no-one, and not the intermediary who, whilst he might gain much vis-à-vis the jenmi also might lose in relation to his under-tenants. Of course in practice the greater resources of the kanamdar intermediary would ensure that he would be able to register gains much in excess of those of the actual cultivator. Even so it

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1 A.F. Pinhey, Malabar Collector to Sec., Commissioner of Revenue Settlement, 25 Oct. 1902, P/6458, MBRP (RS, LR & A) No. 273, 18 Dec. 1902, p. 1.

2 Sections 3(1) and 3(2), 'Bill No. 6 of 1898, to Secure to Tenants in the Malabar District Compensation for Improvements', P/5502, MLP No. 80, 10 Dec. 1898, p. 5.

was the advantage accruing to the Ernad Moplah community at large from the legislation of 1887-1900 which was the chief factor behind the temporary abandonment after 1898 of the traditional method of challenging jenmi power. In the evidence collected for the 1896 report there are signs that some Moplahs were beginning to argue for the alternative of relying on redress for grievances through approach to the Collector.<sup>1</sup> Certainly, during the 1898-1915 period outbreak zone Moplahs showed themselves inclined to exploit the more constitutional methods of pressing their claims. In 1901, during his tour of Malabar, the Governor was presented with a petition from the Hidayut-ul-Muslimin Sabha about the difficulties experienced by Moplahs in persuading jenmis to sell land for mosque sites,<sup>2</sup> an issue which had previously led to outbreaks.<sup>3</sup> The following year the Moplahs of Kaipakancheri amsom, in the 'fanatic zone' brought a similar issue to the notice of the Collector via the Islam Sabha at Ponnani.<sup>4</sup>

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1 Statement of Puzhutini Kunyayu, 14 Mar. 1896, L/PJ/6/422, 996/96, 10 Apr. 1896, p. 12.

2 Govt. Order No. 407, MJP 7 Mar. 1902, p. 22. See also Private Sec. to Governor to Under Sec., 9 Nov. 1901, MJP No. 407 (Conf.), 7 Mar. 1902, p. 1, MRO.

3 See 'Memorandum of conversation between Walluvanaad Tahsildar and fanatics', 28 Aug. 1851, P/327/41, MJP No. 700, 20 Nov. 1851, pp. 3773-74.

4 A.F. Pinhey to Chief Sec., 19 Mar. 1903, P/6667, MJP No. 1792, 30 Nov. 1903, p. 210. For details of another instance of interior south Malabar Moplahs 'looking to Government' for the solution of their land disputes in this period see details of the petition the Moplahs of Kurumbathoor amsom, Ponnani taluk, sent to the District Magistrate in 1909 appealing for mel-charths taken by a Hindu over lands on which the local mosque stood to be set aside, judgement, Case No. 6 of 1924, Court of Session, South Malabar, 21 Jan. 1924, p. 2, KDCA.

In 1915 however the period of abstention from violence which the British appear to have won by the legislation of the late 19th century came to an end with the outbreak of that year, followed by another in 1919.<sup>1</sup> It had been clear for some time that even the limited protection conferred on the tenant by the 1887-1900 legislation had diminished as jenmis discovered ways of circumventing its provisions. As C.A. Innes the Collector in Malabar in 1911 observed of the Tenant's Improvements Act, it had at first "put the jenmi in a difficult position" so that naturally he "set his wits to work to find ways of evading it and he has partly succeeded".<sup>2</sup>

The still largely-unabated dominion in the Malabar countryside of the big jenmi made such circumvention (after some experience of the working of the Jenmi Registration Act<sup>3</sup>) possible in the case of the incidence of the land revenue. In 1915-16 the newly-appointed Court of Wards Manager of the Guruvayur Devaswom estate discovered that, under the Zamorin, estate tenants holding on kanam demises had been required to pay the assessment by the terms of the documents they had had to accept, in

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1 It would also appear that there was a thwarted attempt to organise an outbreak in June-July 1919, see J.A. Thorne, Malabar Magistrate to Chief Sec., 23 Mar. 1923, MPP No. 323 (Conf.), 21 Apr. 1923, p. 4, MRO and deposition of Kyru Nayar, Sub-Inspector of Police, n.d., P.W. No. 6 in District Magistrate's enquiry against Manjeri Chekku Gurikkal, ibid., p. 18.

2 Innes, Acting Collector, Malabar to Sec., Commissioner of Land Revenue and Forests, 26 Aug. 1911, P/9579, MRP No. 9 (Conf.), 2 Jan. 1914, p. 26.

3 A.F. Pinhey, Malabar Collector and Agent to Court of Wards to Sec., Court of Wards, 25 Oct. 1902, P/6678, MRP No. 596, 13 June 1903, p. 3; Pinhey to Court, 6 Feb. 1903, ibid., p. 4.

spite of the registration in the name of the jenmi.<sup>1</sup> By 1918 this resort was reported to be "becoming daily more general" and in practice an estimated two-thirds of the land revenue was being collected from tenants.<sup>2</sup> In the case of the Guruvayur Devaswom estate even verumpattom tenants, who were under no obligation to pay the assessment had been compelled to do so in many cases by an illegal arrangement between the kariastans (agents) of the estate and amsom officials involving unlawful remuneration to the latter.<sup>3</sup>

Among the many ways in which the Tenants' Improvements Act was rendered impotent, one method was to discount the higher rate for improvements by increasing rents.<sup>4</sup> Another manoeuvre involved obliging tenants to 'agree' in new lease deeds to clauses stating, falsely, that they had already been paid in consideration for improvements yet to be made.<sup>5</sup> Above all,

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- 1 Administration Report for fasli 1325 (1915-16) 18 Oct. 1916, P/10040, MCWP No. 55, 9 Dec. 1916, p. 5. See also A.F. Pinhey, Malabar Collector to Sec. to Commissioner, Revenue Settlement and Director of Department of Land Records and Agriculture, 1 June 1902, P/6445, MRP No. 754, 23 Aug. 1902, p. 440; Pinhey to Sec., Court of Wards, 6 Feb. 1903, P/6678, MRP No. 596, 13 June 1903, p. 4.
  - 2 Resolution Mis No. 1026/G-108, of Board of Revenue, 29 July 1918, P/10455, MRP No. 4007, 18 Dec. 1918, p. 11.
  - 3 Administration Report of Zamorin's Estate under the Court of Wards for fasli 1325 (1915-16), 18 Oct. 1916, loc. cit., p. 5. See also Kerala Patrika, 30 Jan. 1904, MNNR 1903-04, L/R/15/111, p. 63; Kerala Sanchari, 6 June 1917, MNNR Jan.-June 1917, L/R/15/123, p. 1717; Malabar Collector's replies, 18 July 1902 to petition of Puthia Kovilagam Viathen Sridevi alias the Valia Thamburathi, 29 June 1902, P/6925, MBRP (RS, LR & A) No. 73, 4 Mar. 1904, pp. 6-7.
  - 4 W. Francis, Acting Malabar Collector to Sec. to Commissioners of Land Revenue, 24 Oct. 1909, P/8541, MJP No. 308, 25 Feb. 1910, p. 5.
  - 5 A. Chandu Nambiar, Walluvanad Tahsildar to Malabar Collector, 10 Jan. 1899, P/5732, MLP No. 9, 6 Feb. 1899, p. 10.

since, in comparison with garden lands, improvements on wet lands were normally of trifling value,<sup>1</sup> the jenmi could resume full control over the latter (and through these over the tenant) by abrogating the traditional practice<sup>2</sup> of granting both kinds of cultivation on the same lease and instead at the time for renewal of leases issuing separate demises for wet lands and for garden lands.<sup>3</sup> Under these circumstances the efficacy of the Act could persist only as long as existing leases were not replaced by new ones incorporating such circumventing clauses. As Collector Bradley realised in 1894 the 12-year period of the kanam lease and a large number of verumpattom demises,<sup>4</sup> was critical for the successful operation of the Act,<sup>5</sup> and it seems

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- 1 See for example Court of Wards Resolution No. 1145, 19 May 1903, P/6678, MRP No. 596, 13 June 1903, p. 2; A.F. Pinhey, Malabar Collector and Agent to Court of Wards to Court, 6 Feb. 1903, ibid., p. 5; W. Francis, Acting Malabar Collector to Sec., Commissioners of Land Revenue, 24 Oct. 1909, P/8541, MJP No. 308, 25 Feb. 1910, p. 8; C.A. Innes, 'Strictly Confidential Note on Malabar Tenancy Legislation', P/35, (Conf.), MRP No. 3021, 26 Sept. 1917, p. 21.
- 2 A.F. Pinhey to Court of Wards, 6 Feb. 1903, loc. cit., p. 5.
- 3 C.A. Innes, 'Strictly Confidential Note on the Malabar Tenancy Legislation', loc. cit., p. 21; A. Edgington, Acting District Judge, South Malabar to Register, High Court, 12 Aug. 1911, P/9579, MRP No. 9 (Conf.), 2 Jan. 1914, p. 6.
- 4 Note by C. Sankaran Nair, enclosure No. 2 to appendix F(d), Govt. of Madras, Malabar Land Tenures Committee Report, p. 46; J.A. Thorne, Collector, Zamorin's Estate to Sec. to Commissioners, Court of Wards, n.d., P/10455, MRP No. 3121, 4 Sept. 1918, p. 3; F.B. Evans, Malabar Collector to Sec., Commissioner of Land Revenue, 26 Mar. 1918, P/10455, MRP No. 4007, 18 Dec. 1918, p. 7; Srinavasa Rao, Collector, Zamorin's Estate, Quinquennial Report on condition of Estate tenants, 16 Jan. 1923, P/11367, MCWP No. 5, 31 Jan. 1923, p. 25.
- 5 H. Bradley, Acting Malabar Magistrate to Sec., Commissioners of Land Revenue, 31 Jan. 1894, P/4621, MJP No. 2374 (Conf.), 1 Oct. 1894, p. 1.



not entirely coincidental therefore that not long after the 12-year period from 1900 (the date of the amended Act), in 1915, Moplah outbreaks were resumed.<sup>1</sup>

Moreover, there is evidence that the effect of the passing of a tenancy Act in 1914 in Cochin State, purporting to confer fixity of tenure on certain categories of kanamdar was to create apprehension among the jenmis of Malabar that similar measures were to follow there.<sup>2</sup> (In fact the Government of Madras rejected Innes' proposals of 1915<sup>3</sup>.) The result seems to have been a movement to convert kanam holdings to inferior tenancies-at-will and a consequent increase in discontent which helped end the previous constitutional period.<sup>4</sup>

### Conclusion

As a form of resistance to jenmi power the Moplah outbreak was crude and unsophisticated. It was subject to no fine control,

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1 The exact timing was determined by other factors, see below p. 219.

2 Note of an unnamed member of the Madras Secretariat, 6 May 1915, MRP No. 1288 (Conf.), 31 May 1915, p. 2, MRO; Legislative Council question of K.K.R. Kavalappara Muppil Nayar, a big south Malabar jenmi, for meeting of 25 May 1915, MRP No. 1287 (Conf.), 31 May 1915, p. 5, MRO. On the excitement occasioned in Malabar by the debates in Cochin preceding this legislation see endorsement D. No. 28, 28 May 1912 by C.A. Innes, Acting Collector, Malabar on memorial from inhabitants of Ponnani taluk to Governor-in-Council, 23 Apr. 1912, P/9579, MRP No. 9 (Conf.), 2 Jan. 1914, p. 31.

3 Govt. Order No. 3021, P/35, (Conf.) MRP 26 Sept. 1917, p. 6.

4 Survey of Kothachira desam, Ponnani, by A. Krishna Wariyar, 1916-17, G. Slater (ed.), Some South Indian Villages, pp. 168-69. See also report from District Magistrate of Malabar /to Govt. of India/, week ending 27 Jan. 1915, MJP No. 360 (Conf.), 18 Feb. 1915, p. 63, MRO; memorial from Father Kuriyakkos, and the Kanom tenants of Chowghat to Governor-in-Council, 4 July 1915, P/35 (Conf.), MRP No. 3021, 26 Sept. 1917, p. 2.

leadership was elementary or non-existent, demands were formulated in a haphazard way, organisation was of the most rudimentary and ad hoc kind. Moreover, it was useful only as a rough and ready way of limiting the exercise of the jenmi's power, not of permanently reducing or eliminating that power, which was sustained by the rights bestowed on the jenmi by Government. Only if British rule in Malabar could be ended or a massive change effected in the administration's policy of cultivating the jenmi as a 'political force on the side of Government'<sup>1</sup> could the latter be achieved. But it was evident that in the last analysis the administration would act decisively against the jenmis only if it were clear that support for them was more likely to weaken than strengthen British rule. Any such massive change in British policy could be brought about only by posing a threat to that rule.

That the materials for the creation of such a threat existed in Malabar, officials well-acquainted with the district were ready to acknowledge. In 1844 Collector Conolly spoke of the "considerable number of needy and lawless men, Moplahs in especial" in the outbreak zone ready to rise "at any time" against Government "if a sufficient prospect of plunder and impunity were held out to them".<sup>2</sup> But though an outbreak of necessity ended in physical clash with the forces of authority,

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1 See above p. 34.

2 H.V. Conolly to Sec., Judicial, 6 Feb. 1844, P/326/36, MJP No. 187, 8 Mar. 1844, p. 752. See also T.L. Strange to Conolly, 27 May 1842 quoted in minute of T.M. Lewin, Acting 3rd Judge, Court of Foujdaree Udalut [Criminal High Court] 30 June 1842, P/326/21, MJP Oct. 1842, pp. 4941-42.

the objective was not to eliminate Government power but self-immolation at the hands of authority. In 1849 with the whole country at their feet after the utter defeat of the sepoys sent against them, Manjeri Athan Gurikal's gang made no attempt to seize control, but merely awaited more troops so as to die in "fair fight with the Cirkar", as the Gurikal put it.<sup>1</sup> As a challenge to British rule the Moplah outbreak was mere ritual.

In 1880 the petition threatening, in the absence of agrarian reform, a bloodbath in Malabar<sup>2</sup> prompted one local official, District Judge Herbert Wigram, to suggest the preconditions for defiance of British power beyond formality:

"Our safety lies in the want of leaders, in the want of organisation, and in the knowledge of the Moplahs themselves, that any attempt at rebellion must end in failure".<sup>3</sup>

In fact the history of the deteriorating relationship of the Ernad Moplah with British rule from its very inception in 1792 indicates that of Wigram's three conditions only the last, belief in the possibility of victory, was the great desideratum for insurrection by the Moplahs after their attempt to challenge British dominion directly in 1800-02.

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1 Report of W. Robinson, 18 Oct. 1849, loc. cit., p. 4937; Robinson to Conolly, 3 Sept. 1852, P/327/56, MJP No. 154, 16 Mar. 1853, pp. 1875 and 1893. A similar case occurred in 1851, see 'Memorandum of conversation between Walluvanaad Tahsildar and fanatics', 28 Aug. 1851, P/327/41, MJP No. 700, 20 Nov. 1851, p. 3774.

2 See above p. 39.

3 H. Wigram, Officiating District Judge, South Malabar, to Chief Sec., 8 Nov. 1880, Govt. of Madras, Malabar Land Tenures, p. 17. More or less the same points had been made as early as 1844, see Minute No. 187, 8 Mar 1844, MJP, p. 754.

CHAPTER 2

The Ernad Moplah and British Rule before the Advent of the  
Indian National Congress into the South Malabar Interior

Part 1: The First Moplah Rebellion against British Rule in Malabar,  
1800-02

Defiance of British power by the Moplah agricultural population of interior south Malabar dates from the earliest period of the rule of the East India Company in the district, the decade after the Muslim ruler of Mysore, Tippu Sultan, ceded Malabar in 1792.

The mere fact that British rule replaced Tippu's administration in the province inevitably gave rise to apprehension among the Ernad Moplahs, since Mysorean hegemony had provided them with unique opportunities to advance their interests at the expense of the high-caste jenmi hierarchy. The earliest British administration of the district, the Joint Commission from Bengal and Bombay of 1792-93,<sup>1</sup> noted that because of Tippu's persecution in 1788-89 of the Malabar Hindus<sup>2</sup> many of the jenmis,

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1 On 23 Mar. 1792 Governor-General Cornwallis ordered the appointment of this body for the purpose of enquiry into the state of the newly-conquered province, Report of Joint Commission of 1792-93, Vol. I, pp. 79-80.

2 That Tippu did indeed attempt a forcible conversion campaign during his period of power in Malabar is indicated by the reported response a decade later of one Hindu aristocrat, the Tacherry Kavel Tirumalpaad /Nilambur Tirumulpad/, to an invitation to join the Sultan in his struggle at that time with the British:

"Your Master /Tippu/ before made a chela /convert/ of me, if he now comes /returns to Malabar/ I will /have to/ put the Topy (Mopilla's Cap) on me, therefore get you gone!".  
Information delivered by Shekary Warrior, Karrigar of the Cotiote Parapanaad Rajah, 10 Mar. 1799, Malabar District Records, Vol. No. 1734, p. 34, MRO. See also petition from Kapul Pacree Uny Moideen /to Tippu/, apparently discovered

who were nearly all of that religion<sup>1</sup>, "were reduced to the necessity of relinquishing every thing and of taking refuge in Travancore"<sup>2</sup> where a Hindu prince maintained his independence of Mysore. Since the "brahmin landholders, as well as many of the Nayrs" were prevented from fear of their Mysorean rulers "from ever trusting their persons at the Mohammedan Cutcheries"<sup>3</sup> Tippu's officers were obliged to settle, for land revenue purposes, with the kanamdars.<sup>4</sup> These 'farmers', as the British often called them<sup>5</sup> were, in south Malabar, very often Moplabs

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at fall of Tippu's capital of Seringapatam in 1799, item 29, unbound correspondence, folder 1796-99 in Box I, 1754-99, ibid., 180al; entries for 14 July and 20 July 1788, G/37/7, Tellicherry Factory Records, pp. 183-84; William Lewis etc., Factors at Tellicherry to Fort William, 2 Sept. 1788, ibid., p. 217; M. Murray to Major Alexander Dow, sending intelligence from Tippu's camp, 12 Mar. 1789, G/37/8, Tellicherry Factory Records, p. 99; A. Walker, entry for 19 Sept. 1790, chapter 1 'War with Tippoo, Journal of the Campaigne of 1790', Journal of 1790-1810, Walker Papers, 181dl, p. 7; 'Translation of a Maharasta paper issued by Tippoo Sultan under his seal and signature, addressed to Mahomed Ismoil Tulookdar of Poonanee', [apparently 1788 A.D.], enclosure in T. Warden, Principal Collector, Malabar to Board of Revenue, 19 Feb. 1811, P/289/79, MBRP 28 Feb. 1811, p. 1534.

- 1 J.W. Wye, Collector of Velatre [to Malabar Commissioners?], 4 Feb. 1801, P/275/45, MRP 20 Feb. 1801, p. 178; report of Malabar Commissioners to Board of Revenue, 28 July 1801, P/286/65, MBRP 10 Aug. 1801, p. 9253; A. Walker, 'History of Malabar', n.d., but possibly 1801-02, Vol. 3, p. 339, Walker Papers, 184a2. See also Chapter 1.
- 2 Report of Joint Commission of 1792-93, Vol. II, p. 4. See also ibid., Vol. I, p. 61.
- 3 Offices for public business.
- 4 Report of Joint Commission of 1792-93, Vol. I, p. 174.
- 5 Ibid., p. 173.

who, as the Joint Commissioners observed had, in consequence of the Hindu exodus, "during the late Mohammedan government considerably augmented their formerly more circumscribed possessions" and had become "the principal land-holders, in what are thence often distinguished under the denomination of the Mapilla Maplah districts" of interior south Malabar.<sup>1</sup>

When, in the wake of victorious British arms, the Hindu jenmis in 1792 returned to Malabar from exile eager to reclaim their rights in their ancient landed estates,<sup>2</sup> the servants of the East India Company responsible for the administration of the newly-won province quickly realised the menace of Moplah sedition intrinsic to a "general restoration" of the dispossessed "Brahmin and Nayr landholders".<sup>3</sup> The Joint Commissioners observed that such a re-instatement would entail not only resistance but "disaffection" and perhaps even "open rebellion" on the part of the "Mapilla Kanumkars" of interior south Malabar who, during the period of jenmi depression and exile, had

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1 Ibid., Vol. I, pp. 163 and 179. See also W.G. Farmer, Malabar Supravisor, to Malabar Commissioners, 14 July 1793, P/366/15, BRP 8 Oct. 1793, pp. 354-55; report of Major Walker, 15 Apr. 1800, P/381/12, BPSP 17 June 1800, pp. 3193-94; A. Walker, 'Account of Malabar', n.d., p. 616, Walker Papers, 184c9, Malabar Commission to Board of Revenue, 28 July 1801, P/286/65, MBRP 10 Aug. 1801, p. 9182.

2 Voucher No. 39, W.G. Farmer's report on the nature of ancient Malabar tenures and of rent and revenue in Malabar, 25 Feb. 1793, Govt. of Madras, Malabar Land Tenures, 1885, p. 152; A. Walker, 'Account of Malabar', n.d., p. 105, Walker Papers, 184c9.

3 Report of Joint Commission of 1792-93, Vol. I, p. 179; W.G. Farmer to Malabar Commission, 14 July 1793, P/366/15, BRP 8 Oct. 1793, p. 355.

"habituated themselves to the ideas of independent tenure".<sup>1</sup>

On assuming responsibility for the province the new British administration was clearly anxious to secure the acquiescence to its sovereignty of the Moplah cultivating population of south Malabar.<sup>2</sup> For their part the chief men of the latter had expressed their disposition to place themselves under the rule of the Company and meet its revenue demands provided the jenmis' dues were not re-imposed.<sup>3</sup> A basis for an understanding between the new Government and the rural Moplahs of south Malabar therefore existed, especially since the Superintendent of this part of the province, a Mr. Stevens, favoured a course of maintaining the kanamdars in possession of the disputed lands to the exclusion of the jenmis.<sup>4</sup>

In fact Stevens was over-ruled by his superiors who, on grounds of "justice and true policy" declared themselves in favour of "restoring these Jenmkars jenmis to their rights as far as the present state of the country will admit".<sup>5</sup> No doubt

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1 Report of Joint Commission of 1792-93, Vol. I, pp. 179-80 and Vol. II, p. 65.

2 W.G. Farmer's report, 25 Feb. 1793, loc. cit., p. 154. See also Report of Joint Commission of 1792-93, Vol. I, pp. 81, 161, 261 and 263; Farmer to Govt. of Bombay, 6 Sept. 1792, P/E/5, BPSP 9 Oct. 1792, pp. 717-18; instructions of Farmer to Capt. Richard Gore, 28 Aug. 1792, ibid., p. 725.

3 W.G. Farmer's report, 25 Feb. 1793, loc. cit., pp. 153-54, and Report of Joint Commission of 1792-93, Vol. I, p. 173.

4 'Report of Messrs. Duncan and Boddam Malabar Commissioners to Sir John Shore Governor-General on their arrival in Calcutta', 2 Feb. 1794, supplement to Report of Joint Commission of 1792-93, Vol. II, p. 211.

5 Ibid.

the exigencies of the Company's policy of collaboration with the former Hindu aristocracy of Malabar in the war which resulted in Tippu's cession of the province<sup>1</sup> dictated a solution to the jenmi-kanamdar land dispute in favour of the former. Of the foremost of the returning Hindu aristocrats, the Zamorin of Calicut, it was noted that his feelings were "for the Nairs, Namburis and Brahmins, who returned with him from banishment in Travancore, and not for the real cultivators of the land" and that, indeed, many of his family were themselves considerable jenmis.<sup>2</sup> It is therefore significant that when, in 1793, the British administration explained to the Zamorin their maxims for a settlement of the jenmi-kanamdar problem, the Rajah and his family "fully agreed" to them "as fair and beneficial to the Jelmkaars jenmis."<sup>3</sup> Under these rules only those Moplah

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1 Robert Abercromby, Governor of Bombay, to Malabar Commissioners, 20 Apr. 1792, P/E/5, BPSP 22 May 1792, p. 341. See also Report of Joint Commission of 1792-93, Vol. I, p. 68; Malabar Commission to Board of Revenue, 28 July 1801, P/286/65, MBRP 10 Aug. 1801, pp. 9079-84.

2 W.G. Farmer's report, 25 Feb. 1793, loc. cit., p. 153. See also Report of Joint Commission of 1792-93, Vol. I, pp. 177-78. The "real cultivators of the land", where they were Moplah tenantry, more than reciprocated this coolness of the Hindu aristocracy to themselves, see statement of Farmer, 27 May 1792 in Report of Joint Commission of 1792-93, Vol. I, pp. 106 and 168, Vol. II, p. 111; 'Mr. Farmer's Transactions during Major Dow's absence', apparently a minute by Farmer, n.d., P/E/5, BPSP 21 Aug. 1792, p. 451; Farmer to Govt. of Bombay, 6 Sept. 1792, ibid., 9 Oct. 1792, p. 717; Capt. Gore to Farmer, 30 Aug. 1792, ibid., p. 728; report of W.G. Farmer, 25 Feb. 1793, loc. cit., p. 154.

3 'Articles settled with regard to the JELMKAARS and to their share of the Revenue for Malayali year 969 1793-94', from the Diary of the Malabar Supravisor, 28 Oct. 1793, in W. Logan



usurpations which had occurred before 11 September 1787 were to be legalised, thus making actionable what must have been the great majority of cases,<sup>1</sup> which occurred when the Hindu high-castes fled from Tippu's campaign of forcible conversion to Islam in 1788-89. The British now laid down that such returning jenmis as had not so far regained possession of their property might claim from the kanamdars that share of the produce the jenmis had received in 1788-89, the penalty for obduracy on the part of any kanamdar being judicial action to give the jenmis repossession of their lands "when the time they leased them for expires".<sup>2</sup>

In practice it seems unlikely that, for the first few years after 1792 when British power in their newly-acquired and turbulent province was still limited, the principles for settling the jenmi-kanamdar problem could be fully enforced. Certainly, as late as 1800 the Malabar Commissioners reported that in the two

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(ed.) A Collection of Treaties, Engagements and Other Papers of Importance relating to British Affairs in Malabar, 1891, p. 208. See also Report of Joint Commission of 1792-93, Vol. II, pp. 68-69; 'Report of Messrs. Duncan and Boddam to Sir John Shore (Governor-General) on their arrival in Calcutta', 2 Feb. 1794, supplement to Report of Joint Commission of 1792-93, Vol. II, Vol. II, p. 210; 'Regulations for Courts of Adaulut and Court of Appeal', Section I, XV, ibid., Vol. III, no p. numbers, Governor-General-in-Council to Govt. of Bombay, 27 Mar. 1794, P/366/16, BRP, 29 Apr. 1794, p. 171.

1 The fullest discussion of this point appears to be in T. Warden, Malabar Collector, to Board of Revenue, Sept. 1815, P/291/53, MBRP 25 Sept. 1815, p. 11080. Warden's first hand experience of Malabar dated back into the 18th century. See also Murdoch Brown [a planter, trader and official of long experience in Malabar] to Francis Buchanan n.d. [1801], P/286/58, MBRP 27 Apr. 1801, pp. 4822-23, and Malabar Commission to Board of Revenue, 28 July 1801, P/286/65, MBRP 10 Aug. 1801, p. 9075.

2 'Articles settled ...', Diary of Malabar Supravisor, 28 Oct. 1793 in W. Logan (ed), loc. cit., p. 208, and Report of Joint Commission of 1792-93, Vol. II, pp. 68-69.

'Moplah districts' of Velatre (which later became the northern part of Walluvanad taluk) and Ernad the Company's Government was "far from being unequivocally established".<sup>1</sup> Apart from the constant law and order problem the British faced in Malabar during the first decade or so after 1792, the firm establishment of the Company's power in the province had also been inhibited by the decision in September 1794 to lease for purposes of revenue collection the majority of its districts to their ancient Hindu rulers.<sup>2</sup> Though, because of the failure of these chiefs to fulfil their engagements, the collections were, after five years experience of the experiment, placed under the sole control of the officers of the Government,<sup>3</sup> the earliest years of British rule in Malabar saw the influence of the Company's European servants undermined by that of the Rajahs whom they had placed between themselves and the people.<sup>4</sup>

The British policy from 1794 of re-instating Hindu aristocrats whose main object was "regaining their landed possessions"

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1 'A List of the Districts of the Province of Malabar according to their usual Political Divisions', enclosure in Malabar Commissioners to Govt. of Madras, 14 Aug. 1800, P/286/48, MBRP 29 Dec. 1800, p. 10791. See also Capt. A. Walker, Military Sec., to General Stuart, 24 Aug. 1799, Wellesley Papers, Add 13682, p. 88; Walker to General Stuart, 3 Apr. 1800, Walker Papers, 182d18, Box 1782-99, 'Private Papers' collection, no p. numbers; minute of Malabar Commissioner J. Spencer, 18 Apr. 1800, P/381/13, BPSF 17 June 1800, p. 3379.

2 Malabar Commissioners to Govt. of Madras, 14 Aug. 1800, P/286/48, MBRP 29 Dec. 1800, pp. 10781-82.

3 Ibid.

4 J.W. Wye, Collector, Vellatre, Shernad, Betutnad and Parappanad, to Board of Revenue, 4 Feb. 1801, P/275/45, MRP 20 Feb. 1801, p. 184; Malabar Commission to Board of Revenue, 28 July 1801, P/286/65, MBRP 10 Aug. 1801, pp. 9210.

in the 'Moplah areas',<sup>1</sup> might itself be thought likely to have resulted in a solution of the jenmi-kanamdar problem in favour of the former. In practice, though the attempts of the leading Rajahs to reduce the Moplah usurpers were noted by the Joint Commissioners almost as soon as Tippu's forces had been expelled from Malabar,<sup>2</sup> the Moplahs were able, almost throughout the 1790s, to resist with remarkable success the forces of the Hindu chiefs. Not only were the south Malabar Moplahs able to win a number of famous victories in pitched battle with the Rajahs of the Zamorin's family,<sup>3</sup> they were able to continue their usurpations of landed property in the 'Moplah districts' for several years after Tippu's cession of the province.<sup>4</sup> Indeed, by 1796-97 it was reported by one British observer that the "power of the Rajahs" had been "nearly overwhelmed by the superior activity and numbers of the Mapillahs".<sup>5</sup> The Hindu aristocrats during

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1 W.G. Farmer's report, 25 Feb. 1793, loc. cit., p. 154. See also Report of Joint Commission of 1792-93, Vol. I, p. 168.

2 Report of Joint Commission of 1792-93, Vol. I, pp. 87, 88, 163 and 238. See also extract of a letter from Lt. John Comyn, on the Bombay Establishment, 30 Mar. 1793, Orme Papers, India, Vol. XVII, p. 5011.

3 Report of Joint Commission of 1792-93, Vol. I, p. 87; A. Walker, 'History of Malabar', n.d., Vol. 2, p. 620, Walker Papers, 184a1; W.G. Farmer's report of 25 Feb. 1793, loc. cit., p. 154.

4 Report of Major Walker, 15 Apr. 1800, P/381/12, BPSP 17 June 1800, pp. 3193-94. See also opinion of J.W. Wye, Asst. in charge of Shernaad, quoted in ibid., pp. 3179-80; Walker to General Stuart, 24 Aug. 1799, Wellesley Papers Add 13682, p. 97; Walker 'Memoir on Malabar in 1790 /sic/ with Correspondence and Documents respecting the same country', [apparently 1797] appendix 2 to Walker's 'History of Malabar', Vol. V, pp. 81 and 82, Walker Papers, 184a4.

5 A. Walker, 'Observations on the Administration of Malabar

the 1790s had proved their incapacity to impose, by exploiting the powers that had been placed in their hands by the revenue settlement of September 1794, their own terms on their Muslim subjects in south Malabar. Certainly two years after this settlement the Nambudiri jenmis in this area were still complaining to the British of their disappointment in failing to recover their lands from their Moplah usurpers.<sup>1</sup>

In fact the British in their initial anxiety to placate the 'Jungle Moplahs', as they called the Muslim agriculturalist population of the southern 'Moplah districts',<sup>2</sup> had taken the precaution of recruiting them to a number of Malabar's revenue and police posts, more especially in these areas where Moplahs were numerous and combative.<sup>3</sup> Moreover, although the Zamorin

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during the year 1796-97', n.d., Walker Papers, 181d8. See also 'Translate of a letter from the Zamorine to the Southern Supt.', 20 Feb. 1796, P/366/18, BRP 28 Mar. 1796, p. 233; A.W. Handley, Acting Supravisor, Malabar to Govt. of Bombay, 2 Mar. 1796, ibid., p. 238; Temporary Southern Supt. /to Govt of Bombay?/ 5 Feb. 1797, P/353/69, BMP 12 Mar. 1797, p. 716; John Smee, Acting Southern Supt. to Capt. William Sholl, O/C Velatre, 15 Feb. 1797, ibid., 18 Mar. 1797, pp. 762-63.

1 Walker to Wilkinson, President, Malabar Commission, 20 Dec. 1796, item 16, folder '1796-99', unbound correspondence, 1754-99, box I, Walker Papers, 180a1.

2 Report of Joint Commission of 1792-93, Vol. I, pp. 163-64; J. Stevens, Malabar Supravisor /to Govt. of Bombay/, 7 July 1794, P/353/61, BMP 7 Aug. 1794, p. 771. See also report of H.M. Winterbotham, 5 May 1896, L/PJ/6/433, 2060/96, MJP No. 1567, 30 Sept. 1896, p. 66.

3 Report of Joint Commission of 1792-93, Vol. I, pp. 200-02, 261-63 and 267, Vol. II, pp. 63-64; letter from Tacherry Tirupaad, 4 Aug. 1798, Malabar 2nd Commission, Revenue Diaries, 3 Sept. 1798, Malabar District Records Vol. No. 1715, p. 70, MRO; letter from Tacherry Tirupaad, 4 Sept. 1798, ibid., 10 Sept. 1798, p. 131; 'Translation of a paper delivered to Mr. Duncan by the Eralpoor raja and Shamnauth on 2 Dec. 1795' in

was able on occasion to exploit the ignorance of the Company's army officers by using fear of them to levy a traditional death duty on Moplah estates (called purushanterum) which the British administration had banned,<sup>1</sup> it would appear that upto the final destruction of Tippu's Raj in Mysore in 1799, British policy was if possible to avoid confronting the Moplahs with the Company's armed forces.<sup>2</sup> The fall of Tippu's capital of Seringapatam in May 1799, however, set in motion a train of events which culminated in the adoption of a less conciliatory policy towards the Moplahs.

As long as Tippu was a power above the Ghats in neighbouring Mysore the resistance of the Moplah usurpers to the returned Hindu jenmis received no "effectual Check", from the new British rulers and the contest between the two rival groups remained

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'Notes from Correspondence relative to Malabar from 23 Mar. 1792 after the British took possession, to December 1795', Home Miscellaneous Series, H/585, p. 805; A. Walker to Wilkinson, President, Malabar Commission, 22 Dec. 1796, 'Letter Book, 1796 and 1800', p. 30, Walker Papers, 181d12; Capt. A. Walker, Military Sec. to General Stuart, 24 Aug. 1799, Wellesley Papers, Add. 13682, pp. 77 and 89. See also 'Revenue Regulations Established for the Administration of Malabar', ibid., Vol. III, Regulation X, no p. numbers. The names of the 25 parbutties (revenue collectors) of Ernad district given in the unheaded enclosure, n.d., in J. Law, Ernad Collector to Sec., Board of Revenue, 5 Feb. 1801 (P/286/54, MBRP 2 Mar. 1801, enclosure pp. 1-2 opposite vol. p. 2392), reveal that about three-quarters were Moplahs.

1 W.G. Farmer's report, 25 Feb. 1793, loc. cit., p. 154; Report of Joint Commission of 1792-93, Vol. I, p. 162; Regulation LI, Revenue Regulations established for the administration of Malabar, ibid., Vol. III, no p. numbers; Governor-General-in-Council to Govt. of Bombay, 27 Mar. 1794, P/366/16, BRP 29 Apr. 1794, p. 171.

2 W.G. Farmer's report, 25 Feb. 1793, loc. cit., p. 154.

unresolved.<sup>1</sup> The importance the Company's servants placed on the appeasement of the Moplah agriculturalist population of south Malabar<sup>2</sup> is no doubt partly accounted for by the threat to the imperfectly-grounded British dominion in the province posed by any accommodation on the Moplahs' part to the political ambitions towards Malabar Tippu was suspected of still harbouring.<sup>3</sup> The presence so near at hand of the power under which, on balance,<sup>4</sup> they had been able considerably to advance their interests was certainly felt by the 'Jungle Moplahs' to be very much to their advantage.<sup>5</sup> Moreover, in one well-documented case

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1 Opinion of J.W. Wye, Asst. in charge of Shernaad, quoted in report of Major Walker, 15 Apr. 1800, loc. cit., p. 3180. See also J. Smee, Malabar Commissioner to Malabar Commission, 31 Jan. 1799, P/366/25, BRP 27 Sept. 1799, p. 938.

2 W.G. Farmer's report, 25 Feb. 1793, loc. cit., p. 154.

3 James Stevens, Malabar Supervisor, to Govt. of Madras, 22 Mar. 1794, P/E/7, BPSP 22 Apr. 1794, p. 256; A. Walker, 'Essay on Malabar' [1798?], Walker Papers, 182c5, p. 57. See also Jonathan Duncan, Governor of Bombay to Earl of Mornington, Governor-General, 9 Oct. 1799 (Private), Wellesley Papers, Add 13698, p. 275.

4 The record of the : relations of the Mysorean administration of Malabar with the 'Jungle Moplahs' is by no means without its instances of conflict, See for example John Beaumont etc., Factors at Tellicherry to Michael Firth, Resident at Calicut, 15 May 1786 and Firth to Beaumont etc., 16 May 1786, G/37/6, Tellicherri Factory Records, pp. 121-22; A. Walker 'Transactions in Malabar', n.d., Vol. I, Walker Papers, 184a9 p. 369; A. Walker, 'Account of Malabar', n.d., p. 108, ibid., 184c9; Mr. Smee, Malabar Commission to Walker (private), 21 Mar. 1800, box 1782-99, ibid., 182dl8; Report of Joint Commission of 1792-93, Vol. I, pp. 49-50, 163-64 and 263.

5 Opinion of J.W. Wye, Asst. in charge of Shernaad, quoted in report of Major Walker, 15 Apr. 1800, loc. cit., p. 3180. See also Walker's 'Memoir on the Actual State of Malabar in regard to its Revenues and Civil Government ... in September 1801', Oct. 1801, Wellesley Papers, Add 13682, pp. 121-22. For some time after the final crushing of Tippu's power by

at least, the Moplah kanamdar interest was closely linked with the fortunes of the 'Tiger of Mysore'.

Elambulasherry Unni Mutta Muppan was one of those "farmer[s]" who, when the high-caste Hindus had fled the country in the Mysorean period, had become "effective proprietor[s]" of their land-holdings in the 'Moplah district' of Velatre.<sup>1</sup> In 1786-87 it had been thought prudent as a means of guaranteeing his good behaviour to take him and 100 followers into the pay of Tippu's Government<sup>2</sup> on behalf of which he participated in 1791 in the war against the East India Company.<sup>3</sup> After Tippu's cession of Malabar, Unni Mutta proved himself consistently inimical to British rule<sup>4</sup> the blustering defiance of which he felt confident enough to indulge in being rather well conveyed in a message the Muppan (elder, headman) sent a British officer who had restrained his levying 'taxes' from the local population in one part of

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the British in 1799 large numbers of 'Jungle Moplahs' continued to believe that the Sultan had not been killed but that he was still at the head of a great army and would shortly re-enter Malabar, Walker to J. Duncan, 24 May 1800 and Walker to General Stuart, 15 June 1800, 'Private letters to different persons 1800 and 1801', Walker Papers, 181d16, pp. 18 and 55.

1 Report of Joint Commission of 1792-93, Vol. I, pp. 265-66.

2 Ibid., p. 263.

3 Ibid., p. 264.

4 Ibid., Vol. II, p. 52; C. Peile, Southern Supt., Malabar to Malabar Commission, 7 Mar. 1799, P/381/2, BPSP 29 Mar. 1799, p. 1838; J.W. Wye, on deputation at Manaarghaut, to Malabar Commission?, 1 Dec. 1798, Malabar District Records Vol. No. 1731, p. 306, MRO; James Stevens, Malabar Supervisor to Govt. of Bombay, 25 Mar. 1794, P/E/7, BPSP 22 Apr. 1794, p. 253; Stevens to Govt. of Bombay, 21 June 1794, P/115/26, BePolP 29 Aug. 1794, p. 1431.

Velatre:

"For what reason you, your Nayrs, head Chitties [a Hindu trading caste], other Chitties and Custom People have put a stop to my Makama [a tax]? [Unless the status quo ante is restored] I will take good care of you and your Chitties. Do not think that I have much fear either of you, your Battalion People or guards ... I desire you to take care that no harm happens in Maquram [a Malabar month] to you or your Chitties. Have you not heard of the Murder and Robbery committed even at the Cutcherry at Perumtalamanna? Even in your Dreams do not think to put<sup>1</sup> a stop to what I do. Have you not heard of my Bravery?"

Unni Mutta not only maintained seditious contact with Seringapatam<sup>2</sup> but also manifested what were clearly political

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- 1 'Translate Ola [leaf writing] from Yelambullacherry Unie Moota to Mr. Mellingchamp the officer for his personal information', n.d., received 9 Apr. 1798, P/366/23, BRP 16 Oct. 1798, p. 1590. See also Report of Joint Commission of 1792-93, Vol. I, p. 261. For other details of tax-gathering activities by Unni Mutta see J.W. Wye, Collector, Vellatre, Betutnaad, Shernaad and Parapanaad to Malabar Commissioners, 29 Sept. 1800, Malabar Records, Vol. 2388, p. 10, MRO; James Stevens, Senior Supravisor, Malabar to Lt. Col. Bannatyne, O/C Malabar, 16 June 1794, Malabar District Records, Vol. 2155, p. 9685, MRO; examination of Purtumpidiakel Marcar, 11 Aug. 1799, P/381/9, BPSP 21 Feb. 1800, p. 732.
- 2 J. Stevens, Malabar Supervisor, to Govt. of Madras, 22 Mar. 1794, P/E/7, BPSP 22 Apr. 1794, p. 256; Report of Joint Commission of 1792-93, Vol. I, pp. 261 and 264-65; C. Peile, Southern Supt., to Malabar Commission, 7 Mar. 1799, P/381/2, BPSP 29 Mar. 1799, pp. 1838-39; 'Information as to the Connection and strength of such Mopillahs as have lately assembled to resist the Authority of Government, obtained through the medium of Mr. J.W. Wye, Translator, Kakooke Uny Moidene etc.', 25 Feb. 1800, P/381/10, BPSP 2 Apr. 1800, pp. 1287-88. See also 'petitions from Golaum Mahomed Moossa [Unni Mutta] to Tippoo Sulatun', n.d., apparently discovered at the fall of Tippu's capital of Seringapatam in 1799, item 29, Walker Papers, 1801, unbound correspondence, 1754-99, box I; Hussan Ali Khan [formerly foujdar, a Govt. officer in charge of police matters, of the Calicut Province under Tippu] to Mahomed Moossa, extracted from 'Royal Mandate under date 21 Deenee of the year Rasykh', ibid; J. Stevens to Govt. of Madras, 22 Mar. 1794, P/E/7, BPSP 14 Jan. 1794, p. 256; Stevens to Lt. Col. Bannatyne, O/C Malabar, 12 May 1794, Malabar District Records Vol. No. 2155, p. 9675, MRO.



ambitions of his own in defiance of the British authority, conducting himself "more like an independent Chieftain, than a subject".<sup>1</sup> As the Joint Commissioners, not without mortification, expressed it in 1793:

"what ideas he has of obedience may be judged by his flags, his Nekareh<sup>2</sup> and beating the Nobit,<sup>3</sup> as well as having in his pay, exclusive of Mappillas, several car-natic Sepoys."<sup>4</sup>

Even before the fall of Seringapatam in May 1799, antipathy on the part of south Malabar Moplahs to a power so evidently favouring a restoration of the Hindu jenmi had been unmistakable.<sup>5</sup>

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1 'List of names given by the Cotiote Paripanaad Rajah of those to whom Tippoo Sultaun has sent Phirmaunds /presumably firmans', edicts/', signed C. Peile, 9 Feb. 1799, P/381/2, BPSP 22 Mar. 1800, p. 1634. See also W. Macleod, Principal Collector, Malabar to Chief Sec., 3 May 1802, Malabar Records, Vol. 2308, pp. 54-55, MRO; Peile to Duncan, 6 Feb. 1799, enclosure in Duncan to Earl of Mornington, Governor-General (private), 13 Mar. 1799, p. 864, Wellesley Papers, Add 13695.

2 A kettle-drum, a mark of state.

3 Corruption of 'naubat', musical instruments sounding at the gateway of a great man at intervals.

4 Report of Joint Commission of 1792-93, Vol. I, pp. 260-61. See also J. Stevens, Malabar Supervisor, to Govt. of Bombay, 25 Mar. 1794, P/E/7, BPSP 22 Apr. 1794, p. 253; C. Peile, Southern Supt., to Malabar Commission, 7 Mar. 1799, P/381/2, BPSP 29 Mar. 1799, p. 1839; 'Examination of Purtumpidiakel Marcar', 11 Aug. 1799, enclosure in G. Waddell, Acting Southern Supt., to Malabar Commission, 11 Aug. 1799, P/381/9, BPSP 21 Feb. 1800, p. 732; Malabar Commissioners to Govt. of Madras, 14 Aug. 1800, P/286/48, MBRP 29 Dec. 1800, p. 10791.

5 See James Stevens, Malabar Supervisor to Lt. Col. Macpherson, O/C Malabar, 28 Sept. 1795, P/E/8, BPSP 23 Oct. 1795, p. 376; Kannu Kuruppa /apparently to James Stevens, Southern Supt., evidently the son of the Malabar Supervisor of the same name/, n.d., P/E/8, BPSP 26 Oct. 1795, p. 425; J.W. Wye, on deputation to Manaar, to C. Peile, Southern Supt., 15 Dec. 1798, P/380/74, BPSP 28 Dec. 1798, p. 5215.

However Moplah hostility to the Company's rule was exacerbated with the final defeat of Tippu. This circumstance was exploited under a new British policy of settling accounts with those Moplahs, a most considerable group, whose defiance of the Company's legal code it had been thought necessary, as long as the Mysorean power remained intact, to some degree to indulge.<sup>1</sup> News of the decisive crushing of the Muslim power in Mysore had acted "with electric effect" on the rival castes in Malabar "inspiring the Nairs with hope, as much as it depressed the Mapillahs". During June 1799 "numerous Complaints against various Mopillas for Murders and robberies were preferred and numbers Seized, who before could never be laid hold of".<sup>2</sup> It

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1 See G. Waddell, Acting Southern Supt. to Malabar Commission, 7 June 1799, P/366/25, BRP 19 July 1799, p. 632; Malabar Commission to Waddell, 10 June 1799, *ibid.*, p. 633; Malabar Commission to Maj.-Gen. J. Hartley, O/C Malabar, 10 June 1799, *ibid.*, p. 635; minute of Spencer, Malabar Commission, 14 Aug. 1799, item 175, P/117/8, BePolP 5 June 1800; J. Duncan to Earl of Mornington (Private), 9 Oct. 1799, Wellesley Papers, Add 13698, p. 274; Duncan to Walker (private), 27 Mar. 1800, *ibid.*, Add 13700, p. 85; report of Major Walker, 15 Apr. 1800, P/381/13, BPSF 17 June 1800, p. 3149; Walker to Governor-General/?/, 23 Oct. 1799, item 29, unbound correspondence, folder 1796-99, box 1, 1754-99, Walker Papers, 180al; Waddell to Malabar Commission, 19 Aug. 1799, Home Miscellaneous Series, H/470, pp. 169-70. Before hostilities with Tippoo had ended the Govt. of Bombay had warned the Malabar Commission (22 Mar. 1799) to be ready to seize the principal Moplah "Disturbers of the Peace" as soon as circumstances permitted (Wellesley Papers, Add 13696, p. 125).

2 'Considerations on the late Mapilla Disturbances' by J.W. Wye, Malabar Translator, 5 Feb. 1800, enclosure in report of Major Walker, 15 Apr. 1800, P/381/13, BPSF 17 June 1800, pp. 3343-44; report of Major Walker, 15 Apr. 1800, *loc. cit.*, p. 3148; note by J.W. Wye, enclosure in *ibid.*, P/381/13, p. 3351; Walker to J. Smee, Malabar Commissioner (private), 22 Mar. 1800, box 1782-99, Walker Papers, 182d18; Walker to Colonel Close, 23 Mar. 1800, 'Private letters to different persons 1800 and 1801', *ibid.*, 181d16, p. 3.

must have appeared to many Moplahs that the British, who had joined with the Nairs in celebrating "publicly and privately with every demonstration of Joy, an event [Tippu's defeat] which tended as [the Moplahs] thought to the depression of their Cast",<sup>1</sup> were now launched on an unambiguously anti-Moplah policy. Certainly, this was the construction on British behaviour placed by two leading Moplahs of the cultivating class,<sup>2</sup> Unni Mutta and Chemban Poker, both of whom had suffered personally in the new British 'law and order' campaign.<sup>3</sup> In a

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1 Report of Major Walker, 15 Apr. 1800, loc. cit., p. 3149.

2 Unni Mutta was described as a "farmer" (see above p. 162) and Chemban Poker as a "kudian" (cultivator), see for example G. Waddell, Acting Southern Supt., to Malabar Commission, 5 Nov. 1799, P/381/9, BPSP 21 Feb. 1800, p. 574. Both were without doubt kanamdars; see report of H.S. Graeme, Malabar Commissioner, n.d., P/277/55, MRP 16 July 1822, para. 1371.

3 Unni Mutta's brother was executed in July 1799 after sentence for "harbouring an outlaw and other heinous crimes" and in October 1799, the Muppan himself had seen his rice crop, arms and other effects seized for long-standing revenue arrears (Malabar Commissioners to Major Walker, 12 Mar. 1800, P/381/11, BPSP 8 Apr. 1800, pp. 1557-58; note by J.W. Wye, 28 Mar. 1800, enclosure in report of Major Walker, 15 Apr. 1800, loc. cit., P/381/13, p. 3351; Yellambalasherry Oonny Moota to President, Malabar Commission, 20 Mar. 1800, 'Letter Book, 1796 and 1800', Walker Papers, 181d12; Walker to J.A. Grant, 17 July 1800, 'Private letters to different persons 1800 and 1801', ibid., 181d16, p. 45; Mr. Walter, Asst. Southern Supt. to G. Waddell, 6 Nov. 1799, item 10, P/117/6, BePolP 24 Apr. 1800; Govt. of Bombay to Malabar Commission, 4 Mar. 1800, ibid., item 13). Chemban Poker in late 1799 had been driven into outlawry and his house destroyed by T.H. Baber the Shernad Asst. (report of Major Walker, 15 Apr. 1800, P/381/12, BPSP 17 June 1800, pp. 3111-12 and 3136; deposition of Kalpelly Kristna Menon, 22 Mar. 1800, enclosure in ibid., P/381/13, p. 3282; minute of J. Duncan, 26 May 1800, P/286/52, BRP 29 Jan. 1801, p. 942; G. Waddell to Baber, 26 Nov. 1799, enclosure in Waddell to Malabar Commission, 1 Dec. 1799, 'Letter Book, 1796 and 1800', Walker Papers, 181d12) after complaints from Nairs of Chemban Poker's oppressive behaviour including the "plundering" of their property (see 'Deposition of Purutiny para Moossa of Ramnaad', 17 Mar. 1800, enclosure in ibid., P/381/13 pp. 3199-200 and 3209).

communication at the beginning of 1800 to the Moplahs of one part of Ernad they warned that "'Since the last year'" the Company's government had "'begun to persecute several of the Sect of Islam'" which, since the oppression was increasing, would "'not be protected but destroyed.'"<sup>1</sup> Reports, which subsequent events did not fail entirely to bear out<sup>2</sup>, soon began to circulate among the south Malabar Moplahs that it was the intention of the Government to use armed bodies of Nairs to deal with their Muslim antagonists.<sup>3</sup>

In response to the new British policy there was established a loose confederation of a number of Moplah Muppans of south Malabar<sup>4</sup> including Unni Mutta and Chemban Poken as well as Manjerry

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1 'Ola addressed by Uny Moota and Chembum Poken to the Inhabitants of Ariacotta', 10 Makaram (Jan.-Feb. 1800), quoted in 'Deposition of Chembatta Kutty Rayen and Uroonen Pokoo, Inhabitants of Ariacotta', 25 Mar. 1800, enclosure in report of Major Walker, 15 Apr. 1800, P/381/13, BPSP 17 June 1800, p. 3227. See also report of Major Walker, 15 Apr. 1800, loc. cit., p. 3149; deposition of Chundien Muchikel Atta, 7 Apr. 1800, enclosure in ibid., P/381/13, p. 3313; proposal of Kakoot Uny Moideen, 22 Mar. 1800, enclosure in ibid., P/381/13, p. 3334; J.W. Wye, Malabar Translator, 'Considerations on the late Mapilla Disturbances', 5 Feb. 1800, enclosure in ibid., p. 3345; Walker to General Stuart, 17 Mar. 1800, box 1782-99, 'Private Papers', Walker Papers, 182d18; Walker to Colonel Close, 23 Mar. 1800, 'Private letters to different persons 1800 and 1801', ibid., 181d16, pp. 3-4.

2 See below p. 178.

3 J.W. Wye to G. Waddell, 16 Mar. 1800, P/381/12, BPSP 17 June 1800, p. 2633. See also proposal of Shamnauth Pattera /Diwan (Minister) of the Zamorin of Calicut/, n.d., enclosure in report of Major Walker, 15 Apr. 1800, loc. cit., P/381/13, p. 3340.

4 Govt. of Bombay to Malabar Commission, 10 Feb. 1800, P/381/9, BPSP 10 Feb. 1800, p. 400; report of Major Walker, 15 Apr. 1800, P/381/13, BPSP 17 June 1800, p. 3113; J.W. Wye, 'Considerations on the late Mapilla Disturbances', 5 Feb. 1800, enclosure in ibid., P/381/13 pp. 3342-44; report of Shamnauth,

Athan Gurikal, a relation of the former, who had amassed landed property not only under Mysorean rule but also by exploiting his position as darogah (a high police and magisterial office) under the Company in Ernad.<sup>1</sup> In November 1799, Athan Gurikal, who had just before witnessed the execution by the Company of his brother-in-law for an alleged crime committed more than three years previously,<sup>2</sup> determined with his confederates to support each other in the event of an attempt to seize them, whilst emissaries were sent out to rouse the south Malabar Moplahs against the Company.<sup>3</sup> By January 1800 the Moplah

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n.d., enclosure in Malabar Commission to Waddell, 16 Dec. 1799, Home Miscellaneous Series, H/470, pp. 175-76; Waddell to Malabar Commission, 22 Dec. 1799, ibid., p. 179; minute of J. Duncan, 24 June 1800, ibid., H/479, p. 53.

- 1 J.W. Wye, Velatre Collector, to Board of Revenue, 4 Feb. 1801, P/274/45, MRP 20 Feb. 1801, pp. 178 and 185; report of Major Walker, 15 Apr. 1800, loc. cit., P/381/13, p. 3140; deposition of Chundien Munchikel Atta, 31 Mar. 1800, enclosure in ibid., P/381/13, p. 3303; Capt. W. Burchall to Lt. Gen. J. Hartley, Commandant, Malabar, 5 Sept. 1793, P/E/6, BPSP 11 Oct. 1793, p. 473. As darogah in Shernad Chemban Poker had also acquired a good deal of land (see Wye to Board of Revenue, 4 Feb. 1801, loc. cit., p. 185; 'Information as to the Connection and strength of such Mopillahs as have lately assembled to resist the Authority of Government, obtained through the medium of Mr. J.W. Wye, Translator, Kakooke Uny Moidene etc.', 25 Feb. 1800, P/381/10, BPSP 2 Apr. 1800, pp. 1288-89 and T.H. Baber, Asst., Shernaad and Ramnaad to G. Waddell, 28 Oct. 1799, Malabar Collectorate Records, Vol. 8404, Magisterial and Police Dept., p. 52, MRO.
- 2 Report of Major Walker, 15 Apr. 1800, loc. cit., P/381/12, p. 3110 and 3137-38; deposition of Purutiny para Moossa, 17 Mar. 1800, enclosure in ibid., p. 3205; Govt. of Bombay to Governor-General-in-Council, 21 Feb. 1800, P/381/19, BPSP 21 Feb. 1800, p. 707. See also 'translate of an Ola (a written leaf) to the Hon. Jonathan Duncan, Governor of Bombay, from Manjerry Attin Gurikil (a Mappila of Ernaad)', Oct. 1799 (5 Tulam 975), Home Miscellaneous Series, H/470, p. 106; Malabar Commission to Govt. of Bombay, 3 Jan. 1800, ibid., p. 109; 'Proceedings of the Southern Fozdary Adawlut, 1st Chingom 974 or 14 Aug. 1799 in the Trial of Aitherman Moodeliar for the Murder of Karanazara Menon in Menom (March and April) 971', ibid., p. 113.
- 3 'Considerations on the late Mapilla Disturbances', J.W. Wye,

combination had broken out in open defiance of British rule with an ambush of George Waddell, the Southern Superintendent of Malabar and the destruction of the cantonment and cutcherry at Uragam.<sup>1</sup> The fall of Seringapatam and the consequent attempt by the Company's servants to assert their authority over the recalcitrant rural Moplah population of south Malabar had provoked what proved to be the first insurrection by the latter in the period of British rule.

It is true that Company servants in Malabar not infrequently comforted themselves with the observation that the south Malabar Moplahs who from 1800 so directly challenged British authority were mere 'banditti'.<sup>2</sup> In fact the real significance of the armed defiance of the Company by the Muppans of 1800 consisted in their understanding that they were thereby resisting the consolidation of a power favouring their subordination to the powerful high-caste Hindu. As had shortly before been observed, the Moplah Muppan, perceiving that the Hindu jemis were viewed by the British Government "as the legal inheritors of the Country", apprehended that his high-caste antagonists might "by some

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5 Feb. 1800, enclosure in report of Major Walker, 15 Apr. 1800, loc. cit. P/381/13, pp. 3344-45.

1 Report of Major Walker, 15 Apr. 1800, loc. cit., P/381/12, p. 3114 and 3144; J.W. Wye, 'Considerations on the late Mapilla Disturbances', 5 Feb. 1800, enclosure in ibid., P/381/13, p. 3345; T.H. Baber, Asst., Shernaad, to G. Waddell, Southern Supt., Ooragum, 10 Jan. 1800, 'Letter Book, 1796 and 1800', Walker Papers, 181d12.

2 Report of Major Walker, 15 Apr. 1800, loc. cit., p. 3174; Malabar 2nd Commission, Minute Books, Magisterial and Police, 1801, entry 31 Mar. 1801, letter from Capt. Watson, p. 29.

future revolution recover their power".<sup>1</sup> However, as argued above,<sup>2</sup> it was sections of the rural Ernad Moplah community much wider than the substantial kanamdar interest which stood to lose by the re-imposition of the jenmi and his demands. In consequence it is not surprising to discover that the rebel bands of the 1800 period though relatively small in numbers commanded the active and enthusiastic support of the Ernad Moplah community at large.<sup>3</sup> Further, the fact that the response to the attempt of the administration to gain mastery of the situation in interior south Malabar took the form of widely-based insurrection was certainly an indication of the Moplah estimate that resistance of this kind was not hopeless. Such a calculation, despite the elimination of the power of Tippu Sultan, was in fact a not-unnatural conclusion for the Ernad Moplah. The 1800 Moplah rebellion occurred at a time when the insurrection of the Pychy Rajah in north Malabar was a matter of considerable embarrassment to the British authorities.<sup>4</sup> Moreover the Company's

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1 Capt. A. Walker, Military Sec. to General Stuart, 24 Aug. 1799, Wellesley Papers, Add 13682, pp. 87-88.

2 P. 105.

3 Macleod, Principal Collector, Malabar to Board of Revenue, 13 June 1802, P/287/7, MBRP 28 June 1802, p. 6356. See also Macleod to Board, 6 Mar. 1802, P/287/1, MBRP 15 Mar. 1802, p. 2858; Macleod to Board, 9 Apr. 1802, Revenue Letters Sent, 1802, Malabar Collectorate Records Vol. 2308, p. 21, MRO, Malabar Commission to Board, 30 Apr. 1801, P/286/59, MBRP 11 May 1801, p. 5531.

4 Malabar Commission to Capt. Watson, 11 Oct. 1800, Malabar Records, Vol. 2388, pp. 8-9, MRO; Diary and Proceedings of J.W. Wye, Collector, Vellatre, Betutnaad, Shernaad and Parapanaad, Political Dept., Letter from Malabar Commission, 3 Jan. 1801, Malabar Records Vol. 2399, p. 3, MRO; J. Spencer and J. Smee, Malabar Commissioners to Major Walker, 26 Mar.

dominion was, even as late as 1800, so ill-established in Malabar that when in that year Alexander Walker was deputed to investigate the causes of the rising in Ernad he found much of the area practically terra incognita to the officials responsible for its administration.<sup>1</sup> Indeed so conscious of their weakness in the south Malabar interior was the Company's Commission in Calicut that at an early stage of the insurrection the possibility of "withdrawing [their] forces altogether and resigning the Manjerry Talook [part of Ernad] to Goorcul's influence"<sup>2</sup> was apparently under serious consideration.

Even so, the estimation of the Ernad Moplah of the likelihood of victory cannot have been as sanguine as the Malabar Commission's desperate expedients might suggest. The actual participation in rebel hostilities was much less than what proved to be the case in the heady days at the start of the rising of 1921 when, far from threatening to extend, British

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1800, Folder; Public and Private Letters, Native Letters and Minutes, 1800, Box. 1782-99, Walker Papers, 182d18; letter proposed to be sent to Col. Sartorius, O/C Malabar, extract, proceedings of Malabar Commission in Magistracy and Police Dept., 20 Feb. 1800, item 4, P/117/9, BePolP 19 June 1800. Records of correspondence exist (e.g. Cotiote Rajah [Pychy Rajah] to Manjerry Attum, 20 Apr. 1800, Home Miscellaneous Series, H/461, p. 95) showing that the Pychy Rajah was interested in instigating trouble in south Malabar for the Company to draw attention from his own quarter.

1 Walker to Mr. Grant, 23 Apr. 1800, set of letters 'Guzrat [sic]/1800', Box 1782-99, Walker Papers, 182d18. See also Walker [to General Stuart?] 3 Apr. 1800, 'Private Papers', ibid., J.W. Wye to Malabar Commission, 7 Nov. 1800, Diary and Proceedings of Wye in the Political Dept., Malabar Records, Vol. 2388, p. 20, MRO.

2 Hay Clephane, Sec., Malabar Commissioners to J.W. Wye, Collector of Vellatre, etc., 3 Nov. 1800, Malabar Records, Vol. 2388, Diary and Proceedings of J.W. Wye in the Political Dept., p. 14, MRO.



rule seemed in the process of collapse.<sup>1</sup> In fact the first 'Moplah Rebellion' was suppressed without extreme difficulty. After several months of cat-and-mouse tactics by the British<sup>2</sup> renewed hostilities with Manjerry Athan Gurikal and his followers broke out when the latter launched attacks on the armed forces of the Company and destroyed a vacated cantonment.<sup>3</sup> However, the combination of Muppans which had been put together in December 1799-January 1800 proved, apparently under the

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1 See below p. 273.

2 Major Walker to J. Spencer, President, Malabar Commission, 27 Mar. 1800, 29 Mar. 1800, 7 Apr. 1800 and 9 Apr. 1800, J. Smee, Malabar Commissioner to Walker (private), 24 Mar. 1800, Walker to Smee (private), 26 Mar. 1800, Walker Papers, 182d18, box 1782-99; memorandum of Walker, 9 Sept. 1800, 'Letter Book, 1796 and 1800', ibid., 181d12; Walker to J. Duncan, 24 May 1800, 'Private letters to different persons 1800 and 1801', ibid., 181d16, p. 55; J.W. Wye to Walker, 20 Aug. 1800, ibid., 'Letters', 182a12; report of Major Walker, 15 Apr. 1800, loc. cit., p. 3186; minute of Smee, /18 Apr. 1801?/ P/286/59, MBRP 4 May 1801, p. 5265; Govt. of Bombay to Malabar Commission, 23 Mar. 1800, item 7, P/117/9, BePolP 19 June 1800.

3 Walker to Colonel Close (Private), 2 Nov. 1800, item 53 in folder 1, Walker Papers, 180a2, unbound correspondence, 1800-03, box II; report of Walker, 11 Nov. 1800, 'Letter Book, 1796 and 1800', ibid., 181d12; J. Watson, O/C New Police to J.W. Wye, Collector of Vellatre, etc., 31 Oct. 1800, Malabar Records, Vol. 2388, Diary and Proceedings of Wye in the Political Dept., 1800, p. 11, MRO; Kakoot Unie Moidine to Wye (translated), 31 Oct. 1800, ibid., p. 13; Hay Clephane, Sec. to Malabar Commission to Wye, 3 Nov. 1800, ibid., p. 13; Clephane to Wye, 1 Dec. 1800, ibid., p. 26; Malabar 2nd Commission, Political Minute Books, entry 24 Oct. 1800 recording a letter from Capt. J. Watson, Malabar District Records, Vol. No. 1808, p. 51, MRO; Malabar Commissioners to Board of Revenue, 20 Apr. 1801, P/286/59, MBRP 4 May 1801, p. 5123. For a fairly detailed account of the initial rebel resistance to the Company's forces see deposition of Pappadakaaran Chimamoo, one of Athan Gurikal's followers, 18 Jan. 1801, Malabar Collectorate Records, Vol. 8405, Magisterial and Police Dept., pp. 21-30, MRO.

tensions of dissension and jealousy,<sup>1</sup> to be evanescent and the rebellion took the form of a long period of desultory warfare waged by several bands of Moplah guerillas. Quite apart from the decentralising effects on Moplah mobilisation of the jealousies of the Moplah Muppans, each with his own local power-base,<sup>2</sup> the problem of organising the provisioning for any length of time of the numbers which combination on a wider scale brought together, dictated a dispersed mode of conducting resistance to the Company.<sup>3</sup> The insurrection ended in 1802 after the extirpation at the hands of the Government forces of the main Moplah leaders Unni Mutta, Athan Gurikal and Chemban Poker and the remnants of their rebel bands.<sup>4</sup>

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1 Malabar Commission to Govt. of Bombay, 20 Jan. 1800, P/381/9, BPSP 10 Feb. 1800, p. 542; report of Major Walker, 15 Apr. 1800, loc. cit., p. 3111; deposition of Purutiny para Moossa of Ramnaad, 17 Mar. 1800, enclosure in ibid., pp. 3203-04; J. Law, Asst. Southern Supt. to G. Waddell, Southern Supt., 5 Feb. 1800, item 11, P/117/6, BePolP 24 Apr. 1800; Walker to J. Duncan, 22 Nov. 1800, 'Private letters to different persons, 1800 and 1801', p. 72, Walker Papers, 181d16.

2 Athan Gurikal's base was the Manjeri area of Ernad, Chemban Poker's the Koyappa area of Shernad and Unni Mutta the Tiruvazhamkundu area of Velatre (Walluvanad). 'Information as to the Connection and strength of such Mopillahs as have lately assembled to resist the Authority of Government, obtained through the medium of Mr. J.W. Wye, Translator, Kakooke Uny Moidene, etc.' 25 Feb. 1800, P/381/10, BPSP 26 Feb. 1800, pp. 1287-88 and 1296.

3 Ibid., p. 1295; J.W. Wye to Malabar Commission, 7 Nov. 1800, Malabar Records, Vol. 2388, pp. 18-19, MRO; report of Wye quoted in report of Major Walker, 15 Apr. 1800, loc. cit., p. 3181.

4 J. Watson to W. Macleod, Principal Collector, Malabar, 29 Apr. 1802, P/287/4, MBRP 14 May 1802, p. 4975; T. Warden, Sub-Collector, Malabar to Macleod, 15 June 1802, P/275/55, MRP 9 July 1802, p. 2365; Warden to R. Rickards, Principal Collector, Malabar, 5 July 1803, P/287/37, MBRP 21 July 1803,

The consequences of this eventual open breach in relations between the Company and the 'Jungle Moplah' were of far-reaching significance. Even before the Moplah revolt of 1800 British solicitude for the fate at the hands of the Moplahs of the usurped high-caste Hindu landed interest might be barely concealed. As T.H. Baber, the official in charge of the south Malabar districts of Shernad and Ramnad observed in October 1799 of Chemban Poker:

"This man in particular is at this moment in possession of Estates to a vast amount without any Claim or Title to the greatest part of them, while the real and original proprietors are suffering much distress and are real objects of pity and compassion."<sup>1</sup>

In fact the British authorities, despite their proclaimed policy of neutrality towards the rival interests in Malabar,<sup>2</sup> had, in the face of Moplah recalcitrance, been unable in practice consistently to maintain such even-handedness even in their public pronouncements. In particular, the action of T.H. Baber in December 1799 in publishing throughout his district a notification in which the Nairs were singled out as the general sufferers, seemed to lend credence to the belief that British

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p. 8157; Rickards to Col. Montresor, O/C Troops in Malabar and Kanara, 8 July 1803, *ibid.*, pp. 8161-62; Local Judge, Vellatre to Malabar Commissioners, 18 Aug. 1801, Malabar 2nd Commission, Minute Books, Magisterial and Police, 1801, Malabar Records, Vol. 1825, p. 177, MRO.

1 T.H. Baber, Asst., Shernaad and Ramnaad to G. Waddell, Acting Southern Supt., 28 Oct. 1799, Malabar Collectorate Records, Magisterial and Police Dept., 1800, Vol. No. 8404, pp. 52-53, MRO. See also J.W. Wye, on deputation at Manaarghauth /to Malabar Commission?/, 1 Dec. 1798, Malabar District Records Vol. No. 1731, p. 306, MRO.

2 See for example 'A Publication from the Diary of the Malabar Joint Commissioners, 5 June 1793', XLIII in W. Logan (ed.) A Collection of Treaties etc. p. 188; Report of Joint Commission of 1792-93, Vol. I, pp. 168-69.

conduct would "not in every Instance appear without a bias".<sup>1</sup> However, from the time of the Moplah revolt of 1800 animus against the 'Jungle Moplah' on the part of Company servants responsible for administering his homelands revealed itself more distinctly. In 1801 the Collector of Velatre, Shernad, Betutnad and Parappanad stated his conviction that

"throughout the Southern Division of Malabar the Namboorees and Nayrs and Their Tier ... are the best and quietest subjects. I have never found any difficulty in managing these people, they are obedient and pay the dues to the Government without trouble, while on the Contrary the Mappillas are turbulent, prone to robbery and the revenue always more difficult to recover where they prevail."<sup>2</sup>

Most unequivocal of all was the advice (to an unknown correspondent) of Alexander Walker the army officer who, as a member of the Malabar Commission had been deputed to report on the insurrection of 1800 and whose memoranda on Malabar had attracted the highest praise from the Governor-General:<sup>3</sup>

"I presume there are but few Moppillahs in Kanara the district immediately north of Malabar. If you wish to keep it peaceable and quiet prohibit that diabolical Cast

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- 1 Report of Major Walker, 15 Apr. 1800, loc. cit., p. 3150. For Baber's report of his action see Baber to G. Waddell, Dec. 1799, P/381/9, BPSP 21 Feb. 1800, p. 626. For other evidence of bias towards the 'Nair interest' or against the Moplah before 1800 see J.W. Wye, on deputation to Manaar, to C. Peile, Southern Supt., 15 Dec. 1798, P/380/74, BPSP 28 Dec. 1798, p. 5215; G. Waddell, to Malabar Commission, 7 June 1799, P/366/25, BRP 19 July 1799, p. 633; Walker to General Stuart, 24 Aug. 1799, Wellesley Papers Add 13682, p. 97; C. Peile to J. Duncan, (private), 25 Aug. 1798, ibid., p. 151; Report of Joint Commission of 1792-93, Vol. I, p. 166; A. Walker, 'Account of Malabar', p. 108, Walker Papers 184c9.
- 2 J.W. Wye to Board of Revenue, 4 Feb. 1801, P/275/45, MRP 20 Feb. 1801, pp. 176-77.
- 3 Marquis Wellesley to General Stuart, Commander-in-Chief, 12 Jan. 1800, letter-book, 1783-1812, of Colonel Alexander Walker, later Resident at Baroda, Mss Eur C 198, p. 12.

from coming into it and by indirect means oblige those that may be there to leave it. This can easily be done by taxing them very heavily. Above all never give a public employment to one of the Cast. If permitted to settle in Kanara you will soon find them become numerous and then stealing Children, robberies and murders will follow. This cast of men are the cause/sic, curse/ of Vellatre and Ernaad."<sup>1</sup>

Nor did the developing British predilection for the high-caste Hindu interest as opposed to that of their Muslim rivals manifest itself solely in the casual expression of opinion by individual Company officials. Shortly after the outbreak in 1800 of open resistance by the Moplah combination to the Company's rule, a decision was taken to rearrange the police establishment in the disturbed area in such a way as to end Moplah preponderance in it. Up to the time of the insurrection of 1800 it had been found necessary to come to terms with the still-unbroken dominant position of the Moplahs in interior south Malabar by vesting the charge of the police of that area in darogahs of that caste.<sup>2</sup> The considerable powers of these

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1 A. Walker, 'Hints for Collection of Land Revenue', [possibly 1802], Walker Papers, 184a4 'Memoir on Malabar, in 1790 [sic, but certainly later, possibly 1797] with Correspondence and Documents respecting the same country', appendix to Walker's 'History of Malabar', Vol. V, pp. 521-22. The reference to 'stealing Children' would appear to be a reference to the apparent practice of south Malabar Moplahs in the 1790s kidnapping Nair children for the purpose of selling them into slavery, see Report of Joint Commission of 1792-93, Vol. I, p. 165. For examples of remarks after the start of the 1800 insurrection, of a similarly anti-Moplah purport see also memorandum of Major Walker of 4 Dec. 1800, 'Letter Book, 1796 and 1800', Walker Papers, 181d12; Walker 'Memoir on the Actual State of Malabar in regard to its Revenues and Civil Government ... in Sept. 1801', Oct. 1801, Wellesley Papers, Add 13682, p. 119; W. Macleod, Collector, Malabar, to Board of Revenue, 18 June 1802, P/287/8, MBRP 15 July 1802, pp. 7039-41 and 7043-44; T. Warden, Collector, Malabar, to Board of Revenue, 31 Aug. 1804, P/288/5, MBRP 27 Sept. 1804, p. 9658.

2 J.W. Wye, Collector of Vellatre etc., to Board of Revenue, 4 Feb. 1801, P/275/45, MRP 20 Feb. 1801, pp. 184-85; unheaded,

officials, which included deciding civil suits to the extent of Rs. 200 and the inflicting of corporal punishment,<sup>1</sup> had been used for the aggrandisement of the Moplah interest.<sup>2</sup> Moreover, the fact that the darogahs had the "Payment and Sole Controul" of their men in their own hands<sup>3</sup> permitted their acquiring such a degree of power and influence as to set the Government at defiance with little fear of receiving effectual check.<sup>4</sup> One outcome of the insurrection of 1800 was the decision of the administration<sup>5</sup> to replace a police arrangement so obstructive to the secure foundation of the Company's authority in the 'Moplah districts' with another which was not only more serviceable in establishing British control, but which also became a

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undated enclosure in J. Law, Ernad Collector, to Board of Revenue, 5 Feb. 1801, P/286/54, MBRP 2 Mar. 1801, p. 2 of enclosure, after p. 2394; T. Warden, Principal Collector, Malabar, to Sec., Revenue, 16 Dec. 1805, P/276/4, MRP 3 Jan. 1806, p. 35.

- 1 J.W. Wye to Board of Revenue, 4 Feb. 1801, P/275/45, MRP 20 Feb. 1801, pp. 184-85; Malabar Commission to Govt. of Madras, 14 Aug. 1800, P/286/48, MBRP 29 Dec. 1800, p. 10784.
- 2 The opinion of J.W. Wye, Asst. in charge of Shernad, quoted in report of Major Walker, 15 Apr. 1800, loc. cit., p. 3180; unheaded, undated enclosure in J. Law to Board of Revenue, 5 Feb. 1801, P/286/54, MBRP 2 Mar. 1801, p. 2 of enclosure, after p. 2394.
- 3 Report of Major Walker, 15 Apr. 1800, loc. cit., p. 3183. See also Malabar Commissioners to C. Peile, Southern Supt., 7 Feb. 1799, P/381/2, BPSF 22 Mar. 1800, p. 1618.
- 4 Report of Major Walker, 15 Apr. 1800, loc. cit., p. 3183. See also Warden to Sec., Revenue, 16 Dec. 1805, P/276/4, MRP 3 Jan. 1806, p. 35.
- 5 Malabar Commission to Govt. of Madras, 14 Aug. 1800, MBRP 29 Dec. 1800, p. 10786; Malabar Commissioners to Board of Revenue, 20 Apr. 1801, P/286/59, MBRP 4 May 1801, p. 5132; memorandum of Major Walker, 9 Sept., 1800, 'Letter Book, 1796 and 1800', Walker Papers, 181d12.

model for all who in subsequent decades sought decisive means of defeating Moplah recalcitrance.<sup>1</sup>

Captain Watson's 'Nair Corps', which operated against the Moplah insurgents of 1800-02 was made up very largely of Hindus<sup>2</sup> of "the most respectable Families"<sup>3</sup> under European control.<sup>4</sup> This highly mobile group of irregulars under the command of a man like Watson, who from long experience of Malabar had acquired intimate knowledge of the people and the country,<sup>5</sup> was able in a very few years to defeat Moplah insurgency in south Malabar.<sup>6</sup>

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- 1 See for example petition of 29 Hindus of Ernad, Walluvanad and Shernad, 12 Aug. 1851, enclosure in H.V. Conolly, Malabar Collector, to Sec., Judicial, 16 Oct. 1851, P/327/42, MJP No. 720, 2 Dec. 1851, pp. 4352-53; report of T.L. Strange, 25 Sept. 1852, loc. cit., pp. 4647-53; Conolly to Sec., Judicial, 23 Dec. 1843, P/326/35, MJP No. 69, 27 Jan. 1844, p. 248; Conolly to Chief Sec., 29 Dec. 1841, P/326/15, MJP No. 15, 4 Jan. 1842, pp. 61-62. Conolly himself, whilst a partisan of the formation of a police corps on the lines of Watson's irregulars was emphatically opposed to recruitment on a communal basis: see Conolly to Sec., Judicial, 16 Jan. 1844, P/326/36, MJP No. 187, 8 Mar. 1844, p. 722.
  - 2 In fact the Corps was "composed of Naiars chiefly and of a few Tiers and Mopillas", W. Macleod, Principal Collector, Malabar to Board of Revenue, 7 May 1802, P/287/5, MBRP 17 May 1802, p. 5102. See also W. Thackeray, A Report on the Revenue Affairs of Malabar and Canara, 7th Sept. 1807, p. 2, Kozhikode Archives; Major A. Walker to J.A. Grant, 6 May 1800, 'Private letters to different persons 1800 and 1801', Walker Papers, 181d16, p. 36, and Walker to J. Duncan, 24 May 1800, ibid., p. 54.
  - 3 T. Warden, Principal Collector, Malabar to Sec., Judicial, 17 Mar. 1808, P/322/31, MJP 17 Mar. 1808, p. 1358; G.W. Gillio, Judge and Magistrate, South Malabar to Chief Sec., 27 Apr. 1812, P/322/68, MJP 9 June 1812, p. 3020.
  - 4 Report of Major Walker, 15 Apr. 1800, loc. cit., p. 3188; minute of J. Duncan, 26 May 1800, P/286/52, MBRP 29 Jan. 1801, p. 949.
  - 5 H. Rickards, Malabar Collector, to Govt. of Madras, 27 Mar. 1803, P/275/63, MRP 15 Apr. 1803, p. 1372; T. Warden, Malabar Collector, to Sec., Revenue, P/276/4, MRP 3 Jan. 1806, p. 37.
  - 6 W. Macleod, Principal Collector, Malabar to Sec., Board of Revenue, 6 Nov. 1802, P/287/18, MBRP 29 Nov. 1802, p. 13508.

It thereby opened the way for the achieving of one objective of the servants of the Company,<sup>1</sup> the return of the high-caste Hindu jenmis to their landed estates in the zone where Moplah resistance to their restoration had been successful for so long.<sup>2</sup>

Although this eventual restoration of the jenmi in interior south Malabar must have confirmed the 'Jungle Moplah' in his antipathy to the power responsible, all the indications are that at the beginning of the 19th century the economic position of the jenmi was precarious. The necessity of having to flee Tippu's campaign of forcible conversion in 1788 had dictated the disposal of their estates by high-caste jenmis on terms very unfavourable to themselves. For trifling sums their kanamdars were able to obtain bonds affixing such a low level of patom ('rent')<sup>3</sup> that in a large number of cases the amount specified

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1 G. Waddell, Acting Southern Supt. to Malabar Commission, 7 June 1799, P/366/25, BRP 19 July 1799, p. 633; Malabar Commission to Waddell, 10 June 1799, ibid., p. 635; J.W. Wye, Collector of Vellatre, 4 Feb. 1801, P/275/45, MRP 20 Feb. 1801, p. 178; Walker to General Stuart, 24 Aug. 1799, Wellesley Papers, Add 13682, pp. 87, 98 and 99; 'A Genealogical Table of the Ernaad Inhabitants', J. Law, Collector, 6 Apr. 1800, P/286/57, MBRP 2 Mar. 1801, p. 2408; memorandum of A. Walker, 19 Nov. 1800, Walker Papers, 181d12, 'Letter book, 1796 and 1800'; Walker /to J. Duncan?/, 23 Apr. 1800, item 38, unbound correspondence 1800-03, folder 1, box II, ibid., 180a2.

2 Details of this return appear to be almost entirely absent from extant official records except in the case of an investigation into the history of the 'fanatic zone' undertaken by W. Robinson, Head Asst. Magistrate, Malabar in 1849 (see appendix A, Robinson to H.V. Conolly, Malabar Magistrate, 18 Oct. 1849, P/327/22, MJP No. 794, 1 Dec. 1849, pp. 4959-60). Unfortunately Robinson did not cite the sources for what is an instructive account.

3 T.W. Baber, Collector of Kirakumpuram, Wadakumpuram and Porawaye, to Board of Revenue, 31 Jan. 1801, P/286/54, MBRP 2 Mar. 1801, pp. 2361-62. See also A. Walker, 'History of Malabar', n.d., Vol. 2, p. 619, Walker Papers, 1814a1; T. Warden, Principal Collector, Malabar to Board of Revenue, Sept. 1815, P/291/53, MBRP 25 Sept. 1815, p. 11086-87.



was insufficient even to meet the interest payable on the kanam amount (lent by the kanamdar to the jenmi).<sup>1</sup> Under these circumstances the jenmis, failing regularly to pay the balance due to their kanamdars, found their estates so heavily encumbered with debt<sup>2</sup> that one British Collector remarked that "from the highest condition" they had been "reduced to a mere nothing but the empty Sound of Title".<sup>3</sup>

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- 1 G.W. Gillio, Collector of Calicut and Beypore, to Board of Revenue, 14 Apr. 1801, P/286/58, MBRP 27 Apr. 1801, p. 4754; J. Wilson, Collector of Cotiote etc. to Board of Revenue, 15 Feb. 1801, P/286/55, MBRP 5 Mar. 1801, p. 2585; Murdoch Brown to Malabar Commissioners, 13 July 1798, P/286/58, MBRP 20 Apr. 1801, p. 4315; T. Warden, Principal Collector, Malabar to Board of Revenue, Sept. 1815, P/291/53, MBRP 25 Sept. 1815, p. 11074.
- 2 G.W. Gillio to Board of Revenue, 14 Apr. 1801, P/286/58, MBRP 27 Apr. 1801, p. 4746; Murdoch Brown to Malabar Commissioners, 13 July 1798, P/286/58, MBRP 20 Apr. 1801, pp. 4315-16; Francis Buchanan; A Journey from Madras through the Countries of Mysore, Canara and Malabar, Vol. II, p. 431; J. Strachey, Collector, Tellicherry, Darmapatam, Randaterra and Mahe to Sec., Board of Revenue, n.d., P/286/56, MBRP 19 Mar. 1801, pp. 2994-95; extract from report of Mr. Thackeray, 4 Aug. 1807, W.K. Firminger (ed.) The 5th Report from the Select Committee of the House of Commons on the Affairs of the East India Company, 28 July 1812, Vol. III, p. 296 and 299; T. Warden, Malabar Collector to Board of Revenue, 16 June 1813, P/290/71, MBRP 1 July 1813, pp. 6379, 6392 and 6407-08; Warden to Board, 20 Apr. 1815, P/291/38, MBRP 1 June 1815, p. 4356; minute of Board of Revenue, 5 Jan. 1818, P/292/53, MBRP, p. 61; H.S. Graeme, Commissioner, Malabar to Board, 20 Nov. 1819, P/293/40, MBRP 2 Dec. 1819, p. 14629; Graeme's Report, n.d., P/277/55, MRP 16 July 1822, para 1433.
- 3 T.W. Baber to Board of Revenue, 31 Jan. 1801, P/286/54, MBRP 2 Mar. 1801, p. 2362. See also fragment of Walker's 'Report on Malabar Land Tenures', 1 July 1801, item 68, Walker Papers, 180a2, unbound correspondence, 1800-03, box II; proceedings of Board of Revenue, 16 Jan. 1815, P/291/31, MBRP pp. 920-21; T. Warden, ex-Collector, Malabar to Board, 3 Oct. 1818, P/292/82, MBRP 12 Oct. 1818 p. 13304; 'Comment of T. Warden, Mr. Warden's Remarks on Mr. Graeme's proposed Regulation, with Mr. Graeme's replies', n.d., enclosure 2 in H.S. Graeme, Malabar Commissioner to Board, 14 Jan. 1822, P/294/13, MBRP 14 Feb. 1822, p. 1416; report of Graeme, n.d., P/277/55, MRP 16 July 1822, para. 1290.

In fact the position of the jenmi was by no means so hopeless. As long as his right to resume his lands on repayment of his debts to the kanamdar was undisputed under Malabar customary law,<sup>1</sup> the jenmi, under conditions of high profits from agriculture caused by rising prices for farm produce, might be able to regain full control of his estate. In the process the kanamdar would be reduced from being landowner in all but name,<sup>2</sup> to a mere tenant liable to eviction virtually at his jenmi's pleasure. When, in the period after 1818<sup>3</sup>, precisely these developments began to make themselves felt, the ascendancy of the jenmi, so long resisted by the south Malabar Moplahs, could begin to be re-established. Moreover, the restored jenmi found he could now operate within a legal framework which permitted him, if he were prepared to flout Malayali custom, to take a competition rent.<sup>4</sup> Thus, by the 1820s and 1830s, the fear of the Moplah agriculturalist population that the Company's rule would entail a jenmi resurgence had been found amply to be justified. For the rest of the century it required little to expose the depth of anti-Government feeling which existed among the inhabitants of the 'Moplah zone'.

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1 This, the British observed, was the case. See Murdoch Brown to Board of Revenue, 9 May 1801, P/286/60, MBRP May 1801, p. 5806; T.W. Baber to Board of Revenue, 31 Jan. 1801, P/286/54, MBRP 2 Mar. 1801, pp. 2361-62; Murdoch Brown to Malabar Commissioners, 13 July 1798, P/286/58, MBRP 20 Apr. 1801, p. 4316.

2 J. Wilson to Board of Revenue, 15 Aug. 1801, P/286/55, MBRP 5 Mar. 1801, p. 2585.

3 See above p. 98.

4 See above p. 53.

Part 2: The Period of the Moplah Outbreak, 1836-1919

Even before extraordinary measures were adopted to deal with the Moplah outbreak the smouldering antagonism of the Moplah to British rule had been noticed. In 1822 Sir Thomas Munro, the Governor of Madras, had referred to the Moplahs as the "worst race in Malabar" and the "most hostile" to British dominion.<sup>1</sup> Two decades later it had been observed that the "'lower order of Moplahs and particularly those of the inland Talooks'" were "'not to be depended upon when an apparent opening for their acting against the British might occur'".<sup>2</sup> When Government in the mid-1850s finally felt impelled to deal with 'Moplah fanaticism' via the "tremendous penalties"<sup>3</sup> of the Moplah Acts it merely intensified the existing hostility to British rule among the Muslim population of Ernad.

In 1851, when a group of Hindus from the 'fanatic zone' demanded a series of repressive measures, including the confiscation of the property of outbreak participants and the disarming of the local Moplahs, as a means of checking their violent outrages,<sup>4</sup> the Government of Madras had pointed out that such

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1 President's Minute, P/277/60, MRP 16 July 1822, p. 1871.

2 The opinion of T.L. Strange, then a judge in Malabar, to Malabar Collector, 27 May 1842, quoted in minute of T.M. Lewin, Acting 3rd Judge, Foujdaree Udalut, 30 June 1842, P/326/21, MJP Oct. 1842, p. 4942. See also Murdoch Brown, 'Memoir of the (Islami) Mapillas of Malabar and of Hyder Ali's invasion of that Province', Oct. 1824, reproduced in F.C. Brown to Chief Sec., 15 Jan. 1864, P/328/47, MJP No. 980, 4 July 1864, p. 854.

3 W. Logan, Malabar Manual, Vol. I., p. 584.

4 'Petition of 29 Hindus of Ernaad, Walluvanaad and Shernaad', 12 Aug. 1851, to H.V. Conolly, Malabar Magistrate, enclosure in Conolly to Sec., Judicial, 16 Oct. 1851, P/327/42, MJP No. 720, 2 Dec. 1851, p. 4354.

measures would only aggravate the evils they were intended to remove.<sup>1</sup> In fact when, in the following year, outbreaks spread to hitherto-unaffected north Malabar with the exceptionally murderous disturbance in Kottayam taluk in January 1852, the local Government reluctantly decided on the appointment of T.L. Strange's Special Commission<sup>2</sup> one outcome of which was the Moplah Acts of 1854 which provided for measures in line with those of the Hindu petition of 1851.

Although the Moplah Acts certainly succeeded in suppressing for long periods at a time Moplah readiness to commit outbreaks, the nature of the enactments was such that aggravation of Moplah bitterness towards British rule was inevitable. The object of the Acts, to which especial importance was attached, was "to enlist the fears and interests of every Moplah ... on the side of order".<sup>3</sup> British officials who supported such measures acknowledged that legislation of this kind involved the risk of injustice to individuals.<sup>4</sup> This was

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1 Minute No. 720, 2 Dec. 1851, P/327/42, MJP, p. 4358.

2 Minute No. 123, 17 Feb. 1852, P/327/44, MJP, p. 674. The opposition of the Governor, H. Pottinger, to the appointment of a Commission (see his minute of 6 Feb. 1852, ibid., p. 626) was apparently only overcome after a member of his Council, J.F. Thomas had come out strongly in its favour (see Thomas' minute of 10 Feb. 1852, ibid., p. 633).

3 Minute No. 352, 16 May 1854, P/327/67, MJP, p. 1530.

4 Conolly to Sec., Judicial, 6 Nov. 1850, P/327/33, MJP No. 767, 3 Dec. 1850, p. 5051; memorandum on the draft Moplah Acts by Conolly, 10 Oct. 1853, P/327/63, MJP No. 714, 30 Nov. 1853, p. 5960; minute of H.W. Bliss, member, Council of Governor of Madras, 15 Aug. 1896, L/PJ/6/433, 2060/96, MJP No. 1567, 30 Sept. 1896, p. 126. Bliss was frank enough to point out that the Acts were not passed "with the object of doing justice between man and man or between the community and the individual" but to suppress outrages for which the general law was not adequate, ibid., p. 124.

unavoidably the case since the provision which extended to Moplah outbreaks Madras Regulation II of 1819, described by the Government Pleader in 1855 as "perhaps the most arbitrary act within my knowledge",<sup>1</sup> permitted the deportation at the Government's pleasure of anyone merely suspected of intending to participate in an outbreak. Moreover injustice to the innocent was entailed in the provision (to which the local Government attached much importance<sup>2</sup>) for collective fining of amsoms ('parishes') in which disturbances occurred,<sup>3</sup> whilst at least one Malabar Magistrate discovered unfairness in the fact that only Moplah residents were liable to this penalty.<sup>4</sup>

But official measures tending to direct Moplah fanatical hatred towards British rule were not restricted to the deportations and ameracements of the Moplah Acts. To prevent the remains of outbreak participants becoming objects of veneration by the Moplah populace<sup>5</sup> it was the invariable practice<sup>6</sup> to

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1 J.B. Norton to Chief Sec., 1 Dec. 1855, P/328/8, MJP No. 925, 8 Dec. 1855, p. 4874.

2 Sec., Govt. of Madras to Officiating Sec., Govt. of India, 16 May 1854, P/327/67, MJP No. 352, 16 May 1854, p. 1530.

3 Report of H.M. Winterbotham, 5 May 1896, L/PJ/6/433, 2060/96, MJP No. 1567, 30 Sept. 1896 p. 65. Naturally the fining policy was resented by the 'fanatic zone' Moplah. See for example F. Fawcett, Supt. of Police, South Malabar, report of 5 June 1896, ibid., p. 105.

4 H. Bradley, Acting Malabar Magistrate to Chief Sec., 6 June 1894, P/4621, MJP Nos. 2186-92, 8 Sept. 1894, p. 118.

5 Chief Sec. to C. Collett, Joint Magistrate, Malabar, 19 Sept. 1855, P/328/6, MJP No. 4, 19 Sept. 1855, p. 3558; 'Account of the Mappilla Outbreak of Feb.-Mar. 1915', annexure, conf. letter No. 1, Judicial, 5 May 1915, Govt. of Madras to Sec. of State, L/PJ/6/1360, 2230/15, in 1003/15, p. 3.

6 J.F. Hall, Malabar Collector to Sec., (Home) Judicial, 25 Apr. 1919, L/PJ/6/1608, 4582/19, MJP No. 1310, 9 June 1919, p. 13; C.A. Innes, Malabar Collector to Sec., Judicial, 29 Mar. 1915, MJP Nos. 2080-84, 3 Sept. 1915 (Conf.), p. 18, Kozhikode Archives.

dispose of the bodies by burning. This was sometimes carried out in the most provocative manner, as when, after being gibbeted in the heart of the fanatic zone<sup>1</sup> the corpses of the assassins of Collector H.V. Conolly in 1855 were publicly burnt in a Moplah suburb of Calicut.<sup>2</sup> In this particular instance the Company's servant on the spot, C. Collett, had attempted unsuccessfully to dissuade the Government of Madras from pursuing this course. Collett argued that since the burning of the body was "regarded by the Moplahs with much horror" the execution of the administration's orders would greatly offend caste prejudices with a result "similar to what usually follows religious persecution": to "excite a degree of sympathy which would not otherwise have existed!"<sup>3</sup> In spite of such admonitions and the unease

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1 C. Collett, Joint Magistrate, Malabar, to Chief Sec., 21 Sept. 1855, P/328/6, MJP No. 716, 3 Oct. 1855, p. 3589.

2 Collett to Sec., Judicial, 8 Oct. 1855, P/328/6, MJP No. 46, 16 Oct. 1855, pp. 3956-57. For the unfavourable reaction to this treatment by Moplahs see examination of Mamod, 16 Oct. 1855, Malabar Collectorate Records, Vol. No. 7347/1, pp. 687-88, MRO.

3 Collett to Chief Sec., 27 Sept. 1855, P/328/6, MJP No. 716, 3 Oct. 1855, p. 3666. The concern felt by 'fanatics' as to the mode of disposal of their remains is revealed in the specific demands they sometimes made for their bodies to be interred in mosques. See for example 'Memorandum of the conversation between the Walluvanaad Tahsildar and the fanatics', 28 Aug. 1851, Collett to Conolly, 20 Sept. 1851, P/327/41, MJP No. 700, 20 Nov. 1851, pp. 3775-76 and statement of Valiya Mannil Chek, 29 Mar. 1896, a witness of the 1896 outbreak, report of H.M. Winterbotham, 10 Apr. 1896, L/PJ/6/422, 996/96, pp. 6 and 20. During the 1921-22 rising Moplahs might be 'executed' by the leaders of the rebellion for suggesting that unburied Moplah rebels would not go to heaven, depositions of M. Ayamad, P.W. No. 2 and M. Marakar, P.W. No. 3, Summary General Court Martial No. 18 of 1922, Malappuram, 23 Jan. 1922, pp. 2-3, MPP No. 848 (Conf.), 1 Nov. 1923, MRO.

occasionally expressed by the Government of India<sup>1</sup> the policy of disposing of the corpses of shahid by fire was continued upto the end of the outbreak period.<sup>2</sup>

A further measure regarded (by the Court of Directors in 1850) as calculated to produce a sense of unfair treatment at British hands was the disarming of the Moplahs.<sup>3</sup> This was eventually carried out in 1885 after the use of firearms in one outbreak had increased apprehension about the risks run by the Government forces responsible for the task of suppression.<sup>4</sup> Although this disarmament was a general one, involving the receipt of firearms and swords<sup>5</sup> from all inhabitants of four south Malabar taluks,<sup>6</sup> the strategy of issuing all subsequent

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1 See for example Sec., Govt. of India to Chief Sec., Govt. of Madras, 29 Sept. 1896, MJP No. 1680 (Conf.), 24 Oct. 1896, MRO, and MJP No. 1379 (Conf.), 25 Aug. 1896, MRO.

2 J.F. Hall, Malabar Collector to Sec., (Home) Judicial, 25 Apr. 1919, L/PJ/6/1608, 4582/19, MJP No. 1310, 9 June 1919, p. 13.

3 Court of Directors to Govt. of Madras, 17 Apr. 1850, P/327/29, MJP No. 419, 3 July 1850, p. 2040. Warnings of the discontent liable to ensue from such a measure were frequently voiced by those in positions of authority whenever the policy was pressed. See, for example proceedings of Foujdaree Udalut, 20 July 1842, P/326/20, MJP 2 Aug. 1842, pp. 4380-81; minute of J. Bird, member, Council of Governor of Madras, 24 Aug. 1842, P/326/21, MJP Oct. 1842, p. 4955; minute of J.F. Thomas, member, Council of Governor of Madras, n.d., Moplah Outrages Correspondence, Vol. I, p. 233. The 1885 disarming did indeed create ill-feeling, see Special Correspondent, Tirur, 7 May 1885, Madras Times, 9 May 1885, p. 2.

4 W. Logan, Malabar Manual, Vol. I, p. 565.

5 One of the Moplah Acts, Act XXIV of 1854, had already proscribed possession of the formidable 'war-knife', the favourite weapon of the Moplah 'fanatic'. For the implementation of this measure see H.V. Conolly to Sec., Judicial, 20 Feb. 1855, P/328/1, MJP No. 182, 9 Mar. 1855, p. 1032.

6 The notably 'fanatic' taluks of Ernad and Walluvanad plus the two adjacent ones having a large Moplah population, Ponnani and Calicut.

licences only to carefully-selected individuals with substantial property<sup>1</sup> effectively discriminated against the Moplahs as a whole. Thus, of the 588 licenses for firearms issued in the disarmed zone in the first few months of the operation of the new policy in 1885 only 5 went to Muslims who formed 36 per cent of the population of the four taluks.<sup>2</sup> Once again British administrators responsible for Malabar had felt it incumbent on them to adopt policies which earlier officials had warned against as infringing on what the Moplahs believed to be their vital interests.<sup>3</sup>

In their anxiety to protect the high-caste Hindu notables of Malabar from Moplah violence the British authorities, whilst rejecting the more provocative proposals for dealing with the

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1 See above p. 20.

2 W. Logan to Chief Sec., 1 May 1885, P/2634, MJP No. 1337, 21 May 1885, p. 100; Logan to Chief Sec., 30 June 1885, P/2635, MJP No. 1830, 13 July 1885, p. 36.

3 See, for example, the cautioning by W. Page, Malabar Commissioner, against giving a privileged dispensation to high-caste Hindu chiefs and their adherents to carry arms in exemption of a proposed prohibition, minute of 8 Dec. 1798, P/380/74, BPSF 11 Dec. 1798, pp. 4809-10. In fact, ever since a proposal of R. Rickards, a former Principal Collector of Malabar (to Lord Bentinck, President and Governor-in-Council, 20 Feb. 1804, P/275/71, MRP 24 Apr. 1804, p. 1036) the Hindu aristocracy of the district had been given special licence to maintain their own armed guard. See notification of Governor-General-in-Council No. 58, Govt. of India, Home (Public) P/2854, MJP No. 283, 30 Jan. 1886; G.W. Dance, Malabar Magistrate to Chief Sec., 6 Aug. 1900, P/5995, MJP No. 1179, 22 Aug. 1900; Officiating Sec. to Govt. of India, Home (Police) to Sec., Govt. of Madras, Home (Judicial), 26 July 1918, P/45 (Conf.), MJP No. 2412, 30 Oct. 1918, pp. 1-7.



Muslim community such as mass deportation from certain areas,<sup>1</sup> and the razing of mosques,<sup>2</sup> had thought it necessary to resort to measures the great object of which was, in the words of the originator of the Moplah Acts, "to operate in terrorem".<sup>3</sup> In attempting so to deter the commission of outbreaks the 'Jungle Moplah' was to be "coerced into submission"<sup>4</sup> despite the hazards the policy entailed.

Under these circumstances it is hardly surprising that on the one occasion (in 1896) when a severe outbreak resulted in the recording of Moplah attitudes at the time of the disturbance,

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- 1 W. Logan to Chief Sec., 7 Feb. 1885, P/2634, MJP Nos. 1169-74, 2 May 1885, p. 25. This proposal for the removal of Moplah populations from centres of recalcitrance was liable to recur whenever the problem of Moplah violence seemed most intractable. In the 1790s it was pressed by certain Malabar officials (see for example J.W. Wye, on deputation at Manaarghaut, /to Malabar Commission?, 1 Dec. 1798, Malabar District Records Vol. No. 1731, p. 306, MRO; Wye to C. Peile, Southern Supt., 15 Dec. 1798, P/380/74, BPSP 11 Dec. 1798, p. 5215) and after the great 1896 outbreak by the non-Muslim Press (see 'A hint to Government regarding the Moppla riot', Lokopakari, 10 Mar. 1896, MNMR 1896-98, L/R/15/108, p. 83). After the 1921-22 rebellion it was given an airing by R.A. Graham, Chief Sec., Govt. of Madras, note of 13 Feb. 1922, MPP No. 250, 17 Mar. 1922, p. 41, MRO.
- 2 C. Collett, Joint Magistrate to T. Clarke, District Magistrate, 20 Oct. 1855, P/328/7, MJP No. 862, 27 Nov. 1855, pp. 4618-19. Collett also wanted the destruction of the tomb of Syed Fazl's father at Mambram (ibid., p. 4619) and his proposals received the support of Clarke (Clarke to Sec. to Govt., 23 Oct. 1855, ibid., p. 4605).
- 3 T.L. Strange to Sec., Judicial, 25 Sept. 1852, P/327/60, MJP No. 483, 23 Aug. 1853, p. 4635.
- 4 The phrase is that of J.D. Sim, member, Council of Governor of Madras, minute, n.d., P/403, MJP No. 1606-A, 28 Aug. 1874, no p. numbers. See also minute of J.F. Thomas, member, Council of Governor of Madras, 4 Feb. 1852, P/327/44, MJP No. 89, 6 Feb. 1852, p. 450.

an unmistakable sense of oppression at the hands of authority should have been revealed. The reports on the 1896 affair indicate that remarks such as "'there is no room for Mussalmans in the country'",<sup>1</sup> "'we Mussalmans can't abide here'",<sup>2</sup> "there [is] no standing room in the country",<sup>3</sup> "'We have had much oppression at the hands of the white folk'"<sup>4</sup> and "'A dozen of us Moplahs can't meet any where but we are at once suspected to be plotting an outbreak!'"<sup>5</sup> were current among the Moplahs of the outbreak area, whether participants or otherwise.

The intensified antagonism to the British administration in Malabar entailed in the policy of repressing Moplah 'fanaticism' was disclosed in the most unequivocal fashion by the two outbreaks in which a Collector became the object of attack. The murderers of H.V. Conolly in 1855 in the weeks leading up to the assassination appear to have made it clear that they were motivated to 'go out' to avenge the hounding from the country of the Mambram Tangal Syed Fazl for which the Collector bore the chief responsibility. As they told one Pathooma, a Moplah woman who asked why they had marked H.V. Conolly for such

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1 Statement of Puzhutini Kunyayu, 14 Mar. 1896, report of Winterbotham, 10 Apr. 1896, loc. cit., p. 12.

2 Ibid.

3 Statement of Kaidhavalappan Kunyalan, n.d., ibid., p. 16.

4 Statement of Valia Mannil Chekkutty, Police Insp., Malappuram Division, n.d., ibid., p. 18. See also statement of wounded Moplah 'fanatic' Aruvirallan Muttha, 13 Mar. 1896, ibid., p. 11, for further evidence that outbreak participants were voicing such sentiments.

5 Report of H.M. Winterbotham, 5 May 1896, L/PJ/6/433, 2060/96, MJP No. 1567, 30 Sept. 1896, p. 56.

treatment:

"Is it not the case ... that our Pookoyah [Syed Fazl] is not to be seen in the country?"<sup>1</sup>

Moreover, during the six weeks that the assassins spent before the murder, traversing an extensive tract of south Malabar "with the undisguised design" of accounting for Conolly, they were "fêted, encouraged, prayed with, and consecrated to the deed" by "hundreds and probably ... thousands" of Moplahs.<sup>2</sup> In the 1915 outbreak in which C.A. Innes narrowly escaped assassination, the perpetrators had felt impelled to attempt the Collector's life after he had acted to restore a young Tien 'convert' to his relations.<sup>3</sup>

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- 1 Statement of 2nd prisoner, Pathooma, Case No. 3, Chembrasherry Case, Govt. versus Panartooyil Kader (deceased) and 5 others, 14 Feb. 1856, Malabar Collectorate Records, Vol. No. 7347, p. 185, MRO. See also Case No. 9, Mambra or Tayulla Case, Govt. versus Narukat Puthenvithe Syed Mahomed Coyakutty and 13 others, 14 Feb. 1856, ibid., p. 378; Case No. 10, Mamakil Case, Govt. versus Valiaparambil Cunjaly and 29 others, 14 Feb. 1856, ibid., p. 434; deposition of Chomeyil Coonhee Pokoo, 25 Oct. 1855, Malabar Collectorate Records, Vol. No. 7347, p. 556, MRO; C. Collett, Joint Magistrate to T. Clarke, Collector, 15 Dec. 1855, P/328/10, MJP No. 36, 14 Jan. 1856, pp. 117-18; Collett to Clarke, 7 Jan. 1856, P/328/10, MJP No. 85, 28 Jan. 1856, p. 444.
- 2 Govt. of Madras to Govt. of India, 20 May 1856, P/328/14, MJP No. 545, 20 May 1856, pp. 3301-02. See also T. Clarke to Chief Sec., 24 Dec. 1855, P/328/10, MJP No. 36, 14 Jan. 1856, pp. 95-96 and Collett to Clarke, 15 Dec. 1855, ibid., p. 118; Case No. 6, Nannambra Case, Govt. versus Parankil Nareath and 7 others, 14 Feb. 1856, Malabar Collectorate Records, Vol. No. 7347, pp. 298 and 299, MRO; Case No. 9, Mambra or Tayulla Case, Govt. versus Narukat Puthenvithe Syed Mahomed Coyakutty and 13 others, 14 Feb. 1856, ibid., p. 378; Case No. 10, Mamakil Case, Govt. versus Valiaparambil Cunjaly and 29 others, 14 Feb. 1856, ibid., p. 434.
- 3 'Account of the Mappilla Outbreak in the Malabar District, Feb.-Mar. 1915', annexure, Govt. of Madras to Sec. of State, 5 May 1915, L/PJ/6/1360, 2230/15, in 1003/15, p. 2; C.A. Innes, Malabar Magistrate to Sec., Judicial, 29 Mar. 1915 (Conf.), MJP Nos. 2080-84, 3 Sept. 1915 (Conf.) p. 11 and 19, Kozhikode Archives; statement of Tangayathil Alavi, 2 Mar. 1915, ibid. p. 40.

The 1915 outbreak, not uniquely, coincided with a period of unrest among the Ernad Moplahs when rumours of the impending downfall of the British Raj were circulating.<sup>1</sup> In a series of contemporary confidential letters Collector Innes revealed that the 'fanatic zone' Moplah was retailing the 'news' that the British army had been destroyed and the King-Emperor captured, and that the Germans and their allies were winning 'all along the line' and were on their way to Malabar to give the Moplahs there a free hand, entailing the ending of rent and revenue payments.<sup>2</sup> In fact the rural Moplah population of interior south Malabar was highly sensitive to the slightest challenge to British power, real or insubstantial. Rumour of every armed collision with the forces of their imperial masters ignited hopes that the white man's rule in Malabar was about to be ended;<sup>3</sup>

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1 C.A. Innes [to Govt. of Madras?], 26 Dec. 1914, MJP No. 360 (Conf.), 18 Feb. 1915, p. 4, MRO; Innes to A. Butterworth, Chief Sec., Govt. of Madras, 30 Dec. 1914, *ibid.*, pp. 12-13; extract from Malabar Collector's report on the internal situation for week ending 3 Feb. 1915, *ibid.*, p. 72; 'Account of the Mappilla Outbreak in the Malabar District, Feb.-Mar. 1915', *loc. cit.*, pp. 2 and 4; remarks of Innes, Acting District Magistrate, 10 Mar. 1915 on South Malabar Police Administration Report for 1914, Pl, II, 1913-24, p. 83; Police Administration Report of Madras Presidency for 1915, *ibid.*, p. 13; Madras Mail, 25 Jan. 1915, p. 3; 'Week by Week' by 'Onlooker', Cochin Argus, 16 Jan. 1915, MNNR 1915, L/R/15/120, p. 200.

2 Innes to A. Butterworth, 30 Dec. 1914, Innes to P. Rajagopala Achariyar, Sec., Judicial, Govt. of Madras, 9 Jan. 1915, Innes to P. Rajagopala Achariyar, 13 Jan. 1915, Innes [to Govt. of Madras?], 20 Jan. 1915, Innes' weekly report on the internal situation of Malabar, 3 Feb. 1915, MJP No. 360 (Conf.), 18 Feb. 1915, pp. 12, 36, 61, 68 and 72, MRO.

3 For example, Moplah hopes of British defeat in the Boer War and the Tirah campaign against the Afridis were depicted in an article, 'The Mappila's Powerful Imagination', Times of Malabar, 13 Jan. 1900, MNNR 1899-1900, L/R/15/109, p. 18.

hopes so desperate as to be, at times, insusceptible to reason.<sup>1</sup>

The form of response of the 'fanatic zone' Moplah to such reports depended on the seeming proximity and imminence of each threat to British rule. The far-off thunder of rumoured colonial wars might stimulate the kind of mass restlessness which was so often the signal for an outbreak.<sup>2</sup> This appears to have been the case in 1884-85 when fanatical preaching in Malabar about the exploits of the Sudanese Mahdi and the "fulfilment of the Prophet's words" contributed to a state of excitement among the Moplahs which saw the perpetration of 3 outbreaks in a period of only 12 months.<sup>3</sup>

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1 In 1914 Collector Innes regarded the "ignorant Mappillas" as "amazingly perverse and stupid" in the tenacity with which they clung to the belief in British military defeat despite a lecture tour by a Moplah Sub-Asst. Insp. of Schools. Innes to A. Butterworth, 30 Dec. 1914, MJP No. 360 (Conf.) 18 Feb. 1915, p. 17, MRO. See also Chief Sec., Govt. of Madras to Govt. of India, Home, demi-official, conf., 16 Jan. 1915, Fortnightly Reports for 1915, MRO.

2 For some occasions when this 'spirit of unrest' phenomenon was remarked see Conolly to Sec., Judicial, 2 Jan. 1844, P/326/35, MJP No. 69, 27 Jan. 1844, p. 266; Malabar Magistrate to Chief Sec., 12 July 1869, P/441/19, MJP No. 1278, 6 Aug. 1869, p. 1314; Acting Chief Sec. to Consul-General, Cairo, 23 June 1871, P/399, MJP Nos. 831 - 32, 23 June 1871, p. 485; W. Logan, Malabar Manual, Vol. I, p. 595; report of F. Fawcett, Malabar Supt. of Police, for week ending 16 Mar. 1895, 18 Mar. 1895, MPolP No. 282 (Conf.), 30 Apr. 1895, para 12, MRO; report of F. Fawcett, 5 June 1896, L/PJ/6/433, 2060/96, p. 105; West Coast Spectator, 30 Dec. 1914, MNMR 1915, L/4/15/120, p. 90; report of R.H. Hitchcock, Supt. of Police, South Malabar, 5 Nov. 1915, P/11 (Conf.), MJP No. 3008, 6 Dec. 1915, p. 3; R.H. Hitchcock, A History of the Malabar Rebellion, 1921, pp. 32-33.

3 W. Logan, to Chief Sec., 17 July 1885, P/2635, MJP No. 2725 8 Oct. 1885, p. 6; see also W. Logan, Malabar Manual, Vol. I, p. 595. Some two years later a European missionary in Malabar recorded the following:  
"Strange to say, there are people who state they have forebodings that something important is to happen shortly

This instance of their reaction to report of a pretender to the style of the Muslim Messiah is by no means the only example of the attraction the idea of a heaven-sent deliverer had for the Moplahs. Belief in "a Mahdi who is going to conquer the world for Islam"<sup>1</sup> seems to have been endemic among the Moplahs.<sup>2</sup> On occasions when, as in the final stages of defeat of the 1921-22 rebellion, no earthly candidate appeared to be forthcoming to supply the means of salvation, predictions of the imminent arrival of an unspecified Mahdi who would save the Moplahs from the consequences of British rule could gain certain currency.<sup>3</sup>

In another case of desperate resort to messianism, in the 1840s, "a sect of enthusiasts" which sprang up among "the lower orders of Moplahs" in one part of the 'fanatic zone',<sup>4</sup> bore the hallmarks of a millenarian movement<sup>5</sup> of what has been called the 'activist' type.<sup>6</sup> The members of this 'Hal Ilakkam'

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.... Others say: 'Two years more and a hundred years will be complete since Tippoo's invasion; maybe the Mahommedans will rise: we are on the eve of a revolution.'" From the diary of Mr. Jaus of Chombala, quoted in Basel German Evangelical Missionary Society, 48th Report of the Society in South-Western India for 1887, p. 23, UTCL.

1 C.A. Innes to Acting Chief Sec., 30 Sept. 1912, MJP No. 1780 (Conf.), 1 Nov. 1912, p. 21, MRO.

2 Interview with Variankunnath Ahamed, Vellangad, 27 Dec. 1974.

3 R.H. Hitchcock, A History of the Malabar Rebellion, 1921, pp. 131 and 136.

4 Conolly to Sec., Judicial, 4 Nov. 1843, P/326/35, MJP No. 69, 27 Jan. 1844, pp. 193-94.

5 See Norman Cohn's definition in The Pursuit of the Millenium, p. 13.

6 Peter Worsley, The Trumpet shall Sound, p. 12.

(frenzy-raising) sect displayed a bizarre but evidently fervent belief in the miraculous. This manifested itself in a conviction of their being endowed with prodigious powers such as that of flight and the ability to conjure food from nothing.<sup>1</sup> Portents, including the springing up of mosques at night and complete darkness for a period of days, were also confidently anticipated.<sup>2</sup> It would appear that the adherents of the sect, the Halar, considered themselves to be in a period of preparation (involving activities such as proselytism, the abandoning of their secular occupations and the meeting together for devotional purposes many times a day<sup>3</sup>) for the seizure of control of the country. The arrival of a mysterious ship with the necessary arms, provisions and money for 40,000 men was awaited in the belief that could that number in the meantime be recruited the country might be conquered.<sup>4</sup> The happy state that would thereby ensue was cast in terms typical of the 'Jungle Moplah's' conception of the millenium. After the final Armageddon "the Hindus would then totally vanish".<sup>5</sup>

In fact although District Magistrate Conolly saw the

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1 'Particulars of the Hal Ilakkam among the Mappillas in Chernad taluk and the neighbouring parts' by a 'native subordinate', Nov. 1843, in W. Logan, Malabar Manual, Vol. I, pp. 561-62.

2 Ibid., p. 562.

3 Conolly to Sec., Judicial, 4 Nov. 1843, loc. cit., p. 194 and 198. Significantly some of the devotions took place at the tomb of a rebel of 1800, Chemban Poker; 'Particulars etc.', loc. cit., Vol. I, p. 562.

4 'Particulars etc.', loc. cit., Vol. I, pp. 561-62.

5 Ibid., p. 562. Not surprisingly this itself proved to be some inducement for numbers of Hindus to convert.

movement as potentially dangerous<sup>1</sup> 'Hal Ilakkam' seems to have posed only a trifling threat to British rule. It is true that the adherents of the sect seem to have shown an attitude of resistance to authority and impatience of subordination<sup>2</sup> resulting in cases of assault on Government servants.<sup>3</sup> Even so few Moplahs seem to have been prepared to commit themselves to a body promising such an incredible means of impending salvation and it is possible that the number of Halar may not greatly have exceeded 100.<sup>4</sup> The sect was in fact impracticable not only as a mass movement (since it required retirement from secular occupation) but also as a durable one (since the promised miracles inevitably ended in ludicrous failure<sup>5</sup>). Moreover, the death in 1844 (soon after the sect attracted the attention of the authorities) of the elder Tirurangadi Tangal<sup>6</sup> in whose company the Halar apparently intended to engage in final battle with 'the Kafirs'<sup>7</sup> may well have helped doom the sect to extinction.

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1 Conolly to Sec., Judicial, 4 Nov. 1843, P/326/35, MJP No. 6, loc. cit., p. 196.

2 Ibid., p. 200.

3 Ibid., pp. 201-02.

4 Ibid., p. 194. On the other hand they were "made much of" in the period when the mysterious ship was expected; 'Particulars etc.', loc. cit., Vol. I, p. 562.

5 'Particulars etc.', loc. cit., Vol. I, pp. 561-62.

6 T.L. Strange, Special Commissioner to Sec., Judicial, 25 Sept. 1852, P/327/60, MJP No. 483, 23 Aug. 1853, p. 4605. The Tangal's successor, Syed Fazl did not pretend to the character of a saintly fakir until 1849 (ibid.) and was therefore presumably not a suitable object for Halar hopes.

7 'Particulars etc.', loc. cit., Vol. I, p. 561.



Moplah challenge to British rule more formidable than the millennial preparations of the Halar or the stylized defiance of the outbreak was likely to materialize only in the event of the Moplahs perceiving the Raj to be shaken to its foundations on a sub-continental scale. Upto almost the end of the outbreak period of 1836-1919 such an episode occurred only once: in 1857-58. In fact, although Malabar has been said to have been in "a very disaffected state" because of the Mutiny,<sup>1</sup> nothing more challenging occurred than a projected 'fanatical' outbreak in Ernad in August 1857 involving 8 plotters.<sup>2</sup> The evidence for the prosecution of the 8 includes the arresting claim of one eye-witness that on Friday 28 August 1857, 3 of the prisoners, in conclave in Ponmala mosque, used seditious language such as

"The mutinies in the north have thrown the Government into the greatest confusion, and caused it great difficulty and distress. If we now make an outbreak, it will be difficult to bring men against us. Now is the time to act as our friends and connexions have acted."<sup>3</sup> /My stress, C.W./

Unless this evidence is concocted, this apparent desire by the plotters to act very differently to the way their 'friends and connexions' had behaved in previous outbreaks, by choosing an occasion when self-immolation at the hands of authority was thought to be unlikely, might indicate a potential for transmutation in the outbreak from merely formal challenge to British

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1 W. Logan, Malabar Manual, Vol. I, p. 579.

2 W. Robinson, Acting Malabar Magistrate to Acting Chief Sec., 8 Oct. 1857, P/328/24, MJP No. 1359, 16 Oct. 1857, pp. 142-43.

3 Govt. versus the 8, 5 Oct. 1857, signed W. Robinson, ibid. pp. 144-46.

rule to something more substantial under circumstances in which defiance of the Raj seemed less desperate.<sup>1</sup> Unfortunately the record provides little further indication of the objectives of this group of plotters who in any case seem to have commanded such little support from their community that it was Ponnala Moplahs themselves who defeated the plot to 'go out' by informing the authorities.<sup>2</sup> The Ernad Moplah was clearly in no mood in 1857-58 to take advantage of the embarrassment of the Raj. Indeed so confident were the authorities about the state of the district that it was even considered safe to send the Malabar Police Corps, which had been raised to deal with Moplah outbreaks, to the nearby district of Canara to help in suppressing rebellion there.<sup>3</sup> Without doubt Malabar owed its relative tranquillity to the stunning impact on the Moplahs of the first implementation of the provisions of the Moplah Acts after the murder of Conolly in late 1855.<sup>4</sup> In the year before the outbreak of the Mutiny it had been reported that "so far from the Moplahs designing to injure anyone, they are themselves in great fear, and overawed by the measures of Government".<sup>5</sup> The projected

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1 That this is not idle speculation is suggested by the way in which the disturbance, which had all the initial marks of a 'fanatical' outbreak, at Pukkotur in July-August 1921, proved to be the opening act of insurrection. See below p. 268.

2 Robinson to Acting Chief Sec., 8 Oct. 1857, ibid., p. 142.

3 Robinson to Chief Sec., 9 Apr. 1858, P/328/27, MJP No. 562, 30 Apr. 1858, p. 149.

4 Robinson to Acting Chief Sec., Judicial (draft) 11 July 1857, Malabar Collectorate Records, Vol. 7379, Police Letters, pp. 456-58, MRO.

5 T. Clarke, Malabar Magistrate to Chief Sec., 15 May 1856, P/328/15, MJP No. 607, 7 June 1856, p. 1664. See also Clarke to Chief Sec., 24 Dec. 1855, P/328/10, MJP No. 36, 14 Jan. 1856, p. 106.

outbreak of August 1857 was thwarted by members of a community apprehensive of again experiencing the penalties of the Moplah Act.<sup>1</sup>

### Conclusion

The source of the antagonism which characterised the relationship between the Ernad Moplah and British rule in Malabar was the facility the latter extended to the ascent of high-caste Hindu power after its nadir under Tipu in 1788-89. British dominion not only favoured and facilitated the re-imposition in the south Malabar interior of the jenmi and his demands, it also dispensed, through the concept of the competition rent, a means to their enlargement which was both novel and exceptionable. Moreover, this basic conflict between the 'Jungle Moplah' and the British was aggravated both by unlawful Moplah resistance to the jenmi and the measures the administration deemed necessary to suppress this refractoriness, whether in the period of early Moplah insurrection or that of the outbreak from 1836.

The consequent disaffection of the Ernad Moplah, recognised by one Government servant in 1899 as marking relations with British authority since the earliest period of contact,<sup>2</sup> was expressed in challenge to the ruling power attaining the level of insurrection only when some assurance of success was promised.

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1 Robinson to Acting Chief Sec., 8 Oct. 1857, loc. cit., p. 142.

2 Report of Lt. Gen. G.E. Wolseley, O/C Madras, 27 Mar. 1899, MJP No. 107 (Conf.), 23 July 1900, p. 2, MRO.

After the rebellion in the earliest period of the consolidation of British power the 'Jungle Moplah' was for long over-awed. As Commissioner Graeme observed in 1820:

"The remembrance on the part of the inhabitants of former humiliation experienced from our Government, the knowledge of the existence of a superior power which is only lying dormant, but is capable of being easily roused to efficient action when circumstances may demand its energies, are the security for the degree of obedience which is shewn to the Government."<sup>1</sup>

The 19th century and the first part of the 20th form a period in which, except for one moment, British power seemed unshakable to the Moplah and rebellion in consequence hopeless. The single moment of hope was 1857-58. The British owed their good fortune in avoiding serious trouble in Malabar during the Mutiny to the effect on the 'Jungle Moplahs' of a novel measure of repression. When, in the immediate post-First World War period, they faced another great challenge to their control of the Indian sub-continent, the Khilafat-non-co-operation movement, they were not to be so fortunate.

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<sup>1</sup> H.S. Graeme to Chief Sec., 1 Aug. 1820, P/277/38, MRP 29 Aug. 1820, p. 3274.

CHAPTER 3

The Ernad Moplah and the Political Movement in Malabar:  
Conflict and Coincidence of Interest, 1916-20

Part 1, The Agrarian Issue

The Indian National Congress was late in establishing its influence in Malabar. As late as 1915, according to K.P. Kesava Menon the Secretary of the Calicut organisation of the party at the time, there was very little Congress work in the district.<sup>1</sup> Not until Britain's dependence on Indian support after the outbreak of the Great War was clearly exposed and the hopes of the 'political classes' for rapid constitutional advance thereby raised was the district drawn into nationalist agitation. It was the Home Rule movement which first excited significant political activity in Malabar and in May 1916 the first Malabar District Conference, held at Palghat, was presided over by Mrs. Besant.<sup>2</sup>

Despite rhetorical claims to represent a wide cross-section of Malabar society,<sup>3</sup> the Palghat Conference in fact drew its support massively from the 'Pattar' (Tamil) Brahmin landed and professional class of Palghat taluk,<sup>4</sup> though Nairs of a similar social background from this and other centres were also well-represented. An analysis of the list of delegates reveals that

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1 Interview with K.P. Kesava Menon, Kozhikode, 11 Dec. 1974.

2 Palghat Conference Report, Introduction, p. ix.

3 See Kollengode Raja's Address of Welcome and speech of M. Krishnama Chariar, ibid., pp. 13 and 17.

4 This "least Malayalam of all the plains taluks" in Malabar district was also that most subject to the "East Coast Brahmin influence" in which the British for a good many years had detected a threat to their rule in India. H. Moberly, Acting Collector, Malabar to Chief Sec., 17 May 1895, MPP No. 547 (Conf.), 3 July 1895, p. 4, MRO.

76 per cent<sup>1</sup> were from Palghat taluk. Pattars made up 64 per cent of the attendance and Nairs 25 per cent. Of the 358 delegates whose occupation is known 27 per cent were returned as landlords and land agents and 33 per cent vakils (advocates), the rest being other members of the professional, propertied and 'middle' classes (merchants, traders, bankers, managers, factory owners, planters, clerks, civil servants, teachers, physicians and journalists). Ten of the 358 were described as 'landholders', a term which might mean either jenmi or tenant. Of the total number of delegates (454) only 9 had names clearly identifiable as Muslim. Of these 7 were merchants of the Ravuthan trading community of Palghat, a group so quiet and law-abiding<sup>2</sup> and distinct from the Moplahs that Ravuthan residents in amsoms fined under the Moplah Acts were exempted.<sup>3</sup> Only 2 delegates, a merchant and special magistrate of Palghat taluk and a trader from Ponnani appear to have been Moplahs. It is certain that from Ernad and Walluvanad there was no Moplah representation, the delegates from the 'fanatic zone' being high-caste Hindu jenmis and vakils.<sup>4</sup>

The aloofness of the 'Jungle Moplah' from the political movement of 1916 is not surprising when the self-proclaimed objectives and character of the Palghat Conference are considered.

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1 All percentages are based on totals of delegates for whom taluk, caste or occupation is indicated.

2 C.A. Innes, Malabar Gazetteer, p. 440.

3 H. Bradley, Acting Malabar Magistrate to Chief Sec., 14 June 1894 and Govt. Order No. 2186, 8 Sept. 1894, P/4621, MJP Nos. 2186-92, 8 Sept. 1894, pp. 127 and 140.

4 List of Delegates, Palghat Conference Report, pp. 118-43.

For a community with an enduring history of boldly-asserted grievance towards British rule, the anxious declamations at Palghat of loyalty to the foreign connection<sup>1</sup> cannot have been alluring. For a denomination for which the sharpest social and economic antagonism was cast in communal terms of Manichaeian polarity the pervasive Hindu allusion and symbolism of the Conference, described (to cheers) by one delegate as "like the birth of Ramachandra to Dasaratha",<sup>2</sup> would have been positively repellent. Above all the first Malabar District Conference was clearly dominated by the high-caste Hindu jenmis and vakils whom the Ernad Moplah had for so long identified as the source of his ills.

The preponderance of the jenmi interest at Palghat is revealed by the constant re-iteration of the proprietary claims of the Malabar landlord<sup>3</sup> to the virtual exclusion of even reference to the tenantry. Moreover, hostility to the traditional form of resistance of the 'Jungle Moplah' to jenmi power was

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1 See for example Resolution I (the 'loyalty' resolution) ibid., p. xiii; Resolution X, ibid., pp. xv-xvi; Kollengode Rajah's Address of Welcome, ibid., p. 5; speech of P.K. Subramania Aiyar, ibid. p. 46; speech of P. Achuthan, ibid., p. 78. For similar protestations of constancy at subsequent Malabar District Conferences see New India, 26 Apr. 1917, p. 9; Address of Rama Varma Valia Raja of Chirakkal, Chairman of the Reception Committee of the 3rd Malabar District Conference, New India, 7 May 1918, p. 4; Resolutions of the 3rd Malabar District Conference, New India, 10 May 1918, p. 5; Presidential Address of Mir Asad Ali Khan Bahadur at 3rd Malabar District Conference, Madras Mail 6 May 1918, p. 6; Correspondent, Badagara, 6 May 1919, New India, 8 May 1919, p. 8.

2 Speech of C. Seshayya, Palghat Conference Report, p. 106. See also speech of P.K. Subramania Aiyar, ibid., p. 47 and speeches of V.V. Parameswara Aiyar, ibid., pp. 41 and 80.

3 See for example Resolution X, ibid., p. xv; speech of K. Natesa Aiyar, ibid., p. 69; speech of S. Sivaramakrishna Ayyar, ibid. pp. 70 and 72.

expressed not only in reference to the "unruly elements which occasionally disturb the peace of the country" and "the Mappilla disturbances which have been a disgrace to our district"<sup>1</sup> but also in fulsome praise<sup>2</sup> for T.L. Strange, the Malabar Commissioner of 1852 whose report on the Moplah outbreaks led to the passing of the Moplah Acts and whose name was a byword for the repression of Moplahs.<sup>3</sup>

The other major social group represented at Palghat, the professional classes, had attracted intensified hostility from the rural Moplah since the late 19th century. Almost throughout the outbreak period of 1836-1919 the Moplah tenantry had often felt the exercise of the oppressive power of the jenmi by way of the vakil and the public official. As early as 1852 it had been observed that it was "through the Courts, that the Hindu chiefly oppresses and annoys the inferior Moplah landholder or

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1 Kollengode Rajah's Address of Welcome, ibid., p. 7. Professional men of the kind so heavily represented at Palghat could be most vociferous in demanding effective Government action against the 'Moplah fanatic', see for example the distraught telegram of 7 Feb. 1919 from the President of the Bar Association, Manjeri to Sec. (Home) Judicial on the occasion of the 1919 outbreak, P/10667, MJP No. 1310, 9 June 1919, p. 1.

2 Speech of P.K. Subramania Aiyar, Palghat Conference Report, p. 44.

3 Even so, an assembly such as the Malabar District Conference, dedicated as it was to challenging British autocracy in India, could hardly fail to condemn regulations as arbitrary as the Moplah Acts. For resolutions calling for the repeal of these Acts see New India, 26 Apr. 1917, p. 9; Correspondent, Tellicherry, 7 May 1918, New India, 10 May 1918, p. 5 and Correspondent, Badagara, 6 May 1919, New India, p. 8.



occupant"<sup>1</sup> whilst in 1891 Collector Winterbotham noted "the strong, probably unconscious, bias that the highest native officials have in favour of the jenmi, in all questions between landlord and tenant".<sup>2</sup> Moreover, by responding with violence to what he regarded as the misuse of power by high-caste Hindu government servants, the 'fanatic zone' Moplah must have succeeded in further souring his relations with this group. One consequence of the Moplah proclivity to 'break out' was the tendency of Malayali officials (and others), as one Malabar Collector put it, to "regard everything done by a Moplah with suspicion" and to "see a Moplah outrage lurking behind every tree and in every shadow."<sup>3</sup> The practical consequences of such animus<sup>4</sup> can have done nothing to allay the Ernad Moplah's sense of grievance towards those who manned the machinery of government. Inevitably the rural Moplah tended to be vocal in his

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1 Minute of J.F. Thomas, member, Council of Governor of Madras, 3 Nov. 1852, P/327/60, MJP No. 483, 23 Aug. 1853 p. 4697. See also Logan's 'Report on Malabar Land Tenures', Govt. of Madras, Malabar Special Commission, 1881-82, Vol. I, pp. lxii and lxxi; Register of Petitions Received, ibid. Vol. III pp. 7, 37 and 361; W. Logan, Malabar Magistrate to Chief Sec., 13 Dec. 1880, Govt. of Madras, Malabar Land Tenures, p. 20; H. Wigram, Officiating District Judge, South Malabar to Chief Sec., 8 Nov. 1883, ibid., p. 18; report of F. Fawcett, Supt. of Police, Malabar, 5 June 1896, L/PJ/6/433, 2060/96, p. 95.

2 Winterbotham to Chief Sec., 14 Feb. 1890, P/4011, MJP No. 2530, 11 Dec. 1891, p. 66. See also Logan, 'Report on Malabar Land Tenures', loc. cit. Vol. I, p. liv; K. Imbichunni Nair, District Munsif, Palghat, to District Judge, 27 Feb. 1907, P/7702, MJP No. 1080, 14 June 1907, p. 7.

3 H. Moberly, Malabar Magistrate to Chief Sec. to Govt., 2 July 1895 (Conf.), MPol.P. No. 459 (Conf.), 11 July 1895, MRO.

4 British officials sometimes expressed themselves confident that such animus on the part of Hindu public servants in Malabar was a reality. See notes by J. Grose, member, Council of Governor

denunciation of officialdom<sup>1</sup> whilst his mistrust of the courts was notorious. As the Court of Wards Collector of the Zamorin's Estate observed in 1918:

"Anyone who has seen the rustic Mappilla under cross examination in court will believe me when I say that he takes up the attitude of 'hostile witness' on the slightest suspicion of being entangled in an 'admission'".<sup>2</sup>

With the passing of the Tenants' Improvements Acts of 1887 and 1900<sup>3</sup> collision between the Moplah tenant interest and that of the monied professional and trading classes who were later so heavily represented at the Palghat Conference acquired a new dimension. The effect of the Acts, by providing for the increased payment by the jenmi of the value of the tenant's improvements on eviction, had been to raise the cost to the jenmi of changing his tenant. The consequence had been for the jenmi to attempt to circumvent this expense and trouble by resorting to melcharths or overleases, i.e. selling the right of eviction (often) to

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of Madras, 14 May 1898 and A.E. Havelock, Governor of Madras, 20 May 1898, on memorandum from Sayyid Abdu Rehman Bin Muhamad Hamid Mutta Koya Tangal to Havelock, 7 Apr. 1898, MJP No. 996 (Conf.), 28 June 1898, no p. numbers, MRO.

1 See for example 'Petition purporting to be addressed by certain Mussulmans, Nayars, Tiyyans and men of other castes inhabiting Malabar', 14 Oct. 1883, Govt. of Madras, Malabar Land Tenures, p. 14; memorandum from Sayyid Abdu Rehman Bin Muhamad Hamid Mulla Koya Tangal to A.E. Havelock, Governor of Madras, 7 Apr. 1898, MJP No. 996 (Conf.), 28 June 1898, p. 6, MRO.

2 J.A. Thorne to Sec. to Commissioner, Court of Wards, n.d., P/10455, MRP No. 3121, 4 Sept. 1918, p. 11. See also Logan 'Report on Malabar Land Tenures', loc. cit., Vol. 1, p. lxxv.

3 See Chapter 1.

whomsoever could pay the highest price.<sup>1</sup> Since the melcharthdar could speculate on recouping his outlay in buying the overlease from compensation for the improvements on the land when his own turn for eviction came,<sup>2</sup> a vigorous market for melcharths grew up in the 1900s and 1910s. Official figures show that in the years following the passing of the 1887 Act the filing of eviction suits on melcharth increased rapidly.

Number of suits filed on melcharths in South Malabar<sup>3</sup>

1891	54	1899	192	1907	282
1892	101	1900	182	1908	291
1893	69	1901	105	1909	409
1894	99	1902	131	1910	419
1895	136	1903	180	1911	500
1896	199	1904	202	1912	562
1897	139	1905	241		
1898	191	1906	234		

1 District Munsiff, Badagara, to District Judge, North Malabar, 21 Aug. 1911, P/9579, MRP (Conf.) No. 9, 2 Jan. 1914, p. 15; C.A. Innes, 'Strictly Confidential Note on the Malabar Tenancy Legislation', P/35 (Conf.) MRP No. 3021, 26 Sept. 1917, p. 21.

2 District Munsiff, Tellicherry, to District Judge, North Malabar, 21 Aug. 1911, P/9579, MRP (Conf.) No. 9, 2 Jan. 1914, p. 12.

3 See sub-enclosure in A. Edgington, Acting District Judge, South Malabar to Registrar, High Court, 12 Aug. 1911, P/9579, MRP (Conf.) No. 9, 2 Jan. 1914, p. 7 and statements enclosed in Acting Registrar, High Court to Chief Sec., 20 Aug. 1913, P/9320, MRP No. 2660, 5 Sept. 1913, pp. 3-4. For the misuse in Ernad taluk of the melcharth by the Zamorin of Calicut in the period 1907-15 see written statement of P. Sankunni Menon, Retired Tahsildar, n.d., Govt. of Madras, Report of the Malabar Tenancy Committee, 1927-28, Vol. I, p. 34 and oral evidence of the same, 27 Oct. 1927, ibid., p. 45.

Moreover, as Collector Innes pointed out in 1911, the extent of the problem is not fully conveyed by these figures. Many suits covered 50 or 60 separate items of land, whilst not all melcharths were in evidence, the person coveting the land sometimes financing a suit for eviction in the jenmi's name.<sup>1</sup> Many of the overleases granted by the Zamorin of Calicut would not figure in the official statistics as melcharths, for in deference to public opinion as to the heinousness of this resort the Zamorin preferred to give a written contract (karar) authorizing a person to sue for eviction in his name and engaging to lease the land when recovered to the karar-holder.<sup>2</sup> Above all, the impact of the overleasing system on the condition of the Malabar tenantry cannot adequately be measured by the extent of involvement in judicial processes. Mere knowledge of the existence of the melcharth weapon in the hands of the jenmi was no doubt often sufficient for the reinforcement of his power over his tenantry, including the power to extort increased payments,<sup>3</sup> which the overleasing system entailed.<sup>4</sup>

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1 C.A. Innes, Acting Malabar Collector to Sec., Commissioner of Land Revenue and Forests, 26 Aug. 1911, P/9579, MRP (Conf.) No. 9, 2 Jan. 1914, p. 24.

2 J.A. Thorne, Collector, Zamorin's Estate, to Sec. to Commissioner, Court of Wards, n.d., P/10455, MRP No. 3121, 4 Sept. 1918, p. 13. This seems to have been the system vilified by Kerala Patrika, 12 Dec. 1896, MNMR 1896-98, L/R/15/108, p. 345.

3 District Munsiff, Tellicherry, to District Judge, North Malabar, 21 Aug. 1911, P/9579, MRP (Conf.) No. 9, 2 Jan. 1914, p. 12.

4 Acting Subordinate Judge, Palghat, to District Judge, South Malabar, 1 Aug. 1911, ibid., p. 9; C.A. Innes, Acting Collector, Malabar, to Sec., Commissioner of Land Revenue and Forests, 26 Aug. 1911, ibid., p. 23.

Not surprisingly the melcharth was "condemned as an abomination by public opinion in Malabar"<sup>1</sup> and jenmis stood at bay on the issue<sup>2</sup> whilst it was "wholly against the principles" of the Court of Wards to grant overleases.<sup>3</sup> The reaction of the tenantry exposed to the operation of the overleasing system is indicated in Collector Innes' remark that the granting of melcharths lead to "bitterness, bad blood and criminal cases"<sup>4</sup> not to mention Moplah outbreaks.<sup>5</sup> In one specific case an influential Hindu landlord of Malappuram, Para Nambi, who in 1902 was admittedly granting dozens of melcharths was the

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- 1 C.A. Innes to Sec., Commissioner of Land Revenue and Forests, 26 Aug. 1911, loc. cit., p. 23. See also J.A. Thorne, Collector, Zamorin's Estate, to Sec. to Commissioner, Court of Wards, n.d., P/10455, MRP No. 3121, 4 Sept. 1918, p. 14; interview with M. Govindan Menon, an amin of the Munsiff's Court, Parappanangadi, during the immediate post-First World War period, Parappanangadi, 1 Jan. 1975.
- 2 See for example memorial of Zamorin to Governor of Madras, 20 Dec. 1913, P/11 (Conf.), MRP No. 897, 17 Apr. 1915, p.2; U.B., 'A Nair Chief: Romance of the house of Kavalapara', New India, 25 Sept. 1915, p. 11; C.A. Innes, 'Strictly Confidential Note on the Malabar Tenancy Legislation', loc. cit., p. 20; Katakkoththala Nambudri to Malabar District Magistrate, n.d. L/PJ/6/1608, 4582/19, MJP No. 1310, 9 June 1919, p. 26. In 1905 the Malabar Jenmis' Association even resolved to do away with the "baneful practice" of giving melcharths, Kerala Patrika, 24 June 1905, MNMR 1905-06, L/R/15/112, p. 240.
- 3 G.W. Dance, Malabar Collector, to Sec., Revenue, 13 July 1899, P/5746, MRP No. 545, 19 Aug. 1899, p. 402. It was the practice of Govt. to punish adhigaris who dealt in melcharths, Kerala Patrika, 7 July 1900, MNMR 1899-1900, L/R/15/109, p. 204; Innes to Sec., Commissioner of Land Revenue and Forests, 26 Aug. 1911, loc. cit., p. 24.
- 4 Innes to Sec., Commissioner of Land Revenue and Forests, 26 Aug. 1911, loc. cit. p. 24. See also Kerala Sanchari, 27 Mar. 1895, MNMR 1894-95, L/R/15/107, p. 109.
- 5 See above p. 32.

object of tenant hostility expressed in a number of both anonymous and signed petitions sent to the authorities complaining of these overleases and the jenmi's 'oppression' of his tenants and warning of his impending murder.<sup>1</sup>

Much of the animosity overleasing aroused among the Malabar tenantry was directed towards the jenmi. On the other hand there can be no doubt that the melcharthdars, "very often speculators willing to meet the expenses of litigation and recover the property [from the tenants], to the common advantage of themselves and the [jenmi]",<sup>2</sup> were by no means exempt from the prevailing hostility.<sup>3</sup> In one recorded case criminal action resulted when the attempt of one recipient of a melcharth to execute decrees for eviction from the 97 separate items of land under the overleases resulted in what were tersely described as "collisions".<sup>4</sup> The melcharthdar in this case was a merchant in the Calicut bazaar and there can be no doubt that those who joined in the scramble for overleases were, as the yakils of Payoli District Munsiff's Court gravely observed in 1911,

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1 A.F. Pinhey, Malabar Magistrate to Chief Sec., 2 Apr. 1902, MJP No. 806 (Conf.), 16 May 1902, pp. 2-3, MRO. Para Nambi in fact appears to have survived these threats.

2 J.A. Thorne, Collector, Zamorin's Estate to Sec. to Commissioner, Court of Wards, n.d., P/10455, MRP No. 3121, 4 Sept. 1918, p. 14.

3 See for example Govt. Order No. 2186, P/4621, MJP Nos. 2186-92, 8 Sept. 1894, p. 134.

4 Innes to Sec., Commissioner of Land Revenue and Forests, 26 Aug. 1911, loc. cit., p. 24.

"generally middle class men possessed of ready money"<sup>1</sup>. Thus in one part of south Malabar, the Parappanangadi area, in this period a Nair advocate was able to become both rich and notorious by the expedient of receiving melcharths on the property of the Zamorin of Calicut.<sup>2</sup> Very often the Moplah tenant must have found that the investor who joined hands with the jenmi to oust him from his holding was the type of high-caste Hindu of the professional class who was such an important force in the local Congress organisation.

At the same time, all tenants, whether having obtained their leases on melcharth or otherwise, shared a common antagonism to the typical jenmi who strove to exploit his advantages under the law to maximise the return from his lands at the tenant's expense. Even vakil melcharthdars were often strong advocates of legislation against the overlease system "lest", as one newspaper put it "their melcharts be re-melcharted!"<sup>3</sup>

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1 To District Munsiff, Payoli, n.d., ibid., p. 18. See also District Judge, North Malabar to Registrar, High Court, 4 Sept. 1911, ibid. p. 10; District Munsiff, Badagara to District Judge, North Malabar, 21 Aug. 1911, ibid., p. 15; G. W. Dance, Malabar Collector to Sec., Revenue, 13 July 1899, P/5746, MRP No. 545, 19 Aug. 1899, p. 402; note by Varanakot Krishnan Namputiripad, enclosure No. 1 to appendix F(f), Govt. of Madras, Malabar Land Tenures Committee Report, p. 61; C.A. Innes, 'Strictly Confidential Note on the Malabar Tenancy Legislation', loc. cit., p. 22.

2 Interview with M. Govindan Menon, Parappanangadi, 1 Jan. 1975.

3 Article 'Melchart' by 'Agrarian', West Coast Reformer, 28 Apr. 1915, P/35 (Conf.), MRP No. 3021, 26 Sept. 1917, p. 3. This newspaper, reported in 1916 as voicing the jenmi's viewpoint (C.I.D. Memorandum on Newspapers for 1916, P/35 /Conf./ MPP No. 940, 21 July 1917, p. 89) was, of course, being satirical (the jenmi enjoyed making this case, see for example Kavalappara Muppil Nayar, Tenancy Agitation in Malabar, p. 16). Even so, the point had substance: there was no legal limit to the

Indeed, the clamour for curbing the proprietary rights of the jenmi in favour of the tenantry which was raised in press and on platform in the earlier part of the century was the forte of the monied investor in kanam property<sup>1</sup> rather than the actual cultivator who was "least able to make himself heard by lawful means".<sup>2</sup>

Nevertheless this interest the Moplah tenantry shared with the middle-class Hindu kanamdar in the district Congress organisation<sup>3</sup> could not be exploited to widen the social base of the national movement in Malabar as long as jenmi influence prevented the advocacy of tenant grievances by the annual District Conferences.<sup>4</sup> At each of the three Conferences which followed the first in 1916 the attempts of tenant spokesmen to advance in face of entrenched jenmi interest<sup>5</sup> were effectually checked.

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jenmi's power to melcharth. See also West Coast Spectator, 27 Nov. 1912, MNNR 1912, L/R/15/117, p. 1756; Govt. Order No. 2346, Law (General), 29 July 1927 in Govt. of Madras, Report of the Malabar Tenancy Committee, 1927-28, Vol. I, p. 68.

- 1 Kerala Sanchari, 14 Dec. 1912, MNNR 1912, L/R/15/117 p. 1889; West Coast Spectator, 12 Mar. 1913, MNNR 1913, L/R/15/118, p. 436; C.A. Innes, 'Strictly Confidential Note on the Malabar Tenancy Legislation', loc. cit., p. 53; 'Strictly Confidential Note by Mr. F.B. Evans on Mr. Innes' Note', ibid. p. 6; J.A. Thorne, Collector, Zamorin's Estate to Sec. to Commissioner, Court of Wards, n.d., P/10455, MRP No. 3121, 4 Sept. 1918 p. 23.
- 2 C.A. Innes, 'Strictly Confidential Note on the Malabar Tenancy Legislation', loc. cit., p. 53. See also ibid., p. 48.
- 3 According to K.P. Kesava Menon, the great gulf separating the rustic Moplah from the Nair kanamdar of the nationalist movement was bridged only by their common interest in the tenancy movement (interview, Kozhikode, 17 Dec. 1974).
- 4 Madras Mail, 17 May 1919, p. 3; K. Madhavan Nayar, Malabar Kalapam, p. 88.
- 5 See the reports of these Conferences in Madras Mail, 23 Apr. 1917 p. 3, 5 May 1918 p. 3, 17 May 1919 p. 3.



One of the chief campaigners for tenancy reforms,<sup>1</sup> K.P. Raman Menon of Calicut, commented at the 1920 Conference that the tenancy question had not been aired at the four previous conferences on the pretext that such a contentious issue should not be taken up at a time when hopes of securing responsible government were high.<sup>2</sup> Disillusionment with the Malabar District Conference as a means of furthering the cause of the tenant reached such a pitch that after the 1917 session had once more shelved the issue, a proposal (which apparently proved abortive) for the creation of a rival organisation was mooted in the anti-jenmi Press.<sup>3</sup>

In fact it was not until the 5th Malabar District Conference at Manjeri in 1920 that this obstructionist policy of the jenmi interest was finally defeated and the tenant case first found a platform. Despite opposition on grounds of the interests of 'landlord-tenant unity',<sup>4</sup> culminating in a strong protest sent up to the President by 21 of the jenmis present, a resolution in favour of tenancy reform was at long last adopted at a Malabar

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1 See for example Legislative Council Question of K.P. Raman Menon for meeting of 25 May 1915, MRP No. 1288 (Conf.), 31 May 1915, p. 5, MRO.

2 Madras Mail, 3 May 1920, p. 6. As Chairman of the Reception Committee at the 1917 Conference K.P. Raman Menon had attempted to ventilate the question in his Welcome to Delegates Speech, Madras Mail, 23 Apr. 1917, p. 3. See also K.P. Raman Menon's further attempt in his Address as President of the 1919 Conference, New India, 5 May 1919, p. 10.

3 West Coast Spectator, 28 Apr. 1917, MNNR Jan.-June 1917, L/R/15/123, pp. 1228-29. For the orientation of this journal see F.B. Evans, Malabar Magistrate to Chief Sec., 30 Jan. 1918, on the working of the Indian Press Act for 1917, P/45 (Conf.) MPP No. 346, 22 Apr. 1918, p. 19.

4 See speeches of K.C. Sri Veerarayan Rajah and Mannarkad Muppil Nair, Madras Mail, 3 May 1920, p. 6.

District Conference.<sup>1</sup> A motion of K.P. Raman Menon claiming that it was "high time to legislate safeguarding the interests of the tenants in Malabar" was put to the vote and carried amidst acclamation.<sup>2</sup> The defection of the greater part of the jenmi interest from the now-radicalised mainstream of the nationalist movement in Malabar was one consequence, so that the Ottapalam Conference of 1921 was boycotted by most of the big Malayali landlords whose support was lent to a newly-formed local branch of the National (Liberal) Federation.<sup>3</sup> Moreover, almost immediately after the Conference in response to invitations sent out by K.P. Raman Menon "a number of Vakils and tenants" met in Calicut to initiate the formation of a Kudian Sangham or Tenants' Association.<sup>4</sup>

It would seem likely that pre-Conference exhortation to all interested in the tenancy question to be at Manjeri on 28 April 1920 for the start of the Conference<sup>5</sup> would have helped ensure the presence of the great numbers of Ernad Moplahs<sup>6</sup> who formed

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1 Madras Mail, 3 May 1920, p. 6. See also K. Madhavan Nayar, Malabar Kalapam, p. 88.

2 New India, 4 May 1920, p. 5.

3 Ibid., 29 Jan. 1921, p. 5.

4 Madras Mail, 28 May 1920 p. 6; Own Correspondent, Calicut, New India, 8 June 1920, p. 9; K. Madhavan Nayar, loc. cit., p. 88.

5 Madras Mail, 17 Apr. 1920, p. 6.

6 Interview with Jenab A. Muhammed Sahib, Congress Secretary, Kottayam taluk in 1920-21, Kozhikode, 6 Dec. 1974.

such a high proportion of the delegates.<sup>1</sup> In fact the growing 'mass' character of Congress in the 'Kerala' area at this time is disclosed both in the record attendance<sup>2</sup> at Manjeri and the social character of very many of the delegates, described later as "the assembled Moplah peasants and coolies".<sup>3</sup> Even so, the successful attracting of representation from among the Ernad Moplahs cannot be ascribed solely to the polarisation between the landlord interest and that of the tenant which reached an advanced state at the 5th District Conference.<sup>4</sup>

The very choice for the venue of the Conference of Manjeri in the heart of the 'fanatic zone' was an indication (one the Government of Madras was not slow to notice<sup>5</sup>) of the ambition

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- 1 The majority according to contemporary Madras Mail reports, 30 Apr. 1920 (from 'Special Correspondent, Manjeri'), p. 3 and 3 May 1920, p. 6, and K. Madhavan Nayar, loc. cit., p. 58. See also report of Special Correspondent, Ottapalam, Madras Mail, 25 Apr. 1921, p. 6 and 'Malabar and the Moplahs', a leaflet issued by the Madras Publicity Bureau, Parliamentary Papers, 1921, Vol. 26, Cmd. 1552, p. 39.
- 2 Variously estimated at 1300-1500; Madras Mail 3 May 1920, p. 6 and 25 Apr. 1921, p. 6. Previous District Conferences had attracted attendances which were comparatively much lower and also apparently below expectations; Madras Mail 9 May 1918, p. 3 and 14 May 1919, p. 3; Correspondent, Badagara, 5 May 1919, New India, 7 May 1919, p. 9; Correspondent, Tellicherry, 6 May 1918, New India, 9 May 1918, p. 4.
- 3 Special Correspondent, Calicut, Times of India, 12 Sept. 1921, p. 11. One of the interviews conducted by the present writer in 1974 (28 Dec.) was with T.K. Kammunni, a Moplah mortgagee of Anakkayam, who in 1921 cultivated 2.7 acres of paddy land. Kammunni participated in the Manjeri Conference.
- 4 Manorama, 30 Apr. 1920, MNNR 1920, L/R/15/128, p. 572. This newspaper, a jenmi organ (C.I.D. Memorandum on Newspapers, 1920, P/63, MPP No. 559, Conf., 31 Aug. 1921, p. 287) deplored this development.
- 5 Extract from fortnightly report of Govt. of Madras to Govt. of India, 4 May 1920, G.R.F. Tottenham (ed.), The Mapilla Rebellion, 1921-22, p. 8.

of the Kerala Congress to extend its influence among the Muslims of Ernad. It was considered a sign of the times when, in late 1919, at a public meeting in Manjeri at which a Reception Committee for the forthcoming Conference was set up, two leading Ernad Moplahs were chosen. This seems to have been the first occasion on which leaders of the community had shown active interest in the political movement.<sup>1</sup> There can be no doubt that both the Congress initiative and the favourable response elicited owed much to the developing anti-British agitation throughout India known as the 'Khilafat' movement,<sup>2</sup> which took as its focus Allied proposals threatening the integrity of the territories of the Turkish Sultan and Caliph.

#### Part 2, The Moplahs and Turkey

It is not surprising that a community like the Ernad Moplahs, for which its religion had connotations of social and economic liberation, should have tended, with or without justification, to cast each challenge to British power during the 19th and early 20th centuries in Islamic terms. The crushing defeat which, in the early stages of the First World War, the 'fanatic zone' Moplah believed was being administered to their rulers was inflicted by the army of a nation, Germany, which, it was

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1 Madras Mail, 10 Oct. 1919, p. 3.

2 According to K.P. Kesava Menon, the Khilafat issue was the dominating theme of the Manjeri Conference (interview, Kozhikode, 17 Dec. 1974). See also Acting Chief Sec., Govt. of Madras to Sec., Govt. of India, Home, 4 May 1920, demi-official, strictly conf., Fortnightly Reports for 1920, p. 16, MRO.

suggested, had embraced Islam.<sup>1</sup> Apparently even the Boers in 1900 were to be led to victory against Britain by the intervention of the Sultan of Turkey.<sup>2</sup> The invincibility of the Empire of this Muslim ruler, especially in conflict with the 'Christian Powers', seems to have been an important item of faith with the Moplahs.<sup>3</sup> According to C.A. Innes, the District Magistrate of Malabar in 1915:

"the Mappillas in the lower strata of society .... have the most absurdly exaggerated ideas of Turkey's prowess and now that Turkey has come in into the War I suspect that they think that Germany's final triumph is merely a matter of time."<sup>4</sup>

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- 1 C.A. Innes, Malabar Magistrate, to A. Butterworth, Chief Sec., Govt. of Madras, 30 Dec. 1914, Innes to Govt of Madras?, 20 Jan. 1915 and Innes to P. Rajagopala Achariyar, Sec., Judicial Dept., Govt. of Madras, 13 Jan. 1915, MJP No. 360 (Conf.), 18 Feb. 1915, pp. 11, 61 and 68, MRO; Chief Sec., Govt. of Madras, to Sec., Govt. of India, Home, demi-official, conf., 16 Jan. 1915, MRO. Soon after the outbreak of World War I a Travancore newspaper Nazrani Deepika reported (with scepticism) that the Home Rule organ New India credited a story that the Moplahs believed the Kaiser would win the war because of a supposed connection with the Prophet; Nazrani Deepika, 21 Oct. 1914, MNNR 1914, L/R/15/119, p. 1606.
- 2 Article 'The Mappilla's Powerful Imagination', Times of Malabar, 13 Jan. 1900, MNNR 1899-1900, L/R/15/109, p. 18.
- 3 Ibid. See also Acting Chief Sec., Govt. of Madras, to Sec., Govt. of India, 17 May 1916, demi-official, strictly conf., Fortnightly Reports for 1916, MRO; Chief Sec., Govt. of Madras to Sec., Govt. of India, Home, demi-official, strictly conf., 1 Nov. 1915, Fortnightly Reports for 1915, MRO and the editorial the Malabar newspaper Paschima Taraka and Kerala Pataka saw fit to publish on 15 Apr. 1877 (MNNR 1877-88, L/R/15/104, p. 5) contradicting a rumour circulating among the Moplahs that the Sultan had won 14 kingdoms from the Russians and carried off 30,000 of their troops to be made Muslims. The strong sense of attachment of the Moplah to the Sultan of Turkey was in 1864 described by F.C. Brown, a Malabar planter and son of Murdoch Brown (see above p. 156), F.C. Brown to Chief Sec., 15 Jan. 1864, P/328/47, MJP No. 980, 4 July 1864, p. 851.
- 4 Innes to P. Rajagopala Achariyar, Sec., Judicial, 13 Jan. 1915, MJP No. 360 (Conf.), 18 Feb. 1915, pp. 66-67, MRO.

The fortunes of the Ernad Moplah were undoubtedly felt by him to be promoted by the exercise of power by the Islamic raj across the Arabian Sea. In 1922 the unconditional release of 500 Moplahs imprisoned for their participation in the 1921-22 rising and the withdrawal from the rebellion zone of the special police raised to deal with the revolt were both attributed to "pressure from the victorious Angoras".<sup>1</sup> Some seven years earlier the belief was current in Ernad that the victory of Turkey and their 'newly-Islamicised' German allies would mean for the Moplah freedom from the constraints of British rule, the obligation to meet rent and revenue demands in particular.<sup>2</sup> It would appear that the presence at the other end of the Indian Ocean shipping routes of the world's most powerful Muslim empire<sup>3</sup> was felt by the Moplah to be of much importance in sustaining his hopes for the downfall of the British-imposed agrarian and administrative systems of high-caste Hindu ascendancy.

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1 R.H. Ellis, Malabar Magistrate, to Chief Sec., 9 Nov. 1922, Govt. of Madras, Under Sec.'s Safe, Secret, No. 386, 15 Dec. 1922, MRO.

2 Innes to P. Rajagopala Achariyar, 13 Jan. 1915, MJP No. 360 (Conf.), 18 Feb. 1915, p. 68, MRO.

3 Moplah contact with Arabia as pilgrims and traders was intimate and of long-standing. See for example C. Collett, Malabar Joint Magistrate to Malabar Magistrate, 14 Feb. 1856, P/328/13, MJP No. 424, 25 Apr. 1856, p. 2318; S. Page, Acting H.M.'s Vice Consul and Hon. Company's Agent at Juddah to R.L. Playfair, Asst. to Political Agent, Aden, 31 Oct. 1856, P/328/22, MJP No. 15, 5 Jan. 1857, p. 37; G.A. Ballard, Malabar Magistrate to Chief Sec., 1 Apr. 1863, P/328/43, MJP No. 872, 5 June 1863, p. 640; Innes to Acting Chief Sec., 30 Sept. 1912, MJP No. 1780 (Conf.), 1 Nov. 1912, p. 20, MRO; Acting Sec., Govt. of Madras, Revenue (Special) to Sec., Govt. of India, Home, 1 Feb. 1919, demi-official, strictly conf., Fortnightly Reports for 1919, p. 26, MRO.

For the Ernad Moplah support for Turkey seems to have been important primarily in so far as such aid was felt to be a form of self-help. The solicitude of the 'fanatic zone' Moplahs for the success of Turkish arms and the fate of the Sultan's Empire was therefore, in the course of the later phases of the 'Eastern Question', most earnest and palpable when most directly linked to their own fortunes. In 1911-12 although the Malayali Press had commented on the "aggressive sympathy shown by Moplahs in a number of places in Malabar for the Ottoman Empire in its war with Italy,"<sup>1</sup> including support extended to the efforts of the Red Crescent Society on behalf of the Turks,<sup>2</sup> a confidential report (prompted by the concern of the Government of Madras<sup>3</sup>) by the District Magistrate on Moplah feeling revealed a picture at once more complex and more significant. C.A. Innes discovered that "the educated Mappillas and others" in centres in the 'fanatic zone' area such as Malappuram, Perintalmanna, Mannarghat and Mambad were following the course of the War "with keen interest" with a 40-days prayer conducted continuously in Perintalmanna mosque, presumably for the success of Turkish

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1 Cochin Argus, 25 Nov. 1911, MNMR 1911, L/R/15/116, p. 1696. See also Innes to Chief Sec., 30 Nov. 1911, P/9035, MJP No. 82, 20 Jan. 1912 pp. 2-3 and Innes to Acting Chief Sec., 30 Sept. 1912, MJP No. 1780 (Conf.), 1 Nov. 1912, p. 20, MRO.

2 West Coast Reformer, 5 Dec. 1912, MNMR, L/R/15/117, p. 1793. The Collector stated that this activity was in the coastal urban centres, Innes to Under Sec., 25 Nov. 1912, MJP No. 2040, 9 Dec. 1912, pp. 12-13.

3 D.O. No. 368/C-1, 5 Nov. 1912, MJP No. 2040 (Conf.) 9 Dec. 1912, Extracts from the Govt. Orders relating to the Mappilla Rebellion, History of the Freedom Movement (typescripts) p. 1, MRO.

arms. On the other hand in the "out-of-the-way amsams [parishes]  
amongst the ignorant Mappilla cultivators" of Ernad and Wallu-  
vanad, i.e. among the traditionally most fanatical Muslims of  
Malabar, he was able to find "very little indication of much  
interest in the war". In fact the 'fanatic zone' was found to  
be "to all outward appearances ... particularly quiet" and the  
Collector could not discover anywhere any manifestation of  
Moplah sympathy with the Turks which posed a danger to the  
interests of the British Raj.<sup>1</sup> For the rural Moplah of Ernad  
Turkey's struggle in the eastern Mediterranean area in 1911-12  
must have seemed remote from any possible resolution of his own  
long-standing discontents under British rule.

On the other hand, when, in late 1914, the empire of their  
'invincible' Sultan entered the Great War as Britain's adversary,  
the coveted day of deliverance must have seemed imminent,  
especially since the challenge to British rule took the irrefut-  
able form of the sensational exploits of the German warship  
Emden which shelled Madras and operated off the Malabar coast,  
sinking ships in the area of the Laccadive Islands.<sup>2</sup> The sense  
of anticipation among the "more ignorant" of the Malabar Moplahs  
was so strong that they were reported as being firmly convinced  
for more than a month before the event that Britain had been at

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1 Innes to Under Sec., 25 Nov. 1912, MJP No. 2040, 9 Dec. 1912,  
pp. 5-14, MRO.

2 See reports of various newspapers in report 39 of 26 Sept.  
1914, pp. 1406-07 and report 40 of 3 Oct. 1914, pp. 1450-52,  
MNNR 1914, L/R/15/119 and Mysore Star, 4 Oct. 1914, ibid., p.  
1512.



war with Turkey but that the fact had been suppressed.<sup>1</sup> Not unnaturally, the concern of the Government of Madras over the likely reaction of its Muslim citizens to Turkey's entry into the War was most anxious in the case of the lower-order Moplahs of Malabar.<sup>2</sup> In the event British fears were not ill-founded. Rumours of the impending collapse of British power in face of the military prowess of Turkey and her allies and the imminent descent of the Sultan on India swept the 'Moplah taluks' in 1914-15.<sup>3</sup> Such doomsday stories can only have been lent credence

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1 Report for 11 Nov. 1914, P4918, one of the fortnightly reports on the internal situation in Madras Presidency, in 'The War: Moslem Feeling', file 4265/1914 Pt. 1, Political and Secret Files, L/P & S/10/518. The anxiety of Moplahs to detect challenge to and triumphs over British rule, whether warranted or not by reality, also seems to emerge from the remark of one Malabar Collector, that the (false, see above p. 22) belief that Collector Innes had fallen victim to the attempt on his life in Ernad in 1915 was still "firmly believe/d" by some Malabar Muslims seven years later; R.H. Ellis to R.A. Graham, Chief Sec., Govt. of Madras, 9 Nov. 1922, Govt. of Madras, Under Sec.'s Safe, Secret, No. 386, 15 Dec. 1922, MRO. The same rumour seems to have been deliberately spread soon after the attempted assassination, see Our Correspondent, Calicut, 5 April 1915, New India, 7 Apr. 1915, p. 12.

2 See fortnightly reports in 'The War: Moslem Feeling', loc. cit., especially that for 11 Nov. 1914, P4918.

3 'Account of the Mappilla Outbreak in the Malabar District, Feb.-Mar. 1915', loc. cit., pp. 2 and 4; Innes to Sec., Judicial, 29 Mar. 1915 MJP Nos. 2080-84, 3 Sept. 1915 (Conf.) p. 33; R.H. Hitchcock, Supt. of Police, South Malabar, 'Report on the Mappilla Outbreak of 1915', 30 Mar. 1915, ibid., pp. 63 and 66; Hitchcock, 'Report of the outbreak of crime in Ernad and Walluvanad', n.d., ibid., p. 73; remarks of Innes, 10 Mar. 1915 on South Malabar Police Administration Report for 1914, Pl, II, 1913-24, p. 83; Police Administration Report of Madras Presidency for 1915, ibid., p. 13; Madras Mail, 25 Jan. 1915, p. 3; 'Week by Week' by 'Onlooker', in Cochin Argus, 16 Jan. 1915, MNNR 1915, L/R/15/120, p. 200; interview with K.M. Mahomed Haji, a primary school teacher of Anakkayam, a teenager during the Great War, Anakkayam, 28 Dec. 1974.

by the replacement in January 1915 of the regular troops which, since 1852 had been garrisoned at Malappuram to watch over the Ernad Moplah,<sup>1</sup> by a reserve battalion composed entirely of recruits,<sup>2</sup> a move which, indeed, was only the first step in a progressive weakening of the British military presence in the 'fanatic zone'.<sup>3</sup> The serious disturbances which accompanied this period of unrest included dacoities, attempts by Moplahs to secure converts by illegitimate and coercive means, a 'fanatical' outbreak and general lawlessness among the Moplahs of the Ernad area.<sup>4</sup>

In the event the Moplah anticipation of impending British downfall was of course disappointed and after the first weeks of Turkish participation in the War the 'Moplah taluks' presented a less disturbed appearance.<sup>5</sup> Despite the fact that the 1915

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1 Extract from Military Consultation, 9 Dec. 1851, No. 3658, in P/327/42, MJP No. 779, 17 Dec. 1851, p. 4774; C.A. Innes, Malabar Gazetteer, Vol. I, p. 416.

2 Extract from letter from Collector of Malabar [to Govt. of Madras?], 20 Jan. 1915, MJP No. 360, (Conf.), 18 Feb. 1915, p. 61, MRO; Govt. Order No. 2080, 3 Sept. 1915, MJP Nos. 2080-84 (Conf.), p. 84, Kozhikode Archives.

3 G.R.F. Tottenham, Acting Under Sec., Govt. of Madras, 'Notes on the withdrawal of troops from Malappuram', 12 Oct. 1921, appendix I, G.R.F. Tottenham (ed.), loc. cit., pp. 421-24.

4 'Account of Mappilla Outbreak ...' loc. cit., p. 1; remarks of Innes, 10 Mar. 1915, loc. cit., pp. 83-84; Innes to Sec., Judicial, 29 Mar. 1915 (Conf.), MJP Nos. 2080-84, 3 Sept. 1915 (Conf.), p. 33, Kozhikode Archives; Govt. Order No. 2080, 3 Sept. 1915, MJP Nos. 2080-84 (Conf.), p. 84, Kozhikode Archives; Correspondent, Calicut, 22 Feb. 1915, New India, 25 Feb. 1915, p. 13; Correspondent, Calicut, 4 Jan. 1915, New India, 5 Jan. 1915, p. 12.

5 Chief Sec., Govt. of Madras to Sec., Govt. of India (Home), 18 Apr. 1915, (demi-official, conf.), Fortnightly Reports, Vol. I, 1914, and 1915, MRO; Acting Chief Sec., Govt. of

outbreak had broken a 17-year period of relative peace in Ernad, the authorities in Madras were still complacent enough in 1917 to dismiss the pressure of ex-District Magistrate Innes for legislation to protect the Malabar tenant, with the reflection that the jenmi's adherence to the British interest outweighed any political gain to be registered by placating the tenant.<sup>1</sup> That Innes himself had been unable to detect any agrarian discontent in an outbreak, which had been directed against an apostate and the infidel administration which protected him certainly would not have helped the case for tenancy legislation.<sup>2</sup> However, despite sanguine British estimates after 1915 of the tractability of the Ernad Moplah, it is clear that his hopes that the end of British rule might not be too distant had not been extinguished by the final outcome of the Great War. Even after the Allied victory of 1918 the 'fanatic zone' Moplah was said to believe that the War had irretrievably weakened the Raj.<sup>3</sup> The eventual complete withdrawal in the first half of 1921 of the troops garrisoned at Malappuram seemed to confirm an

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1 See above p. 34.

2 Innes to Sec., Judicial, 29 Mar. 1915, MJP Nos. 2080-84, 3 Sept. 1915, (Conf.), p. 32, Kozhikode Archives. Of course the fact that, after 17 years of freedom from outbreaks, one instance had occurred, did not create the same intensity of pressure that had led to the 1887-1900 legislation.

3 Kerala Kaumudi, 8 Sept. 1921, MNNR 1921, L/R/15/129, p. 1112. See also speech purported to have been given by the Chembrasserri Tangal, one of the leaders of the 1921-22 rebellion, and supplied in abstract form by one present when it was delivered to Times of India, 17 Oct. 1921, p. 10. This speech is reproduced in P.C. Bamford, Histories of the Non-Co-operation and Khilafat Movements, 1925, pp. 175-76.

impression<sup>1</sup> which, indeed, was by no means without basis in fact.<sup>2</sup>

From the earliest period of British rule in Malabar, officials in closest contact with the Moplahs of the 'fanatic zone' had emphasized the necessity of showing there some "outward and visible sign" of the power of Government<sup>3</sup> if its authority were to be maintained among a people for whom even the closing down of a handful of police stations was liable to be interpreted as "powerlessness to maintain law and order."<sup>4</sup>

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1 "We had heard about the removal of British troops from Malappuram. We believed that the British could no longer afford them and that Austin [T. Austin, the Sub-divisional Magistrate at Malappuram in 1921] was alone." Interview with K.M. Mahomed Haji, Anakkayam, 28 Dec. 1921. See also demi-official notes from Malabar Magistrate [to Govt. of Madras], 7 Aug. 1921, G.R.F. Tottenham (ed.) loc. cit., p. 23; N.E.Q. Mainwaring, Deputy Insp.-Gen. of Police, Western Range to Insp.-Gen. of Police, Madras, 11 and 12 Aug. 1921 (demi-official), in J.T.W. Fillson, Personal Asst. to Insp.-Gen. [to Govt. of Madras], 13 Aug. 1921, ibid., p. 26.

2 See details of British military weakness in the Madras Presidency given in demi-official letter from G.O.C. to Govt. of Madras, 15 Aug. 1921 (Secret), G.R.F. Tottenham, (ed.), loc. cit., p. 30, G.O.C. to Govt. of Madras, 25 Aug. 1921, ibid., p. 67.

3 G.W. Dance, Malabar Collector to Sec. to Commissioners, Land Revenue, 13 Dec. 1897, P/5515, MRP No. 136, 8 Mar. 1898, p. 94. See also Hitchcock, 'Report on the Mappilla Outbreak of 1915', 30 Mar. 1915, loc. cit., p. 65; Hitchcock, A History of the Malabar Rebellion, 1921, pp. 145 and 178-79; Malabar Magistrate to Chief Sec., 12 July 1869, P/441/19, MJP No. 1278, 6 Aug. 1869, p. 1314; P. Grant, Malabar Magistrate to Chief Sec., 29 Aug. 1860, P/328/34, MJP No. 1180, 14 Sept. 1860, p. 240; Major Walker [to General Stuart?], 3 Apr. 1800, 'Private Papers' collection, box 1782-99, Walker Papers, 182d18.

4 Hitchcock, 'Report on the Mappilla Outbreak of 1915', 30 Mar. 1915, loc. cit., p. 63; Innes to Sec., Judicial, 29 Mar. 1915 (Conf.), ibid., pp. 21 and 33.

In fact throughout the entire period of British rule it had been a commonplace with British government servants in closest touch with the predispositions of the Moplah of the south Malabar interior that he was not to be permitted the slightest impression of British weakness if he were to be mastered.<sup>1</sup> During the 'Indian unrest' of the 1900s when the most prescient minds in the Indian administration were framing policing re-arrangements<sup>2</sup> to meet contingencies very like those which in fact faced the Raj in the immediate post-War period, those responsible for law and order in the Madras Presidency had stressed the importance of adequate military provision,<sup>3</sup> the case of Malabar being specifically underlined.<sup>4</sup> Despite such cautioning, and in face of opposition from the Madras Government,<sup>5</sup> the immediate aftermath

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1 See for example C. Peile, Southern Supt., Malabar to J. Duncan, Governor of Bombay, 13 Jan. 1799, enclosure in Duncan to Lord Wellesley (private), 13 Feb. 1799, Wellesley Papers, Add 13695, p. 708; C. Collett, Joint Magistrate, Malabar to Chief Sec., 24 Sept. 1855, P/328/6, MJP No. 716, 3 Oct. 1855, pp. 3659-60; G.W. Dance, Malabar Magistrate to Chief Sec., 26 Feb. 1898, P/5505, MJP No. 819, 25 May 1898, p. 101; Innes to P. Rajagopala Achariyar, Sec., Judicial, 9 Jan. 1915, MJP No. 360 (Conf.), 18 Feb. 1915, p. 36, MRO; Malabar Magistrate [to Govt. of Madras], 10 Aug. 1921, G.R.F. Tottenham (ed.), loc. cit., p. 18; demi-official notes from Malabar Magistrate [to Govt. of Madras], 7 Aug. 1921 ibid., p. 23; A.R. Knapp, member, Govt. of Madras, 'Note on Malabar Affairs', 18 Aug. 1921, ibid., p. 32.

2 See the remarkable minute of C.J. Stevenson-Moore, Officiating Director, Criminal Intelligence, 16 Aug. 1907, P/7988, MJP (Conf.), Nos. 1027-28, 28 July 1908, pp. 3-4.

3 D.W.G. Cowie, Insp.-Gen. of Police, Madras to Chief Sec., 4 June 1908, ibid., p. 15. See also W.O. Horne, Insp.-Gen. of Police, Madras to Chief Sec., 31 May 1905, P/7152, MJP No. 1452, 12 Sept. 1905, p. 80.

4 W.O. Horne, to Chief Sec., 31 May 1905, loc. cit., p. 79.

5 See the lengthy appendix I of G.R.F. Tottenham (ed.), loc. cit., pp. 421-24, entitled 'Notes on the withdrawal of troops

of the Great War saw the removal of all troops from Malappuram and the subsequent public auctioning of the furniture and fittings of its barracks.<sup>1</sup>

The inference drawn from such omens by the Ernad Moplah, that British power was expiring, was also an assumption on which the strategy of the Indian National Congress in the immediate post-War period was based. It was this concurrence which formed the basis of the association of the 'Jungle Moplahs' with Malabar Congressmen in the Khilafat movement of this period. For the latter the numerous Muslim community of Ernad and Walluvanad,<sup>2</sup> observed by the District Magistrate by 1920 to be "ready to overthrow the existing form of Government"<sup>3</sup> given a suitable opportunity, was clearly a useful ally in the struggle for swaraj. For the former, although comprehension of the meaning of the term 'Khilafat' was very often deficient,<sup>4</sup> there was

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from Malappuram' in which the detailed history of this long-fought battle of the Govt. of Madras is set out.

1 Remarks of Innes, 10 Mar. 1915, loc. cit., p. 83; Madras Mail, 14 Sept. 1921, p. 5; R.H. Hitchcock, A History of the Malabar Rebellion, 1921, pp. 179-80.

2 The Moplah population of Ernad in 1921 was 236,873, that of Walluvanad 131,497, G.T. Boag, Census of India, 1921, Vol. XIII, Pt. 1, p. 160.

3 Govt. of Madras, The Non-Co-operation Movements in the Madras Presidency, p. 38, MRO.

4 See report of statement of accused in Special Tribunal case, Madras Mail, 29 Sept. 1921, p. 6; report of statement of Moplah P.W., Madras Mail, 8 Oct. 1921, p. 7; statement of Seethi Koya Thangal, 26 Dec. 1921, in Hitchcock, loc. cit., p. 185; statement of Otakath Kunhi Koya Thangal of Chembrasserri, 26 Dec. 1921, ibid., p. 185; statement of Amakundan Mammad, 28 Dec. 1921, ibid., p. 186; statement of Kunhamad Haji, 10 Jan. 1922, ibid., p. 186; demi-official report of F.B. Evans, Special Civil Officer at the time of the 1921 rebellion,

evidently widespread understanding that the movement entailed alignment with Turkey<sup>1</sup> for a challenge to British rule.<sup>2</sup> A movement for solidarity with Turkey was the improbable form

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26 Dec. 1921, G.R.F. Tottenham (ed.), The Mapilla Rebellion, 1921-22, p. 279; interview with Sir Thomas Austin, Special Asst. Magistrate, Malabar, in 1921, 20 Mar. 1974; interview with K.P. Kesava Menon, Kozhikode, 17 Dec. 1974; weekly report of Hitchcock, 27 May 1922, Govt. of Madras, Under Sec.'s Safe, Secret, No. 360, 5 Sept. 1922, MRO; re-examination of Parakkal Pokker, P.W. No. 3, 20 Apr. 1922, Court of Special Judge, Calicut, Case No. 54 of 1922, Referred Trial No. 45 of 1922, p. 12, MHCA; Exhibit 1, Special Judge Case No. 7 of 1922, deposition of Nalakath Kunhi Pokkar, P.W. No. 5, 7 Oct. 1921, Court of Session, South Malabar, Case No. 15 of 1922, Criminal Appeal No. 1493 of 1922, p. 31, MHCA. The present writer was still being told in 1974 by rebellion participants that 'Khilafat' meant 'the expulsion of the British' (interview with Chelupadan Mohammed, Tirurangadi, 21 Dec. 1974), 'the organisation of Muslims' (interview with K. Moideen Kutty, Tirurangadi, 15 Dec. 1974), 'independence' (interview with A.P. Kunhahamed, Mambram, 14 Dec. 1974), 'something to do with my religion and my community' (interview with N. Checku, Munduparamba, 23 Dec. 1974), 'that the white man should go' (interview with T.K. Kammunni, Anakkayam, 28 Dec. 1974).

1 Statement of Kunhahamad Haji, 10 Jan. 1922, Hitchcock, loc. cit., p. 186; article by E.H. Colebrooke (a planter in the 'fanatic zone' at the time of the 1921-22 rebellion and an employer of many hundreds of Moplahs) published in Madras Mail in Sept. 1921, copy in Colebrooke Papers, p. 1; interview with K.M. Mahomed Haji, Anakkayam, 28 Dec. 1974; deposition of Mankavil Velu Nayar, P.W. No. 5, 27 Mar. 1922, Court of Special Judge, Calicut, Case No. 22 of 1922, Referred Trial No. 50 of 1922, p. 8, MHCA; deposition of Kunhatta Krishnan Nayar, P.W. No. 6, 27 Mar. 1922, ibid., p. 9; Hindu, 6 Sept. 1921, p. 6; evidence presented in Malabar District Magistrate's Court, 8 Apr. 1922, MPP No. 1049 (Conf.), 16 Dec. 1922, p. 2, MRO.

2 Hitchcock, loc. cit., pp. 58, 153 and 164; statement of Kunhamad Haji, 10 Jan. 1922, ibid., p. 186; judgement, Case No. 65 of 1921, Court of Special Tribunal, Calicut, 25 Jan. 1922, ibid., p. 307; deposition of M. Narayana Menon, P.W. No. 1, 28 June 1922, Court of Special Judge, Calicut, Case No. 78 of 1922, Referred Trial No. 106 of 1922, p. 3, MHCA; cross-examination of Madathil Alavi, P.W. No. 4, 6 Apr. 1922, Court of Special Judge, Calicut, Case No. 39 of 1922, Referred Trial No. 41 of 1922, p. 11, MHCA; cross-examination of Kazhnutgam Thottathil Moosa Kutty, P.W. No. 4, 26 Apr. 1922, Court of Special Judge, Calicut, Case No. 130, Criminal Appeal No. 1202 of 1922, p. 13, MHCA.

taken by that hostility to the Raj which was a sentiment shared by 'Jungle Moplah' and Congressman.

### Conclusion

In the first four years after its first impact as a political force of importance in Malabar, the local Indian National Congress was basically pro-jenmi and, in its opposition to the ruling power, constitutionalist. It was therefore, on both counts, of little attraction in 1916-20 to the Ernad Moplah in his quest for the resolution of his traditional grievances. On the contrary the Malabar Congress must have appeared to him simply as a vehicle for the promotion of precisely those high-caste Hindu interests with which he had for so long been in conflict. The capture of Congress in 1920, by elements which favoured not only curbing jenmi power but also the challenge to British rule in the name of the vindication of Islam which was then developing on an all-India scale, attracted the attention of the south Malabar rural Moplah, who at Manjeri first participated in force in a Congress District Conference. By 1920 the pacifying effects of the agrarian legislation of 1887-1900 had long worn off because of jenmi machination, and Moplah discontent had broken out in defiance of British rule with the disturbances of 1915 and 1919.<sup>1</sup> Prescriptively these disorders, in the absence of anything more than a fleeting challenge to the British for power on a sub-continental scale, chiefly took the form of the ritual defiance of the outbreak; a defiance which left the

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<sup>1</sup> See above p. 145.



Madras administration so unperturbed as to reject in 1917 any suggestion of the need for new and more radical agrarian reforms in Malabar. This decision was the guarantee that the response of the Ernad Moplah to the creation of the first great direct threat to British rule in India since 1857-58, the Khilafat-non-co-operation movement of 1920-21, would be most positive. At the same time the fact that the political movement of 1920-21 was in Malabar in the hands of high-caste Hindu elements which, whilst having their own reasons for opposition to landlord power and British rule, were also in antagonism with the Ernad Moplah in the realm of interest, ensured that the relationship of the 'Jungle Moplah' with the non-co-operation movement would be of a nature far removed from that of reciprocity.

CONRAD WOOD

PhD

VOLUME II



CHAPTER 4

The Ernad Moplah and the Political Movement in Malabar:

The Organisation of the Challenge to

British Rule and the Jenmi, 1920-21

Part 1: The Khilafat-Non-Co-operation Movement

Opposition to Government as well as to the power of the jenmi was the rationale for the apposition of 'fanatic zone' Moplah and the Malabar Congress from April 1920, when the 'extremists' assumed control of the local nationalist movement at the Manjeri Conference, and the outbreak of rebellion in August 1921. However, the demonstrations of triumph<sup>1</sup> with which the large Ernad Moplah contingent at Manjeri greeted the passing of the resolution calling for non-co-operation with Government over the Khilafat issue<sup>2</sup> by no means signified Moplah acceptance of the Gandhian tenets to which Congress subscribed. On the contrary, the extent to which the Kerala branch of the Indian National Congress was able to impose the shibboleths of non-co-operation, non-violence and Hindu-Muslim unity on the Ernad Moplah was minimal.

In fact there was limited contact between the organisers of the nationalist movement and the rural population of most of

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1 'The Moplah Rebellion, III' by a Special Correspondent present at Manjeri, Madras Mail, 16 Nov. 1921, p. 8. For Moplah enthusiasm for the Khilafat-non-co-operation resolution at Manjeri see also Madras Mail 3 May 1920, p. 6, *ibid.* 31 May 1920, p. 6 and Special Correspondent, Times of India, 12 Sept. 1921, p. 11; K.P. Kesava Menon, 'Crusading for a Cause', 1921 Movement: Reminiscences, p. 155.

2 Madras Mail, 3 May 1920, p. 6.

the 'Moplah zone'. This area, remote from the urban centres of political organisation such as Calicut, Palghat, Tellicherry and Cannanore, and with a population unlikely to make great financial contribution to the political movement did not receive first priority from Congress agitators.<sup>1</sup> In May 1920, soon after the Manjeri Conference, it is known that at least one Ernad Moplah, Variankunnath Kunhamad Haji, later to become one of the leaders of the rebellion, was appointed to collect subscriptions for the Khilafat movement. However, pressure from the local authorities seems quickly to have suppressed this initial activity<sup>2</sup> which was only resumed in the greater part of the 'fanatic zone' during the three months, June to August 1921, which preceded the start of the insurrection.<sup>3</sup> Although, in this period, scores of Khilafat committees may well have been set up in the Moplah zone,<sup>4</sup> most seem to have been ephemeral. Commonly, itinerant organisers would visit a desam ('village'), hold a meeting in the local mosque, collect subscriptions, appoint Khilafat committee officials

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1 R.H. Hitchcock, A History of the Malabar Rebellion, 1921, p. 55. From January to June 1921 a drive to establish Congress organisations throughout 'Kerala' produced only 365 members in Ernad compared with 2944 in the Palghat-Walluvanad area, 2047 in Calicut taluk, 975 in the Cochin area and 2798 in the coastal taluk of Ponnani; Own Correspondent, Madras Mail, 19 Sept. 1921, p. 6; Special Correspondent, 'The Moplah Rebellion III', ibid., 16 Nov. 1921, p. 8.

2 Hitchcock, loc. cit. pp. 19, 55 and 58.

3 Ibid., p. 55 and judgement, Case No. 128 of 1922, Court of Special Judge, Calicut, 25 Sept. 1922, ibid., p. 219.

4 Judgement, Case No. 128 of 1922, ibid., p. 219. Police Insp. M. Narayana Menon, whose jurisdiction lay in eastern Ernad, entirely within the 'fanatic zone', reported that before the rising there were 30-50 Khilafat organisations in his circle; Special Correspondent, Madras Mail, 17 Dec. 1921, p. 7.

and pass on, hardly knowing who their new recruits were.<sup>1</sup> With such fleeting patronage the organisational forms of the Khilafat movement took no firm root in most of the countryside of interior south Malabar.<sup>2</sup> As R.H. Hitchcock the Superintendent of Police in South Malabar was later to complain, there was "nothing tangible to oppose".<sup>3</sup>

The chief, but partial, exception was the area around Tirur, Tanur, Kaipakancheri and Tirurangadi where Malabar's railway skirted the western margin of the 'fanatic zone'. In this more accessible region, Khilafat committees were set up as early as October-November 1920<sup>4</sup> and in February 1921 the activities of Khilafat organisers among its 'fanatical' Moplah inhabitants attracted the concern of the District Magistrate.<sup>5</sup> The

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1 Hitchcock, loc. cit., pp. 20, 21, 26, 55 and 163-64; Hitchcock to Malabar Magistrate, 27 Apr. 1921, MPP No. 424 (Conf.), 4 July 1921, p. 17, MRO; Madras Mail, 15 Aug. 1921, p. 7; interview with Jenab A. Muhammed Sahib, Kottayam Taluk Sec. of the Khilafat movement in 1921, Kozhikode, 6 Dec. 1974.

2 Hitchcock, loc. cit., pp. 20 and 26; interview with Sir Thomas Austin, 20 Mar. 1974; interview with Jenab A. Muhammed Sahib, Kozhikode, 6 Dec. 1974.

3 Hitchcock, loc. cit., p. 20.

4 Judgement, Case No. 7 of 1921, 2 Nov. 1921, Court of Special Tribunal, Calicut, Hitchcock, loc. cit., p. 245; judgement, Case No. 118 of 1922, Court of Special Judge, Calicut, 8 Aug. 1922, MPP No. 441 (Conf.), 31 May 1923, p.299, MRO; deposition of T.M. Raman Nayar, P.W. No. 1, 27 June 1922, Court of Senior Special Judge, Calicut, Case No. 118 of 1922, Criminal Appeal No. 1160 of 1922, p. 1, MHCA; Correspondent, Calicut, New India, 9 Oct. 1921 p. 8.

5 Malabar Magistrate to Chief Sec., 17 Feb. 1921, P/11111, MPP No. 103, 25 Feb. 1921, p. 5; District Magistrate to Chief Sec. (tel.), 17 Feb. 1921, ibid., p. 2; Special Correspondent, 'The Moplah Rebellion, III', Madras Mail, 16 Nov. 1921, p. 8. See also R.H. Hitchcock, Supt. of Police, South Malabar to Malabar

contiguity of this section of the 'Moplah zone' with the coastal centres of political activity also meant that participation in the large-scale confrontations between Government and the Khilafatists which occurred in the towns in the months preceding the rising was a possibility.<sup>1</sup> It was two or three hundred Ernad Moplahs from this area who, having come to Calicut in February 1921 on the occasion of the arrest of four Khilafat leaders, were the source of the most dangerous and frenzied of the convulsions with which the authorities were faced in the town at that time.<sup>2</sup> In July 1921 it was, again, Moplahs from western Ernad who, when anti-Khilafat Moplahs in Ponnani town were conducting public activity, largely created the greatest threat to law and order when the police protecting the pro-Government party were rushed by the Khilafatists.<sup>3</sup>

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Magistrate, 5 Sept. 1922, MPP No. 1003, 1 Dec. 1922 p. 1, MRO and notice printed at Lakshmi Vilasam Press, Calicut and signed by Aminummanakath Parikutti Moulvi, Sec., Khilafat Committee, Tanur, 16 July 1921, MPP No. 514 (Conf.), 15 Aug. 1921, p. 7, MRO.

- 1 The coincidence of the residence in Calicut of Khan Bahadur P.M. Muttu Koya Thangal, who had jurisdiction over Tirurangadi mosque also provided a means of drawing west Ernad Moplahs into political activity in Malabar's capital, e.g. in August 1920 on the occasion of the visit to Calicut of Gandhi and Shaukat Ali whose reception committee included the Tangal. Hitchcock, loc. cit., p. 19; official report of Hitchcock, 16 Aug. 1921, ibid. p. 29.
- 2 Malabar Magistrate to Chief Sec., 17 Feb. 1921, P/11111, MPP No. 103, 25 Feb. 1921, p. 4; Malabar Magistrate to Chief Sec., 19 Feb. 1921, ibid. p. 9; Hitchcock, loc. cit. p. 20; Malabar Magistrate to Govt. of Madras, 5 Mar. 1921, in extracts from fortnightly reports of Govt. of Madras to Govt. of India, G.R.F. Tottenham (ed.), The Mapilla Rebellion, 1921-22, p. 4; demi-official notes of Malabar District Magistrate, 7 Aug. 1921, ibid., p. 23.
- 3 Madras Mail, 8 Oct. 1921, p. 7; Hitchcock, loc. cit., pp. 21 and 47.

But although such relatively close contact with the organising centres of the non-co-operation movement was a characteristic of that section of it in the Tirurangadi area, even here Khilafat Moplahs were not constrained by the new Congress ideology. Throughout interior south Malabar nationalist agitators discovered that the Moplah received the message of non-violent non-co-operation without enthusiasm or conviction.<sup>1</sup> Indeed in their anxiety to allay suspicion of them as representatives of the social orders which had traditionally attracted Moplah hostility, the Hindu professional men who were primarily responsible for the attempt to organise the 'fanatic zone'<sup>2</sup> found it necessary to prove themselves accommodating to Moplah predilection.<sup>3</sup> The assertion of Police Superintendant Hitchcock that the non-violent part of Gandhi's programme was played down<sup>4</sup> is by no means incredible, the more especially since many Congressmen accepted non-violence merely as a tactic not as a philosophy.<sup>5</sup> It was

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1 Interview with K.P. Kesava Menon, Kozhikode, 17 Dec. 1974; K. Madhavan Nayar, Malabar Kalapam, pp. 92 and 93; Moyarath Sankaran, Ente Jeevitha Kadha p. 181.

2 Hitchcock, loc. cit., p. 19; interview with K.P. Kesava Menon, Kozhikode, 11 Dec. 1974; Govt. of Madras, The Non-Co-operation Movements in the Madras Presidency, pp. 40-41, MRO.

3 The principal Congress organiser of the 'fanatic zone' Muthal Puredath Narayana Menon, a vakil of Perintalmanna (Madras Mail, 19 Sept. 1921, p. 6) went so far as to eat with Muslims and assume Moplah dress. Judgement, Case No. 128 of 1922, Court of Special Judge, Calicut, 25 Sept. 1922, Hitchcock, loc. cit., p. 220; A.R. Knapp, member, Govt. of Madras, 'Note on Malabar Affairs', 18 Aug. 1921, G.R.F. Tottenham (ed.), loc. cit. p. 34.

4 Hitchcock, loc. cit., p. 26.

5 Interview with K.P. Kesava Menon, Kozhikode, 17 Dec. 1974.

the claim of Home Rule leader Manjeri Ramaier that at the 1920 Manjeri Conference he was in receipt of a Malayalam leaflet, distributed on the occasion by the non-co-operation party, and containing no word about non-violence in its fulminations against British policy towards the Khilafat.<sup>1</sup> Certainly Hitchcock's further remark that prominence was given to the alleged British antagonism to the community of Islam is incontestable.<sup>2</sup> As the Government of India observed in June 1921 of the Khilafat movement in Malabar, it had "assumed [a] defiantly religious aspect ... somewhat to [the] detriment of Gandhi propaganda."<sup>3</sup>

Attesting to the necessity for conforming to the traditional disposition of the 'fanatic zone' Moplah felt in the Malabar nationalist movement during 1920-21 was the resort to the recruitment of Moplah ulema as instruments for the organisation of the Khilafat agitation in Ernad. It is true that Moplah divines, especially the more exalted outside interior south Malabar, were prominent in the Government-backed campaign of opposition to the Khilafatists in the district.<sup>4</sup> In Ernad,

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1 Manjeri Ramaier, 'Khilafat Explosion in Malabar', extract from New India, 6 Oct. 1921, G.R.F. Tottenham (ed.), loc. cit., p. 3.

2 Hitchcock, loc. cit., p. 26. See also K. Madhavan Nayar, Malabar Kalapam, p. 90; Mitavadi, 15 Aug. 1921, MNNR 1921, L/R/15/129, p. 1017 and Malabar Magistrate to Govt. of Madras, 5 Mar. 1921 in extracts from fortnightly reports of Govt. of Madras to Govt. of India, G.R.F. Tottenham (ed.), loc. cit., p. 4.

3 Viceory, Home Dept. to Sec. of State (tel.) 1 June 1921, L/MIL/5/838, M/5395/1921. See also Hitchcock to G.R.F. Tottenham, Acting Under Sec., Govt. of Madras (Conf.), 17 May 1921, MPP No. 424 (Conf.), 4 July 1921, p. 49; MRO; C.F. Andrews, 'Malabar Tragedy', New India, 21 Jan. 1922, p. 5 (from The Servant of India).

4 Hitchcock, loc. cit., pp. 20 and 26; official report of Hitchcock, 8 Aug. 1921, ibid., p. 27; judgement, Case No. 7 of 1921,



however, it was the less notable Mussaliars (moulvis) who came to be the cardinal agency for conducting the Khilafat agitation.<sup>1</sup> Of the 10 'agitators' on Police Superintendent Hitchcock's list of the 18 most dangerous men to be arrested during the Government raid on Tirurangadi of 20 August 1921 (the measure which precipitated the outbreak of the rebellion<sup>2</sup>), no less than 8 were Mussaliars and one a Tangal.<sup>3</sup> One of these divines in particular, Kattillasseri Muhammad Mussaliar of Walluvanad, had spent the few weeks immediately preceding the rising with a yakil, Muthal Puredath Narayana Menon, the Secretary of the Ernad Congress Committee,<sup>4</sup> on an organising tour of one of the most remote

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2 Nov. 1921, Court of Special Tribunal, Calicut, ibid., p. 247; Kerala Chandrika, 18 July and 29 Aug. 1921, MNNR 1921, L/R/15/129, pp. 930 and 1045; Muslim, 11 Aug. 1921, ibid., p. 988; Madras Mail, 28 Jan. 1921, p. 6, 26 Apr. 1921, p. 7, 17 May 1921 p. 6, 28 May 1921, p. 10, 1 June 1921, p. 3, 11 July 1921 p. 3, 27 July 1921 p. 3, 19 Sept. 1921 p. 6; speech of Sir L. Davidson, member, Executive Council, Govt. of Madras, 18 Feb. 1921, Proceedings of Madras Legislative Council, 1st session, VI, No. 4, p. 397; interview with E.H. Colebrooke, 21 Aug. 1974; extracts from fortnightly reports, Govt. of Madras to Govt. of India (Feb. 1921), G.R.F. Tottenham (ed.), loc. cit., p. 4; A.R. Knapp 'Note on Malabar Affairs', 18 Aug. 1921, ibid., p. 33; K. Koyatti Moulavi, 1921 le Malabar Lahala, p. 13.

1 Deposition of K. Ahammad Kutty, P.W. No. 2, Court of Special Judge, Calicut, Case No. 22 of 1922, Referred Trial No. 50 of 1922, p. 4, MHCA; J.A. Thorne, Malabar Magistrate to Sec., Public, 15 Apr. 1923, MPP No. 397 (Conf.), 14 May 1923, MRO; deposition of Mankavil Velu Nayar, P.W. No. 5, 27 Mar. 1922, Court of Special Judge, Calicut, Case No. 22 of 1922, Referred Trial No. 50 of 1922, p. 8, MHCA; deposition of Kunhatta Krishnan Nayar, P.W. No. 6, 27 Mar. 1922, ibid., p. 9; notice printed at Lakshmi Vilasam Press, Calicut and signed by Aminummanakath Parikutti Moulvi, Sec., Khilafat Committee, Tanur, 16 July 1921, MPP No. 514 (Conf.), 15 Aug. 1921, p. 7, MRO.

2 See below p. 275.

3 Official report of Hitchcock, 16 Aug. 1921, Hitchcock, loc. cit., pp. 31-32.

4 K.P. Kesava Menon, 'Crusading for a Cause', 1921 Movement: Reminiscences, p. 158.

parts of the 'fanatic zone', eastern Ernad, where a number of rather precarious Khilafat 'organisations' were set up at this time.<sup>1</sup> Responsive to the appeal of organisation in the name of Islam and diffused across the face of the south Malabar countryside, from whose Muslim inhabitants they were entitled to a degree of veneration, the lower ulema of the 'fanatic zone' must have seemed suitable agents for a largely middle-class high-caste Hindu political movement<sup>2</sup> able to close the gulf separating them from the Ernad Moplah only by movement on their side of the division.

This is not to argue that the organisation of the Khilafat-non-co-operation movement in the western marginal areas of the 'fanatic zone' exhibited none of the features characteristic of the campaign in the rest of India. Apart from the sporting of Khilafat flags and other badges of allegiance, the distribution of a 'Khilafat' currency,<sup>3</sup> the constituting of a few volunteer

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1 Hitchcock, loc. cit., pp. 21 and 55. The Khilafat committee established at Karuvarakundu shortly before the rebellion by 'Muslim organizers' (interview with E.H. Colebrooke, then a rubber planter in the area, 21 Aug. 1974) was, no doubt, a result of this spate of activity.

2 Interview with K.P. Kesava Menon, Kozhikode, 17 Dec. 1974.

3 Acting Chief Auditor, South Indian Railway to Chief Sec., Govt. of Madras, 1 Apr. 1921 and News Slip from Publicity Bureau to editors of all newspapers, 14 Apr. 1921, MPP No. 246 (Conf.), 25 Apr. 1921, pp. 1-2, and 11, MRO; deposition of Alavi, P.W. No. 4, 25 Nov. 1921, Court of Special Tribunal, Calicut, Case No. 47 of 1921, Criminal Appeal No. 45 of 1922, p. 18, MHCA.

corps<sup>1</sup> and 'Khilafat courts'<sup>2</sup> as well as the attempt to vest Khilafat committees with magisterial authority<sup>3</sup>, were all marks of the organised movement western Ernad shared with other parts of the sub-continent. However, it is significant that these generally novel expressions of Moplah political activity, entailing the creation of organs as well as symbols of authority, were entirely compatible with the tradition of militant challenge to British rule traceable as a recurrent theme in the history of the 'fanatic zone' back to the 18th century.

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1 Press communique, 22 Aug. 1921, P/11111, MPP No. 535; Hitchcock, loc. cit., p. 26; extracts from fortnightly reports, Govt. of Madras to Govt. of India (Feb., June and July 1921), G.R.F. Tottenham (ed.), loc. cit., pp. 4 and 6; deposition of A.C. Govindan Nambiar, P.W. No. 6, 23 June 1922, Court of Special Judge, Calicut, Special Sessions Case No. 90 of 1922, Referred Trial No. 105 of 1922, p. 12, MHCA; deposition of Khan Bahadur E.V. Amu Sahib, Asst. Supt. of Police, Calicut, 23 July 1926, P.W. No. 22, Court of Session, South Malabar, Case No. 30 of 1926, Referred Trial No. 56 of 1926, p. 31, MHCA; K. Madhavan Nayar, Malabar Kalapam, p. 94; judgement, Case No. 30 of 1926, Court of Session, South Malabar, 2 Aug. 1926, p. 2, KDCA; interviews with the following Moplahs who claim to have been Khilafat volunteers in 1921: A.P. Kunhahamed, Mambram, 14 Dec. 1974, K. Moideen Kutty, Tirurangadi, 15 Dec. 1974, M.K. Haji, Tirurangadi, 21 Dec. 1974, Chelupadan Mohammed, Tirurangadi, 21 Dec. 1974; Govt. of Madras, The Non-Co-operation Movements in the Madras Presidency, p. 41, MRO. These corps, especially that at Tirurangadi, gave some anxiety to the District authorities in June 1921 but a few weeks later they were satisfied that these bodies had waned to insignificance, extracts from fortnightly reports, Govt. of Madras to Govt. of India, G.R.F. Tottenham (ed.), loc. cit., p. 6.

2 Deposition of P.W. Khan Bahadur E.V. Amoo Sahib, 14 Feb. 1922, Case No. 14 of 1922, Court of Special Judge, Calicut, 4 Apr. 1922, MPP No. 1003 (Conf.), 1 Dec. 1922, p. 39, MRO; District Magistrate's Court, 8 Apr. 1922, MPP No. 1049 (Conf.), 16 Dec. 1922, p. 2, MRO; judgement Case No. 4 of 1921, Court of Special Tribunal, Calicut, 18 Oct. 1921, Hitchcock, loc. cit., pp. 209-10.

3 Madras Mail, 10 Feb. 1921, p. 6.

On the other hand the tendency of certain leaders of the Khilafat-non-co-operation movement to attempt to regulate mass participation by confining it to the more innocuous forms of activity under the plea of the need for time to perfect the necessary organisational forms<sup>1</sup> won little positive response from the Ernad Moplah. As the District Superintendent of Police at the time of the Khilafat agitation observed:

"A speech in Calicut would rouse the local Mappilla audience to such a pitch that they would offer their clothes to be burnt: the same speech in Ernad would send the audience away quietly to the making of swords."<sup>2</sup>

Indeed, the non-co-operation side of the nationalist agitation of 1920-21 was found to have so little appeal to the Moplah of interior south Malabar that it came largely to be ignored at meetings even by Hindu activists.<sup>3</sup> It is true that in a few

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1 See, for example, account of speech of K.P. Kesava Menon, to a Khilafat-non-co-operation demonstration at Kaipakancheri, 22 Mar. 1921, in Special Correspondent, 'The Moplah Rebellion, III', Madras Mail, 16 Nov. 1921, p. 8.

2 Hitchcock, loc. cit., p. 178. See also ibid. p. 19 and official report of Hitchcock, 8 Aug. 1921, ibid., pp. 27-28.

3 Hitchcock, loc. cit., p. 20; interview with K.P. Kesava Menon, Kozhikode, 11 Dec. 1974. See also Manjeri Ramaier, 'Khilafat Explosion in Malabar', extract from 'New India', 6 Oct. 1921, G.R.F. Tottenham (ed.), loc. cit., p. 2; extracts from fortnightly reports, Govt. of Madras to Govt. of India (Jan., Feb., Mar., May and July 1921), summary by G.R.F. Tottenham, 25 Oct. 1921 in ibid., pp. 4 and 6; deposition of E.V. Amoo, P.W. No. 2, 19 Mar. 1922, Court of Special Judge, Calicut, Case No. 12 of 1923, Referred Trial No. 44 of 1923, p. 3, MHCA; Hitchcock to G.R.F. Tottenham, 17 May 1921, MPP No. 424 (Conf.), 4 July 1921, p. 49, MRO. An interview by Hitchcock of the Khilafat leader at Tanur, Kunhi Qadir, apparently revealed that the latter regarded the movement as a "purely religious" one and that he "'was against mixing it up with all this ridiculous Hindu propoganda'", ibid. (report for first half of May 1921) p. 6. The anti-Hindu 'fanaticism' of Kunhi Qadir is testified to by Mozhikunnath Brahmadathan Nambudiripad (Khilaphat Smarankal, pp. 150-51), a non-co-operator who, after 20 Aug. 1921 was a fellow inmate of Calicut Sub-Jail.

parts of the 'fanatic zone', such as Tirurangadi, the Ernad Moplah did participate in such forms of activity as the boycotting of 'respectable' Moplahs opposed to the Khilafat agitation and the picketing of toddy shops<sup>1</sup> which were favoured in the rest of Malabar.<sup>2</sup> But even these imported political styles were assimilated to venerable Moplah usage. Far from being conducted peacefully these activities were, in Ernad, characterised by the violence traditionally employed by the 'fanatic zone' Moplah against those who failed to conform to his anti-Establishment persuasions. Thus, the months preceding the rebellion saw a high proportion of the assaults by Moplahs on anti-Khilafatists which were committed in Malabar concentrated in the Tirurangadi region,<sup>3</sup> whilst in the same general area at the beginning of August 1921 the mode of conducting the anti-drink campaign took the form of violent attack on the Tien toddy-tappers at Tanalur.<sup>4</sup>

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1 The anti-drink side of the non-co-operation movement coincided with Moplah religious sentiment and was taken up with some gusto (see for example statement of Tuvvur adhigari, n.d. in F.B. Evans, 'Notes on the Moplah Rebellion', 27 Mar. 1922, MPP No. 682, 22 Aug. 1922, p. 18, MRO, F.B. Evans, 'Note on the Rebellion', 15 Mar. 1922, G.R.F. Tottenham [ed.] loc. cit. p. 45; A.R. Knapp, 'Note on Malabar Affairs', 18 Aug. 1921, ibid., p. 34). With the outbreak of rebellion in Aug. 1921 toddy shops became a target of the Moplah rebels.

2 Hitchcock, loc. cit., p. 20; K. Madhavan Nayar, Malabar Kalapam, p. 91; proceedings of the Sub-Collector, Malappuram, J.A. Thorne, 7 Nov. 1922, MPP No. 320, 20 Apr. 1923, p. 47, MRO; Govt. of Madras, The Non-Co-operation Movements in the Madras Presidency, p. 40, MRO.

3 Hitchcock, loc. cit., pp. 23-24; R.H. Ellis, Malabar Magistrate to Chief Sec., 27 Apr. 1922, P/11253, MPP No. 441, 20 May 1922.

4 Hitchcock, loc. cit., p. 27; official reports of Hitchcock, 8 and 16 Aug. 1921, in ibid., pp. 28, 29 and 32; administration

But the Khilafat movement in the 'fanatic zone' also conformed to Moplah tradition in a sense other than the use of violence. Organisation for social and political ends via the community of religion, for decades the most efficient resort of the unaided Ernad Moplah and now pandered to through the Khilafat movement, was a striking feature of the fateful months preceding the insurrection. The most spectacular index of this kind of mobilisation was the practice of the Khilafat 'volunteers' of Tirurangadi from June 1921 of proceeding en masse, under the leadership of a local Khilafat secretary and divine called Erikunnan Ali Mussaliar, to pray at the spot in the town where the shahid of the celebrated outbreak of October 1843 were reputed to be interred and thereby devote themselves to the cause of 'Islam' by resistance to the authorities.<sup>1</sup> Of more obvious practical use than this form of invocation however was the means adopted by the local-level Mussaliar leadership for the organisation of the Moplahs of the Feroke area of Ernad for support of the Khilafat campaign before the rebellion. This was apparently the nightly performance of the songs descriptive of the deeds of past shahid,<sup>2</sup> the chanting of which had been of

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report of Madras Insp.-Gen. of Police for 1921, P/11253, MJP No. 1002, 28 Aug. 1922, p. 15; Malabar Magistrate to Govt. of Madras, 10 Aug. 1921, G.R.F. Tottenham (ed.), loc. cit., p. 17.

1 Official report of Hitchcock, 16 Aug. 1921, Hitchcock, loc. cit., p. 31; judgement, Case No. 7 of 1921, Court of Special Tribunal, Calicut, 2 Nov. 1921, ibid. p. 245; A.R. Knapp, 'Note on Malabar Affairs', 18 Aug. 1921, G.R.F. Tottenham (ed.) loc. cit., p. 33.

2 Correspondent, Calicut, 24 Sept. 1921, Madras Mail, 26 Sept. 1921, p. 5.

such importance in the traditional methods of mobilisation in the south Malabar interior.<sup>1</sup> Of further utility was the exploitation of traditional Moplah votive rite, in particular<sup>2</sup> the nercha.<sup>3</sup> The oblatory aspect of the nercha in the period of the Moplah outbreak seems frequently to have been the form in which the mutual dependence of shahid (or at least the group sustaining them) and Tangal was transacted.<sup>4</sup> For a form of action like the outbreak the trading of votive offering for religious sanction was appropriate. As a means of securing funds for anti-Government purposes,<sup>5</sup> a principal function it performed for the Khilafat party,<sup>6</sup> the nercha was a mere convenience. Finance for the movement might be, and to an extent was, secured without ceremonial by the functional method of collecting four anna subscriptions from Khilafat 'members'.<sup>7</sup>

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1 See above pp. 37 and 89.

2 Though the maulhud (see above p. 70) also had its uses for the Khilafatists, if only that made by the Pukkotur Moplals who on 15 Aug. 1921 celebrated the release of four Khilafat-non-co-operation leaders with a maulhud for which a Nair's cow had been butchered (Hitchcock, loc. cit., p. 51)! See also details of the maulhud organised by the Khilafat party of Ponnani as part of the social boycott movement in that town, Madras Mail, 28 Mar. 1921, p. 8.

3 Statement of Karat Moideen Kutti Haji, 8 June 1922, Hitchcock, loc. cit., p. 190.

4 See above p. 72.

5 Including, during the rebellion, to supply ammunition. Hitchcock, loc. cit., p. 114.

6 Statement of Kooliparamban Pokkar, 25 Dec. 1921, ibid., p. 195; Madras Mail, 31 Jan. 1921, p. 8.

7 Hitchcock, loc. cit. p. 19; E.H. Colebrooke, 'Away from the Moplals: Another Planter's Graphic Story', article which originally appeared in Madras Mail in Sept. 1921, Colebrooke

Even so, the ready adaptation, by the locally-recruited cadre with the apparent acquiescence of the higher leadership, of the nercha to the purposes of the Khilafat campaign was an indication of the disposition of the movement's leaders to seek support in religion for a challenge for political power. Little wonder the progression of the Moplah challenge to government from the formal to the material was not accompanied by the discarding of rite when the nationalist movement itself deemed expedient the dressing of secular aims in a pious garb.

Yet in one respect at least political mobilisation by means of religion was less obviously dispensable. Moplah use of mosques for purposes of confederation had always had a more strictly secular component in that, as rare community buildings in the countryside, they provided convenient facilities for assembly for intending shahid.<sup>1</sup> During the period of the Khilafat agitation, as well as in the course of the rebellion, such exploitation of the mosque was on occasions extended somewhat beyond the parochial realm in which it operated previously. The sense which developed during the agitation in the south Malabar interior of common participation in a widely-ramified movement seems to have elicited organisational

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Papers, p. 1. However, it seems likely that even the collection of 4 anna subscriptions was sometimes made by Mussaliars in mosques. Hitchcock, loc. cit., p. 55; interview with N. Kunhalavi Haji, Melmuri, 23 Dec. 1974.

1 See above p. 61. Also H.V. Conolly, Malabar Magistrate to Sec., Judicial, 28 Jan. 1852, P/327/44, MJP No. 123, 17 Feb. 1852, p. 610; Govt. versus 8 Moplahs charged with intent to commit outrages under Act XXIII of 1854 before Acting Malabar Magistrate W. Robinson, 5 Oct. 1857, P/328/24, MJP No. 1359, 16 Oct. 1857, pp. 144-46.



innovation from the 'fanatic zone' Moplah, so that the inaccessibilities of the Malabar countryside were to a degree obviated by the development of a system of drumbeating communicated via the close network of mosques spread across the face of the land.<sup>1</sup> It is also likely that the increase during the early 20th century in the number of shandies (markets) in the interior of south Malabar,<sup>2</sup> a measure pressed for by officialdom since the 1890s to promote the economic development of Ernad,<sup>3</sup> would have meant the strengthening of the only solely secular way in which the isolation of the rural Ernad Moplah was mitigated.<sup>4</sup>

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1 'The Moplah Rebellion', from 'Our Own Correspondent', a Calicut Hindu, Times of India, 10 Sept. 1921, p. 12; Times of India (Own Correspondent), 27 Aug. 1921, p. 11 and 29 Oct. 1921, p. 14; Madras Mail, 8 Aug. 1921, p. 6; Hitchcock, loc. cit., pp. 26, 27, 53, 54, 62 and 168; official report of Hitchcock, 8 Aug. 1921, ibid., p. 29; report of M. Narayana Menon, Acting Insp. 'D' Circle, to Supt. of Police, South Malabar, 2 Aug. 1921, ibid., p. 182; statement of Palakal Karunakara Menon, son of Kirathadasan, late Nilambur Tirumulpad, 10 Aug. 1921, G.R.F. Tottenham (ed.), loc. cit., p. 35; Malabar Collector to Govt. of Madras, 10 Aug. 1921, ibid., p. 18; interview with A.P. Kunhamed, Mambram, 14 Dec. 1974; deposition of M. Narayana Menon, P.W. No. 1, Summary General Court Martial, Malappuram, 11 Jan. 1922, Case No. 3 of 1922, p. 3, MPP No. 848 (Conf.), 1 Nov. 1923, MR0; deposition of K. Krishna Menon, P.W. No. 2, Summary General Court Martial, Malappuram, 31 Dec. 1921, Case No. 6 of 1921, p. 10, ibid.

2 Hitchcock, loc. cit., p. 14; C.A. Innes, Malabar Magistrate to Sec., Judicial, 29 Mar. 1915 (Conf.), MJP Nos. 2080-84, 3 Sept. 1915 p. 32, Kozhikode Archives. See also the list of some 21 'fanatic zone' shandies listed in C.K.M. and V.K.M. (eds.) The West Coast Directory, 1920, pp. 111-12.

3 Final report of F. Fawcett, Supt. of Police, Malabar, 5 June 1896, L/PJ/6/433, 2060/96, MJP No. 1567, 30 Sept. 1896, p. 110.

4 See above p. 63. In 1912-13 a 2nd such means emerged with the creation of the 1st Agricultural Co-operative (Credit) Societies in Malabar. From 1914-15 they recruited Muslim members. However by 1921-22 these societies claimed only 24,161 members (including 5,722 Muslims) throughout the district. Govt. of Madras, Annual Report on the Working of the Co-operative Societies Act (II of 1912) for 1912-13 to 1921-22, see appendix 3.

Certainly the market place provided some facility to Hindus during the Khilafat agitation in making contact with Moplahs whose energies they hoped to exploit,<sup>1</sup> whilst the coincidence of the Government raid on Tirurangadi on August 1921 with shandy days in certain settlements in the vicinity meant that Moplah mobs were virtually ready-made for the events with which the insurrection began.<sup>2</sup> Thus, Kottakkal, where shandy day fell on the 20th contributed largely to the Moplah multitudes which attacked the Government force at Tirurangadi 8 or 9 miles away the same day.<sup>3</sup> Most significantly, although news of the emeute at Tirurangadi reached Tirur on the afternoon of the 20th, it was not until the following morning, shandy day, that crowds of Moplahs began to collect.<sup>4</sup>

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1 Hitchcock, loc. cit., p. 58; statement of Kunhamad Haji, 10 Jan. 1922, ibid., p. 186; Special Correspondent, Madras Mail, 27 Jan. 1922, p. 7. The market-place was of course a most obvious point of contact between Hindu and Muslim in the Malabar countryside, see for example deposition of T. Kattun-gunni Nayar 29 Apr. 1922, P.W. No. 2, Court of Special Judge, Calicut, Case No. 61 of 1922, Referred Trial No. 63 of 1922, p. 7, MHCA; deposition of Kakkooth Karnavan Velu, 10 Apr. 1922, P.W. No. 4, Court of Special Judge, Calicut, Case No. 26 of 1922, Referred Trial No. 64 of 1922, p. 9, MHCA. It was also standard practice for Christian evangelists in South Malabar to expose the 'heathen' to their message via the market-place, see for example report of Mr. Jaus, quoted in Basel German Evangelical Missionary Society, 44th Report of the Society for 1883, p. 72, UTCL.

2 Hitchcock, loc. cit. p. 38. For details of this raid see below p. 274.

3 Ibid., p. 38; Special Correspondent, Madras Mail, 17 Oct. 1921, p. 5; K. Koyatti Moulavi, 1921 le Malabar Lahala, p. 23.

4 Judgement, Case No. 74 of 1922, Court of Special Judge, Malabar, 24 May 1922, Hitchcock, loc. cit., pp. 211 and 215; Sub-Magistrate Tirur to Malabar Magistrate, 22 Aug. 1922 (emergent and conf.), exhibit II, Case No. 118 of 1922, Court of Senior Special Judge, Calicut, Criminal Appeal No. 1160 of 1922, p. 21,

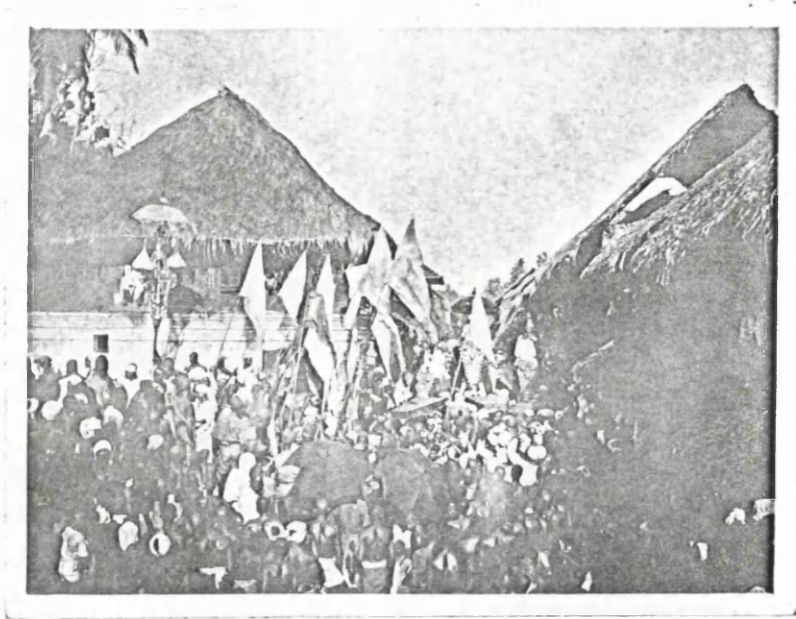
Nevertheless purely secular means of mobilisation were wanting in at least one respect. The preservation inviolate of their place of religious resort was enshrined as a sacred duty for Moplahs in the corpus of tradition<sup>1</sup> surrounding the story of the defence by 44 Moplah heroes in 1734 of Malappuram mosque against the forces of a local Hindu chieftain, an event commemorated in that climax of the Ernad calendar, the Malappuram nercha.<sup>2</sup> Nor was the injunction to defend the mosque ignored. Throughout the modern period of Moplah contumacy, rumour of threat to the mosque was almost certain to elicit violent reaction.<sup>3</sup> Under these circumstances even access or approach to

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MHCA. For other suggestions of the role of trade in encouraging Moplah mobilisation in 1921 see C.G. Tottenham, Supt. of Police, North Malabar in 1921, 'The Mappila Rebellion and Malabar Operations 1921-22', Mss Eur. F 161/4, p. 29; report of M. Narayana Menon, Acting Insp. 'D' Circle to Supt. of Police, 2 Aug. 1921, Hitchcock loc. cit., p. 181; statement of Palakal Karunakara Menon, son of Kirathadasan, late Nilambur Tirumulpad, 10 Aug. 1921, G.R.F. Tottenham (ed.), loc. cit., p. 35; demi-official report of District Magistrate, 19 Oct. 1921, ibid., p. 222; deposition of K. Kunholan, P.W. No. 14, 19 Mar. 1923, Case No. 12, Court of Special Judge, Calicut, Referred Trial No. 44 of 1923, p. 15, MHCA.

- 1 See for example Shahidu Mala Pattu, 'A Garland of Songs about the Shahids, the Heroes of the Defence of the Malappuram Mosque' (anon.) and The Song of Alungal Kandi (anon.), in F. Fawcett, "War Songs of the Mappilas of Malabar", Indian Antiquary, 1901, Vol. XXX, pp. 505-06; J. Twigg, Acting Special Asst. Magistrate to Acting Magistrate, Malabar, 9 July 1884, P/2401, MJP Nos. 2776-81, 1 Nov. 1884, p. 15.
- 2 The only detailed account of the origin of this nercha appears to be in V.J. Ryder, Two Years in Malabar. Ryder obtained his information from the Malappuram adhigari, a Moplah, who in turn relied on records preserved in the Malappuram mosque, ibid., p. 10. See also W. Logan, Malabar Manual, Vol. 2, p. cclx; Madras Times, 6 Aug. 1914, p. 7.
- 3 T.W. Goodwyn, Subordinate Judge, Malabar to Sec., Judicial, 30 Dec. 1849, P/327/26, MJP No. 104, 9 Feb. 1850, pp. 445, 469 and 489; H. Bradley, Acting Malabar Magistrate to Chief

The Malappuram Nercha 1924



Photographs taken by E.H. Colebrooke (Indian Police), 1924.

the palli (mosque) could be narrowly regulated by the fervid jealousy of the Moplah.<sup>1</sup> Significantly this extreme sensitivity of Moplahs to any threat of violation of their mosques did not connote repugnance to the exploitation of these buildings for profane usage by members of their own community.<sup>2</sup> There appears to be no record of disapprobation (except, significantly, by pro-

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Sec., 16 May 1894, P/4621, MJP Nos. 2186-92, 8 Sept. 1894, p. 100; statement of Aruvirallan Muttha, 13 Mar. 1896, in report of Winterbotham, 10 Apr. 1896, L/PJ/6/422, 996/96, p. 11; statement of Pottanthodika Alevi in Court of Special Asst. Magistrate, n.d., P/5506, MJP Nos. 1737-40, 11 Nov. 1898, pp. 24-25; administration report of Court of Wards Collector of the Zamorin's Estate for 1920-21, P/11116, MCWP No. 44, 16 Nov. 1921, p. 10; Resident in Travancore and Cochin to Chief Sec., Govt. of Madras (Conf.), 25 June 1921, L/PS/11/197, 4010/21 in 2187/21, para 9. During the 1921 insurrection itself several attempts were made by rebel leaders to rally the Moplah community in the name of the defence of the mosques against the depredations of the troops. See for example demi-official reports of F.B. Evans, Special Civil Officer in Malabar during the rebellion, 30 Nov. 1921 and 3 Dec. 1921 in G.R.F. Tottenham (ed.), loc. cit., pp. 269 and 270; 'Notes on the Moplah Rebellion' by F.B. Evans, 27 Mar. 1922, MPP No. 682, 22 Aug. 1922, p. 12, MRO.

1 Col. J. Welsh, Military Reminiscences, Vol. II, pp. 80 and 88. See also G. McWatters, Acting Malabar Magistrate to Acting Chief Sec., 27 June 1879, P/1427, MJP No. 1656, 16 July, 1879, pp. 1043-44; description of 1873 outbreak by Malabar District Supt. of Police, n.d., in Govt. of Madras, Administration Report for 1873-74, pp. 31-32; report of F. Fawcett, Police Supt., Malabar, 5 June 1896, L/PJ/6/433, 2060/96, MJP No. 1567, 30 Sept. 1896, p. 89; Special Correspondent, 'Moplah Rebellion - II', Madras Mail, 15 Nov. 1921, p. 8; interview with E.H. Colebrooke, 21 Aug. 1974. See also C.A. Innes to C.W.E. Cotton, Deputy Sec. to Govt. (demi-official), 8 Mar. 1912 and 'Note on the dispute regarding the Mambram Mosque and Derga (or Mausoleum)' by C.A. Innes /10 June 1910/, MJP No. 1027 (Strictly Conf.), 25 June 1912, pp. 1 and 5, MRO.

2 Nor respect for the places of worship of sects of Muslims conceived to be antagonistic to the aspirations of the 'fanatic zone' Moplah. See details of the attack on the mosque of the Kondotti Tangal by rebel leader Kunhamad Haji during the 1921-22 rising, demi-official reports of F.B. Evans, 29 and 31 Oct. 1921, G.R.F. Tottenham (ed.), loc. cit., 'Notes on the Moplah Rebellion', 27 Mar. 1922, MPP No. 682, 22 Aug. 1922, p. 11, MRO.

Government Moplahs<sup>1</sup>) for the undoubted use by Moplahs of the mosque as lodging-house, assembly- and debating-hall, store-room, fortress and cache or asylum for felons.<sup>2</sup> The security expected from the house of God in all these applications was clearly not merely a matter of four walls. If interpretation of the affairs of religion in terms of the spiritual alone is received opinion, the profane use of the zealously-guarded Moplah palli is true paradox. The sanctity of the mosque was of the most decided advantage to Moplahs in the pursuit of temporal objectives, notably those vulnerable to the intrusion

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- 1 Translation of the notice appealing to Moplahs to be loyal to the Crown and pointing to the "sins ... consequent to the use of mosques ... like houses" published on 11 Oct. 1921 by P.M. Valiya Seethi Koya Thangal, D.W. No. 4, Court of Special Judge, Calicut, Case No. 162 of 1922, Referred Trial No. 22 of 1923, p. 40, MHCA.
- 2 Letter from Capt. Watson, 29 May 1801, Malabar Records, Vol. 1825, Malabar 2nd Commission, Minute Books, Magisterial and Police, 1801, p. 95, MRO; Conolly to Officiating Sec., Judicial, 22 Feb. 1847, P/326/69, MJP No. 159, 6 Mar. 1847, p. 1042; C. Collett, Joint Magistrate, to T. Clarke, Malabar Magistrate, 20 Oct. 1855, P/328/7, MJP No. 862, 27 Nov. 1855, pp. 4618 and 4621; Collett to Clarke, 7 Jan. 1856, P/328/10, MJP No. 85, 28 Jan. 1856, pp. 525 and 528; P. Karunakara Menon, Deputy Magistrate, Southern Division to W. Logan, 1 July 1885, P/2635, MJP No. 2725, 8 Oct. 1885, p. 23; item by I.D.T., Madras Times, 26 Apr. 1906, p. 7; Hindu (weekly), 29 Sept., 1921, p. 18; Special Correspondent, 'Moplah Rebellion - II', Madras Mail, 15 Nov. 1921, p. 8; Malabar Magistrate to Govt. of Madras, 3 Sept. 1921 (tel.), G.R.F. Tottenham (ed.), loc. cit., pp. 167-68; P.R. Menon, 'The Mopla Rebellion: A Reply to Mr. Gandhi', New India, 6 Dec. 1921, p. 3; cross-examination of V.P. Alavi, P.W. No. 1, 8 Mar. 1923, Court of Special Judge, Calicut, Case No. 7 of 1922, Criminal Appeal No. 309, of 1922, p. 6, MHCA; deposition of Nalakath Kunhi Pokkar, P.W. No. 5, 7 Oct. 1921, Special Judge Case No. 7 of 1921, exhibit 1, Court of Session, South Malabar, Case No. 151 of 1922, Criminal Appeal No. 1493 of 1922, p. 35, MHCA; cross-examination of the same, 19 Oct. 1921, ibid., p. 35; interview with C. Karunakara Nair, Personal Asst to Supt of Police Hitchcock during the 1921-22 rebellion, Adyar, 18 Mar. 1975, Hitchcock, loc. cit., p. 84.

of parties not sharing the collective interests of the community. Accordingly, it seems significant that whilst groups of Moplahs like the followers of the Kondotti Tangal<sup>1</sup> and anti-Khilafatists<sup>2</sup> were liable to find themselves subject to attempts to exclude them from use of the palli, the prohibitions on mosque-entry could be relaxed in the case of Nairs purporting to be allies in the challenge to the Raj.<sup>3</sup> In the case of the Kondotti people, it would appear that their exclusion from Kizhuparamba mosque was linked by a preacher of the rival faction to the assistance rendered to Government by the former sect in the suppression of outbreaks, for which Kondotti Tangal had been periodically rewarded.<sup>4</sup> Certainly the 'Ponnani' Moplahs had

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1 Petition of two Kondotti Moplahs, received 12 July 1884, in W. Logan, to Chief Sec., 7 Feb. 1885, P/2634, MJP Nos. 1169-74, 2 May 1885, p. 10; judgement, 18 Dec. 1922, Court of Special Judge, Calicut, Case No. 27A of 1922, Referred Trial No. 7 of 1923, p. 5, MHCA; deposition of M. Kuthathan, D.W. No. 9, 23 Nov. 1922, ibid., p. 52.

2 Madras Mail, 21 Feb. 1921, p. 5, 28 Feb. 1921, p. 8, 8 June 1921 p. 5; Viceroy (Home Dept.) to Sec. of State, 7 Mar. 1921, L/PJ/6/1740, 1558/21; Hitchcock, loc. cit., p. 24.

3 Hitchcock, loc. cit., p. 24; Manjeri Ramaier, 'Khilafat Explosion in Malabar', extract from New India, 6 Oct. 1921, in G.R.F. Tottenham (ed.), loc. cit., p. 3; F.B. Evans, 'Note on the Rebellion', 15 Mar. 1922, ibid., p. 45; deposition of Tuvvur adhigari, n.d., in 'Notes on the Moplah Rebellion' by F.B. Evans, 27 Mar. 1922, MPP No. 682, 22 Aug. 1922, p. 18, MRO; Govt. Order No. 375, MPP (Conf.), 3 May 1922, p. 18, MRO.

4 Petition of two Kondotti Moplahs, received 12 July 1884, loc. cit. See also Conolly to Register, Court of Foujdaree Udalut, 11 Dec. 1849, P/327/26, MJP No. 104, 9 Feb. 1850, p. 391; Collett, Joint Magistrate, Malabar to Chief Sec., 21 Sept. 1855, P/328/6, MJP No. 716, 3 Oct. 1855, pp. 3585, 3591 and 3592; Resolution No. 716, 3 Oct. 1855, ibid., p. 3675; Collett to T. Clarke, Malabar Magistrate, 7 Jan. 1856, P/328/10, MJP No. 85, 28 Jan. 1856, p. 533; W. Robinson, Acting Malabar Magistrate to Chief Sec., 5 Nov. 1856,

something to fear from the presence of a loyalist fifth column in their inner sanctum, especially when it is known that Kondotti Moplahs were a source of useful information to the authorities on the intrigues of their rivals.<sup>1</sup>

In the 'Khilafat period' the value of the sanctified seclusion of the mosque as a shield against the possible retribution of the powerful is perhaps most clearly illustrated by the riot case at Kizhakkot amsom, Calicut taluk in March 1921. On 30 March a Khilafat meeting held in a field by the local Moplahs with a Mussaliar from Ernad as speaker had been poorly attended because of the influence of the foremost jenmi of the area, a Nair aristocrat. Instructively, the decision to try again the next day involved the re-location of the meeting, because of fear of opposition, at a local mosque. In fact local Hindus had the temerity to intrude irreverently into the proceedings, with the predictable consequence of a frenzied Moplah response which left 8 Hindu casualties and the jenmi's property damaged and defiled.<sup>2</sup>

It seems clear that the notoriety of the apparently ungovernable enthusiasm of the Moplah for his mosque might work with considerably more cautionary effect than in the Kizhakkot case. During the outbreak period the desperate counsels

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P/328/19, MJP No. 105, 5 Nov. 1856, p. 4517; and for services rendered in a later disturbance: G.W. Dance, Acting Malabar Magistrate to Chief Sec., 30 Sept. 1897, P/5505, MJP No. 247, 11 Feb. 1898, pp. 14, 15 and 20 and Govt. Order No. 247, 11 Feb. 1898, p. 25.

1 W. Logan to Chief Sec., 29 Dec. 1884, P/2634, MJP Nos. 1169-74, 2 May 1885, p. 5; Logan to Chief Sec., 7 Feb. 1885, ibid. pp. 15 and 28.

2 Hitchcock, loc. cit., p. 25; letter from F.O.O.C., n.d., Madras Mail, 5 May 1921 p. 6.



for the closing or even the razing of mosques, emanating from Malabar officials with the most authentic experience of the use the palli was put to by the 'fanatical' Moplah population of Ernad, were rejected, often with rebukes, by their superiors.<sup>1</sup> Later, in the course of the Khilafat agitation, similar circumspection on the part of Government enabled agitators to evade the imposition of restrictions on the right of assembly and to continue inciting defiance of the Raj through the employment of the mosque as a meeting place.<sup>2</sup> Most strikingly of all, the zeal which brought thousands of Muslims "shivering not with fear but with religious fervour", to Pukkotur in Ernad on 1 August 1921,<sup>3</sup> and which was formalised in the call for a Hindu jenmi's mansion to be converted into a mosque, resulted in the authorities shrinking from confrontation and their surrendering control of the ansom (and apparently the neighbouring ones of

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1 See above p. 188 and despatch of Court of Directors, 30 Apr. 1856, P/328/16, MJP No. 683, 27 June 1856, pp. 2088-89; Govt. Order No. 2725, 8 Oct. 1885, P/2635, MJP, p. 8; P. Karunakara Menon, Deputy Magistrate, Southern Division to W. Logan, 1 July 1885, ibid., pp. 22-23; Malabar Magistrate to Sec., Judicial, 4 June 1887, P/3090, MJP Nos. 2102-03, 13 Sept. 1887, p. 121.

2 Hitchcock, loc. cit., p. 177; judgement, Case No. 128 of 1922, Court of Special Judge, Calicut, 25 Sept. 1922, ibid., p. 224; extracts from fortnightly reports to Govt. of India /from Govt. of Madras/ (Feb., Apr., May and July 1921), G.R.F. Tottenham (ed.), loc. cit., p. 6; interview with A.E. Anandan Menon, Parappanangadi, 1 Jan. 1975; evidence, District Magistrate's Court, 8 Apr. 1922, MPP No. 1049 (Conf.), 16 Dec. 1922, p. 2, MRO; deposition of K. Ahammad Kutty, P.W. No. 2, Court of Special Judge, Calicut, Case No. 22 of 1922, Referred Trial No. 50 of 1922, p. 4, MHCA; Govt. of Madras, The Non-Co-operation Movements in the Madras Presidency, p. 40, MRO.

3 See below p. 267.

Melmuri and Valluvampuram<sup>1</sup> to the Moplahs for a period of three weeks.<sup>2</sup> The grave setback for Government which the 'Pukkotur incident' represented would have seemed, to any Moplah capable of reflecting on it, a vindication of political mobilisation through religion. The problem with which the Ernad Moplah had struggled for decades, the British-impelled expansion of jenmi power, had been brought to the point of a most consummate solution, one to which the long history of Moplah recalcitrance pointed. With consciousness of the fact apparently not wanting,<sup>3</sup> the Moplah had, for a short space and a limited area, won swaraj.

Nevertheless the Congress sponsors of the Khilafat movement were less than exultant at this notable victory achieved by the Ernad Moplah.<sup>4</sup> Anxious to establish that the Moplah of the 'fanatic zone' was (somewhat miraculously, considering the pliant character of the agitation in Ernad) a convert to the principles of non-violence and Hindu-Muslim fraternity<sup>5</sup>, the

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1 Deposition of M. Narayana Menon, Circle Insp. of Police, Manjeri, P.W. No. 1, 27 Apr. 1922, Court of Special Judge, Calicut, Case No. 50 of 1922, Referred Trial No. 76 of 1922, p. 4, MHCA.

2 Special Correspondent, Madras Mail, 8 Oct. 1921, p. 7; administration report of Insp.-Gen. of Police, Madras for 1921, P/11253, MJP No. 1002, 28 Aug. 1922, p. 15; Hitchcock, loc. cit., p. 50; official reports of Hitchcock, 8 and 16 Aug. 1921, ibid., pp. 28 and 30; demi-official notes of Malabar District Magistrate, 7 Aug. 1921, G.R.F. Tottenham (ed.), loc. cit., p. 23; statement of Palakal Karunakara Menon, son of Kirathadasan, late Nilambur Tirumulpad, 10 Aug. 1921, ibid., p. 35.

3 Demi-official letter from Malabar Magistrate to Govt. of Madras, 12 Aug. 1921, G.R.F. Tottenham (ed.), loc. cit. p. 27; A.R. Knapp, 'Note on Malabar Affairs', 18 Aug. 1921, ibid. pp. 32-33.

4 Hitchcock, loc. cit., p. 51.

5 'Report of the /Kerala Congress/ Emergency Committee', Police Crimes in Ottapalam, pp. xxv, xxvi and passim, in L/PJ/6/1760, 4739/21.

leaders of the Kerala Congress cannot have welcomed incidents like those at Kizhakkot and Pukkotur, far from suggestive as they were that the Moplah of the south Malabar interior had been won from his old ways. In fact, throughout the Khilafat campaign of 1920-21, the course the agitation in Ernad had taken was, to a very marked degree, autonomous of the Congress leadership. At Kizhakkot the Hindu who first instituted the campaign (but whose connections with Congress are unknown) was soon thrust aside by the Moplahs. When the political activity, in the form of an open-air meeting, initiated by this junior member of a Nair petty official's tarwad (joint family) gave way to assembly in a mosque and the calling-in of outside Moplahs the rôle of the Nair came to an end.<sup>1</sup> In the case of the Pukkotur incident it was the Moplah Secretary of the local Khilafat organisation, Vadakke Vittil Mammad,<sup>2</sup> whose conflict with his Hindu jenmi and ex-employer, the 6th Nilambur Tirumulpad, precipitated the émeute<sup>3</sup>. But though they later played diverse parts in the subsequent rebellion,<sup>4</sup> Moplah Khilafat officials of the locality like Vadakke Vittil Mammad, Karat Moideen Kutti Haji and Malappuram Kunhi Tangal, rather less

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1 Hitchcock, loc. cit., p. 25.

2 Special Correspondent, Madras Mail, 8 Oct. 1921, p. 7.

3 Official report of Hitchcock, 8 Aug. 1921, Hitchcock, loc. cit., p. 28; report of M. Narayana Menon, Acting Insp., 'D' Circle, to Supt. of Police, 2 Aug. 1921, ibid., pp. 181-82; judgement, Case No. 7 of 1921, 2 Nov. 1921 in Court of Special Tribunal, Calicut, ibid., p. 247; West Coast Reformer, 24 Aug. 1921, MNMR 1921, L/R/15/129, p. 1053; Madras Mail, 8 Aug. 1921, p. 6.

4 Hitchcock, loc. cit., p. 59; statement of Karat Moideen Kutti Haji, 24 May 1922, ibid., p. 188.

obdurate than the mass of their 'followers', showed themselves able to exercise over them only the most modest control.<sup>1</sup> The Congress leadership in Calicut was completely dissociated from the incident at Pukkotur until some two or three weeks afterwards when, following a visit to the Malabar capital by Vadakke Vittil Mammad, a Nair emissary, after a most cursory visit to the vicinity reported reassuringly (but doubtless with little confidence) to his headquarters.<sup>2</sup> In fact, what is known of the rudimentary régime which began to emerge at Pukkotur from the end of July and beginning of August 1921 indicates a state of affairs little constrained by the dictates of Congress politics. In a virtual act of secession from the British Raj the Pukkotur Moplads intercepted communications with the outside world, against the intervention of which a degree of both armed and agitational preparation appear to have been made. Within their small and inchoate domain the novel freedom from

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1 Official reports of Hitchcock, 8 and 16 Aug 1921, Hitchcock, loc. cit., pp. 28-30; Hitchcock, loc. cit., p. 59; M. Narayana Menon, Acting Insp., 'D' Circle to Supt. of Police, 2 Aug. 1921, ibid., p. 182; statement of Said Ahmad Kunhi Thangal of Malappuram, n.d., ibid., p. 184; judgement, Case No. 7 of 1921 in Court of Special Tribunal, Calicut, 2 Nov. 1921, ibid. p. 247; judgement, Case No. 92 in Court of Special Judge, Malappuram, 30 June 1922, in ibid., p. 256; A.R. Knapp, 'Note on Malabar Affairs', 18 Aug. 1921, G.R.F. Tottenham, (ed.), loc. cit. pp. 32 and 34; statement of Palakal Karunakara Menon, son of Kirathadasan, late Nilambur Tirumulpad, 10 Aug. 1921, ibid. p. 35; demi-official letter, Malabar Magistrate to Govt. of Madras, 12 Aug. 1921, ibid. p. 27; weekly report of R.H. Hitchcock ending 27 May 1922, Govt. of Madras, Under Sec.'s Safe, Secret No. 360, 5 Sept. 1922, MRO.

2 Hitchcock, loc. cit., p. 51.

the dictates of foreign rule was employed in a fashion wholly consonant with traditional Moplah aspiration, and propertied Hindus, where not put to flight, were liable to arbitrary exactions for purposes which, in one case, included the celebration of a maulhud.<sup>1</sup> The emergent swaraj at Pukkotur was clearly Moplah raj.

## Part 2: The Tenancy Movement

But if the opportunist Congress attitude to the mobilisation of anti-Government feeling over the Turkish question only subserved the Moplah practice of organising through the instrumentality of religion, what of that second great concurrence of interest between the 'extremist' leaders of the Malabar Congress of 1920-21 and the rural Moplah, anti-jenmi sentiment? With respect to the struggle for change in the agrarian system of Malabar, a subject which, as the Government of Madras noted in 1921, "affect[ed] the more impressionable portion of the [Malabar] population very deeply",<sup>2</sup> there could, surely, be no possibility

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1 Madras Mail, 8 Aug. 1921, p. 6., 15 Aug. 1921 p. 7, 7 Sept. 1921 p. 5; Hitchcock, loc. cit. pp. 50 and 54; official report of Hitchcock, 16 Aug. 1921, ibid., p. 30; Malabar Magistrate to Govt. of Madras, 10 Aug. 1921, G.R.F. Tottenham (ed.), loc. cit. p. 17; demi-official notes from Malabar Magistrate to Govt. of Madras, 7 Aug. 1921, ibid., p. 23; statement of Palakal Karunakara Menon, 10 Aug. 1921, ibid., p. 35; N.E.Q. Mainwaring, Deputy Insp.-Gen. of Police, Western Range to Insp.-Gen. of Police, Madras, 11 and 12 Aug. 1921 (demi-official) in J.T.W. Fillson, Personal Asst. to Insp.-Gen. of Police [to Govt. of Madras], 13 Aug. 1921, ibid., p. 25. A Calicut Hindu (Own Correspondent, 'The Moplah Rebellion', Times of India, 10 Sept. 1921, p. 12) a little later claimed that the Pukkotur Moplahs after 1 August had set up their own courts where punishments were inflicted, but the present writer has discovered no confirmation of this.

2 Extracts from fortnightly reports to Govt. of India [from Govt. of Madras], 2 Feb. 1921, G.R.F. Tottenham (ed.). loc. cit., p. 9.

of aberration on the part of the 'political classes' of the urban areas from supplying the means for mobilisation on a secular basis, the great desideratum of Moplah rural organisation?

In fact, in 1921 it was reported by the Court of Wards Collector of the Zamorin's Estate that "Mass meetings of estate tenants among the Mappillas at different centres in Ernad taluk had been organized and held by non-co-operators from October 1920".<sup>1</sup> Such mass assemblies of rural Moplahs must have been the 'Kudian [tenant] Conferences' held in the Malappuram area of Ernad in amsoms like Pukkotur, Kodur, Ponnala, Kuruva and Kottakal and described by K. Madhavan Nayar, a leading non-co-operation leader of the time who in September 1920 himself participated in one such meeting at which not less than 5000 Moplahs and a number of Hindus were present.<sup>2</sup> The organisation which was at first, doubtless, responsible for this activity was the Tenants' Association which had been formed in May 1920 through the initiative of K.P. Raman Menon.<sup>3</sup> But despite the advocacy by leading elements in this Association of the demand for tenancy legislation from the Madras Government, the appellation 'non-co-operators' to the main body of activists in the organisation would appear to be justified.<sup>4</sup> Throughout the period of the domination of the

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1 Administration report for Zamorin's Estate for 1920-21, 10 Oct. 1921, P/11116, MCWP No. 44, 16 Nov. 1921, p. 8.

2 K. Madhavan Nayar, Malabar Kalapam, pp. 88-90.

3 See above p. 213.

4 According to Special Correspondent, Madras Mail (27 Apr. 1921, p. 8) a resolution on these lines was proposed at the Ottapalam Tenants' Conference by V. Raman Menon, a leader of the Tenants'

Malabar Congress by non-co-operators in 1920-21, relations with the Tenants' Association were close. The formation of the Association was one of the outcomes of the 5th Malabar District Conference at Manjeri at which the 'extremist' element had first shown itself to be in control of the local Congress organisation.<sup>1</sup> In turn the holding of a Tenants' Conference as part of the 1st Kerala Provincial Conference at Ottapalam seems to have been the result of an initiative by the Tenants' Association, which, supplying the president (K.P. Raman Menon) at Ottapalam, received the support of the Conference for an extension of tenants' associations throughout Kerala Province.<sup>2</sup> With such evident reciprocation between the non-co-operation movement and the Tenants' Association it is not surprising to discover the majority support which existed in the latter for the tactic of non-co-operation.<sup>3</sup> Thus, at the beginning of 1921 a meeting of the Association resolved, in face of the opposition of those favouring a campaign for tenancy legislation,

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Association (letter from 'Tenant', Madras Mail, 20 June 1921, p. 7). Since K.P. Raman Menon presided at this Conference the claim of Associated Press (Hindu /weekly/, 28 Apr. 1921, p. 13) that it was he who took this line seems less likely and is, no doubt an error.

- 1 K.P. Kesava Menon, 'Crusading for a Cause', 1921 Movement: Reminiscences, p. 155.
- 2 Madras Mail, 20 Jan. 1921, p. 5 and 27 Apr. 1921, p. 8; Hindu (weekly) 28 Apr. 1921, p. 13.
- 3 K.P. Kesava Menon, 'Crusading for a Cause', 1921 Movement: Reminiscences, p. 154, has claimed that it was K.P. Raman Menon who at Manjeri in 1920 moved the resolution for the rejection of the proposed Montagu-Chelmsford reforms.

on the organisation of tenant non-co-operation with jenmis who evicted,<sup>1</sup> a victory which was repeated at Ottapalam despite resistance from not only those favouring legislation, but also the minority jenmi element there.<sup>2</sup>

Details of the extent to which these resolutions were translated into practice are meagre. The claim of the official report of the Government of Madras on the non-co-operation movements in the Presidency was that in Malabar "in the neighbourhood of unpopular janmis ... the pure doctrine of non-co-operation was reinforced by anti-jenmi agitation".<sup>3</sup> Certainly the assertion in February 1921 of one pro-tenant, but anti-non-co-operation Malabar newspaper<sup>4</sup> that "stories of boycott, of meetings and memorials" were coming from the interior<sup>5</sup> receives some confirmation from a contemporary report that a Nambudiri jenmi of Kuruva amsom in Walluvanad taluk had complained to the

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1 Madras Mail, 20 Jan. 1921, p. 5; Kerala Patrika, 29 Jan. 1921, MNNR 1921, L/R/15/129, p. 232; T. Govindan Nair (letter) Madras Mail, 21 Feb. 1921, p. 3; editorial, ibid., p. 4.

2 'Report of the Kerala Congress Emergency Committee appointed to investigate and report on the Police Tyranny in Ottapalam on the 26th Apr. 1921', Police Crimes in Ottapalam, pp. iii and iv; Hindu (weekly), 28 Apr. 1921, pp. 12-13; Madras Mail, 25 Apr. 1921 pp. 6-7 and 27 Apr. 1921 p. 8; Mitavadi, 2 May 1921, MNNR 1921, L/R/15/129, p. 558; reply of Sir W. Vincent, Home Member, Govt. of India, to question of K.M. Nayar, Madras Legislative Assembly debates, 28 Mar. 1922, p. 3781, in L/PJ/6/1769, 277/22.

3 Govt. of Madras, The Non-Cooperation Movements in the Madras Presidency, p. 38, MRO.

4 This orientation of course makes such testimony, if unsupported, suspect. Any supposed advance of non-co-operation among the rural population was exploitable as an argument in favour of tenancy legislation.

5 Mitavadi, 28 Feb. 1921, MNNR 1921, L/R/15/129, p. 300.



authorities that he was being "boycotted and molested" by Moplahs of the locality in pursuance of non-co-operation propaganda.<sup>1</sup> Moreover, in reporting on the effects of the work of non-co-operators in his domain, the Court of Wards Collector of the Zamorin's Estate observed that to notorious opponents of jenmi demands like his Ernad Moplah verumpattomdars (simple tenants) "the teachings of non-co-operation were wholesome food".<sup>2</sup> Activities like the administering of the oath of non-co-operation against the Estate and meetings calling for the withholding of rent due to the Zamorin had encouraged the traditional defiance of their jenmi by the Moplah tenantry, so that on the Guruvayur Devaswom sub-section of the Estate the agitation had resulted in the Moplahs combining to preclude offers for the plot of an evicted co-religionist.<sup>3</sup>

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1 Madras Mail, 14 Feb. 1921, p. 7. See also the report by Associated Press of a similar case in Ernad, New India, 10 May 1921, p. 8 and the deposition of Ultathil Kunhi Veloo, P.W. No. 14, 22 Apr. 1923, Enquiry of Asst. Magistrate, p. 25, MPP No. 397 [Conf.], 14 May 1923, MRO) that local Khilafat leaders in Edapetta, Ernad were, in the months before the outbreak of rebellion in August 1921, calling for the withholding of rent payments to jenmis.

2 Administration report for Zamorin's Estate for 1920-21, 10 Oct. 1921, P/11116, MCWP No. 44, 16 Nov. 1921, p. 9. For details of the earlier recalcitrance of this body of tenants see the reports for the Guruvayur Devaswom part of the Estate for 1915-16, P/10040, MCWP No. 55, 9 Dec. 1916, p. 10; for 1916-17, P/10251, MCWP No. 55, 14 Dec. 1917, p. 2; for 1919-20, P/10925, MCWP No. 46, 20 Nov. 1920, p. 2; and for 1917-18 (main part of Estate), P/10688, MCWP No. 7, 9 Jan. 1919, p. 2.

3 Administration report for Zamorin's Estate for 1920-21, loc. cit., pp. 2 and 9; administration report for Guruvayur Devaswom Estate for 1920-21, 11 Oct. 1921, ibid., p. 2; K. Madhavan Nayar, Malabar Kalapam, p. 88; note by G.R.F. Tottenham, Acting Under Sec., Govt. of Madras, on statement of Karat Moidin Kutty Haji, 8 June 1922, Govt. of Madras, Under Sec.'s Safe,

Thus, there is sufficient evidence to be able to say that the agitation of 1920-21 did to some extent succeed in mobilising at least some Ernad Moplahs on a secular basis against jenmi power. Even so the strength of the non-co-operation effort on the tenancy issue in the south Malabar interior must, in the absence of adequate information, be of uncertain estimation. This is especially the case since a large proportion of the evidence of the tenancy activity of non-co-operators among the Ernad Moplahs relates to the Estate of the Zamorin of Calicut which, since it was under the management of the Court of Wards in 1920-21, was clearly an object of particular hostility to the anti-Government movement.<sup>1</sup> Moreover, the memoirs of one of the chief participants in the Congress tenancy agitation of 1920 make it clear that a failure to undertake basic organisational work characterised the leadership of the movement.<sup>2</sup>

Nevertheless, it may be said with certainty that whatever the degree of penetration of the tenancy movement associated with the Congress leadership among the rural Moplah population of Ernad, it was not sufficient to win the latter from its

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Secret, No. 360, 5 Sept. 1922, p. 28, MRO. This same technique of 'leasing strike' was also tried in January 1921 against a Brahmin jenmi of Pukkotur who had 'melcharted' one of his Moplah tenants according to K. Madhavan Nayar, loc. cit. p. 90.

1 At the same time it should be said that this estate, the greatest in the district, covered "a very considerable part of South Malabar", J.A. Thorne, Collector, Zamorin's Estate, to Sec. to Commissioner, Court of Wards, n.d., P/10455, MRP No. 3121, 4 Sept. 1918, p. 23.

2 K. Madhavan Nayar, Malabar Kalapam, p. 90.

attachment to communal methods of mobilisation. Clearly it would be surprising to discover that a few months of campaigning of doubtful intensity had displaced a rooted tradition of many decades. Moreover, despite a number of victories of a degree for which varying claims have been made,<sup>1</sup> the tenancy movement of 1920-21 evidently presented no credible alternative to that tradition. The action of the Malabar authorities in periodically prohibiting both tenancy and political meetings of the Khilafat-non-co-operation movement as likely to inflame the feelings of the "more ignorant" Moplahs towards both Hindu jenmi and Government,<sup>2</sup> tended to drive the Moplah back to his traditional recourse to the mosque as a bulwark against retribution. Above all, the acid test of the value of secular as opposed to communal means of challenging the agrarian system which had grown up in Malabar under the British was necessarily the readiness of tenants regardless of religion to make common cause against jenmi power and the Government responsible for inflating it.

Of course, the Tenants' Association itself was largely the outcome of initiative from the Nair professional man with

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1 Administration report for Zamorin's Estate for 1920-21, loc. cit., p. 9; K. Madhavan Nayar, loc. cit., p. 88.

2 Madras Mail, 8 Feb. 1921 p. 9, 9 Feb. 1921 p. 6 and 14 Feb. 1921 p. 7. See also demi-official letter, Malabar Magistrate to Govt. of Madras, 12 Feb. 1921, quoted in speech of Sir L. Davidson, member, Executive Council, Govt. of Madras, Proceedings, Madras Legislative Council, 1st session, VI, No. 4, 18 Feb. 1921, p. 396; Madras Mail, 16 May 1921 p. 3; Viceroy to Sec. of State (tel.), 21 June 1921, L/MIL/5/838, p. 2; K. Madhavan Nayar, Malabar Kalapam, p. 92.

substantial kanam interests in the land.<sup>1</sup> Even so (and as the course of the rebellion was to demonstrate) the Moplah cultivator's experience of the scramble for melcharths over his holdings which had been led precisely by this element in the 1900s and 1910s cannot greatly have mitigated his traditional suspicion of the Hindu as an appendage of the jenmi.<sup>2</sup>

It is true that large numbers of the Hindu tenantry outside the ranks of the kanamdar intermediaries of the professional classes had been drawn into the tenancy agitation of 1920-21. However, it is clear that this was on a very different basis to that of the subaltern 'fanatic zone' Moplah for whom the experience of decades held out scant hope of casting Government in the rôle of champion.<sup>3</sup> For a substantial section of the tenant interest, without the same history of collision with the authorities, a strategy of reliance on the action of Government to reform the agrarian system to the advantage of the cultivator seemed most promising.<sup>4</sup> Without

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1 K. Madhavan Nayar, loc. cit., p. 88.

2 Indeed, one of the chief non-co-operators who helped organise the tenancy movement in the 'fanatic zone', K. Madhavan Nayar, was himself a jenmi of that area and tried on occasions to cool anti-jenmi hostility on the part of the Moplah. K. Madhavan Nayar, loc. cit., p. 92; interview with Jenab A. Muhammed Sahib; Kozhikode, 6 Dec. 1974.

3 Though this did not prevent the more eminent in the community continuing, in the period prior to the rebellion, to petition Govt. for fair rents and fixity of tenure. See for example Madras Mail, 17 Sept. 1917 p. 3 and 22 Oct. 1917 p. 3; oral evidence of V. Kunhi Moyi Haji, 30 Nov. 1927, Malabar Tenancy Committee, 1927-28, Vol. II, p. 604.

4 Answer of Law Member to question of Khan Bahadur Muhammad Usman Sahib Bahadur, Proceedings of Madras Legislative Council, 1st Session, Vol. I, No. 2, 16 Feb. 1921, p. 148; Kerala Patrika, 16 Apr. 1921, MNNR 1921, L/R/15/129, p. 500; Madras Mail, 21 May 1921 p. 5 and 7 June 1921 p. 6; Correspondent, Calicut, New India, 6 May 1920, p. 9.

eschewing agitation and never slow to point to the advances of 'extremism' in vindication of its plea for tenancy legislation, this section of the agrarian movement nevertheless declared itself inimical to non-co-operation.<sup>1</sup> To a considerable extent this was a Nair-backed movement with part of this community playing an important cadre rôle.<sup>2</sup> On the other hand it is clear that much of the vigour of this agitation was supplied by the leadership of the far more disadvantaged castes ranking below the Nair in the Malabar social hierarchy, and in particular the Tiers.<sup>3</sup> It was at this caste level in Kerala, far more than that of the Nair,<sup>4</sup> that the suspicion of and resistance

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1 Mitavadi, 7 Feb. 1921, 28 Feb. 1921, 7 Mar. 1921, 2 May 1921, Kerala Sanchari. 8 June 1921, Margadarsi, 24 June 1921, MNMR 1921, L/R/15/129, pp. 230, 231, 300, 394, 558, 730, 790; Hindu (weekly), 25 Apr. 1921, p. 14; Madras Mail, 30 May 1921, p. 3.

2 Madras Mail, 30 May 1921, p. 3. Throughout the 1920s Diwan Bahadur M. Krishnan Nayar was the pre-eminent campaigner for a Tenancy Act for Malabar (extract from Govt. Order No. 2346, Law /General/ 29 July 1927, Malabar Tenancy Committee, 1927-28, Vol. I, p. 1). The Nair-controlled newspapers Kerala Patrika and Kerala Sanchari lent considerable support to the campaign for a tenancy law for Malabar (C.I.D. Memorandum on Newspapers for 1920, P/63 /Conf./ MPP No. 559, 31 Aug. 1921, pp. 218-19; report on the Malayalam Press for 1920, ibid., p. 117).

3 Madras Mail, 20 May 1919 p. 3 and 6 July 1921 p. 5; Correspondent, Calicut, 'Events in Malabar', 16 Aug. 1919, New India, 22 Aug. 1919, p. 9; Address of Rao Bahadur T.M. Appu Nedungadi, President of First Thiyya Conference (Tenancy Section), Tellicherry, 8 May 1919, New India, 9 May 1919, p. 11; Correspondent, Tellicherry, 8 May 1919, New India, 12 May 1919, p. 10. Prominent in the agitation for tenancy legislation was Mitavadi the chief organ of the Malabar Tiers and Margadasi which advocated the cause of the depressed classes in general (C.I.D. Memorandum on Newspapers for 1920, P/63 /Conf./ MPP No. 559, 31 Aug. 1921, p. 296; report on the Malayalam Press for 1920, ibid., p. 117).

4 As Eugene F. Irschick, Politics and Social Conflict in South India, p. 176 seems to argue. In Malabar it was the Nair not the Malayali Brahmin (the Nambudiri) who tended to dominate

to the educationally- and politically-advanced high castes dominating the nationalist movement,<sup>1</sup> which sustained the Non-Brahmin Movement on the East Coast, manifested itself in professions of loyalty to the British connection.<sup>2</sup> A campaign for change in the agrarian system of Malabar which professed

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the professions, engross public office and pioneer in English education. This is not to say that the Nair might not find anti-Brahminism to his taste in certain spheres, such as social reform, however (see Pandit Wishnu Shastri to B.L. Satidas, 28 Aug. 1922, in B.L. Satidas, Moplah Rebellion of 1921, pp. 12-13). A contemporary commentator, C.P. Ramaswami Aiyar, a Fellow of Madras University (Presidential Address to 2nd Malabar District Conference, 1917) drew attention to the singularity of Brahmin-non-Brahmin relations in Kerala (Co-operation and Panchayats, p. 8).

1 This challenge, already evident (on a largely individual basis) on occasions during the 19th century (W. Robinson, Malabar Magistrate to Sec., Judicial, 24 Apr. 1858, P/328/27, MJP No. 667, 21 May 1858, p. 298; memorial of Konikal Idattil Kompi Achchan and several other Brahmins of Puthoor amsom, Palghat taluk, n.d., P/404, MJP No. 17, 4 Jan. 1875, p. 10) mounted after 1900 (Madras Police Administration Report for 1909, p. 16; C.P. Ramaswami Aiyar, loc. cit., p. 8; West Coast Spectator, 3 Nov. 1917 and Indian Patriot, 15 Nov. 1917, MNNR July-Dec. 1917, L/R/15/124, pp. 2643 and 2863; proceedings of mass meeting of Tiers of Chirakkal taluk, held at Cannanore, 25 Nov. 1917, Govt. of Madras, Under Sec.'s Safe, Secret, No. 221, 10 Dec. 1917, MRO; Dravidan, 26 Jan. 1918, MNNR 1918, L/R/15/125, pp. 223-24; Madras Mail, 4 Nov. 1918, p. 6; report on Malabar Pulaya /Cheruma/ Conference, Correspondent, Calicut, 14 May 1919, New India, 19 May 1919, p. 7; report on Malayalam Press, C.I.D. Memorandum on Newspapers 1920, P/63, MPP /Conf./ No. 559, 31 Aug. 1921, p. 118; presidential address of C. Krishnan to Thiya Conference, July 1922, in Pandit Wishnu Shastri to B.L. Satidas, 28 Aug. 1922, B.L. Satidas, loc. cit., p. 14).

2 Professions which were taken seriously by the British administration. Tiers, a community regarded as "very loyal" and "fully alive to the benefits they enjoy under British rule" were, along with Indian Christians, of all Malayali castes most freely welcomed into the Malabar Volunteer Rifle Corps. H. Moberly, Collector, Malabar to Chief Sec., 17 May 1895, MPP No. 547 (Conf.), 3 July 1895, pp. 4-5, MRO. See also C.A. Innes to Chief Sec., 30 Sept. 1912, MJP No. 1780 (Conf.), 1 Nov. 1912, p. 20, MRO. The fidelity to British rule of the Tien community above almost all others in Malabar was a matter

to see in the Union Jack "a symbol of justice and protection"<sup>1</sup> was not well-qualified to be an ally of the 'fanatic zone' Moplah with his long history of repression at the hands of the Raj. Indeed, in the contest between the Ernad Moplah and the Raj during 1920-21 the Tier was frequently ranged, if not unambiguously on the side of the latter, at least against the former.<sup>2</sup>

With such tensions and mistrust riving the tenant body, especially along its caste joints, the successful inter-communal co-ordination pre-conditional to any Moplah renunciation of the traditional modes of defiance practised in Ernad was inconceivable. The absence of solidarity across the divisions of community was disclosed when, during 1920-21, the Court of

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of common observation from the earliest period of British rule, see minute of J. Duncan, 11 Dec. 1798, item 33, P/117/7, BePolP 5 June 1800.

1 Madras Mail, 6 July 1921, p. 5. This was evidently a mass meeting of Tier tenants in Kottayam taluk. For other evidence of Tier support for the British connection and/or opposition to Congress see 'Malabari', Madras Mail, 11 June 1921 p. 5; P. Damodaran 'Thiyyas and Social Reconstruction; Reply to Non-Cooperators', ibid., 17 June 1921 p. 3; Moyarath Sankaran, Ente Jeevitha Kadha, p. 185; interview with K.P. Kesava Menon, Kozhikode, 17 Dec. 1974; letter 'Thiyyas and Conferences' from 'Kerala', n.d., New India, 10 May 1920, p. 5; letter from C.M. Rarichan Moopan on participation of Tiers in 1919 Malabar District Conference, New India, 7 May 1919, p. 9; Correspondent, Tellicherry, 8 May 1919, New India, 12 May 1919, p. 10.

2 Resident, Travancore and Cochin to Chief Sec., Govt. of Madras, 25 June 1921, L/PS/11/197, 4010/21 in 2187/21, paras 4 and 8; administration report of Insp.-Gen. of Police for 1921, P/11253, MJP No. 1002, 28 Aug. 1922, p. 15; Madras Mail, 25 Apr. 1921, p. 7, 5 May 1921 p. 6 and 15 Nov. 1921 p. 5; Moyarath Sankaran, Ente Jeevitha Kadha, p. 186.

Wards administration of the Guruvayur Devaswom estate was able to influence a Hindu tenant to accept the lease of a Moplah's plot decreed for surrender, for which the Ernad Moplahs of the locality had combined to forestall the making of offers.<sup>1</sup>

Indeed the weakness of the tenancy agitation of 1920-21 was such that it failed to make an impact on the Government of Madras sufficient to compel even public acknowledgement that the question of agrarian reforms for Malabar was under consideration.<sup>2</sup> By its manifest shortcomings as an alternative means to communal organisation the tenancy movement of the pre-rebellion period must have done little to wean the 'fanatic zone' Moplah from his old ways. This was shown by the way in which in the course of the first half of 1921 the 'Khilafat' issue drew the attention of the Ernad Moplah increasingly away from the tenancy movement.<sup>3</sup> It was also demonstrated in the most singular fashion by what proved to be the climax of the agitation of

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1 Administration Report for Guruvayur Devaswom Estate for 1920-21, 11 Oct. 1921, P/11116, MCWP No. 44, 16 Nov. 1921, p. 2.

2 Answer of Law Member to question of Khan Bahadur Muhammad Usman Sahib Bahadur, 16 Feb. 1921, Govt. of Madras, Proceedings of the Legislative Council of the Governor of Madras, 1st Session, Vol. I, No. 2, p. 148; answer of Law Member to question from same, 2 Aug. 1921, ibid., 2nd Session, Vol. II, No. 2, p. 123. In fact speculations that the Govt. was considering the question (statement of Diwan Bahadur M. Krishnan Nayar, 3 Aug. 1921, ibid., No. 3, p. 252; Madras Mail, 2 June 1921, p. 6) were correct. Apparently as a result of a tenants' deputation to the Governor in late 1920 the Govt. of Madras had at the start of 1921 set on foot one of its periodic investigations into the subject (Lord Willingdon, Governor of Madras to Lord Reading, Viceroy, 3 June 1922, private, Reading Papers, Vol. 24, p. 328).

3 Note by G.R.F. Tottenham, Acting Under Sec., Govt. of Madras, n.d., on statement of Karat Moidin Kutty Haji, 8 June 1922, Govt. of Madras, Under Sec.'s Safe, Secret, No. 360, 5 Sept. 1922, p. 28, MRO.



1920-21 in the Moplah taluks, the incident at Pukkotur in Ernad at the beginning of August 1921.

### Part 3: The Approach to Rebellion

On this occasion hostility to the great jenmi of the area, the 6th Nilambur Tirumulpad, was promoted by his handling of his economic relationship<sup>1</sup> with his mainly Moplah tenants.<sup>2</sup> However, despite the fact that a tenants' organisation had apparently, been formed in association with the Khilafat movement at the beginning of the year,<sup>3</sup> Moplah resistance moved along customary 'fanatical' lines with mobs assembling in niskarapalli (praying 'sheds') then advancing on the Tirumulpad's kovilagam (palace) to demand its conversion to a mosque, and

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1 This agrarian basis of the Pukkotur incident was most clearly revealed in an interview in September 1921 by a newspaper correspondent with the senior Nilambur Tirumulpad who spoke of the "unsympathetic management" of the Pukkotur properties by his relation by which the latter had made himself "exceedingly unpopular" with the Moplahs; Special Correspondent, Madras Mail, 7 Sept. 1921, p. 5. (See other evidence of economic grievance in ibid., 8 Aug. 1921, p. 6; report of M. Narayana Menon, Acting Insp., 'D' Circle to Supt. of Police, 2 Aug. 1921, Hitchcock, loc. cit., p. 181; K. Madhavan Nayar, Malabar Kalapam, p. 90; interview with N. Kunhalavi Haji, Melmuri, 23 Dec. 1974) When he later realised his interview provided useful ammunition to those who challenged the stand of officialdom (Willingdon to Reading, 13 Sept. 1921 and 3 June 1922, Reading Papers, Vol. 24, pp. 328 and 367; Sir W. Vincent, Home Member, Govt. of India, Council of State Debates, 5 Sept. 1921 Vol. II, 2nd session 1921, p. 91) that the rebellion had nothing to do with agrarian grievance this correspondent made the most clumsy attempt to retrieve himself by trying to discredit the senior Raja's testimony (Special Correspondent, Times of India, 12 Sept. 1921, p. 11).

2 Special Correspondent, Madras Mail, 7 Sept. 1921, p. 5.

3 Statement of Karat Moideen Kutti Haji, 8 June 1922, Hitchcock, loc. cit., p. 190; K. Madhavan Nayar, Malabar Kalapam, p. 90.

the head of its principal inmate, indeed of "all kafirs".<sup>1</sup>

In similar prescriptive vein was the inexorable progression towards confrontation with the Raj, the venerable alliance of which with the jenmi was in this instance exhibited symbolically in the co-operation of a member of the Tirumulpad's family with the local representative of law and order in the attempt to quell the Moplah insubordination.<sup>2</sup>

But whilst the prosecution of economic objectives through the agency of pious frenzy was time-honoured Moplah technique, the incident at Pukkotur in August 1921 also illustrated the one great change the Khilafat movement had helped to bring about: the progression of the challenge to authority from the ritual confines of an earlier period to one more subversive of the established power. Justice Wigram's assurance in 1880<sup>3</sup> of safety from serious Moplah challenge to British dominion in Malabar in the absence of leaders and organisation and with Moplah consciousness of weakness vis-a-vis the Raj, was, four

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1 See above, p. 251 and official report of Hitchcock, 8 Aug. 1921, Hitchcock, loc. cit., p. 28; report of M. Narayana Menon, Acting Insp., 'D' Circle to Supt. Police, 2 Aug. 1921, ibid., p. 181; judgement, Case No. 7 of 1921, Court of Special Tribunal, Calicut, 2 Nov. 1921, ibid., p. 247; demi-official notes from Malabar Magistrate /to Govt. of Madras/, 7 Aug. 1921, G.R.F. Tottenham (ed.), loc. cit., p. 23; statement of Palakal Karunakara Menon, son of Kirathadasan, late Nilambur Tirumulpad, 10 Aug. 1921, ibid., p. 35.

2 Hitchcock, loc. cit., p. 27; M. Narayana Menon, Acting Insp. 'D' Circle, to Supt. of Police, 2 Aug. 1921, ibid., p. 182; statement of Palakal Karunakara Menon, 10 Aug. 1921, loc. cit., p. 35.

3 See above p. 150.

decades later, to be demonstrated as no longer well-founded. It is true that because of the need to overcome the Ernad Moplah's suspicion of them as representatives of antagonistic social strata the yakil non-co-operation leadership had found it necessary to recruit for the local leadership of the Khilafat movement those, the 'fanatic zone' ulema, whose capacity for leadership represented no advance on what was traditional among the Ernad Moplahs. It is true that for the same opportunistic reasons, as well as because of the pressure of the authorities, secular modes of organisation of the 'fanatic zone' were, even in western Ernad, overshadowed by those more traditional to the Muslim population of the area. Even so, the 1800-02 rebellion had demonstrated that the Ernad Moplah was quite capable of insurrection given only internally-supplied leadership and organisation. The one essential provided by the Khilafat-non-co-operation movement to enable the Moplah community to mount the ultimate challenge to British rule was a belief in the possibility of victory. There can be no doubt that the activity of the political movement during 1920-21 had greatly encouraged the developing Moplah notion<sup>1</sup> that British authority was about to collapse. In parts of Ernad the Moplah had sometimes had direct experience of the few volunteer corps and 'Khilafat courts' which had been set up, as had indeed the Khilafat committees themselves, as intended substitutes for British power structures. Of wider impact would have been the

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<sup>1</sup> See above p. 222.

constant circulation of Khilafat-non-co-operation propaganda that foreign rule in India was at or rapidly approaching, its terminal stage.<sup>1</sup> This must certainly have been the impression conveyed by the speeches in April 1921 by Muhammad Ali at Madras and Erode<sup>2</sup> and by the proceedings of the July Karachi Khilafat Conference,<sup>3</sup> the purport of all of which was transmitted throughout the 'fanatic zone' via Malayalam pamphlets (the contents of which were read out in mosques<sup>4</sup>), the occasional public assembly<sup>5</sup> and, in the case of the Erode meeting, by

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- 1 See for example the report of the Malabar District Magistrate in August 1920 of the ferment excited in Moplah minds by Muhammad Ali's talk of swaraj and "war on behalf of Islam". Govt. of Madras, The Non-Co-operation Movements in the Madras Presidency, p. 38, MRO.
- 2 Viceroy (Home Dept.) to Sec. of State (tel.), 20 Apr. 1921, L/PJ/6/1745, 2651/21; Hitchcock, loc. cit., p. 177; P.C. Bamford, Histories of the Non-Co-operation and Khilafat Movements, pp. 28-29 and 174; Govt. of Madras, The Non-Co-operation Movements in the Madras Presidency, p. 40, MRO.
- 3 Speech of Sir W. Vincent, 5 Sept. 1921, Council of State Debates, Vol. II, 2nd session, 1921, p. 91; Hitchcock, loc. cit., pp. 22 and 177; extracts from fortnightly reports from Govt. of Madras to Govt. of India, report of 17 Aug. 1921, G.R.F. Tottenham (ed.), loc. cit., p. 12; Malabar Magistrate to Govt. of Madras, 10 Aug. 1921, ibid., p. 18; A.R. Knapp 'Note on Malabar Affairs', 18 Aug. 1921, ibid., p. 33; Govt. of Madras, The Non-Co-operation Movements in the Madras Presidency, p. 41, MRO; resolution 8, Khilafat Conference Resolutions, Karachi, July 1921, K.K. Aziz, The Indian Khilafat Movement 1915-33: A Documentary Record, p. 186.
- 4 Hindu (weekly), 23 June 1921, p. 10; Madras Mail, 28 June 1921, p. 6; Hitchcock, loc. cit. pp. 21, 22, 26, 164 and 177; official report of Hitchcock, 8 Aug. 1921, ibid., p. 28; Govt. Order No. 358, 6 June 1921, P/11111, MPP; summary of fortnightly reports (Apr. and July 1921) from Govt. of Madras to Govt. of India by G.R.F. Tottenham, 25 Oct. 1921, G.R.F. Tottenham, (ed.) loc. cit. pp. 5 and 6; Govt. of Madras, The Non-Co-operation Movements in the Madras Presidency, p. 40, MRO.
- 5 R.H. Ellis, Malabar Magistrate to Chief Sec., 27 Oct. 1922, MPP No. 1076, 23 Dec. 1922, p. 1, MRO.

Moplah Mussaliars who attended.<sup>1</sup>

Accordingly the estimation on the eve of rebellion of the Government of Madras that "'continual provocative speeches on the Khilafat question, combined with the resolutions of the recent All-India Khilafat Conference at Karachi [had] produced an impression on the mind of the Mappilla that the end of the British Raj is at hand"<sup>2</sup> seems judicious. What is even more significant however is the further observation that it was "'certainly true that, as a result of Khilafat propoganda, the Mappillas [were] ... better informed as to the strength of their own position and the difficulty of taking military action against them."<sup>3</sup> It is clear that the Moplah's assessment of the change in the balance of forces to Britain's disadvantage, though exaggerated, was by no means without foundation.<sup>4</sup>

Thus, when the Pukkotur Moplah's antagonism towards the 6th Nilambur Tirumulpad reached crisis point on 1 August 1921 the crowds which gathered for what was to be the final confrontation with the jenmi did not, as on the occasion of a number

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1 Special Correspondent, Madras Mail, 29 Aug. 1921, p. 7; Hitchcock, loc. cit., p. 21; Govt. of Madras, The Non-Co-operation Movements in the Madras Presidency, pp. 40-41, MRO.

2 Govt. of Madras to Govt. of India, n.d., [17 Aug. 1921] quoted in speech of Sir W. Vincent to Council of State, 5 Sept. 1921, loc. cit., p. 92. See also extracts from fortnightly reports to Govt. of India [from Govt. of Madras], G.R.F. Tottenham, loc. cit., p. 12

3 Govt. of Madras to Govt. of India, [17 Aug. 1921] quoted in speech of Sir W. Vincent to Council of State, 5 Sept. 1921, loc. cit., p. 92.

4 For the estimation of the South Malabar Supt. of Police that the Moplahs' chances of victory in battle with the Govt. forces were by no means remote see extract from a letter of Hitchcock enclosed in demi-official letter of J.T.W. Fillson, Personal Asst.

of 'outbreaks' in the past,<sup>1</sup> come principally as spectators of the courting of retribution by a handful of desperate 'fanatics'. Many hundreds strong, and summoned from the greater part of the 'fanatic zone' by the tattoo system the Moplahs found effective, they came with improvised weapons for the heads of the jenmi and of Government officers ranking from Deputy Police Superintendent Amu downwards, in general anticipation of contest with the authorities.<sup>2</sup> When the latter, in face of such a massive display of opposition, in effect relinquished their sovereignty over the Pukkotur area for the following three weeks,<sup>3</sup>

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to Insp.-Gen. of Police to Govt. of Madras, 13 Aug. 1921, G.R.F. Tottenham (ed.), loc. cit., p. 26.

- 1 Report of W. Robinson, Head Asst. Magistrate, Malabar, 18 Oct. 1849, P/327/22, MJP No. 794, 1 Dec. 1849, pp. 4926-27; H.V. Conolly to Sec., Judicial, 23 Jan. 1851, P/327/35, MJP No. 116, 25 Feb. 1851, p. 438; notes by Conolly, n.d., on T.L. Strange's letter to him of 29 July 1852, P/327/57, MJP No. 154, 16 Mar. 1853, p. 2047; extracts from report of Malabar Supt. of Police Hole for fortnight ending 25 Sept. 1880, P/1580, MJP No. 2500, 19 Oct. 1880, p. 1231; H. Bradley, Acting Malabar Magistrate to Chief Sec., 16 May 1894, P/4621, MJP Nos. 2186-92, 8 Sept. 1894, p. 105.
- 2 Madras Mail, 8 Aug. 1921, p. 6 and 15 Aug. 1921 p. 7; Hitchcock, loc. cit., p. 26; official reports of Hitchcock, 8 and 16 Aug. 1921, ibid., pp. 28-30; M. Narayana Menon, Acting Insp. 'D' Circle to Supt. of Police, 2 Aug. 1921, ibid., p. 182; judgement Case No. 7 of 1921, 2 Nov. 1921, Court of Special Tribunal, Calicut, ibid., p. 247; demi-official notes from Malabar Magistrate to Govt. of Madras 7 Aug. 1921, G.R.F. Tottenham (ed.), loc. cit., p. 23; Malabar Magistrate to Govt. of Madras, 10 Aug. 1921, ibid., p. 18.
- 3 Official report of Hitchcock, 8 Aug. 1921, Hitchcock, loc. cit., p. 29; judgement, Case No. 7 of 1921, 2 Nov. 1921, Court of Special Tribunal, Calicut, ibid., p. 247; Madras Publicity Bureau, 'Malabar and the Moplahs', Parliamentary Papers, Vol. 26, Cmd 1552 1921, p. 40; letter, Hitchcock to Mainwaring, 10 Aug. 1921, enclosure in J.T.W. Fillson, Personal Asst. to Insp.-Gen. of Police to Govt. of Madras, (demi-official), 13 Aug. 1921, G.R.F. Tottenham (ed.), loc. cit., p. 26.

the victory which Moplahs over a wide area of Ernad considered to have been obtained over the Government<sup>1</sup> must have enormously strengthened the conviction that the end of the Raj was close at hand. One educated Moplah alive at the time told the present writer in 1974: "We had the impression that the police had been defeated at Pukkotur .... that the police had no power and that if we exerted ourselves we could win".<sup>2</sup>

The Pukkotur incident was immediately followed on 3 August 1921 by a second challenge to authority at Tanalur near the western fringe of the 'fanatic zone'. A large crowd of Moplahs assembled, apparently with arms, to prevent, with notable success, the arrest of a number of co-religionists who had assaulted some Tiers attempting to prosecute their toddy-drawing trade in defiance of the prohibition declared by the local Muslims. As one member of the Madras Government, sent to Malabar soon after to investigate what was happening in the district, reported to his superiors, the Tanalur offenders were unchastised since "the authorities had not hitherto dared to arrest them for want of sufficient force."<sup>3</sup> The incidents

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1 Speech of Sir W. Vincent, 5 Sept. 1921, Council of State Debates, Vol. II, 2nd session, 1921, p. 92; official reports of Hitchcock, 8 and 16 Aug. 1921, Hitchcock, loc. cit., pp. 29-30; A.R. Knapp 'Note on Malabar Affairs', 18 Aug. 1921, G.R.F. Tottenham (ed.), loc. cit., pp. 32-33; extracts from fortnightly reports to Govt. of India from Govt. of Madras 17 Aug. 1921, ibid., p. 12. The local authorities saw the Pukkotur incident in the same light, see Malabar Magistrate to Govt. of Madras, 10 Aug. 1921, ibid., p. 18; demi-official notes from Malabar Magistrate, to Govt. of Madras 7 Aug. 1921, ibid., p. 23.

2 Interview with K.M. Mahomed Haji, a primary school teacher of Anakayam who was 21 years old in 1921, Anakayam, 28 Dec. 1974. See also Malabar Magistrate to Govt. of Madras, 10 Aug. 1921, G.R.F. Tottenham (ed.) loc. cit., p. 18.

3 A.R. Knapp, 'Note on Malabar Affairs', 18 Aug. 1921, G.R.F. Tottenham (ed.), loc. cit. p. 33.

at Pukkotur and Tanalur with their open resistance to the execution of the orders of the authorities were precisely the kind of "premonitory symptoms" which Justice Wigram had specified as the certain prelude to a "general outbreak" on the part of the Ernad Moplah when the possibility of rebellion had been discussed in the early 1880s.<sup>1</sup> By early August 1921 the months of propaganda concerning the supposed imminent crisis in political affairs in India which had been directed towards the 'fanatic zone' population by the non-co-operation movement, had excited the Moplah to such a pitch that each attempt to impose subordination on him led to confrontation.

In face of what was evidently a rapidly deteriorating situation in the 'fanatic zone', District Magistrate Thomas reported to the Madras Government that the situation was "'beyond the powers of the District officials'", and called for reinforcements.<sup>2</sup> In fact as early as March 1921 concern over the situation in south Malabar had resulted in arrangements being made to supply more troops if necessary.<sup>3</sup> Now, during the second week of August, the military force at Calicut was raised

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1 H. Wigram, Officiating District Judge, South Malabar to Chief Sec., 8 Nov. 1883, Govt. of Madras, Malabar Land Tenures, p. 17.

2 Govt. of Madras to Governor of Madras (on his way to Ceylon) (tel.), n.d., probably 11 Aug. 1921, quoted in Hitchcock, loc. cit., p. 33. For the District Magistrate's letter in full see Malabar Magistrate to Govt. of Madras, 10 Aug. 1921, G.R.F. Tottenham, loc. cit., p. 18.

3 Govt. of Madras to Governor of Madras (tel.), n.d., Hitchcock, loc. cit., p. 33; extracts from fortnightly reports of Govt. of Madras to Govt. of India (March-May 1921), summary by G.R.F. Tottenham, 25 Oct. 1921 in G.R.F. Tottenham (ed.), loc. cit., p. 5.



from a strength of a half to one of one and a quarter companies of Leinsters, with an Indian Pioneer battalion being warned to be ready to move from Bangalore if needed.<sup>1</sup> At the same time a conference at Calicut between district civil and military officers in the presence of A.R. Knapp of the Government of Madras decided on 14 August to intervene decisively to halt the erosion of British authority in Ernad. The intention was to make a surprise raid with 80 Leinsters, 100 Reserve Police and 60 of the Malappuram Special Force<sup>2</sup> at 05.30 hours on 20 August on Tirurangadi, one of the few parts of the 'fanatic zone' fairly easily accessible from the railway and (partly for the same reason<sup>3</sup>) a centre of the Khilafat agitation. The main objective was the arrest under the provisions of the Moplah Act of the chief activists there and, if no serious opposition were encountered, immediately to widen the net to

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1 Viceroy (Home Dept.) to India Office (tel.), 24 Aug. 1921, Parliamentary Papers, Vol. 26 Cmd. 1552, 1921, item 3, p. 5; speech of Sir. W. Vincent, 5 Sept. 1921, Council of State Debates, Vol. II, 2nd Session, 1921, p. 94; Lord Rawlinson, Commander-in-Chief, India, Conf. Report on Operations in Malabar, 20 Aug. 1921 to 25 Feb. 1922, 6 Oct. 1922, L/PJ/6/1782, 6096/22 in 1/22 p. 2; C.G. Tottenham, Supt. of Police, North Malabar at the time of the rebellion, 'The Mapilla Rebellion and Malabar operations 1921-22', n.d., Mss Eur F 161/4 p. 9; G.O.C., Madras to Govt. of Madras, 15 Aug. 1921, (demi-official, secret), G.R.F. Tottenham (ed.) loc. cit., p. 30.

2 In the event nearly 200 policemen and 80 soldiers made up the force at Tirurangadi on 20 Aug. 1921, Malabar Magistrate to Govt. of Madras (tel.), 28 Aug. 1921, G.R.F. Tottenham, (ed.), loc. cit. p. 165.

3 See above p. 231.

include Tanalur and Pukkotur.<sup>1</sup>

In the event the intended coup de main at Tirurangadi failed to trap more than a handful of the wanted men.<sup>2</sup> Some of those who avoided capture, notably Erikunna Ali Mussaliar, a Khilafat Secretary at Tirurangadi,<sup>3</sup> quickly sent out messengers to the surrounding amsoms to summon help, playing on traditional Moplah sentiment by circulating the apparent canard that a local mosque was threatened by the Government force.<sup>4</sup>

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- 1 Secret letter, Malabar Magistrate to O/C Malabar Area and Operations Order, India, Secret, by Capt. P. McEnroy, O/C Malabar, n.d. for either but evidently shortly before 20 Aug. 1921, enclosures in O/C Madras District to H.Q., Southern Command, Poona, 20 Sept. 1921, L/PJ/6/1782, 6735/21 in 1/22; official report of Hitchcock (who was a participant in the 14 August conference) of 16 Aug. 1921, Hitchcock, loc. cit., pp. 30-31; Hitchcock, loc. cit., pp. 33-35 and 164; McEnroy (another participant in the conference) 'The Mappilla Rebellion', ibid., p. 201; Govt. of Madras to Malabar Magistrate (tel.), 16 Aug. 1921, G.R.F. Tottenham (ed.), loc. cit., p. 21; demi-official letter, Malabar Magistrate to Govt. of Madras, 16 Aug. 1921 ibid.; p. 28; A.R. Knapp, 'Note on Malabar Affairs', 18 August 1921, ibid., pp. 32-33; G.O.C. Madras to Govt. of Madras, 20 or 21 Aug. 1921, ibid., p. 22.
- 2 Malabar Magistrate to Govt. of Madras (tel.), 23 Aug. 1921, L/PJ/6/1782, 5224/21 in 1/22; Hitchcock, loc. cit., p. 37.
- 3 Judgement, Case No. 7 of 1921, 2 Nov. 1921, Court of Special Tribunal, Calicut, Hitchcock, loc. cit., p. 245.
- 4 Communique of Malabar Magistrate, n.d., possibly 25 Aug. 1921, Parliamentary Papers, Vol. 26, Cmd 1552, 1921, item 14, p. 10; account of early days of rebellion by 'A', an Ernad villager and Congress worker, in C.F. Andrews 'The First Days of the Moplah Rising', The Modern Review, Apr. 1922, Vol. XXXI, No. 4, p. 469; Hitchcock, loc. cit., pp. 35, 37, 39, 51-53; statement of Kunnoth Mussa, 23 Sept. 1921, ibid., p. 183; statement of Kadavanchi Kotakatakath Atta Koya Tangal, 25 Jan. 1922, ibid., p. 195; judgement, Case No. 4 of 1921, Court of Special Tribunal, Calicut, 18 Oct. 1921, ibid., p. 208; judgement, Case No. 74 of 1922, Court of Special Judge, Malabar, 24 May 1922, ibid., p. 211; Mohamed Abdur Rehman, Provincial Khilafat Committee, Calicut to Sec., Central Khilafat Committee, Bombay, n.d., (intercepted letter) in Special Branch,

Within hours the Government party at Tirurangadi was confronted by thousands of Moplahs inflamed by rumours of mosque desecration<sup>1</sup> and with improvised weapons, singing war-songs and shouting the tekbir (Allah-o-Akbar, God is Great) converging on them from both east and west.<sup>2</sup> It says much not only for the determination of the Ernad Moplah in face of a supposed threat to the sanctity

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C.I.D. [to Govt. of Madras], 20 Sept. 1921, Strictly Conf., Govt. of Madras, Under Sec.'s Safe, Secret, No. 327-A, 2 Nov. 1921 p. 3, MRO.

- 1 Judgement, Case No. 118 of 1922, Court of Special Judge, Calicut, 8 Aug. 1922, MPP No. 441 (Conf.), 31 May 1923, p. 300, MRO. This 'mosque desecration rumour', often retailed in the form that the famous Mambram mosque (at which the remains of the Mambram Tangal, Syed Fazl's father, were interred) had been 'destroyed' by the Government forces, rapidly spread throughout the 'fanatic zone' from 20 August, firing anti-Government feeling everywhere. K. Madhavan Nayar, Malabar Kalapam, pp. 140 and 152; Mohamed Abdur Rehman, to Sec., Central Khilafat Committee, Bombay, n.d., (intercepted letter), loc. cit., p. 3; evidence taken in District Magistrate's Court, 8 Apr. 1922, MPP No. 1049 (Conf.), 16 Dec. 1922, p. 3, MRO; deposition of Thanduparakal Unnikoya, P.W. No. 4, 27 Mar. 1922, Court of Special Judge, Calicut, Case No. 22 of 1922, Referred Trial No. 50 of 1922, p. 7, MHCA; K. Karunakaran Nayar, Sub-Insp., Pandikkad Police Station, to Supt. of Police, 31 Aug. 1921, G.R.F. Tottenham (ed.), loc. cit., p. 79; demi-official report of F.B. Evans, 26 Dec. 1921, ibid., p. 279; interview with N. Checku, Munduparamba, 23 Dec. 1974; interview with C.P. Moideen Haji, Pandikkad, 27 Dec. 1974; interview with K.T. Alavi, Pandikkad, 27 Dec. 1974.
- 2 Report by O/C Calicut from 19 Aug. 1921 to 4 Sept. 1921, enclosure in G.O.C., Madras to H.Q., Southern Command, Poona, 20 Sept. 1921, L/PJ/6/1782, 6735/21 in 1/22; G.O.C. Madras to Chief of General Staff, Simla (Secret), 24 Aug. 1921, ibid.; Malabar Magistrate to Govt. of Madras (tel.), 23 Aug. 1921, L/PJ/6/1782, 5224/21 in 1/22; Hitchcock, loc. cit., pp. 36-37 and 46; judgement, Case No. 4 of 1921, Court of Special Tribunal, Calicut, 18 Oct. 1921, ibid., p. 209; deposition of K. Kannachu, P.W. No. 3, 27 June 1922, Court of Senior Special Judge, Calicut, Case No. 118 of 1922, Criminal Appeal No. 1160 of 1922, p. 3, MHCA; Malabar Magistrate to Govt. of Madras, 25 Aug. 1921, G.R.F. Tottenham (ed.), loc. cit., p. 68; judgement, Case No. 118 of 1922, Court of Special Judge, Calicut, 8 Aug. 1922, MPP No. 441 (Conf.), 31 May 1923 p. 299, MRO.

of his mosque, but also for the extent to which British authority in the 'fanatic zone' had already been undermined that the crowd approaching from the west failed to give an inch when charged with fixed bayonets, beating them down with their swords and sticks. Even when the police opened fire shooting down some of the mob, its effect was to make it retreat only a few yards.<sup>1</sup> The Government forces eventually drove off their assailants with the help of gunfire after themselves suffering several casualties. However, facing what was clearly an unprecedented challenge to British authority in Malabar, with their food supplies disrupted by the disturbances<sup>2</sup> and with news of the wrecking of the railway line and station (Parappanangadi) which was their life-line back to Calicut, the Government party, which included the Collector, the District Superintendent of Police, the Officer Commanding Malabar and the Madras Presidency Deputy Inspector-General of Police, was

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1 Malabar Magistrate to Govt. of Madras, 25 Aug. 1921, G.R.F. Tottenham (ed.), loc. cit., p. 68; N.E.Q. Mainwaring, Deputy Insp.-General of Police, Western Range to Insp.-General of Police, Madras, 23 Aug. 1921, ibid., p. 73; G.H.B. Jackson, Sessions Judge, South Malabar to C.A. Innes, Member, Council of Dept. of Commerce, 4 Sept. 1921 (demi-official), Home (Political) File No. 241, Pt. 1-A, p. 24, NAI; Mohamed Abdur Rehman of the Provincial Khilafat Committee, Calicut (see his intercepted letter to Sec., Central Khilafat Committee, n.d., loc. cit., p. 6) was eye-witness to this determination in the 'fanatic zone' to challenge the authorities.

2 Malabar Magistrate to Govt. of Madras, 25 Aug. 1921, G.R.F. Tottenham (ed.), loc. cit., p. 68; F.B. Evans, 'Note on the Rebellion', 15 Mar. 1922, ibid., p. 46; interview with K. Moideen Kutty, a Khilafat volunteer in Tirurangadi in 1921 who was arrested by the Government party on 20 Aug. and taken to Calicut on 21 Aug., Tirurangadi, 15 Dec. 1974; interview with C. Karunakara Nair, Personal Asst. to Hitchcock during the rebellion, Adyar, 18 Mar. 1975.

in a most precarious position. Whilst the Collector, at 19.00 hours on 20 August 1921 was handing over the situation as beyond civil power to the Officer Commanding Malabar,<sup>1</sup> the intoxicating report was sweeping through Ernad that a great victory had been gained at Tirurangadi over the forces of the Government which had lost both Collector Thomas and Superintendent Hitchcock killed.<sup>2</sup> The events of 21 August did nothing to dispel the impression of British defeat.<sup>3</sup> What must have been an anguished Government party was forced, despite the original intention under such circumstances to hold their ground,<sup>4</sup> temporarily to abandon the 'fanatic zone' leaving behind two missing Leinsters

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- 1 Proceedings of Malabar Magistrate, 22 Aug. 1921 in G.O.C. Madras to H.Q., Southern Command, Poona, 20 Sept. 1921, L/PJ/6/1782, 6735/21 in 1/22; Malabar Magistrate to Govt. of Madras (tel.), 23 Aug. 1921, L/PJ/6/1782, 5224/21 in 1/22; G.O.C., Madras to Chief of General Staff, Simla (Secret), 24 Aug. 1921, L/PJ/6/1782, 6024/21 in 1/22; Hitchcock, loc. cit., p. 37; Madras Police Administration Report for 1921, Pl, II, p. 15.
- 2 Hitchcock, loc. cit., p. 39; Own Correspondent, Madras Mail, 26 Sept. 1921, p. 5; Special Correspondent, ibid., 27 Sept. 1921, p. 5; account of 'A', in C.F. Andrews, loc. cit., p. 470; deposition of P.W. No. 2, P. Sankunni Menon, Melmuri adhigari, Summary General Court Martial No. 6 of 1922, Malappuram, 16 Jan. 1922, MPP No. 848 (Conf.), 1 Nov. 1923, MRO; K. Madhavan Nayar, Malabar Kalapam, p. 146; K. Karunakara Nayar, Sub-Insp., Pandikkad Police Station, to Supt. of Police, 31 Aug. 1921, G.R.F. Tottenham (ed.), loc. cit., p. 79. One eye-witness in Calicut reported that on 20 Aug. a rumour that the whole military had been wiped out was circulating in the town, 'A Correspondent', Podanur, 26 Aug. 1921, Hindu, 30 Aug. 1921, p. 6. For details of the panic such rumours created in Calicut see K.P. Kesava Menon, Kazhinja Kalam, p. 94, interview with K.P. Kesava Menon, Kozhikode, 17 Dec. 1974; G.H.B. Jackson, to C.A. Innes, 4 Sept. 1921, loc. cit., p. 24.
- 3 F.B. Evans, 'Note on the Rebellion', 15 Mar. 1922, G.R.F. Tottenham (ed.), loc. cit., p. 46.
- 4 Official report of Hitchcock, 16 Aug. 1921, Hitchcock, loc. cit., p. 31.

(who in fact fell into Moplah hands at Tirur) and a small force of troops cut off at Malappuram.<sup>1</sup> Fighting off Moplah attacks all along the way, the main Government party force-marched back to Calicut along the wrecked railway line, arriving exhausted at 24.00 hours.<sup>2</sup> Behind them over parts of four taluks<sup>3</sup> British authority had collapsed and Moplah raj was there for the taking. As the District Magistrate himself later described the situation, the 'fanatic zone' Moplah was "convinced that his time [had] come".<sup>4</sup> The great rebellion of 1921-22 had begun.

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1 Official report of Hitchcock, 16 Aug. 1921, Hitchcock, loc. cit., pp. 41 and 46; telegraphic report of Malabar Magistrate, 23 Aug. 1921, Parliamentary Papers, Vol. 26, Cmd. 1552, 1921, item 7, pp. 7-8.

2 Malabar Magistrate to Govt. of Madras (tel), 23 Aug. 1921, L/PJ/6/1782, 5224/21 in 1/22; Hitchcock, loc. cit., p. 40; judgement, Case No. 77 of 1921, Court of Special Tribunal, Calicut, 7 Feb. 1922, ibid., p. 312; interview with A.E. Anandan Menon who accompanied the Govt. party part of the way to Calicut, Parappanangadi, 1 Jan. 1975.

3 Ernad, Walluvanad, Ponnani and Calicut.

4 Malabar Magistrate to Govt. of Madras, 25 Aug. 1921, G.R.F. Tottenham (ed.), loc. cit., p. 72. "We thought British rule had gone for good when we heard about [the Collector's retreat to Calicut]", interview with N. Checku, Munduparamba, 23 Dec. 1974; "we thought British rule had ended for good", interview with C.P. Moideen Haji, Pandikkad, 27 Dec. 1974; "I did not believe British rule had ended but other people did", interview with K.T. Alavi, Pandikkad 27 Dec. 1974. See also evidence taken in District Magistrate's case of 8 Apr. 1922, MPP No. 1049 (Conf.), 16 Dec. 1922, p. 3, MRO; J.A. Thorne, Malabar Magistrate to Chief Sec., 23 Mar. 1923, MPP No. 323 (Conf.), 21 Apr. 1923, p. 5, MRO; Acting Chief Sec., Govt. of Madras, Public to Officiating Sec., Govt. of India, demi-official, strictly conf., 3 Sept. 1921, Fortnightly Reports for 1921, p. 30, MRO; K. Madhavan Nayar, loc. cit., p. 148; deposition of Pandarathodiyil Govindan Nayar, P.W. No. 2, 6 Apr. 1922, Court of Special Judge, Calicut, Case No. 48 of 1922, Referred Trial No. 51 of 1922, p. 4, MHCA; deposition of T. Raman Nayar, P.W.

### Conclusion

The common interest the Ernad Moplah and the advanced nationalist shared in opposing British rule and jenmi power was, in 1920-21, translated into practical terms in the 'fanatic zone' in the form of an agitation the characteristics of which owed little that was fundamental to the non-co-operation movement. In the spheres in which a movement organised by educated urban middle-class elements might contribute to the successful mobilisation of a non-traditional challenge to the ruling power in Ernad the non-co-operation movement was a failure. Leadership in the south Malabar interior was very largely that of traditional Moplah organisation, limited in experience and attainment, narrow in perspective, and restricted in authority. In the promotion of secular forms of organisation fashioned specifically for the discharge of anti-jenmi or anti-Government functions the non-co-operation movement even in western Ernad achieved little. On the contrary it deemed it necessary to pander to the traditional mode of Moplah mobilisation via the solidarity of the community of Islam for the achieving of aims essentially non-communal. The emphasis placed on the Khilafat rather than the non-co-operation aspect of the

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No. 1, 28 Apr. 1922, Court of Special Judge, Sessions Case No. 69 of 1922, Referred Trial No. 54 of 1922, p. 3, MHCA, deposition of K.P. Kunhi Krishna Panikkar, P.W. No. 2, 28 Apr. 1922, ibid., p. 4; deposition of K. Ahammad Kutty, P.W. No. 2, 27 Mar. 1922, Court of Special Judge, Case No. 22 of 1922, Referred Trial No. 50 of 1922, p. 3, MHCA; deposition of Chettiyarumal Kammu Hajee, P.W. No. 3, 27 Mar. 1922, ibid., p. 5; deposition of V. Krishnan, P.W. No. 1, 25 Apr. 1922, Court of Special Judge, Case No. 62 of 1922, Referred Trial No. 58 of 1922, p. 3, MHCA.

campaign and the failure of the tenancy movement to prevail in the face of British repression and the conflicts dividing the movement, ensured that both the leadership and the methods of organisation which finally characterised the 1920-21 agitation in Ernad would be sectarian rather than secularist. Only in the sphere which was the least painstaking and in which the Congress vakil's own conflicts with the Ernad Moplah had least scope, that of the retailing of the story of the impending downfall of the British Raj, had the non-co-operation movement a vital contribution to make. It was the nationalist movement's success in this sphere and its failure in those of leadership and organisation which helped determine the outstanding characteristics of the 'fanatic zone' Moplah's response to the failure of the Tirurangadi raid of 20 August 1921.



## CHAPTER 5

### The Moplah Rebellion of 1921-22

#### Preparation

The suggestion that a blueprint of insurrection had been prepared in interior south Malabar in the period preceding 20 August 1921 was widely propagated during the rebellion period and after. Thus, one member of the 1921 Madras Secretariat has subsequently written of his conviction that "the rebellion started on a set plan" of isolating Calicut and leaving the rest of the district to be overrun.<sup>1</sup> The opening acts of revolt with the rapid cutting of communications links and the elimination of police posts in most of the 'fanatic zone' were taken to be evidence of such preconcert. As Lord Willingdon, the Governor of Madras privately informed the Viceroy in September 1921:

"That the whole thing was very well organised is obvious ... for at the word 'go', different bands tore up railways, bridges, and telegraph lines at great distances apart."<sup>2</sup>

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- 1 Sir Richard Tottenham (in 1921 'G.R.F. Tottenham', Under Sec., Govt. of Madras) 'Reminiscences written in 1964-66', Tottenham Papers, 1st notebook, part 10, CSAS. See also F.B. Evans, Special Civil Officer for Martial Law Area, 1921, 'Note on the Rebellion', 15 Mar. 1922, G.R.F. Tottenham (ed.), The Mapilla Rebellion, 1921-22, p. 45; Malabar Magistrate to Govt. of Madras, 25 Aug. 1921, ibid., pp. 70-71; G.O.C. Madras to G.O.C. in Chief, Southern Command, Poona, 27 Sept. 1921, ibid., p. 152 for other suggestions that the rebellion was pre-planned.
- 2 Willingdon to Reading (private), 13 Sept. 1921, Reading Papers, Vol. 24, item 437 p. 367. See also speech of Willingdon, Madras Legislative Council Debates, 1 Sept. 1921, L/PJ/6/1772, 6385/21; speech of Rao Bahadur C.S. Subrahmanayam, Legislative Assembly Debates, 5 Sept. 1921, L/PJ/6/1774, 6646/21, p. 141; speech of Diwan Bahadur M. Krishnan Nayar, 19 Jan. 1922, Madras Legislative Council Proceedings, 2nd session, Vol. IV, No. 6, p. 1970; Special Correspondent, Madras Mail, 30 Aug. 1921 p. 5, 3 Sept. 1921 p. 7, 7 Sept. 1921 p. 5, 8 Sept. 1921 p. 5,

It seems likely that the telegram Willingdon received from the Madras Government in the second week of August whilst on his way to Ceylon, retailing the Malabar Collector's opinion that there existed in his district "'widespread organization amongst Mappillas to resist authority by force",<sup>1</sup> may have predisposed the Governor to a conspiratorial explanation of the outbreak of the rebellion. Even more compelling would have been suspicion of the effect of Khilafat activities among the Moplahs. A week after the start of the rebellion Willingdon told Secretary of State Montagu:

"It is inconceivable to me that this wasn't thoroughly organized, for these Khilafat people have been for months secretly working on the minds of these fanatical people the wickedness of the British in regard to the Turkish Peace Terms, and the certainty of securing Swaraj through Gandhi's propaganda."<sup>2</sup>

In fact the concept of the Moplah Rebellion as a planned revolt receives little support from the evidence. Certainly the Ernad Moplah, partly as a result of Khilafat-non-co-operation

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and (reporting Public Prosecutor's speech at trial of Ali Mussaliar) 19 Oct. 1921 p. 6; Krishnaswami Ayyar, Malabar Gazetteer (Supplement) p. iv; T.W. Arnold, 'Mappillas', Encyclopaedia of Islam, Vol. III, p. 261.

- 1 Govt. of Madras to Willingdon (tel.), n.d., reporting on Malabar Magistrate to Govt. of Madras, 10 Aug. 1921, in Hitchcock, loc. cit., p. 33. For other messages coming out of Malabar suggesting the organised nature of Moplah resistance to the authorities see demi-official notes of Malabar Magistrate to Govt. of Madras, 7 Aug. 1921, ibid., p. 23 and N.E.Q. Mainwaring, Deputy Insp.-Gen. of Police, Western Range to Insp.-Gen. of Police, Madras, 11 and 12 Aug. 1921, enclosure in J.T.W. Fillson, Personal Asst. to Insp.-Gen. /to Govt. of Madras/, 13 Aug. 1921, ibid., p. 26.
- 2 Willingdon to Montagu (private), 27 Aug. 1921, Willingdon Papers, Vol. 4, p. 224.

propaganda, fully expected the downfall of the Raj forthwith,<sup>1</sup> and under such circumstances it would be surprising had no provision been made for what had for so long been coveted. Even so the indications are that such preparation as occurred was most pervasive in the realm of morale.

The Moplah's wresting of control of Pukkotur from the Government on 1 August 1921 heightened the sense of anticipation of the defeat of the Raj which had been incited in the preceding period. Speculation was rife among the Moplahs of the area that the expiring foreign power would be totally ineffective should it attempt to re-impose its authority against Moplah resistance. This emboldening calculation went so far as the dissemination of a certain amount of brave talk of the mastery with which the exploitation of local conditions would furnish the Moplah when the final battle for power came. However these prognostications amounted to a preparation no more elaborate than talk of the possibility of felling of trees to paralyse British mobility and the ineffectiveness of the gun against the knife in such close country as Ernad.<sup>2</sup> Provision more material was desultory. There seems to be no doubt at all that, in the weeks preceding 20 August, Moplahs in parts of the 'fanatic zone' were having weapons, in the form of large knives or 'swords', made by the rural blacksmiths in anticipation of the approaching

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1 See above p. 271.

2 District Magistrate to Govt. of Madras, 10 Aug. 1921, G.R.F. Tottenham (ed.) loc. cit., p. 18; N.E.Q. Mainwaring to Insp.-Gen. of Police, 11 and 12 Aug. 1921, loc. cit., p. 26; Hitchcock to Insp.-Gen. of Police, 10 Aug. 1921, ibid., p. 26.

contest for power.<sup>1</sup> Somewhat detailed arrangements, involving the preparation of Moplah names and dress for Hindu women for example, are alleged to have been set on foot before the outbreak of the rebellion in anticipation of the 'Islamisation' Mappilla raj was to bring.<sup>2</sup> But apart from such rudimentary signs of preparation, evidence to support the 'blueprint theory' of the genesis of the 1920-21 rebellion seems entirely wanting.

Indeed what is known of the events immediately following the Government raid on Tirurangadi points irresistibly towards a very different conclusion. The Moplah response to the raid was characterised by improvisation rather than providence. Despite the manufacture of war-knives that had preceded the rebellion, the Moplahs who swarmed into Tirurangadi on 20 August

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1 Hitchcock, loc. cit., p. 54; report of Hitchcock, 16 Aug. 1921, ibid., p. 30; judgement, Case No. 4 of 1921, Court of Special Tribunal, Calicut, 18 Oct. 1921, ibid., p. 207; judgement, Case No. 7 of 1921, Court of Special Tribunal, Calicut, 2 Nov. 1921, ibid., pp. 245-46; Correspondent, Calicut, 'The Moplah Rebellion', Times of India, 10 Sept. 1921 p. 12; Special Correspondent's interview with senior Nilambur Tirumulpad, Madras Mail, 7 Sept. 1921, p. 5; District Magistrate to Govt. of Madras, 10 Aug. 1921, G.R.F. Tottenham (ed.), loc. cit., p. 18; A.R. Knapp, 'Note on Malabar Affairs', 18 Aug. 1921, ibid. p. 33; interview with K.P. Kesava Menon, Kozhikode, 17 Dec. 1974; note by G.R.F. Tottenham, Acting Under Sec., Govt. of Madras, n.d., on statement of Karat Moidin Kutty Haji, 8 June 1922, Govt. of Madras, Under Sec.'s Safe, Secret, No. 360, 5 Sept. 1922, p. 29, MRO; deposition of K. Govindan Nair, P.W. No. 2, 5 Feb. 1923, Court of Special Judge, Calicut, Case No. 77 of 1922, Referred Trial No. 47 of 1923, p. 5, MHCA; deposition of K. Kunhalan Kutty, P.W. No. 3, 23 May 1922, Court of Special Judge, Case No. 86 of 1922, Criminal Appeal No. 878 of 1922, p. 4, MHCA; cross-examination of Nalakath Kunhi Pokkar, 19 Oct. 1921, Special Judge Case No. 7 of 1921, exhibit 1, Case No. 151 of 1922, Court of Session, South Malabar, Criminal Appeal No. 1493 of 1922, p. 35, MHCA; statement of Lavakutty, a rebel leader of Tirurangadi transmitted by Cheria Mohammed, in K. Madhavan Nayar, Malabar Kalapam, pp. 122-123.

2 Hitchcock, loc. cit., p. 33; A.R. Knapp, 'Note on Malabar Affairs', 18 Aug. 1921, G.R.F. Tottenham (ed.), loc. cit., p. 33; Special Correspondent, Madras Mail, 9 Sept. 1921 p. 5 and 16 Sept. 1921 p. 6.

were generally most ill-prepared for combat. These hastily-assembled mobs equipped themselves with arms largely by cutting staves from trees on their way. Many, lacking even this provision, extemporised during the collision with the police with whatever road metal lay at hand.<sup>1</sup>

To close study, the absence of overall direction, and even to a very great extent co-ordination, is an unmistakable feature of the events immediately following 20 August.<sup>2</sup> The Moplahs of each narrow locality in the rebellion zone were at the outset subject to no external regulation. With such autonomy the response to the news of the 'defeat of the Raj' depended to an extent on local circumstances. Where leaders were absent or ineffectual, clear signs of indecision as to the course of action

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1 Hitchcock, loc. cit., pp. 37-38, 51, 54, 56 and 163-64; statement of Kunnoth Mussa, arrested 23 Sept. 1921 and a member of one of the 20 August mobs, n.d., ibid., p. 183; statement of Karat Moideen Kutti Haji, 24 May 1922, ibid., p. 188; statement of Kadavanchi Kotakatath Atta Koya Tangal, 25 Jan. 1922, ibid., pp. 195-96; Own Correspondent, Times of India, 3 Sept. 1921 p. 11; planter's account of Moplah Rebellion, Englishman, 13 Sept. 1921, p. 3; E.H. Colebrooke, 'Away from the Moplahs: Another Planter's Graphic Story', article from Madras Mail, Sept. 1921, in Colebrooke Papers, p. 7; interviews with Sir Thomas Austin, 20 Mar. 1974 and E.H. Colebrooke, 21 Aug. 1974.

2 The man most directly responsible for the suppression of the rebellion, Police Supt. Hitchcock, later observed that the rebellion leaders "never had a settled plan" and that barely one "had any very clear idea of why he ... join~~ed~~/ in". Hitchcock to G.R.F. Tottenham (private), 2 July 1923, MPP No. 394 (Conf.), 29 Apr. 1926, p. 52, MRO.

to be taken were evident at first. Some 'villages' did not join the rebellion until after a period of delay, some two months in the case of the two Ernad amsoms of Wandur and Arikkod.<sup>1</sup> When action was taken, both its form and extent were subject to variation according to the locality, so that the Pukkotur Moplahs, to take the most striking example, ignored the call from Tirurangadi to rally for a confrontation with the Government party. Instead, on 21 August, they attacked the kovilagam (palace) of the senior Tirumulpad at Nilambur.<sup>2</sup>

Even so, it is quite true, as Willingdon claimed, that throughout the rebellion zone of Ernad and the contiguous parts of the adjoining taluks the immediate targets of attack, along with the scattered police posts and other public buildings, were almost invariably the means of communication.<sup>3</sup> In certain

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1 E.H. Colebrooke, 'Away from the Moplahs: Another Planter's Graphic Story', loc. cit., p. 2; Hitchcock, loc. cit. pp. 48-49 and 73; Madras Mail, 5 Sept. 1921, p. 6.

2 Hitchcock, loc. cit., pp. 45, 50-52, 54, 69 and 164; statement of Karat Moideen Kutti Haji, 24 May 1922, ibid., p. 188; E.H. Colebrooke, 'Notes', 7 Nov. 1972, Colebrook Papers, p. C. It may well be significant that the amsom showing the least concern for battle with the Govt. force at Tirurangadi was Pukkotur where the upshot of the confrontation with Govt. of 1 Aug. had been a localised Moplah raj.

3 Telegraphic report of Malabar Magistrate, 23 Aug. 1921, Parliamentary Papers, Vol. 26, Cmd. 1552, 1921, item 7, pp. 7-8; telegraphic reports of Govt. of Madras, 30 Aug. 1921, ibid., item 22, p. 12; Press Communiqué, P/11111, MPP No. 535, 22 Aug. 1921; answer of H.D. Craik, Deputy Sec., Govt. of India (Home) to question of Sir Zulfiqar Ali Khan, Council of State Debates, Vol. II 2nd session 1921, p. 180; judgement, Case No. 182 of 1922, Court of Special Judge, Calicut, 25 Jan. 1923, Hitchcock, loc. cit., p. 287; deposition of Moosa Kutti, P.W. No. 2, Summary General Court Martial, Malappuram, 31 Dec. 1921, Case No. 6 of 1921, p. 4, MPP No. 848 (Conf.), 1 Nov. 1923, MRO; judgement, Case No. 30 of 1926, Court of

cases this was indeed a matter of some co-ordination in that, where news of the sensation at Tirurangadi spread outwards, via the messengers, to the chief avenues of entry into the 'fanatic zone' (notably the railway), the call was for them to be blocked.<sup>1</sup> This was no superintended operation, with the disconnection of the 'fanatic zone' at the strategic points of junction with the outside world, but a series of ramifying local initiatives entailing scores of hastily-improvised mass assaults on the permanent way throughout its traverse of the disturbed area.<sup>2</sup> Thus, according to one eye witness report, the track at Feroke was attacked when, at 17.30 hours on 21 August, two or three Moplahs came running from the south to call on the great throng of Moplahs which had gathered on receiving intimation of stirring events in the direction of Tirurangadi to imitate their example in destroying the line near Vadakampad bridge since a

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Session, South Malabar, 2 Aug. 1926, p. 2, KDCA; Personal Asst. /sig/ to Malabar Collector, 20 Aug. 1921 (tel.), G.R.F. Tottenham (ed.), loc. cit., p. 54; interviews with K.P. Kesava Menon, Kozhikode, 17 Dec. 1974, C.P. Moideen Haji, Pandikkad, 27 Dec. 1974, K.T. Alavi, Pandikkad, 27 Dec. 1974, M. Govindan Menon, Parappanangadi, 1 Jan. 1975; deposition of K. Ahammad Kutty, P.W. No. 2, Court of Special Judge, Calicut, Case No. 22 of 1922, Referred Trial No. 50 of 1922, p. 3, MHCA; deposition of T. Raman Nayar, P.W. No. 1, 28 Apr. 1922, Court of Special Judge, Case No. 69 of 1922, Referred Trial No. 54 of 1922, p. 3, MHCA; deposition of P. Kunhayamad, P.W. No. 2, 6 May 1922, Court of Special Judge, Case No. 72 of 1922, Referred Trial No. 59 of 1922, p. 3, MHCA.

1 Special Correspondent, Madras Mail, 26 Sept. 1921, p. 5, 27 Sept. 1921 p. 5 and 30 Sept. 1921 p. 6; judgement, Case No. 4 of 1921, Court of Special Tribunal, Calicut, 18 Oct. 1921, Hitchcock, loc. cit., p. 208.

2 F.B. Evans, 'Note on the Rebellion', 15 Mar. 1922, G.R.F. Tottenham (ed.), loc. cit., p. 46; Evans, 'Note on the operations from 26 Aug. 1921 to 6 Sept. 1921', ibid., p. 233.

special train was coming from the north (Calicut).<sup>1</sup> In fact, once consciousness had dawned that the anticipated time for the taking of power had at last arrived, it must rarely have required much prompting from the outside for Moplahs in any particular neighbourhood to establish what needed to be done. If swaraj were to be both constituted and safeguarded, it was necessary not only to eliminate the remnants of British authority in the form of police posts and administrative buildings but also to sever links with the outside world.<sup>2</sup> The railway was the most obvious target. The District Magistrate's party had, after all, both entered and, on 21 August, was decamping from interior south Malabar via its routeway and, since the whole 'fanatic zone' had an interest in its obstruction, some external encouragement for the laggard was clearly in order. But what strongly suggests the absence of any overall management of the events immediately following 20 August was the tendency for each small realm in the rebellion zone to isolate itself, even from its neighbours. Accordingly, as soon as the Government party had left Tirurangadi on 21 August, the local Moplahs sacked the nearby buildings connected with the defeated administration, smashed culverts and felled trees to insulate themselves from attack and Erikunna

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1 Special Correspondent, Madras Mail, 30 Sept. 1921 p. 6. The eye witness was a rail gang maistri giving evidence at a Special Tribunal Case.

2 Hitchcock, loc. cit., p. 49; statement of Amakundan Mammad, 28 Dec. 1921, ibid., p. 186; statement of Kadavanchi Katakath Atta Koya Tangal, 25 Jan. 1922, p. 196; account of 'A' in C.F. Andrews, loc. cit., p. 470; T. Austin, Subdivisional Magistrate, Malappuram, to District Magistrate, 2 Sept. 1921, G.R.F. Tottenham, (ed.) loc. cit., p. 84.



Ali Mussaliar began his reign in the area.<sup>1</sup>

Such highly-decentralised autonomy did not exclude, indeed it encouraged, large numbers of erratic forays against important nearby targets. Thus, Perintalmanna, the administrative centre of Walluvanad taluk, suffered three attacks in the first week of the rebellion: the first by local Moplahs on 21 August, the second by Puthangadi Moplahs on 22 August and the third by a gang from Karuvarakundu on 28 August.<sup>2</sup> Similarly, the headquarters of the British administration of Ernad, Manjeri, was raided several times in rapid succession by different Moplah bands after 20 August.<sup>3</sup> There can be no doubt that sorties of this kind perforce spread the contagion of insurrection to less venturesome ansoms in passage.<sup>4</sup> This, significantly, was the

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1 Hitchcock, loc. cit., p. 45.

2 Hindu (weekly), 8 Sept. 1921, p. 9. See also F.B. Evans, 'Note on the Rebellion', 15 Mar. 1922, G.R.F. Tottenham (ed.), loc. cit., p. 47; demi-official report of C.W.E. Cotton, Director of Industries (reporting on the experiences of a Nair vakil who had fled from Perintalmanna to Madras) to Govt. of Madras, 25 Aug. 1921, ibid. p. 225; judgement, Case No. 30 of 1926, Court of Session, South Malabar, 2 Aug. 1926, p. 2, KDCA.

3 Hitchcock, loc. cit., p. 53; interview with T.K. Kammunni, who participated in the looting of the Manjeri treasury in August 1921, Anakkayam, 28 Dec. 1974. See also details of a further case, involving 2 raids in rapid succession on Melattur police station on 21 August 1921, deposition of Parakot Chathappunni Paniker, P.W. No. 3, 12 May 1922, Court of Special Judge, Calicut, Case No. 67 of 1922, Referred Trial No. 66 of 1922, p. 9, MHCA.

4 See evidence taken in District Magistrate's Case of 8 Apr. 1922, MPP No. 1049 (Conf.), 16 Dec. 1922, p. 3, MRO.

the case with the raid of the Pukkotur Moplahs on Nilambur and their foray against Manjeri immediately after.<sup>1</sup> It is evident that a group which had tasted the fruits of immunity from chastisement ever since 1 August would be most forward in interpreting the story of the Government defeat at Tirurangadi as licence for such open and wide-ranging mobilisation against the traditional foes of jenmi and State. In fact, where Government control was necessarily most remote, in eastern Ernad in the heart of the 'fanatic zone', this tendency openly to spread the rebellion was most evident. But whatever may have been the case elsewhere, here it was done not en passant but with calculation and it was in eastern Ernad that the rising first showed signs of developing from its initial tendency to unco-ordinated revolt towards the attempt for a more concerted development.<sup>2</sup>

### Organisation

In fact as early as 21 August there was evidence of such co-operation between the chief centres of insurrection in eastern Ernad. What is claimed (probably unreliably) to have been a meeting of 4,000 Moplahs in Pandikkad mosque, at which were present the two most well-known leaders of the rebellion, Variankunnath Kunhamad Haji of Nellikuth and the Chembrasserri Tangal, apparently made some attempt to direct the seizure of

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1 Hitchcock, loc. cit., pp. 52-53; K. Madhavan Nayar, Malabar Kalapam, p. 145; F.B. Evans, 'Notes on the Moplah Rebellion', 27 Mar. 1922, MPP No. 682 (Conf.), 22 Aug. 1922, p. 14, MRO.

2 Hitchcock, loc. cit., pp. 50 and 54; Acting Chief Sec., Govt. of Madras to Sec., Govt. of India (Home), 1 Oct. 1921, (Conf.) P/64 (Conf.) ILP Dec. 1921, p. 2.

power which was under way.<sup>1</sup> Thus, we have the testimony of an eye-witness that the rebel leadership had advised this assembly that "arrangements should be made for governing the country."<sup>2</sup> From the time of this meeting rebel leaders, especially Kunhamad Haji and the Chembrasseri Tangal, maintained contact with each other, sometimes through meetings but also via correspondence, such as the letter from Moplahs of the Tirurangadi-Vengara gang to C. Kunhalavi found on the body of a rebel at Nannambra on 28 November 1921.<sup>3</sup>

What is most striking in fact is the way in which the outbreak of general rebellion promoted an unprecedented efflorescence of political talent among the south Malabar Moplahs, at

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- 1 Hitchcock, loc. cit., pp. 56 and 100; F.B. Evans, 'Note on the Rebellion', 15 Mar. 1922, para. 6, G.R.F. Tottenham (ed.), loc. cit., p. 45; K. Karunakaran Nayar, Sub-Insp., Pandikkad Police Station to Supt. of Police, 31 Aug. 1921, ibid., p. 80.
- 2 Deposition of P.W. Moosa Kutti, Pandikkad adhigari, Summary General Court Martial No. 6 of 1921, Malappuram, 31 Dec. 1921, MPP No. 848 (Conf.), 1 Nov. 1923, p. 4, MRO.
- 3 Hitchcock, loc. cit., pp. 69 and 119; statement of Otakath Kunhi Koya Thangal of Chembrasseri, 26 Dec. 1921, ibid., p. 185; statement of Karat Moideen Kutti Haji, 24 May 1922, ibid., p. 190. See also statement of a Moplah of Tirurangadi, a leader of a minor gang, n.d., in F.B. Evans, 'Notes on the Moplah Rebellion', 27 Mar. 1922, MPP No. 682, 22 Aug. 1922, p. 16, MRO; letter written by accused the Konara Tangal to Mulla Koya Tangal, n.d., exhibit B, Court of Special Judge, Calicut, Case No. 12 of 1923, Referred Trial No. 44 of 1923, p. 55, MHCA; letter in accused's handwriting, 27 Nov. 1921, exhibit D, ibid. p. 57; letter from Unni Moideen Kutty to P. Unnian, n.d., exhibit G, ibid., p. 58; letter from Karat Moydin Kutti Haji to accused, n.d., ibid., p. 59; O/C Malabar to Govt. of Madras, 22 Sept. 1921 (tel.), G.R.F. Tottenham (ed.), loc. cit., p. 91; judgement, Case No. 30 of 1926, Court of Session, South Malabar, 2 Aug. 1926, p. 2, KDCA.

least in those areas not too accessible from the railway line. Anticipation of the inexorable employment of the apparently invincible power standing behind the jenmi had for decades imposed narrow limits to the organisation of the Ernad Moplah's challenge to the established order. The belief that this restraining influence was now inoperative released a verve for government rarely suspected since the previous period when British rule in Malabar was weak more than a century before. At that time Major Alexander Walker of the Malabar Commission had observed of the Jungle Moplahs of interior south Malabar:

"There is an energy in their character and they would in our absence soon erect an empire in this part of the Province."<sup>1</sup>

In fact in this earliest period of British dominion in Malabar several leaders among the "enterprising and bold" Moplahs of Ernad and Walluvanad, aspiring to independence, according to Walker's testimony "began to exercise their jurisdiction over the country."<sup>2</sup> Whilst details of what this 'jurisdiction' comprised are few, the record is somewhat less stinted in the case of the 1921-22 insurrection. Even in the less remote western parts of the rebellion zone "Khilafat raj had been a

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1 'Essay on Malabar', n.d., but probably 1798 or early 1799, Walker Papers, 182c5, p. 114. See also Francis Buchanan, A Journey from Madras through the Countries of Mysore, Canara and Malabar, Vol. II, p. 565; minute of Mr. Smee, Malabar Commissioner, 18 Apr. 1800, P/381/13, BPSF 17 June 1800, p. 3391. In this connection it might not be entirely irrelevant to notice that perhaps the most celebrated Mussalman of the south Malabar interior, Syed Fazl, became for a time Emir of Dhofar after his removal from the ambit of British power in India. Note by J.G. Beville, Political Agent, Mouscat, 29 Mar. 1897, 'Attack on Dhofar', p. 6, Bushire Residency Records, R/15/1/393.

2 A. Walker, 'History of Malabar', Vol. 2, p. 621, Walker Papers, 184a1.

very real thing" in the period the British were struggling to regain control of the situation, according to Police Superintendent Hitchcock.<sup>1</sup> In less accessible parts of the disturbed area such as eastern Ernad where rebel control remained unchallenged for considerable periods at a time<sup>2</sup> and where according to F.B. Evans, the Special Civil Officer for the Martial Law Area, the rebel régime was "rigorously administered",<sup>3</sup> it is clear that the outlines of the essential departments of government had begun to take shape.

Whilst an initial impulse among the Moplah population from 20 August was to turn the withdrawal of British power to their personal advantage by looting abandoned Government buildings, helpless jenmis and other Hindus of means,<sup>4</sup> the principal leaders

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1 Loc. cit. p. 120.

2 F.B. Evans, 'Note on the Rebellion', 15 Mar. 1922, G.R.F. Tottenham (ed.), loc. cit., p. 49; Evans to Govt. of Madras, 25 Sept. 1921 (demi-official), ibid., p. 170; demi-official report of Evans, 23 Sept. 1921, ibid., p. 242; Malabar Magistrate to Chief Sec., 10 Oct. 1921, MJP No. 742 (Conf.), 14 Oct. 1921, p. 1, MRO.

3 F.B. Evans, 'Notes on the Moplah Rebellion', 27 Mar. 1922, MPP No. 682, 22 Aug. 1922, p. 14, MRO.

4 Viceroy (Home Dept.) to India Office (tel.), 25 Aug. 1921, L/PJ/6/1782, 5225/21 in 1/22; Madras Publicity Bureau, 'Malabar and the Moplahs', Parliamentary Papers Vol. 26, Cmd 1552, 1921, p. 41; Own Correspondent, Times of India, 27 Aug. 1921, p. 11; Madras Mail, 24 Aug. 1921, p. 5 and 26 Aug. 1921 p. 5; Hitchcock, loc. cit., p. 142; F.B. Evans, 'Note on the Rebellion', 15 Mar. 1922, G.R.F. Tottenham, (ed.), loc. cit., p. 46; K. Madhavan Nayar, Malabar Kalapam, pp. 85 and 166; judgement, Case No. 4 of 1925, Court of Session, South Malabar, 24 Jan. 1925, KDCA; U. Gopal Menon, vakil and Congress leader, to Yakub Hassan, n.d., copy of letter forwarded by Yakub Hassan to Supt., Central Khilafat Committee, Bombay and intercepted by Special Branch, C.I.D., Special Branch /to Govt. of Madras/, Strictly Conf., 20 Sept. 1921, Govt. of Madras, Under Sec.'s Safe, Secret, No. 327-A, 2 Nov. 1921, p. 4, MRO.

of the rebellion were quick to attempt to safeguard their chief sources of revenue by declaring such free-lancing actionable.<sup>1</sup> Kunhamad Haji in particular was severe in putting down looting<sup>2</sup> and his interest in so doing is revealed in a proclamation issued by him and nine other rebel leaders declaring all property obtained by loot to be 'Khilafat property' and directing that it be deposited with the 'Khilafat authorities' on pain of condign punishment.<sup>3</sup> In fact without the supply of food, arms and money commandeered from inhabitants of the area of insurrection it is clear that the rebels would have lacked the means of continuing resistance to British rule.<sup>4</sup> It is true that the levies of this seminal Moplah regime itself, on its Hindu inhabitants in particular, could often seem, and sometimes no doubt were, quite arbitrary. This seems to have been implied in the remark of one rebel leader to two Nairs he had had beaten for trying, on 24 October 1921, to escape from the Khilafat domain at Mavoor, that they had no business to carry away valuables

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1 Madras Mail, 21 Sept. 1921, p. 6; K. Koyatti Moulavi, 1921 - le Malabar Lahala, p. 48; exhibit 1, Special Judge Case No. 7 of 1921, deposition of Nalakath Kunhi Pokkar, P.W. No. 5, Court of Session, South Malabar, Case No. 151 of 1922, Criminal Appeal No. 1493 of 1922, p. 34, MHCA.

2 Hitchcock, loc. cit., p. 58; judgement, Case No. 128 of 1922, Court of Special Judge, Calicut, 25 Sept. 1922, ibid., pp. 223-24 and 235; K. Madhavan Nayar, Malabar Kalapam, p. 171.

3 Own Correspondent, Madras Mail, 8 Dec. 1921, p. 6.

4 Special Civil Officer, Malappuram to Govt. of Madras, 22 Oct. 1921, G.R.F. Tottenham (ed.), loc. cit., p. 330; G.O.C., Madras to G.O.C. in Chief, Southern Command, Poona, 27 Sept. 1921, ibid., p. 152; deposition of E.V. Amoo, Deputy Supt. of Police, 19 Mar. 1923, P.W. No. 2, Court of Special Judge, Calicut, Case No. 12 of 1923, Referred Trial No. 44 of 1923, p. 4, MHCA.

which might be devoted to Khilafat purposes.<sup>1</sup> On the other hand, it is significant that captured rebels could feel impelled to claim that their gangs abjured looting and instead paid for everything.<sup>2</sup> There is little doubt that the tendency was certainly to justify, and presumably to regulate, the demands of Moplah raj according to canons which were deemed proper, the usual propensity being to formulate the exactions in terms of a land revenue kist or instalment.<sup>3</sup> Moreover, in interpreting the proceedings of this nascent raj it is by no means irrelevant to consider the war that was being conducted, since even the most constitutional of governments might find resort to exceptional measures necessary when engaged in hostilities. Of the rebel leaders Kunhamad Haji for one was explicit about which of his revenues were devoted to his 'Weapons Fund': those derived from the sale of 'passports', in effect safe-conduct

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1 Judgement, Case No. 12 of 1923, Court of Session, South Malabar, 23 Mar. 1923, Hitchcock, loc. cit., p. 268.

2 Statement of Vennathori Moyen Kutty, captured member of gang of Mahommed Koya Thangal of Konara, 26 Apr. 1922, Mss. Eur. F.161, box 26, p. 3.

3 Correspondent, Palghat, 30 Aug. 1921, Madras Mail, 31 Aug. 1921, p. 5; Special Correspondent, ibid., 8 Oct. 1921, p. 8; Special Correspondent, ibid., 6 Dec. 1921 p. 6; F.B. Evans, 'Notes on the Moplah Rebellion', 27 Mar. 1922, MPP No. 682, 22 Aug. 1922, p. 12, MRO; exhibit C, statement of Muthalath Chekku, 14 Dec. 1921, Court of Special Judge, Calicut, Case No. 106 of 1922, Referred Trial No. 123 of 1922, p. 16, MHCA; deposition of P. Ismal, P.W. No. 30, 20 Mar. 1923, Court of Special Judge, Case No. 12 of 1923, Referred Trial No. 44 of 1923, p. 31, MHCA; exhibit 1, Special Judge Case No. 7 of 1921, deposition of Malakath Kunhi Pokkar, P.W. No. 5, 7 Oct. 1921, Court of Session, South Malabar, Case No. 151 of 1922, Criminal Appeal No. 1493 of 1922, p. 34, MHCA; deposition of Pulakatthodi Kunhan Nair, P.W. No. 1, 16 Aug. 1922, Court of Special Judge, Case No. 133 of 1922, Referred Trial No. 160 of 1922, pp. 3-5, MHCA.

passes.<sup>1</sup>

These passes<sup>2</sup> were in fact a most instructive aspect of the organisation of Moplah raj in the rebellion zone. For military reasons the control of the movement of non-combatants, and more especially the intelligence they commanded, between the rebel- and the British-controlled territories was of the most crucial importance. The prohibition which, at least in the best-organised rebel areas was imposed on all exodus not specifically sanctioned<sup>3</sup> was enforced by the posting of 'frontier guards' and the scrutiny of 'passports'.<sup>4</sup> As early as 28 August 1921 a Sub-Inspector of Police and two constables from the Nilgiris were killed by rebels at Edakkara as they were

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- 1 Demi-official report of F.B. Evans, 14 Sept. 1921, G.R.F. Tottenham, loc. cit., p. 239; Own Correspondent, Madras Mail, 30 Sept. 1921 p. 6; Own Correspondent, Times of India, 5 Oct. 1921, p. 9.
- 2 For some instances of their issue see Hitchcock, loc. cit., pp. 75 and 80; statement of Kunhamad Haji, 10 Jan. 1922, ibid., pp. 186-87; Special Correspondent, Madras Mail, 17 Sept. 1921 p. 7; 'Note on the Rebellion' by F.B. Evans, 15 Mar. 1922 para 17, G.R.F. Tottenham, loc. cit. p. 48; demi-official report of Evans, 3 Nov. 1921, ibid. p. 258; Evans, 'Notes on the Moplah Rebellion', 27 Mar. 1922, MPP No. 682, 22 Aug. 1922 pp. 12 and 14, MRO; deposition of Aroli Ayamad Kutti, P.W. No. 3, 12 Aug. 1922, Court of Special Judge, Calicut, Case No. 108 of 1922, Referred Trial No. 138 of 1922, p. 8, MHCA.
- 3 Exhibit 1, Special Judge Case No. 7 of 1921, deposition of Nalath Kunhi Pokkar, P.W. No. 5, 7 Oct. 1921, Sessions Court, South Malabar, Case No. 151 of 1922, Criminal Appeal No. 1493 of 1922, p. 34, MHCA; deposition of M. Chiruthevi Amma, P.W. No. 2, 2 Feb. 1923, Court of Special Judge, Calicut, Case No. 11 of 1923, Referred Trial No. 34 of 1923, 2 Feb. 1923, p. 4, MHCA; deposition of E.K. Moideen, P.W. No. 1, 1 Mar. 1922, Court of Special Judge, Case No. 75 of 1922, Referred Trial No. 25 of 1922, p. 4, MHCA; judgement Case No. 43 of 1922, Court of Special Judge, 19 May 1922, Referred Trial No. 60 of 1922, p. 1, MHCA; deposition of P. Parangotan, P.W. No. 2, 2 May 1922, Court of Special Judge, Case No. 57 of 1922, Referred Trial No. 72 of 1922, p. 4 MHCA.
- 4 Hitchcock, loc. cit., pp. 78 and 80; statement of Konara



attempting to cross a Moplah raj frontier without a pass.<sup>1</sup> But the development of Moplah 'passport' systems is of significance not only for its practical importance in the conduct of the insurrection but also for the light it throws on Moplah pretensions to legitimacy. Inherent in the injunction, with which rebel passes were inscribed, that, by order of the local Moplah leadership, the bearer should not be molested,<sup>2</sup> was a concept of tutelage which could amount to an affectation of a virtual Pax Mappilla. Thus, inhabitants of the rebel areas might be warned that they left the Moplah raj, whose frontiers were sometimes actually marked with Khilafat flags,<sup>3</sup> at their own risk. As one refugee reported to the District Magistrate on 15 September 1921, whilst in rebel hands he had been solemnly advised by Kunhamad Haji that Calicut, held by the British, was not safe but that his own territory of Nilambur was quite secure since he had conquered Ernad and Walluvanad and there was only Khilafat government there.<sup>4</sup> Whatever might have been the

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Muhammad Koya Tangal, 29 Aug. 1922, *ibid.*, p. 199; judgement, Case No. 133 of 1922, Court of Special Judge, Calicut, 24 Oct. 1922, *ibid.*, p. 279; alleged speech of the Chembrasserri Tangal recounted by one present when it was delivered, Times of India, 17 Oct. 1921, p. 10; Special Correspondent, Madras Mail, 17 Sept. 1921 p. 7, 8 Oct. 1921 p. 7 and 7 Nov. 1921 p. 8.

1 F.B. Evans, 'Notes on the Moplah Rebellion', 27 Mar. 1922, MPP No. 682, 22 Aug. 1922, p. 14, MRO.

2 Hitchcock, loc. cit., p. 67.

3 Demi-official report of F.B. Evans, 14 Oct. 1921, G.R.F. Tottenham (ed.), loc. cit., p. 250.

4 Special Correspondent, Madras Mail, 17 Sept. 1921 p. 7; Hitchcock, loc. cit., p. 68.

aberrations in practice, and they were not rare, the aspiration was evidently that Moplah rule should not be mere brigandage. Accordingly when, on 25 August 1921, the Vellikat Bhattathiripad of Porur was required by a Moplah leader of Wandur to provide Rs 1000 for 'Khilafat government', the demand was 'legitimised' in terms of the 'security' which was promised in return.<sup>1</sup>

In practice, this particular great jenmi found himself subject to levies from different bands, not only because of the extreme dispersion of Moplah authority at this early stage of the rebellion, but also because, already, leaders like Kunhamad Haji were on the move with their 'bodyguards' attempting to organise suzerainties. This was sometimes accomplished, as in the above case of the Wandur Moplah, by bringing leaders who had already emerged in their own right into a subaltern relationship, occasionally at the invitation of the local leaders themselves.<sup>2</sup> In other instances, in a schematic division of territorial responsibility, some kind of command structure issued from on high ready-made to be superposed, with a most questionable degree of success, on the ferment of burgeoning localised jurisdictions which had been excited throughout

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1 Hitchcock, loc. cit., p. 57. See also Manjeri Correspondent, Kerala Patrika, 29 Oct. 1921, quoted in K. Madhavan Nayar, Malabar Kalapam p. 260.

2 J.A. Thorne, Malabar Magistrate to Sec., Public, 15 Apr. 1923, MPP No. 397 (Conf.), 14 May 1923, MRO; evidence, District Magistrate's Court, 8 Apr. 1922, MPP No. 1049 (Conf.), 16 Dec. 1922, p. 4, MRO; deposition of Koyana Kunholan, P.W. No. 4, 28 Mar. 1922, Court of Special Judge, Calicut, Case No. 25A of 1922, kept with Referred Trial No. 64 of 1922, p. 18, MHCA; R.H. Ellis, Malabar Magistrate to Chief Sec., 21 Nov. 1922, MPP No. 26 (Conf.), 15 Jan. 1923, p. 1, MRO.

interior south Malabar. Within a few days of the rebellion's outbreak the Chembrasser Tangal went to Pandikkad where he was instrumental in the appointing of 'rulers' over various Ernad amsoms by the issue of sanads or commissions.<sup>1</sup> This particular suzerain structure did achieve in at least one instance a degree of practical reality. Kattungal Attakoya Tangal, proclaimed 'King' of Vellianchery and its vicinity, evidently considered himself as holding title from the Chembrasser Tangal, supplying him with "large and frequent consignments of food provisions" and conveying his orders to the population of the settlement.<sup>2</sup> Later, in October, it was reported that Kunhamad Haji had made a detailed apportionment of part of Ernad into baronies for his various lieutenants.<sup>3</sup>

Whilst such grandiose projections of empire were evidently not entirely practicable under the conditions obtaining during

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1 Hitchcock, loc. cit., pp. 5-6; statement of Kunhamad Haji, 10 Jan. 1922, ibid., p. 186; F.B. Evans, 'Note on the Rebellion' 15 Mar. 1922, G.R.F. Tottenham (ed.), loc. cit., p. 45; Moosa Kutti, the Pandikkad adhigari (deposition of P.W. No. 2, Summary General Court Martial No. 6 of 1921, Malappuram, 31 Dec. 1921, MPP No. 848 [Conf.], 1 Nov. 1923, p. 4, MRO) gives a slightly different account of what are apparently the same proceedings.

2 District Magistrate's Court, 8 Apr. 1922, MPP No. 1049 (Conf.), 16 Dec. 1922, pp. 3-4, MRO.

3 Own Correspondent, Madras Mail, 21 Oct. 1921, p. 6. For other evidence of the existence of a Moplah command structure involving degrees of subordination among the rebel leadership see Hitchcock, loc. cit., pp. 67 and 120; statement of Abuvoker Musaliar, 9 Aug. 1922, ibid., pp. 198-99; Own Correspondent, Times of India, 16 Nov. 1921 p. 10 and 19 Nov. 1921 p. 10; Own Correspondent, Madras Mail, 10 Jan. 1922, p. 5.

the rebellion of 1921-22,<sup>1</sup> it is important to recognise the extent to which Moplah rule came to be structured (at least in parts of the rebellion zone for more or less lengthy periods) in areas of government apart from land revenue and passports. In the circumstances of the war being waged against the British Raj some kind of judicial administration was indispensable. Moplah 'courts' to which prisoners from the surrounding rebel territory could be referred certainly functioned widely<sup>2</sup> and in at least one case it is known that a Moplah form of 'martial law' was proclaimed by tattoo to the effect that anyone seen moving about in the afternoon was liable to be shot.<sup>3</sup> Nor was the edge of the Moplah courts turned solely against those seen as opponents of the rebel régime. During Ali Mussaliar's short reign at Tirurangadi it was reported that the rebels had proclaimed that regular courts would be established to deal with

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1 See below p. 307.

2 Hitchcock, loc. cit., pp. 45, 136-37; statement of Konara Muhammad Koya Tangal, 19 Aug. 1922, ibid., p. 199; Own Correspondent, Times of India, 29 Oct. 1921, p. 14; Own Correspondent, Hindu (weekly), 17 Nov. 1921, p. 13; E.V. Amu, Deputy Supt. of Police to Supt. of Police, 17 June 1922, Govt. of Madras, Under Sec.'s Safe, Secret No. 360, 5 Sept. 1922, MRO; F.B. Evans, 'Notes on the Moplah Rebellion', 27 Mar. 1922, MPP No. 682, 22 Aug. 1922, p. 12, MRO; demi-official report of Evans, 4 Oct. 1921, G.R.F. Tottenham (ed.), loc. cit., p. 246; deposition of Nayarveetil Unnian, 8 Apr. 1922, P.W. No. 3, Court of Special Judge, Calicut, Case No. 52 of 1922, Referred Trial No. 52 of 1922, p. 5, MHCA; depositions of M. Ayamad, P.W. No. 2 and M. Marakar, P.W. No. 3, Summary General Court Martial No. 18 of 1922, Malappuram, 23 Jan. 1922, pp. 2-3, MRO.

3 Madras Mail, 15 Sept. 1921, p. 5. For other evidence of the proclamation of a Moplah 'martial law' see Correspondent, Calicut, New India, 5 Oct. 1921, p. 11.

popular grievances.<sup>1</sup> One such source of vexation which appears to have been brought before Ali Mussaliar,<sup>2</sup> looting, is known to have been punished by another rebel leader, Kumaramputhur Seedi Koya Tangal, by means of terrorism, with a simulated 'execution' of three of his own men found guilty by court martial of dacoity at Elampalasserri.<sup>3</sup> Seedi Koya Tangal in fact seems to have been particularly ready to use the weapon of the court-room to enforce discipline among his own men, for it would seem that another group was, in October 1921, court-martialled by him for 'arresting innocent people'.<sup>4</sup>

To some extent the organisation of Moplah rule encroached on areas of basically civil concern. Food supplies might be mobilised, though on an irregular basis, for the inhabitants of the rebel territories.<sup>5</sup> Communications were taken seriously enough for the making of at least one attempt to recruit, with threats, the services of a postal runner acting on behalf of the British.<sup>6</sup> Tolls were sometimes levied on the use of certain

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1 Own Correspondent, Times of India, 30 Aug. 1921, p. 7.

2 Special Correspondent, Madras Mail, 8 Oct. 1921, p. 8; exhibit 1, Special Judge Case No. 7 of 1921, deposition of Nalakath Kunhi Pokkar, P.W. No. 5, 7 Oct. 1921, Court of Session, South Malabar, Case No. 151 of 1922, Criminal Appeal No. 1493 of 1922, p. 34, MHCA.

3 Madras Mail, 21 Sept. 1921, p. 6.

4 Own Correspondent, Madras Mail, 24 Oct. 1921, p. 8.

5 Ibid., 1 Oct. 1921 p. 8, and 5 Oct. 1921 p. 5.

6 Demi-official report of F.B. Evans, 13 Oct. 1921, G.R.F. Tottenham, loc. cit., p. 249; Hitchcock, loc. cit. p. 70; Special Correspondent, Madras Mail, 13 Oct. 1921, p. 6.

roads and ferries.<sup>1</sup> In the course of the earlier part of the rebellion letters were even received in Calicut from Ernad communicating the condescension of Kunhamad Haji to the passage of produce such as tea from Wynaad through his "republic" on payment of duty.<sup>2</sup>

On the other hand the erection of some kind of edifice of Moplah raj of necessity primarily subserved the conduct of the war effort. In the sphere of logistics, the mobilisation of not inconsiderable numbers of inhabitants of the rebel territories, both Moplah and Hindu, was sometimes involved. The (Hindu) south Malabar blacksmith population was very quickly secured to supply munitions for the rebel bands, and a large group of coolies who had been detained for some time in one rebel domain by the Moplahs testified to seeing no less than four such armourers at work making swords in this one desam.<sup>3</sup> For less skilled tasks greater numbers might be involved. On 15 September one refugee from Kunhamad Haji's raj reported a gang of 100 Cherumar coolies organised for the construction of road blocks.<sup>4</sup> In the same area of north-east Ernad the Haji was responsible for the engaging, on cash wages, of agricultural labourers (Moplahs, Cherumar and other Hindus) to harvest the Nilambur

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1 Lord Willingdon to Reading (private), 18 Sept. 1921, Reading Papers, Vol. 23, item 447, p. 377; Madras Mail, 15 Sept. 1921, p. 5.

2 Own Correspondent, Madras Mail, 17 Sept. 1921, p. 8.

3 Hitchcock, loc. cit., pp. 75-76. See also Own Correspondent, Madras Mail, 30 Sept. 1921, p. 6 and 10 Oct. 1921 p. 8.

4. Special Correspondent, Madras Mail, 17 Sept. 1921, p. 7.

Tirumulpad's grain crop for the supply of the rebel forces.<sup>1</sup>

The conduct of rebel hostilities themselves was conceded on occasions to be adroit by British officers charged with the responsibility of suppressing the insurrection. The organisation of the Moplah intelligence system attracted particular though doubtless grudging commendation, so that Police Superintendent Hitchcock found himself able to say that the decision of a rebel meeting on 20 September to defend their amsoms by stationing scouts on all roads leading to enemy military stations was well-executed.<sup>2</sup> Military organisation by the rebel leaders operating in the eastern part of Calicut taluk (where the nature of the terrain, making the region relatively inaccessible, gave scope to the exercise of Moplah organisational talent<sup>3</sup>) seems to have been particularly systematic. In this area the British forces seized much documentary evidence indicating that regular rosters of rebel personnel were maintained, men allotted to different sentry posts,<sup>4</sup> receipts taken for the issue of arms, a careful

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1 Ibid., 30 Sept. 1921, p. 6. See also statement of Vennathori Moyen Kutty, 26 Apr. 1922, Mss. Eur. Fl61, box 26, p. 3.

2 Hitchcock, loc. cit. p. 69. See also C.G. Tottenham, 'The Malabar Rebellion and Malabar Operations 1921-22', Mss. Eur. Fl61, box 4, p. 44; E.T. Humphreys, Colonel Commandant, Malabar Force, Instructions (Secret), 10 Oct. 1921, Malabar Operational Orders, 1921, Dorset Military Museum; Special Correspondent, Madras Mail 17 Sept. 1921, p. 7 and 17 Oct. 1921 p. 6.

3 F.B. Evans, 'Notes on the Moplah Rebellion', 27 Mar. 1922, MPP No. 682, 22 Aug. 1922, p. 12, MRO.

4 These seem to have occasionally involved the erection of structures of some permanence. Judgement, 10 June 1922, Court of Special Judge, Malappuram, Case No. 76 of 1922, Referred Trial No. 70 of 1922, p. 1, MHCA.

system of signals devised to warn of the approach of troops, and elaborate arrangements made for the constant checking of passports at rebel control points.<sup>1</sup>

In all this unparalleled exuberance of organisational effort by the south Malabar Moplah the influence of the British Raj as a model is constantly suggested. The rebel 'kists', 'martial law', 'tolls', 'passports' and, perhaps, the concept of a Pax Mappilla, are to all appearances traceable to the British Empire in India as a prototype. It would appear to be most improbable that when rebel leader Seedi Koya Tangal issued a fiat that the percentage of the harvest payable to the Khilafat exchequer in his Mannarghat territories should be 60,<sup>2</sup> he was not indebted to a precedent of British revenue administration theory well-known in Malabar since the first decade of the 19th century.<sup>3</sup> It may also be presumed that the practice of the insurgents in conferring on their leaders the investments of authority in the form of captured uniforms of the Raj had a significance which was wider and more figurative than the mere provision of clothing.<sup>4</sup>

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1 F.B. Evans, 'Notes on the Moplah Rebellion', 27 Mar. 1922, loc. cit., p. 12 and Hitchcock, loc. cit., pp. 80 and 92.

2 Own Correspondent, Madras Mail, 8 Oct. 1921, p. 7.

3 W. Logan, Malabar Manual, Vol. I, p. 669; C.A. Innes, Malabar Gazetteer, p. 308. See also Resolution No. 3881, 2 Aug. 1901 (P/6223, MBRP /RS, LR & A/ No. 252, 11 Oct. 1901 pp. 13-15) replying to a memorial from the Kerala Mahajana Sabha complaining that the 1901 settlement was in violation of the 1804 proclamation which provided for a government share of 60 per cent of the net paddy harvest.

4 Own Correspondent, Times of India, 27 Aug. 1921, p. 11; deposition of P.W. No. 1, Unmatiadakel Achuthan Nayar, Summary General Court Martial No. 3, Tirur, 13 Nov. 1921, MPP No.848 (Conf.), 1 Nov. 1923, p. 107, MRO.



But the most incontrovertible evidence of the moulding influence of British power structures lies perhaps in the constant employment by Moplah rebels of British titles to authority such as 'Assistant Inspector', 'Colonel', 'Collector', 'Governor', 'Viceroy' and (less conclusively) 'King'.<sup>1</sup>

Of course the use of such designations of jurisdiction was suggestive of aspiration to an over-all regulation of the affairs of the rebellion zone which cannot have been realised. There can be no dispute that the marked tendency to a high degree of decentralisation of command which was a feature of the early part of the insurrection persisted even after the attempt of leaders like Kunhamad Haji and the Chembrasseri Tangal to extend their influence.<sup>2</sup> Throughout the period of the rising, whatever the countervailing efforts of these more aspiring Moplah leaders there was a constant proclivity for rebel authority to disperse.

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1 Demi-official report of F.B. Evans, 14 Sept. 1921, G.R.F. Tottenham, loc. cit., p. 239; letters from Malabar Magistrate to Govt. of Madras, 7 May 1925, 24 June 1925 and 19 July 1925, MPP No. 813 (Conf.), 22 Aug. 1925, p. 4, MRO; statement of Vennathori Moyen Kutty, 26 Apr. 1922, Mss. Eur. Fl61, box 26, p. 6; Hitchcock, loc. cit., p. 67; judgement, Case No. 7 of 1921, 2 Nov. 1921, Court of Special Tribunal, Calicut, ibid., pp. 245 and 249; judgement, Case No. 78 of 1922, Court of Special Judge, Malappuram, p. 261; Own Correspondent, Madras Mail, 17 Sept. 1921, p. 8, 21 Sept. 1921, p. 6, 8 Oct. 1921 p. 7, 8 Dec. 1921 p. 5 and 10 Jan. 1922 p. 5. Even before the outbreak of the rebellion a Moplah Tangal had been nominated as successor to District Magistrate Thomas against the day when swaraj would dawn; Thomas to A.R. Knapp (demi-official), 23 Feb. 1921, MPP No. 270, 3 May 1921, p. 3, MRO.

2 Demi-official report of F.B. Evans, 3 Nov. 1921, G.R.F. Tottenham (ed.) loc. cit., p. 258; E.V. Amu, Deputy Supt. of Police, to Supt. of Police, 17 June 1922, Govt. of Madras, Under Sec.'s Safe, Secret, No. 360, 5 Sept. 1922, MRO; K.P. Kesava Menon, 'Crusading for a Cause', 1921 Movement: Reminiscences, p. 161.

The instances of co-ordinated enterprise and even amalgamation between the "innumerable scattered parties"<sup>1</sup> of insurgents of which the rebel personnel comprised proved unstable, so that Moplah organisation was characterised by a continual process of fusion and division.<sup>2</sup> Thus, after the combined raid for arms and food on Pandalur in the Nilgiris beyond Nilambur on 10 December, in which sections of the gangs of Kunhamad Haji, the Chembrasserri Tangal, Mukri Ayamad and the Konara Tangal were involved, the rebel force returned immediately to Malabar where it split up into the original gangs, each returning to its own haunts.<sup>3</sup>

The incessant reassertion of the tendency to decentralisation in the realm of Moplah mobilisation owes something to the conscious policy decision of rebel leaders. Whilst Kunhamad Haji and the Chembrasserri Tangal in particular seemed anxious to

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1 Hitchcock, loc. cit., p. 69. See also statement of Abuvoker Musaliar, 9 Aug. 1922, ibid., pp. 197-98 and Times of India, 29 Oct. 1921, p. 14.

2 Hitchcock, loc. cit., pp. 67, 72, 84, 91, 107, 119 and 126. See also the account by the Tuvvur adhigari of events in his amsom in the early part of the rebellion, in F.B. Evans, 'Notes on the Moplah Rebellion', 27 Mar. 1922, MPP No. 682, 22 Aug. 1922, p. 18, MRO.

3 Hitchcock, loc. cit. p. 108; demi-official report of F.B. Evans, 23 Dec. 1921, G.R.F. Tottenham (ed.), loc. cit., p. 278; Evans, 'Notes on the Moplah Rebellion', 27 Mar. 1922, MPP No. 682, 22 Aug. 1922, pp. 15 and 20, MRO; deposition of Kuru-kuthi Kunhirayan, 17 Sept. 1923, P.W. No. 34, Court of Stationary Magistrate, Walluvanad, Case No. 2 of 1926, exhibit Y, Case No. 30 of 1926, Sessions Court, South Malabar, Referred Trial No. 56 of 1926, p. 57, MHCA (see also statements of Kallenthodan Ahamadutty, P.W. No. 35, 17 Sept. 1923 and of Kuru-kuthi Kunhirayan, P.W. No. 27, 13 Mar. 1926, exhibits Z and II respectively, ibid. pp. 58-59 and 61-62); Correspondent, Calicut, New India, 5 Oct. 1921, p. 11; demi-official report of Evans, 26 Dec. 1921, G.R.F. Tottenham (ed.), loc. cit., p. 279; statement of captured rebel Chundanga Alavi, 3 Feb. 1922, MPP No. 250, 17 Mar. 1922, p. 34, MRO.

build empires in the rebellion zone, the developing reassertion of the power of the British Raj dictated the exercise of a suzerain rather than a material authority. During October 1921 Kunhamad Haji evidently spurned the approaches of a rebel band known to the British as the 'Mongam triangle gang' which wanted to join him, since it was deemed tactically to his advantage to have local groups operating over as wide an area as possible.<sup>1</sup> This same motive must have been an important factor in promoting the extreme apprehension shown by the insurgents when the British policy of securing the piecemeal surrender of rebel ansoms began to show results.<sup>2</sup> In the highly mobile guerrilla warfare which the Moplahs were forced to adopt in an attempt to counter the British superiority in matériel, the rebel leadership were not unaware that a marked degree of fragmentation of the Moplah forces produced detachments of a size which, presenting few rationing problems, were not restricted in their scope to a few particularly productive ansoms.<sup>3</sup>

And yet, whilst the Moplah leadership showed itself to some degree prepared to conform to the dictates of objective circumstance by acquiescing in the need for a decentralised mode of operation, this developing recognition of necessity was achieved only through experience of the recurrent frustrations the early

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1 Hitchcock, loc. cit., p. 70.

2 Ibid., pp. 119 and 127. See also ibid p. 69 for other evidence of the anxiety of Kunhamad Haji and the Chembrasserri Tangal to ensure a dispersal of centres of opposition to the British.

3 Ibid., pp. 70-71. For the almost identical operation of this factor in the 1800-02 rebellion see Chapter 2.

attempts to erect a more complex superstructure of control encountered. Very often this thwarting of the development of Moplah organisation was a result of the exigencies of the desperate struggle against the British drive to re-establish control in south Malabar. This was demonstrated, for example, by the numerous occasions when rebel attempts to activate what machinery of superintendance Kunhamad Haji and the Chembrasser T'angal had been able to contrive were confounded by the sheer mobility military survival in the face of the operations of the Government forces demanded.<sup>1</sup> Decisions which constitutionally were the province of the higher rebel authorities frequently devolved on subordinates when reconnaissance revealed that precaution had taken the rebel suzerains elsewhere, beyond the possibility of reference.<sup>2</sup>

But even without the pressure of the steadily increasing resurgence of British power, it is evident that the evolution of a more centralised form of Moplah control of the rebellion zone would not have been achieved without difficulty. Social, economic and geographic circumstances had for long encouraged a highly-localised form of organisation and leadership in interior south Malabar<sup>3</sup> and it is clear that the 1921-22 rebellion was most

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1 E.V. Amu, Deputy Supt. of Police to Supt. of Police, 17 June 1922, Govt. of Madras, under Sec.'s Safe, Secret, No. 360, 5 Sept. 1922, MRO.

2 Hitchcock, loc. cit., p. 75; statement of Thaliyil Unnian Kutti, the Tiruvazhamkunnu adhigari, 27 Dec. 1921, ibid., p. 184. See also Hitchcock, loc. cit., p. 80; deposition of Kanakary Parambil Raman, P.W. No. 4, 11 July 1922, Court of Special Judge, Calicut, Case No. 99 of 1922, Referred Trial No. 116 of 1922, p. 7, MHCA.

3 See above p. 82.

effectively organised at this same parochial level. Moreover, as in the past, the prosecution of the Moplah cause tended to centre in each locality on the chief mosque, which was exploited for the purposes, among many others, of jurisdiction, administration and the conduct of hostilities.<sup>1</sup> For a movement for which the sole means to organisation was via communal solidarity it is perhaps not surprising that the mosque alone was deemed premises adequate for the discharge of the functions of government which the rebels assumed from the Raj, the court-houses, cutcheries and police posts of which were deliberately destroyed by the 'fanatic zone' Moplah at the outset of insurrection.<sup>2</sup> The articulations intrinsic to Moplah organisation were not the functional ones of modern political structures like the British Raj but largely self-contained local domains.

The 1921-22 rising provided a wealth of example of how stubborn the resistance of parochial prerogative could prove in the face of dictation from outside. Whilst the traditional gravitation of the Ernad Moplah towards markedly-decentralised forms of association by no means precluded, as the events at Pukkotur and Tirurangadi in August 1921 demonstrated, the more

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1 Hitchcock, loc. cit., pp. 38, 86 and 113; statement of Kooliparamban Pokkar, 25 Dec. 1921, ibid., p. 195; statement of Konara Muhammad Koya Tangal, 29 Aug. 1921, ibid., p. 199; judgement, Case No. 7 of 1921, 2 Nov. 1921, Court of Special Tribunal, Calicut, ibid., p. 249; judgement, Case No. 12 of 1923, Court of Session, South Malabar, 23 Mar. 1923, ibid., p. 268; judgement, Case No. 30 of 1926, Court of Session, South Malabar, 2 Aug. 1926, p. 2, KDCA; F.B. Evans, 'Notes on the Moplah Rebellion', 27 Mar. 1922, MPP No. 682, 22 Aug. 1922, p. 16.

2 See above p. 288.

or less spontaneous rallying of the Moplahs of one desam to the support of those of another,<sup>1</sup> it certainly created the most favourable conditions for the play of dissension.<sup>2</sup> Naturally the leadership of any movement is prey to the effects of failure to agree on the conduct of hostilities and that of the 1921-22 Moplah rising was no exception.<sup>3</sup> K. Abdu Haji and his rebel band apparently developed an antipathy towards Kunhamad Haji, with whom they were for a time in association, over the issue of what part Moplah leaders themselves ought to take in the fighting.<sup>4</sup> Kunhamad Haji himself, said to be the most quarrelsome of all the rebel leaders,<sup>5</sup> separated in an atmosphere of some repugnance from the Chembrasseru Tangal along with several of the latter's lieutenants when, in early December, the Tangal began to show signs of responding positively to British calls for surrender.<sup>6</sup> However, discord among the rebel Moplahs owed

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1 See also examples in the course of the rebellion; statement of Kooliparamban Pokkar, 25 Dec. 1921, Hitchcock, loc. cit., p. 195; statement of a Moplah of Tirurangadi, a leader of one of the minor gangs, n.d., in F.B. Evans, 'Notes on the Moplah Rebellion', 22 Mar. 1922, MPP No. 682, 22 Aug. 1922, p. 16, MRO.

2 For details of the conflict between Kunhamad Haji and rebel leader Koyamu Haji see statement of captured rebel Chundanga Alavi, 3 Feb. 1922, MPP No. 250, 17 Mar. 1922, p. 34, MRO.

3 F.B. Evans, 'Notes on the Moplah Rebellion', 15 Mar. 1922, G.R.F. Tottenham (ed.), loc. cit., p. 50.

4 Hitchcock, loc. cit. p. 79.

5 Demi-official report of F.B. Evans, 20 Dec. 1921, G.R.F. Tottenham (ed.), loc. cit., p. 276.

6 Hitchcock, loc. cit. p. 107; statement of Otakath Kunhi Koya Thangal of Chembrasseru, 26 Dec. 1921, p. 185; demi-official report of F.B. Evans, 20 Dec. 1921, G.R.F. Tottenham (ed.), loc. cit., p. 276.

far more to jealousy over territorial and other pretensions. Thus, when, on 8 November 1921, a small gang under Mussaliar Kunhalu moved into the Kurumbathur area and looted the house of a Moplah under the protection of Palliath Moideen's Kaipakancheri gang, Moideen took back all the property and after having had Kunhalu soundly thrashed sent him out of the area with the royal sum of Rs. 5 to compensate him for his trouble.<sup>1</sup> Under such circumstances of fiercely-defended parochial sovereignty it is not surprising that the most aspiring of the rebel leaders, Kunhamad Haji, should have discovered that the road to empire in interior south Malabar was by no means a smooth one. The attempt of the Haji on 28 August 1921 to recruit to his own ambition the local rebel forces of Pandalur met with such sullen resistance that their leader, Madari Mukari was slashed with a sword for declining to hand over the guns he had collected.<sup>2</sup> Further north in Ernad, at Arikkod, Kunhamad Haji later in the rebellion discovered that Karat Moideen Kutti Haji and the Konara Tangal were in full sway and that his own presence was deemed superfluous.<sup>3</sup>

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1 Hitchcock, loc. cit., p. 94. See also details of the resistance of the Perintalmanna rebels to Moplah gangs from Karuvarakundu and Melattur who on 28 Aug. 1921 came and demanded the surrender of arms which the local mob had captured, F.B. Evans, 'Note on the Rebellion', 15 Mar. 1922, G.R.F. Tottenham (ed.), loc. cit. p. 47.

2 Hitchcock, loc. cit. p. 53.

3 Ibid., p. 79. For another instance of jealousy among rebel leaders souring relations see statement of Puvil Alavi Haji, 10 Dec. 1921, ibid., pp. 191-92.

## Leadership

The men who exercised such local dominion were, virtually without exception, Moplah inhabitants of the 'fanatic zone'. Those outsiders responsible, at various levels, for the introduction of the Khilafat-non-co-operation movement into interior south Malabar, far from playing a leadership rôle in the rebellion, were almost unanimous in their condemnation of the armed challenge to British rule the introduction of their agitation among the Ernad Moplahs had done so much to precipitate. It is true that the menacing implications that the anti-Hindu aspect of the rebellion<sup>1</sup> might foreshadow for communal relations on an all-India scale inhibited the full and frank acknowledgement on the part of Gandhi and the Congress national leadership of what was happening to the non-Muslims of interior south Malabar under Moplah raj.<sup>2</sup> On the other hand, without by any means exonerating the authorities of the charge of 'provoking' the insurrection, the same leadership openly censured the Moplah method of fighting for swaraj as a violation of the principles of non-violent non-co-operation.<sup>3</sup>

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1 See below p. 359.

2 M.K. Gandhi, 'Speech at Madras', 15 Sept. 1921, Collected Works, Vol. XXI, no. 53, p. 121 (appeared originally in Hindu, 16 Sept. 1921); resolution of Congress Working Committee meeting, Calcutta, 6-11 Sept. 1921, B. Pattabhi Sitaramayya, The History of the Indian National Congress, 1885-1935, p. 364.

3 Gandhi, 'The Two Incompatibles', written 29 Aug. 1921, Collected Works, Vol. XXI, No. 31, p. 70 (appeared originally in Young India, 8 Sept. 1921); Gandhi, 'Speech at Madras', 15 Sept. 1921, loc. cit., Vol. XXI, no. 53, p. 121; resolution of Congress Working Committee meeting, Calcutta, 6-11 Sept. 1921, B. Pattabhi Sitaramayya, loc. cit., p. 364; Civil Disobedience Enquiry Committee (appointed by the All-India Congress Committee), 'Report of 1922', L/PJ/6/1811, 6418/22 in 3499/22, p. 28.



At least as anxious to see the armed struggle of the Ernad Moplah against British rule halted were the nationalist leaders in closer touch with events in the rebellion zone. Whilst C. Rajagopalachariar anathematised the rising as a "mad outburst" with "terrible consequences",<sup>1</sup> a chief concern of another leading non-co-operator of Madras, Yakub Hassan, who had been imprisoned for his part in the events of February 1921 in Calicut<sup>2</sup> was to try his hand at bringing the conflict to an end.<sup>3</sup> Whilst Yakub Hassan's ministrations were not welcome to Lord Willingdon, the Governor of Madras, a party of activists from the non-co-operation movement in Calicut headed by K.P. Kesava Menon, Secretary of the Kerala Congress Committee, was permitted by the authorities in Malabar, towards the end of August 1921, to visit the short-lived Moplah kingdom of Tirurangadi, on the understanding that they would attempt to pacify Moplah truculence. However this intercession with the Khilafat monarch of the area, Ali Mussaliar, for a capitulation in the interests of peace met with rebuff and Kesava Menon's mission was obliged to return speedily to safer ground.<sup>4</sup>

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1 Hindu (weekly), 15 Sept. 1921 p. 14.

2 See above p. 232.

3 Willingdon to Montagu, Sec. of State, 27 Aug. 1921 (private), Willingdon Papers, Vol. 4, p. 227; Montagu to Reading, (tel.), 29 Aug. 1921, Reading Papers, Vol. 10, p. 318.

4 Capt. P. McEnroy, O/C Calicut, 'The Mappilla Rebellion', Hitchcock, loc. cit., p. 203; Madras Mail, 29 Aug. 1921 p. 7 (through Associated Press); Hindu (weekly), 1 Sept. 1921 p. 14; Malabar Magistrate to Govt. of Madras, 28 Aug. 1921 (tel.), G.R.F. Tottenham (ed.), loc. cit., p. 165; interviews with K.P. Kesava Menon, Kozhikode, 11 and 17 Dec. 1974; K.P. Kesava Menon, Kazhinja Kalam, p. 106.

In fact the outbreak of the Moplah Rebellion exposed in the clearest fashion what had been suggested by earlier incidents such as Kizhakkot in March and that at Pukkotur in August 1921: that the juxtaposition of middle-class Congressman and Ernad Moplah rustic in the struggle against the Raj and the jenmi was founded on no stable basis of programmatic concordance. Nor was unity of this kind likely to be achieved when any articulation forged by the coincidence of antipathy to British rule and jenmi privilege was subject to the stresses and strains of the traditional contentions between Hindu yakil and Muslim cultivator in the 'fanatic zone'. The kind of propertied professional man so prominent in the Kerala Congress leadership had in the past, as the Anglo-Indian Madras Mail propagandistically but also accurately cautioned,<sup>1</sup> shown a prophylactic apprehension of Moplah violence.<sup>2</sup> This was no doubt the more especially the case when it was believed that, as with some of those pressing for the use of the non-cooperation weapon against the jenmis and the British, such men were dealers in the hated melcharth.<sup>3</sup>

But if the Moplah-middle-class nationalist junction was suspect in face of the tensions of the pre-rebellion period, it was unequivocally snapped by the eruption of Moplah confidence from 20 August 1921<sup>4</sup> that the country was theirs. Whatever

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1 Leader, Madras Mail, 21 Feb. 1921, p. 4.

2 See details of telegram, 7 Feb. 1919, from President of the Bar Association, Manjeri to Madras Government anxiously demanding the prompt suppression of the Moplah violence of that time, above p.

3 Letter from K.G.T.M. of 24 Feb. 1921, Madras Mail, 7 Mar. 1921 p. 9. See also discussion above p. 210.

4 In fact as early as 1 Aug. 1921 in the case of Pukkotur, see A.R. Knapp, 'Note on Malabar Affairs', 18 Aug. 1921, G.R.F. Tottenham (ed.), loc. cit. p. 34.

credence the Ernad Moplah had ever placed in the reflection that the organised political strength of 'vakildom' was an asset in his decades-long struggle for a solution to the problem of jenmi pretension, was rendered inconsequent in circumstances in which the Moplahs' own unsupported resolution had apparently been sufficient to dispose of the one power that stood between him and the jenmi. The efforts of Congressmen of nearly every rank seemingly to rob him of this coveted victory with entreaties of surrender can only have confirmed the Ernad Moplah's conviction that there was no good reason generally to exempt the Congress yakil from the rigours Moplah raj imposed on the rest of its Hindu citizenry.

Although Congressmen were most understandably reluctant<sup>1</sup> to concede that their treatment at the hands of the Moplah rebel was not always strictly in accordance with "the wonderful sobering and restraining influence" which the non-co-operation movement was claimed to have exercised on the Muslims of Kerala,<sup>2</sup> there can be no doubt that prominent figures in the local nationalist movement were numbered among those who personally fell victim to insurgent activity. The temple at Morayur belonging to the Mondambalath Mussad's<sup>3</sup> family which had shortly before the

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1 Special Correspondent, Madras Mail, 9 Sept. 1921 p. 5.

2 P. Ramunni Menon, Sec., Ottapalam Congress Committee, letter to Hindu, 3 Mar. 1921, appendix II, 'Report of the Kerala Congress Emergency Committee appointed to investigate and report on the Police Tyranny in Ottapalam on the 26th Apr. 1921', Police Crimes in Ottapalam, pp. 23-24.

3 A Mussad is a kind of Brahmin.

rebellion contributed to the organisation of the Khilafat agitation in the Kondotti area was desecrated by the 'Mongam triangle gang' which was recruited from the same general vicinity.<sup>1</sup> It would also appear that the tarwad (joint family) house in the rebellion zone of K. Madhavan Nayar, Secretary of the Calicut Congress Committee, and famous throughout Malabar as one of the 'Kerala Patriots' arrested as a result of the events in Calicut in February 1921, was, soon after the outbreak of the rising, attacked by the Moplahs, evidently much to his embarrassment.<sup>2</sup> Moreover, as far as the vakils, the section of society with which the nationalist leadership was most identified, were concerned, their fate at the hands of the Moplah rebels was most graphically described by V. Narayana Menon, a teacher of Parappanangadi who found himself cut off in that settlement in the western part of the rebellion zone in the days immediately after 20 August 1921. This eye-witness observed that the mob, far from responding to the appeals for calm of V. Rama Menon the leader of the local Bar became "very furious" attacking the house of a "respectable Nair vakil" in which Narayana Menon was sheltering and chasing another local vakil "with a special vengeance towards him". This last unfortunate individual in fact

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1 Hitchcock, loc. cit., p. 71.

2 Special Correspondent, Madras Mail, 9 Sept. 1921, p. 5; Own Correspondent, Times of India, 27 Aug. 1921, p. 11. It is not clear whether the house of a "'non-cooperator Vakil'" said, in a report from Tirur (Viceroy, Home Dept. to India Office /tel./ 24 Aug. 1921, Parliamentary Papers, Vol. 26, Cmd 1552, 1921, item No. 4, p. 6), to have been attacked by the insurgents was the same tarwad home of Madhavan Nayar or something quite different.

made good his escape along with Narayana Menon and yet another vakil of the local Bar.<sup>1</sup>

Under such circumstances it is not surprising, as Police Superintendent Hitchcock observed, that those men, not of the 'fanatic zone' Moplah community, who had been primarily responsible for the Khilafat-non-co-operation agitation before the outbreak of the rebellion, "in many instances ... men of some social standing and with a stake in the country and with property to lose" and who could see "to what length personal violence to individuals and attacks on private property might lead" should have "attempted in some cases to use a restraining influence".<sup>2</sup> In fact it must be said that, on the whole, Congress leaders in Kerala exercised what limited power they commanded in an attempt to thwart the progress of the rebellion. These efforts certainly assumed the form of propaganda against the insurrection through the medium of the written word. Apart from the taking of stands in public condemnation of the Moplah rebels,<sup>3</sup> in some cases in protest against what was regarded as a predisposition among certain national figures in the Khilafat-non-co-operation movement

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1 V. Narayana Menon, Madras Mail, 30 Aug. 1921 pp. 5-6. For other evidence of rebel hostility to 'vakildom' see speech purported to have been given by one rebel leader early in the rebellion and reported to the authorities by one of the audience, P.C. Bamford, Histories of the Non-Co-operation and Khilafat Movements, p. 175 and statement of Karat Moideen Kutti Haji, 8 June 1922, Hitchcock, loc. cit., p. 190 for the attitude of rebel leader Ali Mussaliar to high-caste Congress vakil leaders.

2 Hitchcock, loc. cit., p. 142.

3 See for example letter from P. Ramunni Menon from Congress Office, Ottapalam, 24 Aug. 1921 to Hindu (weekly), 1 Sept. 1921 p. 12.

to find excuses for insurgent behaviour,<sup>1</sup> leaflets denouncing the rising and appeals for non-violence were printed and circulated.<sup>2</sup> At the same time the exertions of Kerala nationalists to arrest the course of the rebellion extended into realms more hazardous than that of the printing press.

There can be no doubt that in the early days of the rising, on the fringes of the rebellion zone where the impetus of the insurrection was weakest, Khilafat leaders, significantly practically always Muslims, on occasions played a part of some consideration in obstructing the extension of the revolt. In British Cochin the local Khilafat party worked conjointly with the Deputy Collector at the beginning of the rebellion when it was not known how far the insurrection might spread.<sup>3</sup> The action of Muhammad Moulvi, President of the Kerala Province Khilafat Committee in appealing to local Moplahs from the steps of the Congress office at Ottapalam on 23 August 1921 to keep the area non-violent was probably not as momentous in quelling the ogre of rebellion as some nationalists suggested<sup>4</sup> since the town was

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1 Protest of K.P. Kesava Menon (Sec., Kerala Congress Committee), T.V. Mohamad (Sec., Ernad Khilafat Committee), K. Madhavan Nayar (Sec., Calicut Congress Committee), K. Karunakara Menon (Treasurer, Kerala Congress Committee) and K.V. Gopal Menon /apparently to Muhamad Ali and Gandhi/ n.d., appendix III, C. Sankaran Nair, Gandhi and Anarchy, p. 137; protest of K. Madhavan Nayar /apparently concerning the statements of Maulana Hasrat Mohani/ n.d., appendix III, ibid., p. 138.

2 P. Ramunni Menon, letter, 24 Aug. 1921, Hindu (weekly), 1 Sept. 1921 p. 12; Madras Mail, 24 Aug. 1921 p. 5; judgement, Case No. 74 of 1922, Court of Special Judge, Malabar, 24 May 1922, Hitchcock, loc. cit., p. 215.

3 Demi-official report of Malabar Magistrate to Govt. of Madras, 19 Sept. 1921, G.R.F. Tottenham (ed.), loc. cit., p. 220.

4 P. Ramunni Menon, letter, 24 Aug. 1921, Hindu (weekly), 1 Sept. 1921 p. 12.

beyond the limits of the 'fanatic zone' area to which the rebellion was largely confined <sup>1</sup> and, like British Cochin, was never seriously threatened. Quite another matter however was the action of the Khilafat party of the largely Moplah<sup>2</sup> town of Ponnani which was the target at the beginning of the insurrection of one of those rebel forays which at that time did much to spread the resolve to take up arms against the Government.<sup>3</sup> The Sub-Magistrate of Ponnani C.V. Gangadhara Ayyar testified in court (and his reports apparently confirmed) that when, on 21 August 1921, he heard that Moplahs from the Tirur area on the south-western fringe of the 'fanatic zone' were marching southwards, on Ponnani, he rallied the leaders of the town's Khilafat and anti-Khilafat factions and with a large number of local Moplahs confronted the insurgents at the point of access to the town, the bridge over the Conolly Canal. Eventually, with some considerable difficulty, the Khilafat leaders of Ponnani, along with Panchiliyakath Muhammad Haji, the Secretary of the Tirur Khilafat Committee, were able to persuade the rebels to turn back, so that Ponnani was very largely untouched by the rising.<sup>4</sup>

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1 See below p. 389.

2 Though Ponnani town was never within the 'fanatic zone', 77 per cent of its population was Muslim, compared with only 40 per cent in the case of Ottapalam amsom (Census of 1921: Village Statistics, Malabar District, Madras Presidency, pp. 59 and 69).

3 See above p. 291.

4 Hitchcock, loc. cit., p. 47; judgement, Case No. 74 of 1922, Court of Special Judge, Malabar, 24 May 1922, ibid. p. 215; Ponnani Taluq Congress Sec. (letter), Hindu (weekly), 8 Sept. 1921, p. 9; F.B. Evans, 'Note on the Rebellion', 15 Mar. 1922, G.R.F. Tottenham (ed.), loc. cit. p. 47.

Further into the south Malabar interior, from which the momentum of insurrection was generated and where rebel control was generally undisputed, those Khilafat-non-co-operation leaders who found themselves caught in the midst of a rising of which they disapproved were in a far more difficult position than those in safety outside the rebellion zone. In the one outstanding and almost unique case of such a leader who was both a local man and a Moplah and yet who worked actively to thwart the rebels, that of the Tirur leader Panchiliyakath Muhammad Haji, considerable gallantry was shown in a most perilous situation. An attempt by the police to concoct a case of 'waging war against the King' against this Khilafat leader foundered (much to the ire of members of the local administration<sup>1</sup>) in face of the evidence of certain Europeans. These men, besieged with a small Government party in the courts building at Tirur by a bloodthirsty mob of Moplahs, testified how Muhammad Haji and another Khilafat leader Ayupalli Moideen responded to their summons for help by urging the crowd to disperse, pressing them back from the building and later secreting them in Muhammad Haji's own warehouse until they could be safely handed over to the military authorities.<sup>2</sup> On the other hand the other major

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1 See MPP No. 441 (Conf.), 31 May 1923, passim.

2 Hitchcock, loc. cit., pp. 46-47 and 169-70; judgement, Case No. 74 of 1922, Court of Special Judge, Malabar, 24 May 1922, ibid., pp. 211-13; Julian Cotton, District & Sessions Judge, Coimbatore (who had a certain amount of close personal contact with nearby Malabar during the rebellion) to H.E.A. Cotton, 12 Sept. 1921, enclosure in H.E.A. Cotton to Sec. of State Montagu, 5 Oct. 1921, enclosure in Montagu to Reading (private) 3 Nov. 1921, Reading Papers Vol. 3, item 22, p. 236; Sub-Magistrate, Tirur, to Malabar Magistrate, 22 Aug. 1921 (emergent and



instance of nationalist leaders finding themselves cut off in the rebellion zone provided less scope for heroics.

On the morning of the Tirurangadi raid which precipitated the rebellion three Khilafatists, Muhammad Abdul Rahman (the Secretary of the Kerala Province Khilafat Committee), Moideen Koya and K. Moidu Mussaliar, having got wind that some drastic Government action had been set on foot, had arrived at Pukkotur. Their assumption was that the three-week-old Moplah raj there would be the first objective of the British forces; their anxiety to ensure that in that event the principles of non-violent non-co-operation would be observed by the inhabitants.<sup>1</sup> When, soon after their arrival, the canard of the 'attack' on the Mambram mosque reached Pukkotur, with a call for assistance to be sent to Tirurangadi, K. Madhavan Nayar was brought from Manjeri in the hope that the influence of this celebrated 'Kerala Patriot'<sup>2</sup> would be sufficient to restore calm.<sup>3</sup> However, when Madhavan Nayar's admonition that it was "against the principles of the Khilafat and Congress Committee to attack the police or disobey

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conf.), exhibit II, Court of Senior Special Judge, Calicut, Case No. 118 of 1922, Criminal Appeal No. 1160 of 1922, p. 22, MHCA.

1 Interview with K.P. Kesava Menon, Kozhikode, 17 Dec. 1974; K.P. Kesava Menon, Kazhinja Kalam, p. 93; Mohamed Abdur Rehman to Sec., Central Khilafat Committee, Bombay, n.d. (intercepted letter), in Special Branch, C.I.D. /to Govt. of Madras/, Strictly Conf., 20 Sept. 1921, Govt. of Madras, Under Sec.'s Safe, Secret No. 327-A, 2 Nov. 1921, pp. 1 and 3, MRO.

2 See above p. 318.

3 K. Madhavan Nayar, Malabar Kalapam, p. 139; Mohamed Abdur Rehman to Sec., Central Khilafat Committee, Bombay, n.d., loc. cit. p. 3.

lawful orders" and his caution that the mosque attack story must be false were seen to be in vain, the small nationalist party returned to Calicut disconcerted.<sup>1</sup> Their failure to exercise even the degree of influence Panchiliyakath Muhammad Haji and Ayupalli Moideen were able to exert in Tirur must largely be attributed to the fact that none of the group visiting Pukkotur were local Moplahs, Muhammad Abdul Rahman himself being "an educated young man of a rich and influential family in Cranganore, Cochin".<sup>2</sup> Not one (except Madhavan Nayar, who of course was a Hindu) was a native of Ernad, or at all acquainted with the taluk,<sup>3</sup> and, as Police Superintendent Hitchcock observed, the Ernad Moplah would brook no control from Hindus or north Malabar Moplahs.<sup>4</sup>

No doubt for this very reason another Khilafat-non-co-operation worker who found himself in the heart of the rebellion zone in the first days after 20 August, Muthal Puredath Narayana

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1 Hitchcock, loc. cit., p. 51; statements of Karat Moideen Kpatti Haji, 24 May and 8 June 1922, ibid., pp. 187-88 and 190-91; judgement, Case No. 128 of 1922, Court of Special Judge, Calicut, 25 Sept. 1922, ibid., p. 233; Own Correspondent, Times of India, 27 Aug. 1921 p. 11; K. Madhavan Nayar, Malabar Kalapam, pp. 140, 143, 170 and 195-96; K. Koyatti Moulavi, 1921 le Malabar Lahala, p. 37; report of Hitchcock, week ending 27 May 1922, Govt. of Madras, Under Sec.'s Safe, Secret, No. 360, 5 Sept. 1922, MRO.

2 R.H. Ellis, Malabar Magistrate to Chief Sec., 27 Oct. 1922, MPP No. 1076, 23 Dec. 1922, p. 1, MRO.

3 Hitchcock, loc. cit., p. 51. Nearly all the paid workers of the Khilafat-non-co-operation movement operating in south Malabar were from north Malabar, Govt. of Madras, The Non-Co-operation Movements in the Madras Presidency, p. 40, MRO.

4 Hitchcock, loc. cit., p. 145.

Menon, a Nair vakil of Perintalmanna in the south of the 'fanatic zone',<sup>1</sup> had previously gone so far as to identify with the Moplahs of this area by eating with them and dressing in the fashion of a Moplah Tangal.<sup>2</sup> Narayana Menon, who as Organising Secretary of the Indian National Congress in Ernad from May 1921 until the rebellion,<sup>3</sup> had been primarily responsible for the conduct of the Khilafat agitation in interior south Malabar, was clearly far more deeply involved with the 'Jungle' Moplahs than any other outside organiser. For this very reason he must have found it virtually impossible to avoid compromising himself in the eyes of the British authorities when, soon after 20 August 1921, the rebels took control of Manjeri where he was staying. With no immediate power to challenge them, they looked to this familiar figure in the agitation for swaraj in Ernad to put his preaching into practice and defy the Government with open support for the new regime. M.P. Narayana Menon was in fact later, in a decision which left a deep sense of injustice among Indian nationalists,<sup>4</sup> convicted in the Court of the Special Judge in Calicut for 'waging war against the King' and sentenced to transportation for life. However, as the Judge himself allowed, it is difficult to conceive that Narayana Menon can have favoured

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1 Madras Mail, 19 Sept. 1921, p. 6.

2 Judgement, Case No. 128 of 1922, Court of Special Judge, Calicut, 25 Sept. 1922, Hitchcock, loc. cit. pp. 220 and 236.

3 K.P. Kesava Menon, 'Crusading for a Cause', 1921 Movement: Reminiscences, p. 158.

4 See for example C.F. Andrews to Lord Goschen, Governor of Madras, 20 Nov. 1925, MPP No. 456 (Conf.), 15 May 1926, p. 69, MRO.

a movement which had already come to entail the ill-treatment of his fellow Hindus, and his involvement with Moplah raj must be accounted for by fear of the consequences to himself if he failed to comply with rebel expectations.<sup>1</sup>

Quite different from the case of the cadre of the Khilafat-non-co-operation movement originating from outside the ranks of the 'fanatic zone' Moplahs was that of those members of this community who had been recruited as the basis of Khilafat organisation in the south Malabar interior. These latter, subject like all 'Jungle Moplahs' to those pressures of interest and tradition which had made Ernad and Walluvanad a hot-bed of militant resistance to the local paramountcy of the kafir, were governed most inappreciably in their response to the outbreak of insurrection by the precepts of non-violence and Hindu-Muslim unity which were enjoined by the movement to which nominally they subscribed. Local Moplah Khilafat leaders like Ali Mussaliar with a family history of participation in fanatical outbreaks,<sup>2</sup> Kunhamad Haji who, with a similar background, had also been suspected of being implicated personally in the February-March 1915 outbreak<sup>3</sup> and Palakkamthodi Avvokker Mussaliar himself the

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1 Hitchcock, loc. cit., pp. 217-18 and 234. See also Govt. Order No. 375, MPP (Conf.), 3 May 1922, p. 18, MRO.

2 Report of Hitchcock, 16 Aug. 1921, Hitchcock, loc. cit., p. 31; Hitchcock, loc. cit., p. 44; N.E.Q. Mainwaring, Deputy Insp.-Gen. of Police, Western Range to Insp.-Gen. of Police, Madras, 23 Aug. 1921, G.R.F. Tottenham (ed.), loc. cit. p. 72.

3 C.A. Innes, Judicial, 24 Mar. 1915, MJP Nos. 2080-84 (Conf.) 3 Sept. 1915, p. 6, Kozhikode Archives; interview with Variankunnath Ahamed, son of Kunhamad Haji's brother, Vellangad, 27 Dec. 1974; Hitchcock, loc. cit., pp. 19 and 58; Madras Mail,

tenant of two Nair jenmis,<sup>1</sup> far from opposing the Moplah recourse to violence from August 1921 assumed the role of leaders of a convulsion which was expected to prove the means to the final exorcism of those evils the Ernad Moplahs felt had long beset them. In fact, although instances occurred in which 'fanatic zone' Moplahs who were Khilafat organisers before 20 August 1921 declined to participate in the rising,<sup>2</sup> and, further, although certain rebellion leaders appear to have played no part in the preceding political agitation,<sup>3</sup> in general there was

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9 Feb. 1921, p. 6. On the considerable part played by Kunhamad Haji's ancestors in the 1894 outbreak see H. Bradley, Acting Malabar Magistrate to Chief Sec., 16 May 1894, P/4621, MJP Nos. 2186-92, 8 Sept. 1894, pp. 93 and 96; Bradley to Chief Sec., 16 May 1894, ibid. p. 107. For details of another rebellion leader known to have had a family history of outbreak participation, namely Nadakalathil Ahmad Kutti Haji, see Hitchcock, loc. cit., p. 57.

1 Judgement, Case No. 32-A of 1922, Court of Special Judge, Malabar, 29 July 1922, Referred Trial No. 104 of 1922, p. 5, MHCA.

2 Apart from the example of Panchiliyakath Muhammad Haji of Tirur who actively opposed the insurrection (see above p. 322 ) there was the instance of the kazi who, though a Khilafat leader at Pandikkad before 20 August 1921, fled the area soon after that date; interview with K.T. Alavi, bullock-cart driver of Pandikkad in 1921, Pandikkad, 27 Dec. 1974.

3 The most outstanding example would appear to have been the Konara Tangal. Even so his entry into the field against the British seems to have occurred only after what appears to have been the particularly provocative misbehaviour of certain Govt. forces engaged in the suppression of the rebellion in the Tangal's vicinity of Chaliyapuram and Vazhakad in October 1921. Hitchcock, loc. cit., p. 137; statement of Konara Muhammad Koya Tangal, 29 Aug. 1922, ibid., p. 199; judgement, Case No. 12 of 1923, Court of Session, South Malabar, 23 Mar. 1923, ibid., p. 267. Two other instances of well-known leaders of large gangs throughout the rebellion who had not been concerned in political action before 20 Aug. 1921 were Abdu Haji and M. Abdullah Kutti Haji. Hitchcock, loc. cit., p. 138.

undoubtedly a high degree of correspondence between those 'Jungle Moplahs' who were local leaders of the Khilafat movement and those who undertook the leadership of the rising.<sup>1</sup> For nearly all Moplahs of interior south Malabar the natural consummation of the Khilafat movement was just such a violent attempt to seize power from the hands of their rulers as occurred in August 1921.

Under these circumstances the Moplah Mussaliars and Tangals who provided the greater part of the local leadership of the Khilafat movement in Ernad and Walluvanad talukus also figured most prominently in the rebellion. With the single exception of Kunhamad Haji all the most celebrated rebel leaders, the

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1 Other examples of this correspondence are provided by the Chembrasseru Tangal, Karat Moideen Kutti Haji, Seedi Koya Tangal and U. Puthen Veetil Kunhi Kadir of Tanur. Hitchcock, loc. cit., pp. 59; judgement, Case No. 4 of 1921, Court of Special Tribunal, Calicut, 18 Oct. 1921, ibid., p. 206; Madras Mail, 2 Nov. 1921, p. 6; Special Correspondent, Calicut, 31 Oct. 1921, ibid., 1 Nov. 1921, p. 6; F.B. Evans, 'Note on the Rebellion', 15 Mar. 1922, G.R.F. Tottenham (ed.), loc. cit., p. 45; deposition of P.W. No. 2, K. Krishna Menon, Summary General Court Martial No. 6 of 1921, Malappuram, 31 Dec. 1921, MPP No. 848 (Conf.), 1 Nov. 1923, p. 10, MRO. For evidence of other Moplah Khilafat organisers leading rebels see judgement, Case No. 78 of 1922, Court of Special Judge, Malappuram, 14 July 1922, Hitchcock, loc. cit., p. 261; judgement, Case No. 41, of 1922, Court of Special Judge, Calicut, 24 Apr. 1922, ibid., p. 283; judgement, Case No. 182 of 1922, Court of Special Judge, Calicut, 25 Jan. 1923, ibid., p. 287; judgement, Case No. 73 of 1922, Court of Special Judge, Malappuram, 1 July 1922, ibid., p. 300; 'Away from the Moplahs: Another Planter's Graphic Story', article by E.H. Colebrooke published in Madras Mail, September 1921, Colebrooke Papers, p. 2; Special Correspondent, 'The Moplah Rebellion - IV', Madras Mail, 17 Nov. 1921, p. 6; deposition of P.W. No. 2, Ramen Nayar, Summary General Court Martial No. 16 of 1922, Manjeri, 20 Jan. 1922, MPP No. 848 (Conf.), 1 Nov. 1923, p. 3, MRO; deposition of P.W. No. 1, V. Krishnan, Summary General Court Martial No. 12 of 1922, Malappuram, 16 Jan. 1922, ibid. p. 1.

Chembrasserri Tangal, Ali Mussaliar, Seedi Koya Tangal, the Konara Tangal, Avvokker Mussaliar and Karat Moideen Kutti Haji<sup>1</sup> were divines in the eyes of the Ernad Moplah. Moreover there is a mass of evidence that Mussaliars and Tangals were also heavily represented in the ranks of the more obscure rebel leadership.<sup>2</sup>

The significance of the role played by the Moplah ulema in the rebellion consisted partly in the utility for the spread of the insurrection in its early stages of the rather more widely-ramified contacts<sup>3</sup> of this particular section of the Ernad

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1 Karat Moideen Kutti Haji had been a teacher of religion at Pukkotur before the rebellion. Judgement, Case No. 92 of 1922, Court of Special Judge, Malappuram, 30 June 1922, Hitchcock, loc. cit., p. 255.

2 Hitchcock, loc. cit., pp. 39, 68, 80, 83 and 138; notes on rebel leaders compiled at H.Q., Malabar Force, 14 Nov. 1921, L/PJ/6/1782, 7717/21 in 1/22, pp. 7-8; Major Wyatt's intelligence summary, week ending 10 Dec. 1921, annexure B, Madras Army H.Q. to Army H.Q., G.S. Branch, 19 Dec. 1921, L/PJ/6/1782, 367/22 in 1/22; G.O.C. Madras to Chief of General Staff (tel.), 17 Jan. 1922, L/PJ/6/1782, 503/22 in 1/22; G.O.C. Madras to Chief of General Staff (tel.), 21 Jan. 1922, L/PJ/6/1782, 536/22 in 1/22; Viceroy, Home Dept. to Sec. of State (tel.) 4 Aug. 1922, L/PJ/6/1786, 4226/22 in 240/22; K. Karunakaran Nayar, Sub-Insp., Pandikkad Police Station to Supt. of Police, 31 Aug. 1921, G.R.F. Tottenham (ed.), loc. cit., p. 80; J.A. Thorne, Malabar Magistrate to Sec., Public; 15 Apr. 1923, MPP No. 397 (Conf.), 14 May 1923, MRO; evidence in District Magistrate's Court, 8 Apr. 1922, MPP No. 1049 (Conf.), 16 Dec. 1922, p. 2, MRO; deposition of P.W. No. 2, K. Ahammad Kutty, 27 Mar. 1922, Case No. 22 of 1922, Court of Special Judge, Calicut, Referred Trial No. 50 of 1922, p. 3, MHCA; deposition of D.W. No. 3, E. Packar, 6 June 1922, Case No. 25A of 1922, Court of Special Judge, kept with Referred Trial No. 64 of 1922, p. 9, MHCA; deposition of P.W. No. 1, T.M. Raman Nayar, 27 June 1922, Case No. 118 of 1922, Court of Senior Special Judge, Criminal Appeal No. 1160 of 1922, p. 1, MHCA; Special Correspondent's interview with Nilambur Tirumulpad, Calicut, 7 Sept. 1921, Madras Mail, 8 Sept. 1921, p. 5.

3 Individual Mussaliars sometimes had experience of religious work in different localities, thereby establishing contacts in several parts of south Malabar. According to K. Madhavan Nayar (Malabar Kalapam, p. 94) this was the case with Ali Mussaliar.

population. The Moplah Mussaliars, each usually attached to one (or more<sup>1</sup>) of the mosques scattered across the face of the 'fanatic zone' and most having been trained at the same religious establishment in Ponnani,<sup>2</sup> were well-placed to take a part in communicating the virus of insurrection in the crucial days following the Government raid on Tirurangadi. Thus, when, on 20 August 1921, Ali Mussaliar transmitted the story of the defilement of the Mambram mosque along with an appeal for assistance, his messengers were sometimes sent to contact the Mussaliars at neighbouring mosques which themselves might provide rallying points for the mobs which converged on the Collector's party at Tirurangadi.<sup>3</sup>

The celebrity, from 20 August 1921 onwards, of the Moplah ulema in the defiance of British rule led certain officials to attribute to this group (along with 'Khilafat agitators') responsibility for the rebellion.<sup>4</sup> In any sense that the Moplah Mussaliars and Tangals were generally more zealous for the cause of Moplah raj than their lay followers, this conception may be

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1 Apparently the case with Avvokker Mussaliar. Judgement, Case No. 32-A of 1922, Court of Special Judge, Calicut, 29 July 1922, Referred Trial No. 104 of 1922, p. 6, MHCA; Hitchcock, loc. cit., p. 136; statement of Abuvoker Musaliar, 9 Aug. 1922, ibid., p. 197.

2 C.A. Innes, Malabar Gazetteer, Vol. I, p. 193; W. Logan, Malabar Manual, Vol. I, p. 108.

3 Statement of Kunnoth Mussa, 23 Sept. 1921, Hitchcock, loc. cit., pp. 182-83.

4 Speech of Sir W. Vincent, Home Member, Govt. of India, 8 Feb. 1922, Madras Legislative Assembly Debates, Official Report 1922, Vol. II, Part II, p. 2279; Willingdon, to Reading, (private) 4 Feb. 1922, Willingdon Papers, Vol. 5, p. 77.



as confidently rejected as the earlier British thinking which ascribed a manipulative function to Muslim divines in the time of the Moplah outbreak.<sup>1</sup> As in this earlier period, insofar as any deficiency in resolution or enthusiasm for challenging British rule is discernable, it was more likely to be detected among the ranks of the Moplah ulema than the laity.<sup>2</sup> The report, which appeared in the Indian press at the beginning of the rebellion, that the response of Moplahs at Manjeri to appeals for non-violence by a prominent Hindu non-co-operation organiser (apparently K. Madhavan Nayar) was that they would not remain silent even if the Mambram Tangal himself were to rise from his grave and order them not to create a disturbance,<sup>3</sup> is entirely compatible with the uninduced fervour which the Ernad Moplah showed, at least at first, for the rising. At the same time, the reported bravado of the Manjeri Moplahs obscures the undoubted presumption of rebellion participants in general that the 'fanatic zone' ulema would in fact not fail to perform certain important functions which they were best fitted to discharge.

Reiterating their role in the outbreak period Moplah divines were expected, and indeed usually took it upon themselves, to sanction the conduct of the rebellion by blessing combatants,

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1 See above p. 69.

2 Hitchcock, loc. cit. pp. 45, 59 and 88; statements of Karat Moideen Kutti Haji, 24 May and 8 June 1922, ibid., pp. 187-88 and 191; judgement, Case No. 92 of 1922, Court of Special Judge, Malappuram, 30 June 1922, ibid., pp. 256 and 259; judgement, Case No. 7 of 1921, Court of Special Tribunal, Calicut, 2 Nov. 1921, ibid., p. 247.

3 Correspondent, Calicut, 26 Aug. 1921, Times of India, 27 Aug. 1921, p. 11.

weapons, forays and in fact almost any activity the rebels chose to undertake in the name of 'Islam'.<sup>1</sup> Since the 1921-22 Moplah rebellion was the occasion for an almost unique attempt at government on the part of the Ernad Moplah, the licence of the ulema to interpret Islamic law was in demand for the sanctioning of rebel punishments. Thus in dealing with what he regarded as malefactors under the Moplah raj Kunhamad Haji was in the habit of referring their cases to one Thatiyan Moidinkutty Musaliyar for sentence "according to the principles of the mussal man religion".<sup>2</sup> It is a graphic comment on the most unconstrained approach of the Ernad Moplah to his need for religious sanction for activity considered to be in furtherance of his worldly interests, that this Mussaliar blithely sought, and made every show of discovering, in his copy of the Koran the precise punishments for which those who had, for example,

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1 Hitchcock, loc. cit., p. 59; statement of Karat Moideen Kutti Haji, 24 May 1922, ibid., p. 188; Madras Mail, 2 Nov. 1921, p. 6; deposition of P.W. No. 34, Kurukuthi Kunhirayan, 17 Sept. 1923, Preliminary Register Case No. 2 of 1926, Court of Stationary Magistrate, Walluvanad, Exhibit Y, Case No. 30 of 1926, Sessions Court, South Malabar, Referred Trial No. 56 of 1926, p. 57, MHCA. Malabar Magistrate Thomas even before the rebellion, during the Khilafat agitation, had noted the eagerness of anti-Government Moplahs to secure from Tangals religious sanction for their activities. Thomas to Chief Sec., 5 May 1921, MPP No. 424 (Conf.), 4 July 1921, p. 15, MRO.

2 Deposition of P.W. No. 3, Nayarveettil Unnian, 8 Apr. 1922, Case No. 52 of 1922, Court of Special Judge, Calicut, Referred Trial No. 52 of 1922, p. 5, MHCA; deposition of P.W. No. 4, Parieyarath Moidin Kutty, 8 Apr. 1922, ibid., pp. 8-9. See also judgement, Case No. 12 of 1923, Court of Session, South Malabar, 23 Mar. 1923, Hitchcock, loc. cit. p. 270.

supplied food to the British troops were liable under 'Islam'.<sup>1</sup>

In these circumstances the frequent assertion of District Police Superintendant Hitchcock that those Tangals and Mussaliars who so often formed the leadership of the rebellion were no more than figureheads<sup>2</sup> can largely be accepted. Of course the function in the rising of the Moplah divines who were rebel leaders, though certainly not generative, cannot quite be reduced to mere decoration and symbolism. The Moplah ulema were uniquely fitted to play the part of legitimisers of an act of revolt which was the instrument of the ambition of the Ernad Moplah community at large for the creation of an 'Islamic' raj of justice.<sup>3</sup> At the same time it may safely be presumed that the ties of interest which bound the ulema in Ernad to their congregations<sup>4</sup> would ensure that their power of sanctioning the rising

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1 Nayarveettil Unnian, (deposition of 8 Apr. 1922, loc. cit.) for example testified: "Paruvarath Moideen Kutty was brought up before him. Kunhamad Haji said to him 'Did you not give eggs ... to the troops?' He admitted it. Then Kunhamad Haji asked the 1st accused /the Mussaliar/ what punishment should be given to him under the rules of Kilafat /sic/ for this. 1st accused had a book in his hand, a book of the Koran. He referred to it and said, 'This man must have 20 blows.'"

2 Hitchcock to Tottenham (private), 2 July 1923, MPP No. 394 (Conf.), 29 Apr. 1926, p. 51, MRO; Hitchcock, loc. cit., pp. 50, 59, 100 and 137.

3 In the more meagre record of the 1800 rebellion there are indications of the Moplah divine sanctioning what also purported to be a struggle in the name of 'Islam' (see above p. 167). See Malabar 2nd Commission, Minute Books, Magisterial and Police, 1801, Malabar Records, Vol. 1825, pp. 94-95, MRO. Of course, the fact that the indictable Moplah Muppan was the most obvious target of advancing British power dictated the prominence of Moplah laymen in the 1800 revolt.

4 See above p. 72.

would not generally be withheld.

Of course the primary task facing the Muslim population of interior south Malabar from August 1921 was the military one of securing Moplah raj. Under these circumstances, except in the rare cases where, as perhaps in the instance of Odakal Moideen Kutti Mussaliar the kazi of Uragam Melmuri and the rebellion leader in that desam,<sup>1</sup> the Moplah divines at the head of rebel bands showed a personal flair for the organisation of hostilities, this crucial function was discharged by laymen who acted as their 'lieutenants'. Thus, in the case of almost every Moplah divine who operated in a leadership capacity in the rebellion, one or more 'lieutenants' or 'right-hand men', having the responsibility for the conduct of the war against the Government, can be identified. In the case of the Chembrasserri Tangal, it was apparently one Amakundan alias Kozhisseri Mammad who acted as lieutenant, and other pairs were Seedi Koya Tangal and Thalilyil Unnian Kutti, Ali Mussaliar and Karadan Moideen and Malappuram Kunhi Tangal and Vadamke Vittil Mammad.<sup>2</sup> It was the necessary dependence of the priestly leadership on their lieutenants for the vital task of organising the armed challenge to the British Raj that no doubt led Police Superintendent Hitchcock to the view that the former were mere ciphers.<sup>3</sup> Certainly there were occasions

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1 Hitchcock, loc. cit., pp. 39 and 138; notes on the rebel leaders compiled at H.Q., Malabar Force, 14 Nov. 1921, L/PJ/6/1782, 7717/21 in 1/22, p. 8.

2 Hitchcock, loc. cit., pp. 59 and 88; G.O.C. Madras to Army H.Q., G.S. Branch (Secret), 28 Dec. 1921, L/PJ/6/1782, 643/22 in 1/22.

3 Hitchcock, loc. cit., pp. 51 and 59.

enough when the apparently sedentary ulema<sup>1</sup> delegated the main decision-making to their lieutenants. Perhaps the most extreme example occurred when, at the beginning of the insurrection, Ali Mussaliar referred Kerala non-co-operation leader K.P. Kesava Menon's appeal for the surrender of Tirurangadi to the Government forces to his 'Minister' Chenimathil Lavakutti and to his 'Commander-in-Chief' Chittambalan Kunhalavi.<sup>2</sup> Moreover the paramount importance of the part such Moplah 'lieutenants' played in the rebellion is conveyed by the pattern which became established for the priestly leaders of insurgent bands quickly to surrender when their 'right-hand men' were killed or captured.<sup>3</sup>

Since the chief task of those Moplahs who functioned as lieutenants of the clerical leadership of the rising was that of the practical organisation of day-to-day rebel affairs, those who emerged to assume this role tended to be men whose métier provided them with experience most relevant to the successful discharge of such an office. Thus, it is no surprise to find among the ranks of the lay Moplah organisers of the rebellion Thaliyil Unnian Kutti the adhigari (village headman) of

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1 Judgement, Case No. 12 of 1923, Court of Session, South Malabar, 23 Mar. 1923, 1923, ibid., p. 270; G.O.C. Madras to Army H.Q., G.S. Branch (Secret), 14 Nov. 1921, L/PJ/6/1782, 7717/21 in 1/22, p. 10.

2 Interview with K.P. Kesava Menon, Kozhikode, 17 Dec. 1974; K.P. Kesava Menon, Kazhinja Kalam, p. 106. See also Hitchcock, loc. cit., p. 59; statement of Seedi Koya Thangal, 26 Dec. 1921, ibid., p. 185; statement of Karat Moideen Kutti Haji, 24 May 1922, ibid., p. 188.

3 Hitchcock, loc. cit., pp. 59 and 99-100; judgement, Case No. 7 of 1921, Court of Special Tribunal, Calicut, 2 Nov. 1921, ibid., pp. 249 and 252.

Thiruvazhamkunnu amsom,<sup>1</sup> kariastans (agents) like Amakundan Mammad and Thonikara Ayamu<sup>2</sup> and even notorious organisers of crime like Karadan Moideen.<sup>3</sup> On the other hand the leadership talent drawn upon for the insurrection was by no means completely confined to such narrow sections of the Moplah population of interior south Malabar. Among the leaders of the rising were to be found cultivators, teashop-keepers, gangers, traders, labour contractors, carters and also Moplahs from the lowest social and economic strata of the community.<sup>4</sup> This last group

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1 Hitchcock, loc. cit., p. 88. Other rebel leaders who had been adhigaris are mentioned at ibid., pp. 48, 80, 86 and 100; statement of Puvil Alavi Haji, 10 Dec. 1921, ibid., p. 194; interview with Kuttath Raman Nair, Cochin, 13 Sept. 1921, Hindu (weekly), 15 Sept. 1921, p. 14; interview with M. Govindan Menon, Parappanangadi, 1 Jan. 1975; report of Calicut Town Insp. of Police to Supt. of Police, 24 Nov. 1922, MPP No. 907 (Conf.), 28 Nov. 1923, MRO; judgement, Case No. 118 of 1922, Court of Special Judge, Calicut, 8 Aug. 1922, MPP No. 441 (Conf.), 31 May 1923, pp. 299-300, MRO; deposition of P.W. No. 1, T.M. Raman Nayar, 27 June 1922, Case No. 118 of 1922, Court of Special Judge, Criminal Appeal No. 1160 of 1922, p. 1, MHCA. Even so, those adhigaris, the majority, who were Hindus and also the greater proportion of those who were Muslims were opposed to the rebellion. Hitchcock, loc. cit., pp. 63, 67, 69 and 144; Madras Mail, 6 Oct. 1921, p. 6; Times of India, 29 Oct. 1921, p. 14; interview with Jenab A. Muhammed Sahib, Kozhikode, 6 Dec. 1974; re-examination of M. Narayana Menon, 13 June 1922, Case No. 50 of 1922, Court of Special Judge, Referred Trial No. 76 of 1922, p. 7, MHCA.

2 Hitchcock, loc. cit., pp. 48 and 55; statement of Seethi Koya Thangal, 26 Dec. 1921, ibid. p. 185.

3 Hitchcock, loc. cit., p. 44; official report of Hitchcock, 16 Aug. 1921, ibid., p. 31; A.R. Knapp, 'Note of proposed action in Malabar', 16 Aug. 1921, G.R.F. Tottenham (ed.), loc. cit., p. 27. Karadan Moideen was also a kariastan (agent) of one Khan Bahadur P.M. Muttu Koya Thangal. Ibid. For other examples of criminal elements in the rebellion leadership see Hitchcock, loc. cit. pp. 53, 57, 62 and 93; interview with Chelupadan Mohammed, Tirurangadi, 21 Dec. 1921.

4 Hitchcock, loc. cit., pp. 55 and 123; statement of Thaliyil Unnian Kutti, 27 Dec. 1921, ibid., p. 184; judgement, Case No.

included not only the occasional verumpattomdar like Achuthodi Kunhuppi, a rebel leader of Tuvvur in eastern Ernad,<sup>1</sup> but even men living close to the margins of subsistence by whatever menial or labouring employment they could secure. Chenimathil Lava Kutti and Chittambalan Kunhalavi, the lieutenants of Ali Mussaliar, appear to have been men of such standing, Kunhalavi perhaps owing his position to his athletic endowments.<sup>2</sup> The

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77 of 1921, Court of Special Tribunal, Calicut, 7 Feb. 1922, ibid., p. 313; Madras Mail, 15 Sept. 1921, p. 5 and 10 Jan. 1922 p. 5; E.H. Colebrooke, 'Away from the Moplahs: Another Planter's Graphic Story', article originally published in Madras Mail, Sept. 1921, Colebrooke Papers, p. 6; interview with N. Kunhalavi Haji, Melmuri, 23 Dec. 1974; judgement, 18 Dec. 1923, Case No. 79 of 1923, Court of Session, South Malabar, p. 3, KDCA; Hitchcock to Malabar Magistrate, 5 Sept. 1922, MPP No. 1003 (Conf.), 1 Dec. 1922, p. 1, MRO; statement of P.W. Vallathayi Korappan, exhibit E, Case No. 79 of 1923, Court of Session, South Malabar, Criminal Appeal No. 31 of 1924, MHCA; statement of Kooliparamban Pokkar, 25 Dec. 1921, Hitchcock, loc. cit., p. 195.

1 Cross-examination of P.W. No. 2, P. Narayana Panikar, 24 Oct. 1922, Case No. 182 of 1922, Court of Special Judge, Calicut, referred Trial No. 20 of 1923, p. 6, MHCA; deposition of P.W. V. Narayana Nair, 24 Oct. 1922, ibid., p. 7.

2 Official report of Hitchcock, 16 Aug. 1921, Hitchcock, loc. cit., p. 31; interviews with A.P. Kunhahamed, Mambram, 14 Dec. 1974, K. Moideen Kutty, Tirurangadi, 15 Dec. 1974, K.P. Kesava Menon, Kozhikode, 17 Dec. 1921, M.K. Haji, Tirurangadi, 21 Dec. 1974, Chelupadan Mohammed, Tirurangadi, 21 Dec. 1974, Kazhungunthottathil Evamutti, 21 Dec. 1974, P. Unneen, Tirurangadi, 23 Dec. 1974. Another rebel leader who may have owed his position to his physical prowess was O. Mammu Haji who had a reputation as a kurikal or Moplah sportsman. Correspondent, Calicut, 5 Dec. 1921, Madras Mail, 8 Dec. 1921, p. 6.

case of another celebrated rebel leader of lowly status, Kizhisseri alias Mukri Ayamad, described as "a man of no means" who "live/d by cooly", may perhaps be attributable to his position as mukri (servant and grave-digger) of Ponniakurishi mosque.<sup>1</sup>

### Sustentation

The diversity of social background of the leadership of the 1921-22 Moplah rebellion was a reflection of the breadth of support the insurrection commanded from the Muslim community of interior south Malabar. Indeed there is an enormous mass of evidence to indicate that the great majority of 'fanatic zone' Moplahs became implicated in one way or another in the challenge to British authority in the early stages of the rebellion when it was easy to believe that the end of the Raj had come. Police Superintendant Hitchcock for example asserted that, in the heart of the rebellion zone, eastern Ernad, "all Mappillas with very few exceptions joined the rebellion".<sup>2</sup> Even at Tirurangadi on 20 August 1921 when the settlement was occupied by the powerful raiding party of District Magistrate Thomas, the Government force could only muster about 30 opponents of Ali Mussaliar out of a total Moplah population of 1750.<sup>3</sup> Such was the impression

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1 Deposition of P.W. No. 2, M.K. Achuthan Nayar, 19 July 1926, Case No. 30 of 1926, Court of Session, South Malabar, Referred Trial No. 56 of 1926, p. 4, MHCA; deposition of P.W. No. 7, Thamarath Mammad, 20 July 1926, ibid., p. 11; deposition of P.W. No. 10, K. Kunhayamad, 22 July 1926, ibid., p. 18; cross-examination of P.W. No. 22, Khan Bahadur E.V. Amu Sahib, 23 July 1926, ibid., p. 31.

2 Hitchcock, loc. cit. p. 54.

3 Ibid., p. 37.



of total hostility to the forces of the British government on the part of the Moplah community, including even women and children,<sup>1</sup> of many parts of the rebellion zone that the military anticipated that in certain areas the rebellion would continue until every Moplah was either exterminated or arrested.<sup>2</sup> Some conception of the extent of Moplah involvement in the rising<sup>3</sup> is

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1 Numbers of women and children participated actively in the rebellion in different capacities, see for example ibid., pp. 68, 84, 120, 150-52; official report of Hitchcock, 8 Aug. 1921, ibid., p. 29; report of M. Narayana Menon, Acting Insp., 'D' Circle, to Supt. of Police, 2 Aug. 1921, ibid., p. 182; Correspondent, Calicut, 24 Oct. 1921, Madras Mail, 26 Oct. 1921, pp. 5-6; Correspondent, Calicut, 7 Dec. 1921, ibid., 10 Dec. 1921, p. 7; Correspondent, Calicut, 11 Feb. 1922, ibid. 13 Feb. 1922, p. 4; Correspondent, Calicut, 26 Aug. 1921, Times of India, 27 Aug. 1921, p. 11; demi-official notes of Malabar Magistrate, 7 Aug. 1921, G.R.F. Tottenham (ed.), loc. cit., p. 23; statement of Palakal Karunakara Menon, son of Kirathadasan, the late Nilambur Tirumulpad, 10 Aug. 1921, ibid., p. 35; demi-official report of Malabar Magistrate, 17 Sept. 1921, ibid., p. 220; F.B. Evans, 'Note on operations from 26 Aug. 1921 to 6 Sept. 1921', ibid., p. 233; demi-official reports of Evans of 14 and 16 Sept. 1921, ibid., pp. 239 and 240; judgement, 5 Dec. 1921, Case No. 62 of 1921, Court of Session, South Malabar, KDCA; Own Correspondent, New India, 16 Feb. 1922, p. 9.

2 O/C Madras to Army H.Q., G.S. Branch and Poona, 24 Oct. 1921, L/PJ/6/1782, 7362/21, in 1/22.

3 A selection of other evidence suggesting that this was extremely extensive is to be found in Hitchcock, loc. cit., pp. 64, 74, 105, 111, 113, 130, 138 and 144; statement of Seethi Koya Thangal, 26 Dec. 1921, ibid., p. 185; Madras Mail, 2 Nov. 1921 p. 6; interview with E.H. Colebrooke, 21 Aug. 1974; Lord Rawlinson, Commander-in-Chief, India, Conf. Report on Operations in Malabar, 20 Aug. 1921 to 25 Feb. 1922, 6 Oct. 1922, L/PJ/6/1782, 6096/22 in 1/22, pp. 5 and 9; annexure C, O/C Madras to H.Q. Southern Command, 20 Sept. 1921, L/PJ/6/1782, 6735/21 in 1/22; Malabar Magistrate to Chief Sec., 7 Sept. 1921, P/11104, MJP No. 818-A, 31 Oct. 1921; O/C Madras, to Army H.Q., G.S. Branch and Poona, 24 Oct. 1921, L/PJ/6/1782, 7362/21 in 1/22; F.B. Evans, 'Note on the Rebellion', 15 Mar. 1922, G.R.F. Tottenham (ed.), loc. cit., p. 53; Govt. of Madras to Govt. of India, Home, (tel.) 10 Oct. 1921, ibid., p. 200; demi-official report of Malabar

also conveyed by the fact that, apart from the 2-3,000 rebels estimated to have been killed in the course of the insurgency,<sup>1</sup> the authorities registered court cases against some 60,000 Moplahs for their resistance to the authorities<sup>2</sup> in an area the total male Moplah population (of all ages) of which must have been in the order of 230,000.<sup>3</sup> Throughout the period of British rule in Malabar opposition to the power of the high-caste Hindu and the foreign dominion which promoted that power had been a characteristic of the rural Ernad Moplah community at large. That the opportunity to deal finally with both objects of

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Magistrate, 17 Sept. 1921, ibid., p. 220; F.B. Evans, 'Note on operations from 26 Aug. 1921 to 6 Sept. 1921', ibid., pp. 233-35; demi-official reports of Evans, 18 Sept., 7 Oct., 30 Nov. and 14 Dec. 1921, ibid., pp. 240, 247, 270 and 274; Evans to A.R. Knapp, Special Commissioner, Malabar, 15 Dec. 1921 (demi-official), ibid., p. 340; K. Madhavan Nayar, Malabar Kalapam, p. 198; deposition of P.W. No. 1, Circle Insp. M. Narayana Menon, 18 Jan. 1923, Sessions Case No. 76 of 1922, Calicut, MPP No. 323 (Conf.), 21 Apr. 1923, p. 37, MRO.

- 1 Lord Rawlinson, Commander-in-Chief, India, Conf. Report on operations in Malabar, 20 Aug. 1921 to 25 Feb. 1922, 6 Oct. 1922, loc. cit., p. 10. The estimate of 3-4,000 rebel dead by J.T. Burnett-Stuart, Major-General Commanding Madras (to H.Q., Southern Command, Poona, 'Final Report on the Operations in Malabar', 14 Mar. 1922 /Secret/, Govt. of Madras, Under-Sec.'s Safe, Secret, No. 358, 26 July 1922, p. 10, MRO) seems to be an error. Lord Rawlinson, loc. cit., gives this figure for rebels killed and wounded.
- 2 MPP No. 742 (Conf.), 25 May 1932, History of the Freedom Movement (typescripts) p. 147, MRO. Lord Rawlinson, loc. cit., before repression following the rebellion had ceased gave a figure of some 45-46,000 rebels taken into custody, but earlier F.B. Evans had estimated 5,000 rebels captured and 50,000 surrendered (to Govt. of Madras, 7 Jan. 1922, MPP No. 678, 21 Aug. 1922, p. 2, MRO). Jail facilities did not permit the incarceration of all those surrendering.
- 3 The total Moplah population of Ernad in 1921 was 236,873. Parts of three other taluks, Walluvanad with a Moplah population of 131,497, Ponnani, 228,522 and Calicut, 86,952, were

antagonism simultaneously, by the seizing of control of the 'fanatic zone' which the apparent defeat of British power on 20 August 1921 presented, met with such a mass response is therefore not surprising.

But whilst the great mass of the interior south Malabar Moplahs plunged into involvement in the rebellious outbreak in the days immediately following 20 August 1921, the sympathies of certain sections of the community were at no stage generally recruited to the rebel interest. Even before the outbreak of the insurrection, a widening rift between the great majority of Ernad Moplahs, who were prepared to challenge British authority, and the large Moplah property interests, mainly rich merchants, standing to lose fortunes in the event of a breakdown of law and order, was patent. Thus, in early August 1921 the citizens of the youthful Moplah raj at Pukkotur were reported to have stoned a passing car occupied by two well-known anti-Khilafat Moplah merchants of those parts.<sup>1</sup> Once the rebellion had started in earnest it seems to have been the influence of the big Moplah merchant interests in Calicut which played a major

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involved in the rising. G.T. Boag, Census of India, 1921, Vol. XIII, Part I, p. 160. Half the Muslim population of Walluvanad, Ponnani and Calicut added to the total for Ernad gives some 460,000 Moplahs, male and female.

1 Madras Mail, 15 Aug. 1921, p. 7. See also statement of Seethi Koya Thangal, 26 Dec. 1921, Hitchcock, loc. cit., p. 185; interviews with K. Moideen Kutty, Tirurangadi, 15 Dec. 1974, Kazungunthotathil Evamutti, Tirurangadi 21 Dec. 1974, and N. Checku, Munduparamba, 23 Dec. 1974; A.R. Knapp, 'Note on Malabar affairs', 18 Aug. 1921, G.R.F. Tottenham (ed.), loc. cit., p. 34.

part in preserving the peace in the capital of Malabar.<sup>1</sup> In the 'fanatic zone' itself the small number of very rich trading Moplahs like Khan Bahadur Kalladi Moidutti Sahib "with a large stake in the country and employing much labour", as well-known supporters of the Government were obliged to flee.<sup>2</sup>

However, one section of the Ernad Moplah community which was more prosperous than the common run of coolies, poor verumpattomdars, teashop-keepers and porters did not generally stand aloof from the insurrection of 1921-22. These were the substantial kanam tenants who had played such an important role in the earlier organisation of resistance to the jenmi and defiance of British rule. Although material relating to the exact social and economic status of Moplah participants in the 1921-22 rebellion is often deficient, it is practically certain that one major rebel leader Amakundan Mammad, at one time an agent of a big Angadipuram timber merchant but also a substantial cultivator in the eastern part of the 'fanatic zone' was a big kanamdar of the type which had been so prominent in anti-jenmi

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1 Capt. P. McEnroy, O/C Malabar until outbreak of rebellion, 'The Mappilla Rebellion', n.d., Hitchcock, loc. cit., p. 202. See also Correspondent, Calicut, 13 Sept. 1921, Madras Mail, 14 Sept. 1921, p. 5 and Correspondent, Calicut, 24 Sept. 1921, ibid., 24 Sept. 1921, p. 8.

2 Hitchcock, loc. cit., pp. 48, 49 and 89; Correspondent, Palghat, 30 Aug. 1921, Madras Mail, 31 Aug. 1921, p. 5. For other evidence of the estrangement of rich Moplah merchants from the rebel cause see Madras Mail, 29 Aug. 1921, p. 8; Correspondent, Calicut, 20 Sept. 1921, ibid., 21 Sept. 1921, p. 6; Correspondent, Calicut, 21 Sept. 1921, ibid., 23 Sept. 1921, p. 6; Hindu (weekly), 8 Sept. 1921, p. 8; interview with E.H. Colebrooke, 21 Aug. 1974; judgement, 15 Mar. 1924, Case No. 24 of 1924, Court of Session, South Malabar, KDCA; cross-examination of Nalakath Kunhi Pokkar, 7 Oct. 1921, Special Judge Case No. 7 of 1921, exhibit 1 in Special Judge Case No. 151 of 1922, Court of Session, South Malabar, Criminal Appeal No. 1493 of 1922, p. 34, MHCA.

and anti-British manifestations in the past.<sup>1</sup> Moreover evidence from the reports on the outbreak of 1894 indicate that the family of the most prominent of the rebel leaders of 1921-22, Kunhamad Haji, whose close relations were so widely implicated in the 1894 disturbance, were comparatively prosperous cultivators and therefore almost certainly kanamdars.<sup>2</sup> Useful evidence of the participation of this element in the 1921-22 rebellion is also provided by the investigation into the background of the 70 men who, convicted of felonies connected with the insurrection, died of suffocation on 10 November 1921 in a luggage van which was transporting them out of Malabar.<sup>3</sup> 46 per cent of the victims were mere coolies owning property worth not more than Rs. 65 each. Another 27 per cent though of different occupations, also owned property worth Rs. 65 or less. However 10 of the 70 were Moplah cultivators in rather better circumstances, and of these the most substantial possessed property valued at Rs. 6000, whilst another was worth Rs. 1500.<sup>4</sup> It seems most likely that Moplahs of this kind would have been well-to-do kanamdars.

A second category of south Malabar Moplahs which was generally hostile to the insurgents was that of men who had some experience of Government service.<sup>5</sup> Moplahs serving with the police forces were

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1 Hitchcock, loc. cit., p. 55.

2 H. Bradley, Acting Malabar Magistrate to Chief Sec., 16 May 1894, P/4621, MJP Nos. 2186-92, 8 Sept. 1894, pp. 93-96, 98 and 107.

3 This was the notorious 'Train Tragedy'.

4 See table p. 344.

5 Interview with E.H. Colebrooke, 21 Aug. 1974.

PARTICULARS OF THE 70 CONVICTED REBELS WHO DIED IN THE'TRAIN TRAGEDY' OF 10 NOVEMBER 1921<sup>1</sup>

Occupations	
Coolies	32
Cultivators	19
Koran Readers	4
Teashop-keepers	3
Mosque attendants	2
Religious teaching	2
Petty merchants	2
Traders	2
Small scale timber merchant	1
Goldsmith	1
Carpenter	1
Barber	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>70</b>

Property		Community	
None	31	Moplahs	67
Rs 5- 65	21	Hindus <sup>d</sup>	3
Rs 75- 200 <sup>a</sup>	10	<b>Total</b>	<b>70</b>
Rs 300- 800 <sup>b</sup>	5		
Rs 1000-6000 <sup>c</sup>	3		
<b>Total</b>	<b>70</b>		

Notes

- a This total includes three cultivating brothers possessing joint property worth Rs 300 and a Koran reader with property worth Rs 200 but with Rs 70 in debts.
- b Includes a cultivator with property worth Rs 600 but with Rs 500 in debts.
- c Includes a trader whose father was worth Rs 1000 but who was also indebted to the same amount.
- d Comprising 2 cultivators and 1 goldsmith, none with property.

<sup>1</sup> Compiled from biographical details given in Government Order No. 290, 1 Apr. 1922, P/11253.

subject to particularly strong insurgent pressure to forsake their allegiance to the Crown.<sup>1</sup> Even so acts of disloyalty on the part of the Moplah police seem to have been rare, one of the chief occasions being on 20 August 1921 at Tirur when, on hearing the tekbir (the cry Allah-o-Akhbar, God is Great) of the mob, out of 17 members of the Reserve Police four said they felt unable to fight and lay down their arms.<sup>2</sup> Of the 61 Moplahs serving as ordinary policemen in the rebellion zone on 20 August 1921 when each police station was attacked by huge crowds of Moplahs, about a dozen joined the rebels, three were killed by the insurgents, three were later promoted for good work and two decorated.<sup>3</sup> Considerable resistance to the pressures to accede to the rebellion was in fact offered by every category<sup>4</sup> of Moplah Government servant except one.

Although isolated cases occurred of Moplah ex-sepoys rallying to the side of Government in the course of the rebellion,<sup>5</sup>

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1 Malabar Magistrate to Govt. of Madras, 25 Aug. 1921, G.R.F. Tottenham (ed.), loc. cit., p. 68.

2 Hitchcock, loc. cit., p. 165.

3 Ibid., pp. 166-67; F. Armitage, Insp.-Gen. of Police, Madras to Chief Sec., Judicial, 18 July 1922, P/11253, MJP No. 1002, 28 Aug. 1922, p. 1; administration report of the Madras Presidency Police for 1921, ibid., pp. 3 and 32.

4 For details of the adhesion of the great majority of rebellion zone adhigaris to the Govt. side see above p. 336. A detailed list of police officers and other Govt. servants, including considerable numbers of Moplahs, rewarded with paid leave for their exceptional services in the rebellion is recorded at P/11366, MPP No. 466, 9 June 1923.

5 Deposition of P.W. No. 3, Ambalakuth Aidernan, 5 Apr. 1922, Case No. 62 of 1922, Court of Special Judge, Calicut, Referred Trial No. 58 of 1922, p. 11, MHCA; depositions of ex-Subedar Thanduparakkal Kunhali, 8 Feb. 1923, Case No. 10 of 1923, Court of Special Judge, Referred Trial No. 29 of 1923, p. 2,

in general those with experience of service in the armed forces of the Crown showed little of the resistance to the rising which was patent among other categories of Government servant. In fact there can be no doubt that the insurgents were able to draw on the military expertise of large numbers of Moplah ex-sepoys who joined their ranks which in some cases, such as with the gang of Kunhamad Haji, were made up largely of men of this type.<sup>1</sup> Perhaps uniquely in the Ernad Moplah's modern experience of Government service the sepoys' taste of public employment was interrupted and unsatisfactory. Though the recruitment to the army of Moplahs, always very largely from the 'fanatic zone',<sup>2</sup> dated only from the last years of the 19th

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and 21 Aug. 1923, Case No. 7 of 1923, Court of Session, North Malabar, Referred Trial No. 89 of 1923, p. 2, MHCA; deposition of P.W. No. 6, Parassal Kunhammad, 3 July 1922, Case No. 89A of 1922, Court of Special Judge, Criminal Appeal No. 119 of 1923, pp. 14-15, MHCA.

1 Hitchcock, loc. cit., pp. 23, 46, 58, 102 and 135; statement of Karat Moideen Kutti Haji, 24 May 1922, ibid., p. 188; judgement, 2 Nov. 1921, Case No. 7 of 1921, Court of Special Tribunal, Calicut, ibid., p. 246; statement of Vennathori Moyen Kutty, 26 Apr. 1922, Mss Mur. 161/26, p. 5; Madras Mail, 27 Aug. 1921, p. 7, 29 Aug. 1921, p. 7, 14 Sept. 1921, p. 5, 24 Sept. 1921, p. 8 and 30 Sept. 1921 p. 6; Correspondent, Calicut, 26 Nov. 1921, Times of India, 28 Nov. 1921, p. 10; Hindu (weekly), 29 Sept. 1921, p. 18; F.B. Evans, 'Note on the Rebellion', 15 Mar. 1922, G.R.F. Tottenham (ed.), loc. cit., p. 48; demi-official report of Evans, 20 Dec. 1921, ibid., p. 277; deposition of P.W. No. 6, Circle Insp. M. Narayana Menon, 24 June 1922, Case No. 104 of 1922, Court of Special Judge, Calicut, Referred Trial No. 94 of 1922, p. 12, MHCA; interviews with Chelupadan Mohammed, Tirurangadi, 21 Dec. 1974, Variankunnath Ahamed, Vellangad, 27 Dec. 1974, C.P. Moideen Haji, Pandikkad, 27 Dec. 1974 and C. Karunakara Nair, Adyar, 18 Mar. 1975.

2 C.A. Innes, Malabar Gazetteer, Vol. I, p. 191; Major P. Holland-Pryor, Recruiting Staff Officer, Army H.Q. Mappillas or Moplahs, pp. 56-57; Hitchcock, loc. cit., p. 14.



century<sup>1</sup> and though estimates of their soldierliness had been favourable,<sup>2</sup> by the time of the first decade of the 20th century they had attracted the antagonism of the Commander-in-Chief of the armed forces in India. It is clear from his own private papers that at least as early as 1904 Lord Kitchener was most anxious to see Gurkhas take the place in the Indian Army of Madras regiments like the 77th and 78th Moplah Rifles to which he showed himself antipathetic.<sup>3</sup> Meeting resistance to his plans from high Government circles,<sup>4</sup> Kitchener seems to have obliged the authorities to accept his plan for the disbandment of the Moplah regiments by what was contemporaneously described as "a cruel scheme for bringing the officers and men of the two Battalions into general contempt."<sup>5</sup> In 1905 there was arranged a sudden transfer of the 78th Moplah Rifles from the tropical south of the sub-continent to the North-West Frontier where,

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1 Remarks of Malabar Magistrate, H.M. Winterbotham, weekly report, 20 July 1889 (Conf.), MJP No. 1426 (Conf.), 17 Aug. 1889, MRO; 'Annual Caste Returns of the Native Army in India', 1 Jan. 1890 to 1 Jan. 1901, L/MIL/14/223 and L/MIL/14/224; Sec., Govt. of India to Sec., Govt. of Madras, Military, 17 Sept. 1894, L/MIL/3/1039.

2 Maj.-Gen. Sir W.G. Nicholson, Adjutant-General in India to Sec., Govt. of India, Military, 1 Nov. 1899, enclosure to despatch No. 20, 8 Feb. 1900, Govt. of India to India Office, L/MIL/3/1104; report of G.B. Wolseley, Lt. Gen. Commanding Forces, Madras, 27 Mar. 1899, MJP No. 107 (Conf.), 23 July 1900, p. 5, MRO.

3 Kitchener to Lord Roberts, 24 Mar. 1904, Kitchener Papers, 30/57, No. 29, p. 38, PRO; Kitchener to Roberts, 27 Apr. 1904, ibid., p. 41; Kitchener to Roberts, 4 Dec. 1904, ibid., p. 53; Kitchener to Broderick, 21 Sept. 1904, ibid., 30/57, No. 22, pp. 678-79.

4 Kitchener to Broderick, 21 Sept. 1904, ibid., 30/57, No. 22, p. 679; editorial, Madras Mail, 3 Aug. 1906, p. 4.

5 Editorial, Madras Mail, 27 Nov. 1906, p. 4.

Kitchener had disingenuously assured his superiors, the regiment would "have the advantage of being associated with frontier troops, and enjoy special facilities for training".<sup>1</sup> In fact the failure to provide adequate equipment to contend with the northern winter ensured the breakdown of the regiment with more than a quarter of its complement hospitalised.<sup>2</sup> Ingenious manipulation of army regulations which reduced both Moplah regiments to mere skeletons, the parading of which in cantonments where "low-class gharry-wallahs" were driving about in discarded uniforms of the Moplah Rifles afforded merriment to every other regiment, completed Lord Kitchener's handiwork, which the Madras Mail described at the time as "nothing less than disgusting".<sup>3</sup> Though the disbandment of the "sickened"<sup>4</sup> troops of the two Moplah regiments was effected in 1907,<sup>5</sup> even after the outbreak of the Great War it was reported that Ernad and Walluvanad were filled with Moplah ex-sepoys who vividly remembered their treatment in the British army.<sup>6</sup> Despite the poor reputation of the army which was considered to have been communicated to the

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1 Govt. of India, Army Dept. to Sec. of State, 28 Mar. 1907, despatch No. 34 of 1907, M4982/07, L/MIL/3/183, p. 3.

2 Ibid., editorial, Madras Mail, 3 Aug. 1906, p. 4; Lt.-Gen. G.N. Molesworth, Curfew on Olympus, pp. 68-69; C.A. Innes, to Chief Sec., 17 July 1914, P/9570, MPP No. 1377 (Conf.), 27 Oct. 1914, p. 5.

3 Editorial, 27 Nov. 1906, p. 4; Madras Times, 26 Mar. 1907, p. 8.

4 Editorial, Madras Mail, 27 Nov. 1906, p. 4. See also letter from 'Malayalee', New Statesman, 24 Sept. 1921, Vol. XVII, No. 441, pp. 671-72.

5 W. Francis, Acting Collector, Malabar to Chief Sec., Judicial, 10 July 1907, MJP Nos. 1336-37 (Conf.), 29 July 1907, p. 1, MRO; Correspondent, Bangalore, Madras Mail, 8 July 1907, p. 5.

6 C.A. Innes to Chief Sec., 17 July 1914, P/9570, MPP No. 1377 (Conf.), 27 Oct. 1914, p. 5.

younger Moplahs of the 'fanatic zone',<sup>1</sup> special efforts during the War years finally succeeded in producing a Malayali regiment, including Muslims, by 1918.<sup>2</sup> This second trial was even more short-lived however, for in the month preceding the rebellion the troops of the 2-73rd Malabar Infantry, who had been returned to India after being considered unfit for service in Mesopotamia, were disbanded<sup>3</sup> to face the same problems of subsistence that had faced the discarded sepoys of 1907.<sup>4</sup> The history of the

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1 Ibid., p. 6. As early as 1905-06, at the time of their ordeal on the North-West Frontier, the Moplah sepoys were apparently "advising their friends /in Malabar/ on no account to enlist", Govt. of India, Army Dept. to Sec. of State, despatch No. 34, of 1907, 28 Mar. 1907 M482/07, L/MIL/3/183, p. 3.

2 Acting Chief Sec., Public to G.O.C., 9th (Secunderabad) Division, 27 Oct. 1914 (Conf.), P/9570, MPP No. 1377 (Conf.), 27 Oct. 1914, p. 1; Chief Sec., Govt. of Madras, Judicial to Sec., Govt. of India, Home, 18 Apr. 1915 (Conf.), Fortnightly Letters, Vol. I, 1914-15, MRO; Hitchcock, loc. cit., p. 2; statement of F.B. Evans, Malabar Magistrate at recruiting meeting, Calicut, 9 Aug. 1918, Madras Mail, 13 Aug. 1918, p. 3; 'Annual Returns showing the Class Composition of the Indian Army' (Conf.), 1 Jan. 1916 to 1 Jan. 1921, L/MIL/14/228 and L/MIL/14/230.

3 Answer of Sir Godfrey Fell, Financial Adviser, Military Finance Dept., Govt. of India, to question of K.M. Nayar, 15 Sept. 1921, Legislative Assembly Debates, Official Report, Vol. II, 2nd Session, 1921, p. 251; answer of Home Member to question of K. Prabhakaran Tampan, 6 Aug. 1921, Proceedings of Legislative Council of Governor of Madras, 2nd session, Vol. II, No. 6, p. 459; Acting Chief Sec., Govt. of Madras, Public to Officiating Sec., Govt. of India, Home, 20 Aug. 1921 (demi-official, strictly conf.), Fortnightly Reports, 1921, p. 28; Madras Mail, 20 July 1921, p. 8 and 21 July 1921, p. 6.

4 W. Francis, Acting Collector, Malabar to Chief Sec., Judicial, 10 July 1907, MJP Nos. 1336-37 (Conf.), 29 July 1907, p. 2, MRO; petition of "the people of Malabar (Moplahs) residing at Mecca" to Malabar Magistrate, 17 June 1907, MJP No. 1498, 24 Aug. 1907, p. 6, MRO; Kerala Patrika, 9 Jan. 1915, MNRR 1915, L/R/15/120, p. 174; Manjeri Ramier, 'Five Days under Swaraj', New India, 1 Sept. 1921, p. 7.

Moplahs in the Indian Army from 1905 to 1921 affords an explanation for the failure of one section of the Ernad Muslim community with experience of government service to reject participation in the rebellion of 1921-22.

The largest group of interior south Malabar Moplahs to keep aloof from the armed challenge to British power was the bulk of the followers of the Kondotti Tangal. Though the Tangal himself was obliged to concede that not a few of the adherents of his sect were drawn into the insurrection,<sup>1</sup> this was certainly not the case with the majority and Kondotti, after some initial excitement immediately following the Tirurangadi raid, was known as one of the very few areas friendly to the forces of Government in the whole rebellion zone.<sup>2</sup> Such was the exasperation of insurgent leader Kunhamad Haji with the failure of Kondotti to play its part in the rising that on 28 October 1921 he organised a raid on the settlement, fighting taking place between the rival groups of Moplahs at the residence of the Kondotti Tangal.<sup>3</sup>

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1 Memorial of Takkiyakkal Sheik Mushtaka Shaha Valiya Thangal of Kondotti to Governor of Madras, 4 Mar. 1922, MPP No. 669, 22 Aug. 1923, p. 3, MRO. See also report of M. Narayana Menon, Acting Insp., 'D' Circle, to Supt. of Police, 2 Aug. 1921, Hitchcock, loc. cit., p. 182.

2 Demi-official report of F.B. Evans, 15 Nov. 1921, G.R.F. Tottenham (ed.), loc. cit., p. 263; report of O/C Calicut, 4 Sept. 1921, enclosure in O/C Madras to H.Q. Southern Command, 20 Sept. 1921, L/PJ/6/1782, 6735/21 in 1/22; Hitchcock, loc. cit., pp. 18 and 168; Capt. P. McEnroy, O/C Calicut at start of rebellion, 'The Mappilla Rebellion', n.d., ibid., pp. 203-04; Madras Mail, 19 Dec. 1921, p. 7; interview with E.H. Colebrooke, 21 Aug. 1974.

3 Demi-official report of F.B. Evans, 31 Oct. 1921, G.R.F. Tottenham (ed.), loc. cit., p. 256; Hitchcock, loc. cit., p. 78; statement of Karat Moideen kutti Haji, 24 May 1922, ibid., p. 190; Correspondent, Calicut, 29 Oct. 1921, Madras Mail, 31 Oct. 1921, p. 6.

Even so, the work of the Tangal in trying to ensure that his followers did not participate in the rebellion was not all it was sometimes made out to be in terms of loyalty to the Raj.<sup>1</sup> The traditional astuteness shown by successive Kondotti Tangals since the start of British rule in Malabar was evident throughout the 1921-22 rising. Whilst the Tangal on the whole succeeded in keeping his sect from active participation in the insurrection, there is no doubt that he and his retainers turned his reputation for loyalty to their own profit through lucrative dealings with the rebels. This traffic included the hawking to insurgents of supplies of many kinds, places of refuge, alibis and good conduct passes in the name of the Kondotti Tangal.<sup>2</sup> Police Superintendent Hitchcock later described the Tangal's conduct during the rising as "disgraceful"<sup>3</sup> and the Government of Madras declined to honour him for his work in 1921-22.<sup>4</sup>

Support for the 1921-22 rebellion was confined to those sections of the Ernad Moplah population, by far the most numerous,

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1 The Calicut Correspondent of the Madras Mail, (23 Sept. 1921, p. 6) in particular could be unduly effusive about the 'absolute' loyalty of the Kondotti Tangal and his adherents.

2 Hitchcock, loc. cit., pp. 18, 71 and 78; statement of Karat Moideen Kutti Haji, 24 May 1922, ibid., p. 190; statement of Puvil Alavi Haji 10 Dec. 1921, ibid., p. 192; Correspondent, Calicut, 24 Dec. 1921, Madras Mail, 27 Dec. 1921, p. 3. It was the stock alibi of accused in rebellion cases that they were guarding the house of the Kondotti Tangal, see judgement, 10 Apr. 1924, Case No. 36 of 1924, Court of Session, South Malabar, Referred Trial No. 38 of 1924, p. 5, MHCA.

3 R.H. Hitchcock, note of 28 Jan. 1923, MPP No. 669, 22 Aug. 1923, p. 5, MRO.

4 Draft of Govt. Order No. 669, 15 Feb. 1923, ibid.

for whom the British rule which had for so long seemed to buttress high-caste Hindu power, had none of the compensating advantages which the Moplah inamdar, Government servant and merchant might derive. But despite the most limited nature of the loyalty on which the Government forces were able to rely from the Ernad Moplah community, the mass enthusiasm for Moplah raj shown at the start of the rising was not prolonged. As long as the might of the military engaged in the suppression of the rebellion was directed solely against actual identifiable insurgents, the latter continued to receive assistance from the Moplah population at large in vital spheres such as intelligence.<sup>1</sup> This situation changed however when, after some two months of exasperating failure to account for any of the main bodies of rebels or indeed make "much net progress in quashing the rebellion",<sup>2</sup> British troops began to mete out more drastic treatment to the Moplah population which was sustaining the insurgency.<sup>3</sup>

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1 F.B. Evans, 'Note on the Rebellion', 15 Mar. 1922, G.R.F. Tottenham (ed.), loc. cit., p. 49; demi-official report of Evans, 23 Sept. 1921, ibid., p. 242; Acting Chief Sec., Govt. of Madras to Sec., Govt. of India, Home, 1 Oct. 1921, P/64 (Conf.) ILP Dec. 1921, p. 2.

2 F.B. Evans, 'Note on the Rebellion', 15 Mar. 1922, G.R.F. Tottenham (ed.), loc. cit., p. 49; G.O.C. Madras to G.O.C.-in-Chief, Southern Command, 27 Sept. 1921, ibid., p. 152; demi-official reports of District Magistrate, 4, 19 and 21 Oct. 1921, ibid., pp. 222 and 224; demi-official reports of Evans, 23, 25, and 27 Sept., 4, 7 and 23 Oct. 1921, ibid., pp. 170, 242, 245-47 and 254; Malabar Magistrate to Chief Sec., 10 Oct. 1921, MJP No. 742 (Conf.), 14 Oct. 1921, pp. 1-2, MRO; O/C Madras to Army H.Q., G.S. Branch and Poona, 24 Oct. 1921, L/PJ/6/1782, 7362/21 in 1/22; Willingdon to Montagu, 28 Sept., 10 and 16 Oct. 1921, Willingdon Papers, pp. 230 and 233-34.

3 This change in policy by the military seems to have been a result of pressure to end the rebellion quickly exerted by Sir W. Vincent, Home Member, Govt. of India, who from 18 to 21 October 1921 paid a personal visit to the rebellion area

From the first the soldiers had tended to treat every Moplah "as prima facie an enemy",<sup>1</sup> but the real turning-point in the behaviour of the military, and in the course of the rebellion, came with the raid on 25 October 1921 by men of the Dorset Regiment on Melmuri ansom in which dwellings were burnt wholesale and widespread slaughter of the Moplah population, including an unknown number of those who were not active rebels, occurred.<sup>2</sup> The Melmuri raid was only the first of a series of similar incidents<sup>3</sup> which on 12 November 1921 provoked from F.B. Evans, the Special Civil Officer for the Martial Law Area, the comment that "on the whole" he would "not be sorry to see the

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for consultation with the local authorities. See G.O.C. Madras /to Govt. of India?/ (Secret) 25 Oct. 1921, L/PJ/6/1782, 7362/21 in 1/22; G.O.C. Madras to Army H.Q., G.S. Branch and Poona, 24 Oct. 1921, ibid.; G.O.C. to Govt. of Madras, 21 Oct. 1921 (tel.), G.R.F. Tottenham (ed.), loc. cit., p. 154.

- 1 F.B. Evans, 'Note on the Rebellion', 15 Mar. 1922, G.R.F. Tottenham (ed.), loc. cit., p. 53. See also O/C Madras to Army H.Q., G.S. Branch and Poona, 24 Oct. 1921, L/PJ/6/1782, 7362/21 in 1/22.
- 2 The official figure for Moplahs killed in the Melmuri raid was 246. Demi-official reports of F.B. Evans, 26 Oct. and 2 Nov. 1921, G.R.F. Tottenham (ed.), loc. cit., pp. 255 and 257; Under Sec.'s 'Summary of the important events of the Rebellion', n.d., ibid., p. 39; Evans, 'Note on the Rebellion', 15 Mar. 1922, ibid., p. 49; Note by G.R.F. Tottenham, Acting Under Sec., Govt. of Madras on 'Military Reports on the Mappilla Rebellion', Govt. of Madras, Under Sec.'s Safe, Secret, No. 358, 26 July 1922, p. 8, MRO; interview with N. Kunhalavi Haji who was a youth living in Melmuri in 1921 and who apparently saw his father and sister shot by the troops during this raid, Melmuri, 23 Dec. 1974. The Museum of the Dorset Regiment, Dorchester is in possession of a photograph showing the burning of dwellings at Melmuri during the rebellion, presumably on 25 Oct. 1921.
- 3 F.B. Evans 'Note on the Rebellion', 15 Mar. 1922, G.R.F. Tottenham (ed.), loc. cit. p. 50; demi-official reports of Evans, 4, 12, 14 and 15 Nov. 1921, ibid., pp. 260-63; judgment, Case No. 9 of 1924, Court of Session, South Malabar, 2 Apr. 1924, p. 2, KDCA.

last of the Dorsets".<sup>1</sup> But whatever the unease occasioned by such methods, there can be no doubt about their effectiveness in eliminating the crucial support rendered to the rebel bands by the Moplah population generally. The Melmuri raid started a series of submissions, normally called "surrenders" and usually accompanied by Moplah appeals for protection from the troops, to the authorities by the terrorised Moplah population of the rebellion zone amsom by amsom.<sup>2</sup> The surrendering of an amsom entailed the parading by the authorities of its Moplah inhabitants for the recording of their names and the offer of a promise to avoid active military operations in the settlement as long as its population rendered active assistance for the arrest of rebels and denied gangs access to the amsom.<sup>3</sup> As with its engineering, the collapse of the rebellion was essentially a matter of morale.<sup>4</sup> The return of the sense of awe of the power

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1 Demi-official report of Evans, 12 Nov. 1921, G.R.F. Tottenham (ed.), loc. cit., p. 261. Evans also expressed the same sentiment about another body of troops which played a key role in the crushing of the rebellion, the Chin-Kachin regiment from Burma, see demi-official report of Evans, 23 Jan. 1922, ibid., p. 285. This regiment was responsible on 29 October 1921 near Arikkod for an incident not dissimilar to the Dorsets' Melmuri raid in that the Burmese troops inflicted casualties on 'non-rebel' Moplahs, Hitchcock, loc. cit., p. 85.

2 Demi-official reports of F.B. Evans, 2, 3, 14, 15 and 18 Nov., 2 and 7 Dec. 1921, G.R.F. Tottenham (ed.), loc. cit., pp. 257-58, 262-64, 270 and 272; cross-examination of P.W. No. 2, Moothothath Kunhalen, 11 May 1922, Case No. 67 of 1922, Court of Special Judge, Calicut, Referred Trial No. 66 of 1922, p. 8, MHCA; cross-examination of P.W. No. 5, A. Aydraman, 3 July 1922, Case No. 89A of 1922, Court of Special Judge, Criminal Appeal No. 119 of 1923, p. 11, MHCA; Hitchcock, loc. cit., p. 138; H.Q. Madras /to Govt. of India/(tel.) No. 1074, Political, 7 Nov. 1921, L/PJ/6/1782, 7013/21 in 1/22.

3 F.B. Evans, 'Note on the Rebellion', 15 Mar. 1922, G.R.F. Tottenham (ed.), loc. cit., p. 50; Hitchcock, loc. cit., p. 83.

4 F.B. Evans, 'Note on the Rebellion', 15 Mar. 1922, loc. cit. p. 53.



of the Raj which for more than a century before 1921 had precluded rebellion by the Ernad Moplah was recognised by the insurgents as dooming the rising to failure.<sup>1</sup> In fact, despite the pressure of intensified rebel counter-terror directed towards those Moplahs inclined to come to terms with the British,<sup>2</sup> the closing months of the insurrection, November 1921 - March 1922, were marked by the withholding of support to the rising by increasing sections of the Moplah population, which in a number of cases chose to demonstrate to the British troops loyalty to the Raj by participation in the operations against the insurgents.<sup>3</sup>

Whilst the interior south Malabar Moplah population in general was of such vital importance, at least until late October 1921, in sustaining the rebellion of 1921-22, the case of their

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1. See letter to 'C. Kunhalavi and friends' from 'K. Kutti, O. Ahammad Kutti and K. Syedali' found on the body of a rebel at Nannambra, 28 Nov. 1921, quoted in Hitchcock, loc. cit. p. 119.

2 Hitchcock, loc. cit., p. 127; deposition of P.W. No. 3, V.P. Koru, Case No. 2 of 1922, Summary General Court Martial, Nilambur, 2 Jan. 1922, MPP No. 848 (Conf.), 1 Nov. 1923, MRO; demi-official report of F.B. Evans, 3 Dec. 1921, G.R.F. Tottenham (ed.), loc. cit., p. 270; G.O.C. Madras to Army H.Q. (G.S. Branch), (Secret) 14 Nov. 1921, L/PJ/6/1782, 7717/21 in 1/22.

3 Hitchcock, loc. cit., pp. 94, 131 and 133; judgement, Case No. 12 of 1923, Court of Session, South Malabar, 23 Mar. 1923, ibid., p. 270; interview with Sir Thomas Austin who was in charge of accepting surrenders of amsoms in 1921, 20 Mar. 1924; M.V. Amu, Deputy Supt. of Police to Supt. of Police, 17 June 1922, Govt. of Madras, Under Sec.'s Safe, Secret, No. 360, 5 Sept. 1922, MRO; demi-official reports of F.B. Evans, 18 Nov. and 2 Dec. 1921, 17 Jan. and 3 Feb. 1922, G.R.F. Tottenham, (ed.) loc. cit., pp. 264, 270, 284 and 287; O/C 1/39th Royal Garhwal Rifles to O/C Malabar, 29 Mar. 1922, MPP No. 627, 3 Aug. 1922, p. 2, MRO; Evans, 'Notes on the Moplah Rebellion', 27 Mar. 1922, MPP No. 682, 22 Aug. 1922, p. 20, MRO; Chief Sec., Govt. of Madras, Public to Sec., Govt. of India, Home (demi-official, strictly conf.), 16 June and 3 July 1922, Fortnightly Reports, 1922, pp. 30 and 33, MRO; intelligence summary for week ending 3 Dec. 1921 by Major E.R. Wyatt, Malabar Force, annexure A in G.O.C. Madras to Army H.Q., G.S. Branch (Secret), 12 Dec. 1921.

Hindu neighbours was entirely different. In particular, whilst Hindu claims that their community held completely aloof from active participation in the rising<sup>1</sup> are incorrect, there is no doubt that Hindus joined the rebels only in paltry numbers, for the most transient period and in marginal areas of the rebellion zone.<sup>2</sup> Wherever details of those arrested or convicted for involvement in the insurrection are available they record an overwhelmingly high proportion of Moplahs. Of the 1,570 convicts admitted from 1 October 1921 to Bellary Camp, which from that date was converted into a jail exclusively for rebellion prisoners from Malabar,<sup>3</sup> no less than 1,555 were Muslims and only 15 Hindus.<sup>4</sup> It is true that poor Hindus sometimes formed part of the gangs which looted Hindu mansions. However the proportion of non-Muslims in these bands was almost invariably tiny, whilst the phenomenon was most common outside the heart of the rebel-controlled area (the traditional 'fanatic zone') and generally did not survive the first few days of the insurrection when there was still a possibility of confusion about the true character

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1 See for example, speech of Rao Bahadur T. Rangachariar, extract from Legislative Assembly debates, 5 Sept. 1921 p. 132, L/PJ/6/1774, 6646/21 and Podanur Correspondent, 26 Aug. 1921, Hindu, 30 Aug. 1921, p. 6.

2 Hitchcock, loc. cit. p. 3.

3 Report on Administration of Jails, Madras Presidency, 1921, P/11256, ML(G)P No. 1588, 27 June 1922, p. 1.

4 Statement showing details of convicts admitted into Bellary Camp during 1921, ibid., pp. 30-31. See also lists of persons convicted in the rebellion in P/11253, MPP No. 681, 21 Aug. 1922, MPP No. 826, 14 Oct. 1922, MPP No. 875, 27 Oct. 1922 and MPP No. 955, 17 Nov. 1922; P/11411, MPP No. 777, 30 Oct. 1924; P/11482, MPP No. 136, 7 Feb. 1925 and MPP No. 729, 3 Aug. 1925 and P/11253, MPP No. 290, 1 Apr. 1922 for similar results.

of the rebel raj.<sup>1</sup> On or near the southern margins of the rebellion zone, at Cheruppulasseri, Mannarghat and Perintalmanna-Angadipuram Moplah influence was locally subordinate, largely because of Hindu numerical superiority, but also owing to (in the case of Perintalmanna-Angadipuram) the existence of a concentration of Hindu vakils.<sup>2</sup> Consequently it was here that certain Hindu non-co-operation workers played parts of some importance in the assaults on Government property which occurred in the first intoxicating days of apparent British defeat after 20 August 1921.<sup>3</sup> Even so even this non-Muslim participation in the rising involved only a relative handful of Hindus, the great majority of activists being Moplahs. Typical was the situation

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1 Hitchcock, loc. cit., pp. 3 and 47; judgement, 14 Mar. 1925, Case No. 25 of 1925, Court of Session, South Malabar, KDCA; judgement, 26 Sept. 1921, Case No. 1 of 1921, Special Tribunal, Calicut, MPP No. 222 (Conf.), 16 Mar. 1926, p. 47, MRO; deposition of Cherusseri Puthanveetil Sankaran Nair, 24 Nov. 1921, Case No. 47 of 1921, Court of Special Tribunal, Criminal Appeal No. 45 of 1922, p. 6, MHCA; Correspondent, Calicut, 23 Sept. 1921, Madras Mail, 24 Sept. 1921, p. 8.

2 Hitchcock, loc. cit., p. 48. Cheruppulasseri had 1546 Hindu, 379 Mussalman and 4 Christian inhabitants, Arakkurissi (Mannarghat), 2778 Hindu, 914 Mussalman and 57 Christian, Perintalmanna 2287 Hindu, 1810 Mussalman and 43 Christian, and Angadipuram 1918 Hindu and 476 Mussalman. Govt. of Madras, Census of 1921: Village Statistics, Malabar District, Madras Presidency, pp. 64, 65 and 69.

3 Hitchcock, loc. cit., pp. 48, 49 and 169; judgement, Case No. 65 of 1921, Court of Special Tribunal, Calicut, 25 Jan. 1922, ibid., p. 305; F.B. Evans, 'Note on the Rebellion', 15 Mar. 1922, G.R.F. Tottenham (ed.), loc. cit., pp. 46-47; Malabar Magistrate to Govt. of Madras (tel.), 3 Sept. 1921, ibid., p. 167; demi-official reports of Evans, 19 Oct. and 26 Dec. 1921, ibid., pp. 253 and 279; deposition of P.W. No. 1, Elankurnarath Kunhan Nair, 7 June 1922, Case No. 70 of 1922, Court of Special Judge, Referred Trial No. 75 of 1922, p. 3, MHCA; deposition of P.W. No. 2, K. Krishnan Nambiar, 8 Mar. 1922, Case No. 7 of 1922, Court of Special Judge, Calicut, Criminal Appeal No. 309 of 1922, pp. 6-7, MHCA.

at Cheruppulasserri, a desam with a population in 1921 of 1,546 Hindus and 379 Mussalmans, and part of an amsom of the same name comprising 3,409 Hindus and 1,087 Mussalmans,<sup>1</sup> where a local Moplah police eye-witness claimed that on 23 August 1921 there were only about 25 Hindus in an insurgent mob of some 400.<sup>2</sup> Moreover the approach of these small numbers of Hindu non-co-operators to the organisation of insurrection proved to be quite different to that of the 'fanatic zone' Moplah. Invariably the resistance of this non-Moplah element evaporated with news of the first approach of the military sent to suppress the rebellion.<sup>3</sup> Even before the appearance of the challenge presented by the British troops in those few places where the conduct of the rising lay in the hands of Hindu non-co-operators it tended to be half-hearted. At Perintalmanna-Angadipuram for example, the non-co-operators, who included some of "the more respectable well-to-do class" of Moplahs as well as Hindus, had led the initial attack on Government property on 22 August 1921. However "fearing danger at the hands of the mob" they quickly formed, with several officials, a local defence or vigilance

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1 Govt. of Madras, Census of 1921: Village Statistics, Malabar District, Madras Presidency, p. 65.

2 Deposition of P.W. No. 1, V.P. Alavi, 8 Mar. 1922, Case No. 7 of 1922, Court of Special Judge, Calicut, Criminal Appeal No. 309 of 1922, p. 3, MHCA. See also deposition of P.W. No. 1, M. Krishnan, 10 Apr. 1922, Case No. 26 of 1922, Court of Special Judge, Referred Trial No. 64 of 1922, p. 3, MHCA; cross-examination of P.W. No. 1, Elankurnarath Kunhan Nair, 7 June 1922, Case No. 70 of 1922, Court of Special Judge, Referred Trial No. 75 of 1922, p. 6, MHCA; judgement, Case No. 65 of 1921, Court of Special Tribunal, Calicut, 25 Jan. 1922, Hitchcock, loc. cit., p. 305.

3 Hitchcock, loc. cit., pp. 48-49.

committee which lasted no longer than 28 August when Moplahs from the traditionally 'fanatic' areas of Karuvarakundu and Melattur, unimpressed with its circumspect work, drove out its participants.<sup>1</sup> There can be no questioning the statement of Police Superintendent Hitchcock that the rebellion owed its vigour solely to the Moplahs.<sup>2</sup> Indeed the vast majority of Hindus of interior south Malabar very quickly became apprehensive of what from the very first was a Moplah rising. Nor was this apprehension unfounded. In the event it was indeed Hindus who in the main fell victim to the Moplah rebellion.

### Prosecution

Perhaps no more eloquent testimony to the widespread suffering of Hindus at the hands of the Moplah rebels is available than that of those Congressmen who in the name of Hindu-Muslim unity had attempted to recruit the Ernad Moplah as part of their own challenge to the British Raj. K. Madhavan Nayar, one of the foremost Kerala Congressmen and who had close first-hand experience of the rebellion in the days immediately after 20 August 1921 when he found himself in Ernad, described the Moplah attack on the Hindu population as "most wanton and unprovoked".<sup>3</sup> In a letter intercepted by the Special Branch

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1 Ibid., pp. 49 and 169; judgement, Case No. 65 of 1921, Court of Special Tribunal, Calicut, 25 Jan. 1922, ibid., p. 305; F.B. Evans, 'Note on the Rebellion', 15 Mar. 1922, G.R.F. Tottenham (ed.), loc. cit., p. 47.

2 Loc. cit., p. 3.

3 K. Madhavan Nayar, 4 Jan. 1922, Hindu, 5 Jan. 1922, p. 3. This telegram is reproduced in appendix III, C. Sankaran Nair, Gandhi and Anarchy, p. 138. Similar sentiments were expressed in an undated statement by K.P. Kesava Menon, Sec., Kerala Congress

of the Criminal Investigation Department soon after the start of the insurrection, a leading member of the Kerala Khilafat Committee, Muhammed Abdul Rahman, who also spent some time in Ernad in the early stages of the rebellion, commented that the Moplahs had "alienated Hindu sympathy" and that "even the Congress workers" had come to the conclusion that "the military régime should not be ended soon for fear of Hindus being molested".<sup>1</sup> South India Congress leader C. Rajagopalachariar noted that the actions of Moplah bands in Malabar had dealt Hindu-Muslim amity a "mortal wound".<sup>2</sup>

Nevertheless the Moplah rebellion at least in its earliest stage, did not present the appearance of a communal rampage in which Hindus were slaughtered wholesale merely as Hindus. Indeed the total number of persons of all communities from the civilian population of Malabar estimated by the authorities to have been killed by the insurgents during the rebellion amounted to only 500-600 in an area with a Hindu population of several hundred thousand.<sup>3</sup> It would appear that immediately after the

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Committee, T.V. Mohamad, Sec., Ernad Khilafat Committee, K. Madhavan Nayar, Sec., Calicut Congress Committee, K. Karunakara Menon, Treasurer, Kerala Congress Committee and one K.V. Gopal Menon, appendix III, ibid., p. 137.

1 Muhammed Abdul Rahman to Yakub Hassan, 7 Sept. 1921, forwarded by the latter to Sec., Central Khilafat Committee, Bombay and intercepted by the Special Branch who on 20 Sept. 1921 sent a copy to the Govt. of Madras, Strictly Conf., Govt. of Madras, Under Sec.'s Safe, Secret, No. 327-A, 2 Nov. 1921. See also intercepted letter of U. Gopal Menon, vakil and leading Malabar Congressman to Yakub Hassan, n.d., ibid., p. 4.

2 Letter from C. Rajagopalachariar, n.d., Hindu (weekly), 15 Sept. 1921, p. 14.

3 Statement of Home Member, 13 Nov. 1922, Proceedings of Madras Legislative Council, 3rd Session, Vol. IX, No. 1, p. 468. The

beginning of the insurrection the idea of the rebellion leadership in at least one place was to placate rather than antagonise the Hindu population.<sup>1</sup> At this stage of the rising, Moplah participants were known to have sometimes declared the British and not members of the native population to be their quarry.<sup>2</sup> But whatever the rhetoric among some sections of rebel Moplahs at the start of the attempt to seize power in the 'fanatic zone', the long and continuing tradition of seeking the resolution of grievance through the agency of communal solidarity ensured that from the first Hindu participation in the new raj would be on Moplah terms only.

No sooner had the power of the British government been extinguished in the ansoms of interior south Malabar than the residences of Hindus of property were subjected to whatever exactions the local Moplahs chose to impose on them. The case of the raid on a rich Nair's mansion in Ponnani taluk on 22 August 1921 was typical of a multitude of such forays at that time. 500 local people, very largely Moplahs, came with arms in broad daylight to proclaim the 'Khilafat kingdom' and smash

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total number of Hindus in the taluks wholly or partially affected by the rebellion were Ernad 163,328, Walluvanad 259,979, Ponnani 281,155 and Calicut 196,435. Govt. of Madras, Census of 1921: Village Statistics, Malabar District, Madras Presidency, pp. 6, 23, 62, and 72.

1 Hitchcock, loc. cit., pp. 56 and 100.

2 Special Correspondent, Calicut, 7 Sept. 1921, interview with the Nilambur Tirumulpad, Madras Mail, 8 Sept. 1921, p. 5; interview with Kuttath Raman Nair, Cochin, 13 Sept. 1921, Hindu (weekly), 15 Sept. 1921, p. 14. See also N.E.Q. Mainwaring, Deputy Insp.-Gen. of Police, Western Range to Insp.-Gen. of Police, 23 Aug. 1921, G.R.F. Tottenham (ed.), loc. cit., p. 74.

the Nair's portraits of the King-Emperor and his consort. Dissatisfied with the Nair's contribution which had been demanded from him to the 'Khilafat' the mob looted the whole house, destroying what records and account books they could find.<sup>1</sup> Significantly, Moplahs of any property, unless known to be pro-British,<sup>2</sup> nearly always escaped the attentions of these early mobs<sup>3</sup> whilst, excluding of course the impecunious, Hindus generally, even famous non-co-operators,<sup>4</sup> were visited.<sup>5</sup>

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- 1 Judgement, Case No. 4 of 1925, Court of Session, South Malabar, 24 Jan. 1925, KDCA. See also judgement, Case No. 9 of 1922, Court of Special Judge, Calicut, 30 Mar. 1922, Hitchcock, loc. cit., p. 319; judgement, Case No. 40 of 1921, Court of Special Tribunal, Calicut, 21 Nov. 1921, ibid., p. 321; judgement, Case No. 66 of 1923, Court of Session, South Malabar, 8 Nov. 1923, KDCA; Madras Mail, 24 Aug. 1921, p. 5, 26 Aug. 1921, p. 5, 27 Aug. 1921 (through Associated Press), p. 8, 29 Aug. 1921 (through Associated Press), p. 8, 31 Aug. 1921, p. 5 and 1 Sept. 1921 (Correspondent, Palghat, 1 Sept. 1921), p. 5.
- 2 See for example Hitchcock, loc. cit., p. 45; deposition of P.W. No. 1, M. Narayana Menon, 27 Mar. 1922, Case No. 22, Court of Special Judge, Calicut, Referred Trial No. 50 of 1922, p. 2, MHCA.
- 3 K. Madhavan Nayar, Malabar Kalapam, p. 86; interview with A.E. Anandan Menon, Parappanangadi, 1 Jan. 1975; Correspondent, Palghat, 5 Sept. 1921, Madras Mail, 6 Sept. 1921, p. 5; Own Correspondent, 'The Moplah Rebellion', Times of India, 10 Sept. 1921, p. 12; letter from C. Rajagopalachariar, n.d., Hindu (weekly), 15 Sept. 1921, p. 14; K. Karunakaran Nayar, Sub-Insp. of Police, Pandikkad to Supt. of Police, 31 Aug. 1921, G.R.F. Tottenham (ed.), loc. cit., p. 80; Hitchcock, loc. cit., p. 47.
- 4 See above p. 318.
- 5 T. Austin, Sub-divisional Magistrate, Malappuram to Malabar Magistrate, 2 Sept. 1921, G.R.F. Tottenham (ed.), loc. cit., p. 84; Malabar Magistrate to Govt. of Madras, (tel.), 14 Sept. 1921, ibid., p. 169; K. Madhavan Nayar, 4 Jan. 1922 (tel.), Hindu, 5 Jan. 1922, p. 3; K. Madhavan Nayar, Malabar Kalapam, p. 149; Hitchcock, loc. cit., pp. 54 and 56; Correspondent,



A further characteristic of Moplah raj, one which began to appear within hours of the beginning of the rebellion, threatened all non-Muslims without exception. On the very first day of the insurrection, 20 August 1921, two Hindu motor drivers working for the Government forces, on falling into the hands of the rebels near Tirurangadi were offered the choice of Islam or death.<sup>1</sup> This incident would appear to be the first example<sup>2</sup> of what quickly became one of the ruling concerns of Moplah participants in the 1921-22 rising: the conversion of the inhabitants of the rebel raj to Islam. As a matter of policy no official attempt was ever made to calculate the number of

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Palghat, 5 Sept. 1921, Madras Mail, 6 Sept. 1921, p. 5; Correspondent, Calicut, 17 Sept. 1921, ibid., 17 Sept. 1921, p. 8; Hindu (weekly), 1 Sept. 1921, p. 13, 8 Sept. 1921 p. 8; 27 Oct. 1921, p. 11; Times of India, 27 Aug. 1921, p. 11; 'Account by a judicial officer belonging to an aristocratic family in one of the disturbed areas', n.d., ibid., p. 10; letter from C. Rajagopalachariar, n.d., ibid., 15 Sept. 1921, p. 14; Viceroy (Home Dept.) to India Office, 24 Aug. 1921, L/PJ/6/1782, 5222/21 in 1/22; T. Prakasam and T.V. Venkatarama Iyer, 'Report on the Malabar Disturbances', Sept. 1921, Indian Annual Register, 1922-23, Vol. II, pp. 830-31.

- 1 Hitchcock, loc. cit., p. 39; statement of Kadavanchi Kotakatakath Atta Koya Tangal, 25 Jan. 1922, ibid., pp. 195-96.
- 2 For other instances in the first days of the rebellion see Hitchcock, loc. cit., pp. 52-54 and 168; judgement, Case No. 92 of 1922, Court of Special Judge, Malappuram, 30 June 1922, ibid., p. 256; Correspondent, Calicut, 17 Sept. 1921, Madras Mail, 17 Sept. 1921, p. 8; memorandum from Chief Conservator of Forests to Govt. of Madras, 16 Sept. 1921, G.R.F. Tottenham (ed.), loc. cit., pp. 225-26; Subdivisional Magistrate, Palghat to Govt. of Madras, 31 Aug. 1921 (tel.), ibid., p. 75; District Magistrate to Govt. of Madras, 1 Sept. 1921 (tel.), ibid., p. 78; K. Karunakaran Nayar, Sub-Insp. of Police, Pandikkad to Supt. of Police, 31 Aug. 1921, ibid., p. 80; K. Madhavan Nayar, loc. cit., p. 174; judgement, Case No. 1 of 1921, Special Tribunal, Calicut, 26 Sept. 1921, MPP No. 222 (Conf.), 16 Mar. 1926, p. 47; War Diary, 2nd Battalion, Dorset Regiment, Malabar, 1921, entry No. 11, Dorset Military Museum, Dorchester.

those forcibly converted during the rebellion,<sup>1</sup> but the estimates of those in closest touch with events in Malabar after 20 August 1921 suggest a minimum of 1000-1500<sup>2</sup> with an unknown number of Hindus choosing death rather than conversion.<sup>3</sup> One rebel leader, Karat Moideen Kutti Haji, was apparently personally responsible for some 500 conversions over a period of 15 days in the Arikkod area of north Malabar where a considerable proportion of the rebellion conversions took place.<sup>4</sup> Throughout the rebellion, but especially in its later stages, whenever Hindus lay at the mercy of Moplah rebels, they were normally subjected to pressure, very often in the form of threat of death, to become

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1 Answer of Home Member to question, 13 Nov. 1922, Proceedings of the Madras Legislative Council, 3rd session, Vol. IX, No. 1, p. 468 (see also MPP No. 972, 21 Nov. 1922, MRO); Viceroy (Home Dept.) to India Office (tel.), 11 Nov. 1921, L/PJ/6/1773, 7044/21.

2 Hitchcock, loc. cit., p. 145; note by F.B. Evans, 22 Mar. 1922, MPP No. 337, 15 Apr. 1922, p.4, MRO; deposition of P.W. M. Narayana Menon, Circle Insp. of Police, Manjeri, 25 May 1922, Case No. 53 of 1922, Court of Special Judge, Malappuram, Referred Trial No. 65 of 1922, p. 10, MHCA. Other estimates put the number at 'thousands', (see for example draft telegram from R.A. Graham, Chief Sec., Govt. of Madras, to Home Dept., Govt. of India, 11 Jan. 1922, MPP No. 720, 5 Sept. 1922, p. 7, MRO; answer of Sir W. Vincent, Home Member, Govt. of India to question of Khan Bahadur Sarfaraz Husain Khan, 16 Jan. 1922, Legislative Assembly Debates, Official Report 1922, Vol. II, Part II, p. 1566).

3 See for example statement of Puvil Alavi Haji, 10 Dec. 1921, Hitchcock, loc. cit., p. 192; judgement, Case No. 88 of 1922, Court of Special Judge, 19 July 1922, ibid., p. 292; judgement, Case No. 145 of 1922, Court of Special Judge, Calicut, 25 July 1922, ibid., p. 299; judgement, Case No. 98 of 1922, Court of Special Judge, 12 June 1922, ibid., p. 324; judgement, Case No. 16 of 1923, Court of Session, South Malabar, 20 June 1923, KDCA; examination by Court of P.W. No. 2, Muthalath Chekku, 2 Aug. 1922, Case No. 106 of 1922, Court of Special Judge, Referred Trial No. 123 of 1922, p. 7, MHCA.

4 Statement of Karat Moideen Kutti Haji, 24 May 1922, Hitchcock, loc. cit., p. 188.

Muslims. Indeed there can be no doubt that it was the conviction of large numbers of Moplahs of the rebellion zone that in their Islamic raj the only place for the Hindu was as a convert to the Mussalman religion. It became quite usual for Moplahs to approach Hindus, those who had failed to escape the Khilafat régime, in the manner of K. Syed Muhamad Koya Kunhikoya Thangal of Malappuram who on 20 August 1921 informed P. Sankunni Menon, the adhigari of Melmuri:

"The British Government is finished: a Khilafat Government is established .... There is now only one religion, Mahammedanism: you must embrace it."<sup>1</sup>

Before 1921 there had been a long tradition of Moplah zeal for proselytism in which considerations other than purely religious ones were of importance.<sup>2</sup> During the Moplah rebellion this

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1 Deposition of P.W. No. 2, P. Sankunni Menon, Summary General Court Martial No. 6 of 1922, Malappuram, 16 Jan. 1922, MPP No. 848 (Conf.), 1 Nov. 1923, MRO. See also K. Madhavan Nayar, Malabar Kalapam, p. 173; deposition of P.W. No. 5, M. Narayana Menon, Circle Insp. of Police, Manjeri, 26 May 1922, Case No. 47 of 1922, Court of Special Judge, Calicut, Referred Trial No. 109 of 1922, p. 11, MHCA; cross-examination of P.W. No. 2, Appu alias K. Krishnan Nair, 19 Aug. 1922, Case No. 105 of 1922, Court of Special Judge, Referred Trial No. 153 of 1922, p. 6, MHCA; depositions of P.W.s Nos. 2 and 3, T. Sankunni Nayar and Chokkili Veeran, 9 Apr. 1924, Case No. 36 of 1924, Court of Session, South Malabar, Referred Trial No. 38 of 1924, pp. 5 and 7, MHCA (see also pp. 22, 28 and 29); deposition of P.W. No. 3, Madhavan Moideen, 22 June 1922, Case No. 88 of 1922, Court of Special Judge, exhibit B in ibid., p. 20; extracts from account by adhigari of Tuvvur amsom of events there in early part of rebellion, in F.B. Evans, 'Notes on the Moplah Rebellion', 27 Mar. 1922, MPP No. 682, 22 Aug. 1922, p. 19, MRO; Madras Mail, 12 Sept. 1921, p. 8; Correspondent, Palghat, 15 Sept. 1921, ibid., 16 Sept. 1921, p. 6; Correspondent, Calicut, 3 Oct. 1921, ibid., 4 Oct. 1921, p. 5; Correspondent, Calicut, 27 Oct. 1921, ibid., 29 Oct. 1921, p. 8; Correspondent, Calicut, 10 Oct. 1921, Times of India, 17 Oct. 1921, p. 10; ibid., 29 Oct. 1921, p. 14; 1 Dec. 1921, p. 11.

2 See above p. 134.

tradition was continued in a way which made such considerations manifest. There would seem to be no doubt that, whatever its other sources, Moplah enthusiasm during the insurrection for converting Hindus was rooted in the belief that proselytism promoted the war effort against British rule.<sup>1</sup> Thus, it was customary for rebels, when faced with the task of deciding how to treat non-Muslims who were believed to have assisted the Government forces in their operations against the insurrection, to see conversion to Islam as an appropriate means of dealing with such offenders.<sup>2</sup> It may be presumed that for the Moplah rebel the honour of conversion was not viewed as suitable retribution for offences against the insurrection. Rather must the conversion of such 'malefactors' be seen as what was hoped would be a way of rendering them harmless. This interpretation receives support from the rebel mode of dealing with one Kuttath Raman Nair who, as an eye-witness to the murder of Mr. Eaton, a British rubber planter, was a potential menace to those insurgents who were responsible. In fact despite a majority opinion in

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1 This did not go unnoticed at the time, see for example Hitchcock, loc. cit., p. 146; deposition of P.W. No. 1, K. Kunhi Raman, Sub-Insp. of Police, Nilambur, 5 Feb. 1923, Case No. 77 of 1922, Court of Special Judge, Calicut, Referred Trial No. 47 of 1923, p. 3, MHCA; judgement of Judge M. McGilligan, 10 Apr. 1924, Case No. 36 of 1924, Court of Session, South Malabar, Referred Trial No. 38 of 1924, p. 5, MHCA.

2 See for example Hitchcock, loc. cit., p. 67; Madras Mail, 2 Nov. 1921, p. 6 and examination by Court of P.W. No. 2, Muthalath Chekku, 2 Aug. 1922, Case No. 106 of 1922, Court of Special Judge, Calicut, Referred Trial No. 123 of 1922, p. 7, MHCA.

favour of imposing the silence of the grave on the prisoner, after a heated discussion in a mosque it was decided that his expressed willingness to become a Moplah would be sufficient.<sup>1</sup> The concept of conversion to Islam as a means of denying to the Government the aid of the non-Muslim was occasionally made even more explicit. The family of one K. Krishnan Nair, for example, was apparently told by 50 Moplahs who raided his home in the course of the rising that if the household was "left without being converted" its members "would help the Military if they came".<sup>2</sup> Of course the use of proselytism to secure commitment to the insurrection was merely an extension of this prophylactic concept of conversion. Rebel leader Avvokker Mussaliar was one practitioner of this method of recruitment to the insurgent cause. It was his habit to have killed any non-Muslim declining conversion and to arrange for their castemen to witness the executions so that they might "tell future recusants what awaited them as he did not want more killed than he could help so as to have recruits against the Government."<sup>3</sup> For rebels like

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1 Interview with Kuttath Raman Nair, Cochin, 13 Sept. 1921, Hindu (weekly), 15 Sept. 1921, p. 14. For a very similar incident involving District Forest Officer Chandu see Hitchcock, loc. cit., p. 52.

2 Deposition of P.W. No. 5, K. Krishnan Nair, 7 Nov. 1922, Case No. 186 of 1922, exhibit 3, Case No. 77 of 1923, Court of Special Judge, Calicut, Referred Trial No. 47 of 1923, pp. 74-75, MHCA. See also K. Madhavan Nayar, Malabar Kalapam, p. 176.

3 Deposition of P.W. No. 4, Mekkath Chandappan, 8 Nov. 1922, Case Nos. 32A and 32B of 1922, Court of Senior Special Judge, Referred Trial No. 182 of 1922, p. 7, MHCA. See also deposition of P.W. No. 3, Nageri Ukkandan Nayar, 8 Nov. 1922, ibid., p. 5; deposition of P.W. No. 2, E.V. Amoo, Deputy Supt. of Police, 19 Mar. 1923, Case No. 12 of 1923, Court of Special Judge, Calicut, Referred Trial No. 44 of 1923, p. 4, MHCA; deposition of P.W. No. 5, O. Krishnan Nair, 28 Feb. 1923, Case

Avvokker Mussaliar, if not always for the forcible converts themselves,<sup>1</sup> conversion to Islam was clearly an oath of allegiance to Moplah raj.<sup>2</sup>

Nothing seems to demonstrate this fact more conclusively than the most remarkable phenomenon in the rebel campaign of proselytism: the 'conversion' of pro-Government Moplahs. At the trial of rebel leader Ali Mussaliar an anti-Khilafat Moplah trader, Nalakath Kunhi Pokkar, gave the following testimony of the rebel leader's address on Kunhi Pokkar's being produced before him after Moplah raj had been proclaimed in Tirurangadi on 21 August 1921:

"You deserve death. You have been against us for some time. Since you are born a Muhammadan, I do not kill you<sup>3</sup> but you must repeat 'Kalima' and be taken into our fold."

The constraining by Moplah rebels of pro-Government Muslims like Nalakath Kunhi Pokkar to repeat, as a means of recruiting them

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No. 77A of 1922, Court of Additional Sessions Judge, Calicut, Referred Trial No. 49 of 1923, p. 15, MHCA, K. Madhavan Nayar, Malabar Kalapam, p. 174; 'Ananias', article in Times of India, quoted in Madras Mail, 31 Oct. 1921, p. 9.

- 1 Late in the rebellion the Konara Tangal apparently decreed the decapitation of all forced converts on the grounds that on escaping they gave valuable intelligence of rebel dispositions to the military. Correspondent, Calicut, 5 Dec. 1921, Madras Mail, 8 Dec. 1921, p. 6. However at least one Hindu converted to Islam during the rebellion is on record as having played an active part in the rising subsequently (see Madras Mail, 23 Jan. 1922, p. 8).
- 2 This seems to have been appreciated by F.B. Evans, Special Civil Officer to the Martial Law Area of 1921-22. See his demi-official report of 29 Dec. 1921, G.R.F. Tottenham (ed.), loc. cit. p.280.
- 3 Deposition of P.W. No. 5, Nalakath Kunhi Pokkar, 7 Oct. 1921, Case No. 7 of 1921, Court of Special Tribunal, Calicut, exhibit 1 in Case No. 151 of 1922, Court of Session, South Malabar, Criminal Appeal No. 1493 of 1922, p. 33, MHCA. See also judgement, Case No. 7 of 1921, 2 Nov. 1921, Court of Special Tribunal, Calicut, Hitchcock, loc. cit., p. 249.

to the insurgent cause, the formula uttered on the occasion of the acceptance into the fold of Islam of a non-Muslim would seem to exclude the possibility of the interpretation of Moplah zeal for conversion in terms of religion alone.

Confronted with a rising of a community with a reputation for fanatical hostility to the infidel, with their property from the first liable to the often arbitrary exactions of 'Khilafat' bands and themselves always exposed to the likelihood of conversion on pain of death, there was never any possibility of the conciliation of the Hindus of interior south Malabar to the Moplah rebellion. On the contrary the terrified Hindu inhabitants of the 'fanatic zone',<sup>1</sup> where they were unable to flee the Moplah raj to Government-controlled areas,<sup>2</sup> tended to remain as unobtrusive as possible anxiously awaiting the early re-establishment of British control.<sup>3</sup> Moreover there is no doubt that underlying the general Hindu failure to support the 1921-22 rising<sup>4</sup>

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1 Account of the early days of the rising by 'A', a villager in the rebellion zone and a Khilafat and Congress worker, as related to C.F. Andrews, 'The First Days of the Moplah Rising', The Modern Review, Apr. 1922, Vol. XXXI No. 4, p. 472. This fear was shared by Hindus, like those of Calicut, outside the area of rebellion, interview with K.P. Kesava Menon, Kozhikode, 17 Dec. 1974.

2 Many thousands did so. See for example Hitchcock, loc.cit., pp. 68, 69 and 152; speech of K. Muppil Nayar a big south Malabar jenmi living outside the rebellion zone who claimed to have himself sheltered 1,600 refugees, extract from Legislative Assembly debates, 2 Mar. 1922, L/PJ/6/1771, 2165/22, pp. 2713-18; demi-official report of F.B. Evans, 31 Oct. 1921, G.R.F. Tottenham (ed.), loc. cit., p. 257; F.B. Evans, 'Note on operations from 26 Aug. to 6 Sept. 1921', ibid., p. 235.

3 See for example, Hitchcock, loc. cit., p. 64.

4 Mozhikunnath Brahmadathan Nambudiripad, a non-co-operation worker who was himself sentenced to life imprisonment for his alleged part in the rebellion, Khilaphat Smarankal, pp. vii and 57.

was an animosity which intensified as the course of the insurrection increasingly disclosed the character of the rebel raj.<sup>1</sup> It was not long after 20 August 1921 that the Hindus of Malabar in general began openly to show their avidity for the punishment of the Ernad Moplah for his conduct during the attempt to seize power in the 'fanatic zone'.<sup>2</sup> Most distasteful of all was perhaps the habit of groups of Hindus at places like Shoranur, a railway junction to the south of the rebellion zone where many refugees had congregated and where the local feeling to Moplah rebels was reported to be "the reverse of cordial", of assembling outside the luggage vans which were commonly used for transporting Moplah prisoners out of Ernad to jeer at the inmates.<sup>3</sup> On 19 November 1921 when what proved to be an almost air-tight van carrying 100 convicted prisoners shouting desperately for water stopped at Shoranur, a crowd of Hindus on the platform taunted them with expressions such as:

"Sons of harlots. You have killed our countrymen, you deserve this" and

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1 See for example demi-official reports of F.B. Evans, 30 Nov. and 24 Dec. 1921, G.R.F. Tottenham (ed.), loc. cit., pp. 270 and 279; F.B. Evans, 'Note on the Rebellion', 15 Mar. 1922, ibid., p. 53.

2 Demi-official reports of Evans, 10 Sept. 1921 and 9 Feb. 1922, ibid., pp. 237 and 288.

3 Joint finding of C. Crighton (Locomotive and Carriage Supt., President), A.W. Acres (General Traffic Manager, Member) and C.E.R. Norman (Chief Medical Officer, Member), 'Proceedings of Joint Enquiry, Class A-2, held at Podanur, 24 and 25 Nov. 1921 on the Train Tragedy', L/PJ/6/1778, 3002/22. See also statement of witness T.R. Srinivasa Ayyar, Asst. Stationmaster, Olavakkot, n.d., 'Report of Committee Appointed to Enquire into the Death of Certain Mappilla Prisoners', L/PJ/6/1778, 1534/22, p. 23.



"'Have you not guns and swords? Are you not Khilafat people? Can you not take water by force?'"<sup>1</sup>

Under such circumstances, the advent of Government forces in the different parts of the rebellion area was not infrequently the signal for demonstrations of relief if not elation on the part of the Hindu inhabitants.<sup>2</sup> Even as early as 21 August 1921 the train taking a party of police to the rescue of the Collector's party in Ernad received the approbation of cheering crowds of Hindu residents as it left Calicut.<sup>3</sup> On the same day the Collector's party, making its way under Moplah attack back to Calicut was received with "extreme relief" by the inhabitants of a "friendly country" around Ariyallur, an amsom containing 2,356 Hindus and only 341 Muslims.<sup>4</sup>

Such manifestations of Hindu support for the military commonly included the rendering of active assistance in the work

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- 1 Statements of witness K.V. Rama Ayyar, Goods Supervisor, Shoranur, and Kalikarottee koya Kutti Tangal, one of the surviving prisoners, 'Report of Committee Appointed to Enquire into the Death of Certain Mappilla Prisoners', L/PJ/6/1778, 1554/22, pp. 24 and 28. See also deposition of witness K.V. Rama Ayyar, 'Proceedings of Joint Enquiry, Class A-2, held at Podanur, 24 and 25 Nov. 1921, on the Train Tragedy', L/PJ/6/1778, 300/22. The incident was the notorious Train Tragedy in which 70 of the 100 prisoners, 97 Moplahs and 3 Hindus, were asphyxiated, see P/11253, MPP No. 290, 1 Apr. 1922.
  - 2 Demi-official report of F.B. Evans, 25 Sept. 1921, G.R.F. Tottenham (ed.), loc. cit., p. 222; K. Madhavan Nayar, Malabar Kalapam, pp. 166 and 192.
  - 3 C.G. Tottenham, Supt. of Police, North Malabar in 1921, 'The Mappilla Rebellion and Malabar Operations 1921-22', n.d., Mss Eur F161/4, p. 17. C.G. Tottenham was in charge of this party of police.
  - 4 District Magistrate to Govt. of Madras, 25 Aug. 1921, G.R.F. Tottenham, (ed.) loc. cit., p. 70; Govt. of Madras, Census of 1921: Village Statistics, Malabar District, Madras Presidency, p. 18.

of suppressing the rebellion.<sup>1</sup> Nor did the authorities fail to make use of this prevailing Hindu sentiment of antagonism to the insurrection. On 3 November 1921 at a conference at which A.R. Knapp, the Martial Law Commissioner met 'leading citizens' of Calicut it was decided that in view of the critical situation in Malabar there should be recruited a citizen army of 800 through a committee of five prominent Hindus.<sup>2</sup> The outcome was the embodiment in January 1922 of the Malabar Territorial Force consisting of two companies of Nairs and two of Tiers (including one platoon of Christians), recruited mainly from the population of the rebellion zone.<sup>3</sup> Far more important in the work of putting down the Moplah rising however was the well-armed corps known as the Malabar Special Police the formation of which was proposed early in the rebellion and which from October 1921 played an important part in its suppression.<sup>4</sup> The Malabar Special Police was a communal body, reminiscent of Captain Watson's 'Nair Corps' of the beginning of the 19th century,<sup>5</sup> consisting wholly

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1 K. Madhavan Nayar, Malabar Kalapam, p. 193; demi-official report of Evans, 15 Jan. 1921, G.R.F. Tottenham (ed.), loc. cit., p. 283; deposition of P.W. No. 5, V. Krishnan, 24 Oct. 1922, Case No. 182 of 1922, Court of Special Judge, Calicut, Referred Trial No. 20 of 1923, p. 12, MHCA.

2 Madras Mail (through Associated Press), 4 Nov. 1921, p. 8.

3 Cannanore Correspondent, 23 Jan. 1922, Madras Mail, 25 Jan. 1922, p. 4.

4 See E.F. Thomas, Malabar Magistrate to Chief Sec., 7 Sept. 1921, P/11104, MJP No. 818-A, 31 Oct. 1921; G.O.C. Madras to Army H.Q., G.S. Branch (Secret), 1 Nov. 1921, L/PJ/6/1782, 7717/21 in 1/22.

5 See above p. 178.

of Hindu and Christian ex-sepoys who were largely from the rebellion area, some having suffered personally at the hands of the insurgents.<sup>1</sup> According to one source these military-style policemen were "thoroughly imbued with the spirit of revenge".<sup>2</sup>

Even so, the Hindu thirst for vengeance on the Ernad Moplah was by no means solely expressed through the channels provided for by the authorities. Wherever, in 'pacified' areas or even in districts outside the rebellion zone, the Hindu had the upper hand, any Moplah, whether associated with the rebellion or not, was liable to misuse at the hands of the non-Muslim civilian population.<sup>3</sup> The Tier community in particular, broad sections of which even before the outbreak of rebellion had been ranged against the Khilafat movement in the name of support for the Raj,<sup>4</sup> was prominent in this molesting of Moplahs.<sup>5</sup>

Such manifestations of the general Hindu opposition to the rebellion naturally ensured a further twist to the spiral of communal antagonism and played an important part in generating the insurgent violence against Hindus as Hindus which became

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1 Hitchcock, loc. cit., pp. 2 and 172.

2 Lt.-Col. A.C.B. Mackinnon, 'The Moplah Rebellion, 1921-22', The Army Quarterly, Jan. 1924, Vol. VII, No. 2, p. 267. Mackinnon, as O/C 9th Gurkha Rifles, participated in the suppression of the rebellion.

3 Correspondent, Calicut, 28 Nov. 1921, Madras Mail, 2 Dec. 1921, p. 5; K. Madhavan Nayar, Malabar Kalapam, p. 192; interview with C. Karunakara Nair, Indian Police (retired), Adyar, 18 Mar. 1975; Hitchcock, loc. cit., pp. 126 and 131.

4 See above p. 265.

5 Account of 'A' in C.F. Andrews, loc. cit., p. 472; Hitchcock, loc. cit., pp. 81, 82, 92, and 118.

increasingly frequent as the insurrection took its course. The complaint of the rebels that the Hindus were helping the Government side<sup>1</sup> was easily translated into remedial action as communal violence. In October 1921 when the Konara Tangal first made his contribution to the rebellion one of his injunctions was apparently that since the troops were receiving assistance from the Hindus "none should be spared".<sup>2</sup> There can be no doubt that it quickly became the practice for the Moplah rebel to proclaim openly that the rising was directed against both the Government and the Hindu.<sup>3</sup>

Although acts of more or less indiscriminate rebel violence against Hindus were liable to occur almost at any time and place during the rebellion they were most frequent in those areas where and at that time when Hindu antagonism to the rising seemed of the greatest menace to the Moplah. Thus, in general, the worst cases occurred from the time the Government forces

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1 See for example Correspondent, Calicut, 1 Oct. 1921, New India, 5 Oct. 1921, p. 11.

2 Deposition of P.W. No. 16, K.P. Chappan Nayar, 19 Mar. 1923, Case No. 12 of 1923, Court of Special Judge, Calicut, Referred Trial No. 44 of 1923, p. 17, MHCA. See also letter from K.K.C. Muhamad Koya [the Konara Tangal/ to Palliparamban Unniman alias Kunhalikutty, 27 Nov. 1921, exhibit D, Case No. 12 of 1923, Court of Special Judge, Referred Trial No. 44 of 1923, p. 57, MHCA.

3 Depositions of P.W.s No. 2 and 3, K. Gopalan Nair and V.P. Koru, Summary General Court Martial, 2 Jan. 1922, Case No. 2 of 1922, Nilambur, MPP No. 848 (Conf.), 1 Nov. 1923, MRO; depositions of P.W.s 3 and 4, P. Alikutty and Moidutty, 17 July 1922, Case No. 115-A of 1922, Court of Special Judge, Calicut, Referred Trial No. 101 of 1922, pp. 4-5, MHCA; deposition of P.W.s No. 2, 3 and 4, Kuruvapalli Sekharan Nayar, Payanat Ali Kutti and Atturi Moidutti, 8 July 1924, Case No. 51 of 1924, Court of Session, South Malabar, Referred Trial No. 53 of 1924, p. 6, MHCA.

began clearly to emerge as having the upper hand, that is from late October 1921, and in those areas outside the heart of the rebellion zone (eastern Ernad) where Hindus were still present in numbers sufficient to appear as a threat to the rebellion. It is these factors, not the "inherent vice and criminality of the Chernad [an old taluk name roughly corresponding to western Ernad] Mappilla",<sup>1</sup> which most reasonably explain the widespread cases of communal killing of Hindus by Moplals which occurred in western Ernad during November 1921.<sup>2</sup> In the case of the repeated acts of rebel violence against Hindus which were a feature of the insurrectionary campaign of the Konara Tangal in the eastern part of Calicut taluk and the adjoining areas of Ernad from late October 1921 onwards,<sup>3</sup> a special factor may well have been the fact that the communally-constituted Malabar Special Police was mainly responsible for the suppression of the rebellion in this region.<sup>4</sup> Certainly, the Special Police were participants in the Government operations in the Konara Tangal's own area of Chaliyapuram in northern Ernad in which a mosque was raided and the Koran apparently insulted and which

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1 Hitchcock, loc. cit., p. 82.

2 Ibid.; Special Correspondent, Calicut, 10 Nov. 1921, Madras Mail, 10 Nov. 1921, p. 6; Correspondent, Calicut, 12 Nov. 1921, ibid., 12 Nov. 1921, p. 7; Special Correspondent, Calicut, 12 Nov. 1921, ibid., 14 Nov. 1921, p. 6 and Special Correspondent, Calicut, 14 Nov. 1921, ibid., 15 Nov. 1921, p. 5; Correspondent, Calicut, 9 Nov. 1921, New India, 12 Nov. 1921, p. 4.

3 Hitchcock, loc. cit., p. 79.

4 O/C Madras District [to Govt. of India?], 25 Oct. 1921, L/PJ/6/1782, 7362/21 in 1/22; O/C Madras to Army H.Q., G.S. Branch (Secret), 1 Nov. 1921, L/PJ/6/1782, 7717/21 in 1/22.

precipitated the Tangal's decision to join the insurrection.<sup>1</sup>

But despite the tendency for retaliation and counter-retaliation to generate communal violence, it must be stressed that, especially in the earliest stages of the rebellion, many instances occurred of Moplah rebels permitting apparently harmless Hindus to go unmolested.<sup>2</sup> Even as late as the third week of October 1921 in a rebel-controlled area like that between Pandikkad and Wandur in eastern Ernad it was possible for rebel bands to stop isolated Nair travellers and permit them to pass unharmed in return for payment of one rupee for a 'safe-conduct pass'. In the first days of the rebellion, when the Moplah was pre-occupied with the initial eradication of British power from interior south Malabar and before the spiral of communal violence and counter-violence had been set in motion, it was still possible in many places for Hindus to be present as spectators of the work of destruction of Government property.<sup>4</sup> Indeed at this stage of the insurrection Moplah rebels were not always averse to permitting certain Hindus to participate in the benefits of the rebellion. Apart from the indigent Hindus who

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1 Hitchcock, loc. cit., pp. 79 and 137; judgement, Case No. 12 of 1923, Court of Session, South Malabar, 23 Mar. 1923, ibid., p. 268.

2 See for example judgement, Case No. 92 of 1922, Court of Special Judge, Malappuram, 30 June 1922, ibid., p. 256.

3 Hitchcock, loc. cit., p. 67.

4 Judgement, Case No. 77 of 1921, Court of Special Tribunal, Calicut, 7 Feb. 1922, ibid., pp. 313-14; deposition of P.W. No. 2, Pandarathodiyil Govindan Nayar, 6 Apr. 1922, Case No. 48 of 1922, Court of Special Judge, Calicut, Referred Trial No. 51 of 1922 p. 4, MHCA; deposition of P.W. No. 3, K. Raman Nayar, 6 May 1922, Case No. 72 of 1922, Court of Special Judge, Referred Trial No. 59 of 1922, p. 3, MHCA.

occasionally joined in the plundering of their wealthy co-religionists in the first days after 20 August 1921<sup>1</sup> it is known that Hindus were among the debtors of the Nambudiri Bank at Manjeri who received back their pledged valuables when rebel leader Kunhamad Haji effected that distribution at the start of the rebellion there.<sup>2</sup>

Moreover, non-Muslims were by no means the only victims of rebel violence. Any Moplah suspected of helping the Government or even merely failing to respond to the rebel call for all Mussalmans, or "'the Moplah brotherhood (udapurappa)'"<sup>3</sup> to come to the aid of the Moplah cause<sup>4</sup> was almost certain to suffer on falling into the hands of the insurgents. Most notorious is perhaps the murder by men of Kunhamad Haji's gang on 30 August 1921 of retired police inspector Khan Bahadur Kurimannil Valiyamannil Chekkutti Sahib who had had the temerity to harbour Government servants and Hindus at his residence at Anakayam, as well as to display on his gate a directive of the authorities

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1 See above p. 356.

2 Judgement, Case No. 128 of 1922, Court of Special Judge, Calicut, 25 Sept. 1922, Hitchcock, loc. cit., pp. 235 and 238.

3 Deposition of P.W. No. 1, Madhava Menon, 10 Feb. 1922, Court of Special Judge, Calicut, 4 Apr. 1922, Case No. 14 of 1922, MPP No. 1003, 1 Dec. 1922, p. 36.

4 E.V. Amu, Deputy Supt. of Police, Calicut to Supt. of Police, 17 June 1922, Govt. of Madras, Under-Sec.'s Safe, Secret, No. 360, 5 Sept. 1922, MRO; evidence, District Magistrate's Court, 8 Apr. 1922, MPP No. 1049 (Conf.), 16 Dec. 1922, p. 3, MRO; deposition of P.W. No. 3, Parakot Chathappunni Paniker, 12 May 1922, Case No. 67 of 1922, Court of Special Judge, Referred Trial No. 66 of 1922, p. 10, MHCA; F.B. Evans, 'Notes on the Moplah Rebellion', 27 Mar. 1922, MPP No. 682, 22 Aug. 1922, p. 12, MRO; demi-official report of District Magistrate, 19 Oct. 1921, G.R.F. Tottenham (ed.), loc. cit., p. 222.

that all arms were to be surrendered.<sup>1</sup> In fact a considerable number of Ernad Moplahs fell victim to the rebellion in consequence of their failure to support it.<sup>2</sup> If it was not rare for Hindus the insurgents deemed harmless to the cause of Moplah raj to escape rebel hands unmolested, it was positively the rule for Moplah backsliders to be called to account.

In this sense the observation of F.B. Evans, the Special Civil Officer for the Martial Law Area that, at least in murder cases, the victims of the rebels were nearly always those who had supported the Government or failed to help the insurgents<sup>3</sup> carries a good deal of weight. The Moplah rebellion of 1921-22 was for the most part no irrational orgy of communal bloodletting. Even so, Evans' remark fails to take into account the fact that it was the assumption of the rebels that 'fanatic zone' Moplahs would (if certain definite categories detailed above<sup>4</sup> are

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1 Hitchcock, loc. cit., p. 63; judgement, Case No. 128 of 1922, Court of Special Judge, Calicut, 25 Sept. 1922, ibid., p. 236; judgement, Case No. 78 of 1922, Court of Special Judge, Malappuram, 14 July 1922, ibid., pp. 261-62; judgement, Case No. 73 of 1922, Court of Special Judge, Malappuram, 1 July 1922, ibid., p. 300; deposition of P.W. No. 1, M. Narayana Menon, 27 Apr. 1922, Case No. 50 of 1922, Court of Special Judge, Calicut, Referred Trial No. 76 of 1922, p. 4, MHCA.

2 See for example deposition of P.W. No. 3, Nayarveetil Unnian, 8 Apr. 1922, Case No. 52 of 1922, Court of Special Judge, Calicut, Referred Trial No. 52 of 1922, p. 5, MHCA; Hitchcock, loc. cit., p. 65; judgement, Case No. 12 of 1923, Court of Session, South Malabar, 23 Mar. 1923, ibid., p. 269; judgement, Case No. 133 of 1922, Court of Special Judge, 24 Oct. 1922, ibid., p. 280.

3 Demi-official report of 21 Jan. 1922, G.R.F. Tottenham (ed.), loc. cit., p. 284.

4 P. 341.



excluded) be supporters of the rising and that Hindus if not positively opposed to the insurrection would at least be completely unreliable. Further, these assumptions, though very largely confirmed by the outcome of the rising, were not merely products of the experience of the rebellion but were rooted in communal antagonisms pre-dating 20 August 1921 by not less than 129 years. Only these traditional antagonisms explain the fact that, as the Congress eye-witness K. Madhavan Nayar pointed out,<sup>1</sup> immediately after the outbreak of rebellion and before the advent of the military made it possible for Hindus generally to render help to the Government side, it was the property of Hindus that was singled out for mulcting, and that even before 20 August 1921 the call of the founders of the first Moplah raj at Pukkotur had been for the death of all kafirs.<sup>2</sup>

That the swaraj the 'fanatic zone' Moplah intended even before August 1921 was Moplah raj was openly suggested in a notice in the name of Aminummanakath Parikutti Moulvi, the Secretary of the Tanur Khilafat Committee, distributed before the rising and couched in terms which must have given pause to even the most gullible victim of the Congress propaganda that the Ernad Moplah was a convert to the principles of Hindu-Muslim unity:

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1 Telegram, 4 Jan. 1922 to Hindu, 5 Jan. 1922, p. 3.

2 Statement of Palakal Karunakara Menon, son of Kirathadasan, late Nilambur Tirumulpad, 10 Aug. 1921, G.R.F. Tottenham (ed.), loc. cit., p. 35.

"it is the bounden duty of all Muslims to endeavour in attaining Swaraj for all Muslims ... and to non-co-operate with the other religionists who are enemies of our religion."<sup>1</sup>

As the District Magistrate noted in March 1921 "the talk of Hindu-Muslim unity was nonsense and the main idea was the vision of swaraj and Malabar for the Mapilla and the Mapilla alone".<sup>2</sup> Certainly it soon became apparent with the outbreak of rebellion<sup>2</sup> that the swaraj the Moplah insurgent fought for owed little to the national leadership of the non-co-operation movement. Indeed, when K.P. Kesava Menon, the Secretary of the Kerala Congress Committee, soon after 20 August 1921 appealed to the Moplah mobs in Ernad for peace and order in the name of Gandhi, he was told that the Mahatma was a kafir and that they would never follow him. When they were appealed to in the name of the Ali brothers, the reply was that they would not follow those who followed a kafir.<sup>3</sup> During the rising the 'cause of Islam' or 'the Khilafat' in the name of which the rebels openly fought<sup>4</sup>

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1 Notice, 16 July 1921, copy in MPP No. 514 (Conf.), 15 Aug. 1921, p. 7.

2 Letter of 5 Mar. 1921 quoted in extracts from fortnightly reports from Govt. of Madras to Govt. of India, G.R.F. Tottenham (ed.), loc. cit., p. 4. Police Supt. Hitchcock agreed (ibid.).

3 T. Prakasam and T.V. Venkatarama Iyer, 'Report on the Malabar Disturbances', Sept. 1921, Indian Annual Register, 1922-23, Vol. II, p. 829.

4 Letter to 'C. Kunhalavi and friends' signed by 'K. Kuttu, O. Ahammad Kutti and K. Syedali Kutti', found 28 Nov. 1921 on the body of a rebel at Nannambra, Hitchcock, loc. cit., p. 119; demi-official report of F.B. Evans, 10 Oct. 1921, G.R.F. Tottenham (ed.), loc. cit. p. 248; evidence in District Magistrate's Court, 8 Apr. 1922, MPP No. 1049 (Conf.), 16 Dec. 1922, p. 3, MRO; letter in hand-writing of Unni Moideen

was , more prosaically, the cause of the Ernad Moplah, and the setting up of a Khilafat Kingdom was understood to entail a raj governed by the Moplah.<sup>1</sup> As the insurgents did not fail to proclaim, it was the Moplahs who had captured the 'fanatic zone' and they were now the 'Kings'.<sup>2</sup>

No régime of Moplah justice in Ernad could fail to deal with the problem which was of such fundamental concern to the Muslim rural population of interior south Malabar ever since the start of British rule: that of the power of the high-caste Hindu jenmi. It is recorded that in one part of Ernad the

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Kutty, n.d., exhibit G, Case No. 12 of 1923, Court of Special Judge, Calicut, Referred Trial No. 44 of 1923, p. 58, MHCA; letter from Karat Moydin Kutti Haji to Syed Mammad Koya Thangal [the Konara Tangal], n.d., exhibit H, ibid., p. 59; deposition of P.W. No. 2, Vattamanna Meluveetil Madhava Paniker, 10 Apr. 1922, Case No. 26 of 1922, Court of Special Judge, Referred Trial No. 64 of 1922, p. 5, MHCA; deposition of P.W. No. 2, V. Changaru, 30 Mar. 1921, Case No. 25A of 1922, Court of Special Judge, kept with Referred Trial No. 64 of 1922, p. 13, MHCA; deposition of P.W. No. 6, Nalakath Kunhi Pokker, 5 Aug. 1922, Case No. 151 of 1922, Court of Session, South Malabar, Criminal Appeal No. 1493 of 1922, p. 19, MHCA; deposition of P.W. No. 2, Tenat Raman Nair, 28 June 1922, Case No. 78 of 1922, Court of Special Judge, Referred Trial No. 106 of 1922, p. 3, MHCA; K. Madhavan Nayar, Malabar Kalapam, pp. 148-49.

1 Deposition of P.W. No. 2, M.K. Achuthan Nayar, 19 July 1922, Case No. 30 of 1926, Court of Session, South Malabar, Referred Trial No. 56 of 1926, p. 4, MHCA; cross-examination of P.W. No. 1, K. Karunakara Nair, 27 June 1922, Case No. 119 of 1922, Court of Special Judge, Calicut, Referred Trial No. 117 of 1922, p. 3, MHCA.

2 See for example deposition of P.W. No. 1, Karumarakadan Raman, [Summary Court Martial?] Case No. 2, Oorangattiri, n.d., MPP No. 9 (Conf.), 5 Jan. 1924, p. 3, MRO; deposition of P.W. No. 2, M. Chiruthevi Amma, 2 Feb. 1923, Case No. 11 of 1923, Court of Special Judge, Calicut, Referred Trial No. 34 of 1923, p. 4, MHCA; statement of Kozhithodi Ayyappan, n.d., District Magistrate's proceedings [1 Sept. 1922?], MPP No. 542, 30 July 1924, p. 8, MRO.

local Moplahs began their rising with the statement: "'We want only jenmis and amsom officials; we don't want to injure others'".<sup>1</sup> Reports from Malabar at the beginning of the rising indicated that, from the first, talk of Khilafat raj had been associated in the mind of the Ernad Moplah with freedom from the exactions of the Malayali landlord.<sup>2</sup> Indeed, the moment British authority was eliminated in the 'fanatic zone' there disappeared with it the power of the jenmi to enforce any sort of demand on the Moplah rural community except in a few isolated instances, such as that of the Mankada kovilagam (palace) which was able to rally enough dependents to its support to save it from the rebels until the British could return in force.<sup>3</sup> The collapse of jenmi power brought with it a settling of accounts which was perhaps the most universal and spontaneous phenomenon of the rising. In almost every locality in the south Malabar interior the first impulse of almost the entire adult male

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1 Deposition of P.W. No. 4, P. Chathunni, 5 Feb. 1923, Case No. 77, Court of Special Judge, Calicut, Referred Trial No. 47, p. 13, MHCA. The area was that of Kizhuparamba in north Ernad. The Moplahs showed little respect for this intention.

2 Letter from an un-named Govt. officer, quoted in speech of Sir W. Vincent, 5 Sept. 1921, Council of State Debates (Official Report), Vol. II, 2nd Session, 1921, p. 92.

3 Hitchcock, loc. cit., pp. 70 and 152; T. Austin, Subdivisional Magistrate, Malappuram to District Magistrate, 2 Sept. 1921, G.R.F. Tottenham (ed.), loc. cit., p. 83; F.B. Evans, 'Note on operations from 26 Aug. 1921 to 6 Sept. 1921', ibid., p. 235; demi-official reports of Evans, 7 Oct. 1921 and 14 Dec. 1921, ibid., pp. 247 and 275; Correspondent, Palghat, 19 and 21 Sept. 1921, Madras Mail, 20 and 22 Sept. 1921, p. 6; a Correspondent, ibid., 13 Sept. 1921, p. 6; petition of K.K. Vikkaran Eradi /a jenmi/ to Malabar Collector, 11 Sept. 1921, exhibit B, Case No. 155A of 1922, Court of Senior Special Judge, Calicut, Criminal Appeal No. 48 of 1922, p. 10, MHCA.

Moplah populace was to proceed en masse to the residence of their big local high-caste Hindu landlord, creditor and employer for the exercise of their newly-won ascendancy.<sup>1</sup> In an orgy of Nemesis every conceivable manifestation of jenmi hubris to Moplahs over the preceding epoch was repaid with interest in a matter of a few days following 20 August 1921. The Moplah raiding parties exacted as they pleased;<sup>2</sup> humiliated where they thought fit;<sup>3</sup> used violence when resisted<sup>4</sup> and, as a most radical expedient, denuded the countryside of their antagonists by driving them out.<sup>5</sup>

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1 Communiqué of District Magistrate, Malabar, quoted in Viceroy (Home Dept.) to India Office (tel.), 27 Aug. 1921, item 14, Parliamentary Papers, Vol. 26, Cmd. 1552, 1921, p. 10; Madras Mail, 13 Sept. 1921, p. 5; K.K.M., writing from Bethathputhiyangadi, 28 Aug. 1921, Hindu (weekly), 1 Sept. 1921, p. 16; Diwan of Cochin to Govt. of Madras, 30 Aug. 1921, G.R.F. Tottenham (ed.), loc. cit., p. 67; Malabar Magistrate to Govt. of Madras (tel.), 14 Sept. 1921, ibid., p. 169; deposition of P.W. K. Rammunny Kurup, 6 June 1922, Case No. 62 of 1922, Court of Special Magistrate, Malabar, Criminal Appeal No. 1188 of 1922, p. 2, MHCA.

2 Judgement, Case No. 9 of 1922, Court of Special Judge, Calicut, 30 Mar. 1922, Hitchcock, loc. cit., pp. 319-20; Madras Mail, 26 Aug. 1921, p. 5; Hindu (weekly), 25 Aug. 1921, p. 12; Malabar Magistrate to Govt. of Madras, 25 Aug. 1921, G.R.F. Tottenham (ed.), loc. cit., p. 71; K. Madhavan Nayar, Malabar Kalapam, p. 150.

3 Hindu (weekly), 29 Sept. 1921, p. 18.

4 Judgement, Case No. 40 of 1921, Court of Special Tribunal, Calicut, 21 Nov. 1921, Hitchcock, loc. cit., p. 322; Madras Mail, 25 Aug. 1921, p. 5 and 26 Aug. 1921, p. 5.

5 Hitchcock, loc. cit., pp. 3, 71 and 152; extracts of account of Tuvvur adhigari of events there early in the rebellion, in F.B. Evans, 'Notes on the Moplah Rebellion', 27 Mar. 1922, MPP No. 682, 22 Aug. 1922, p. 19, MRO; demi-official report of District Magistrate, 19 Oct. 1921, G.R.F. Tottenham (ed.), loc. cit., p. 222; answer of S.P. O'Donnell, Sec., Govt. of India (Home), to question of Raja Moti Chand, 28 Mar. 1922, extract from Council of State Debates, L/PJ/6/1769, 2771/22.

Only the widespread Moplah destruction of title-deeds, promissory notes and other legal paraphernalia<sup>1</sup> had perhaps no very exact parallel in jenmi usage.

A typical example of the Moplah's handling of the jenmi came on 23 September 1921 before the Special Tribunal set up under the Martial Law régime and was widely reported in the Madras press. Immediately after the retreat of the Collector's party from Tirurangadi on 21 August 1921 the residence at Muthoor, Ponnani taluk, of a big jenmi, Parameswaran Nambudiri was visited by a crowd of 100-150 people of the locality, all, except for 2 or 3 Cherumas, being Moplahs and a good proportion tenants of the Nambudiri. Despite the prohibition on their entering the residence of a Brahmin, the crowd forced its way inside, treating the inmates, including the females in purdah, with familiarity and contempt. Despite his prostrations the Nambudiri was beaten and looted, and documents relating to landed property, and money dealings of estimated value Rs. 10,000 were destroyed.<sup>2</sup>

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1 Hitchcock, loc. cit., p. 154; judgement, Case No. 40 of 1921, Court of Special Tribunal, Calicut, 21 Nov. 1921, ibid., p. 322; Madras Mail, 24 Aug. 1921, p. 5, 7 Sept. 1921 p. 5 and 8 Sept. 1921 p. 5; K.K.M., writing from Bethathputhiyangadi, 28 Aug. 1921, Hindu (weekly), 1 Sept. 1921, p. 16; interview with M. Govindan Menon, an amin in Parappanangadi Munsif's Court in 1921, Parappanangadi, 1 Jan. 1975; judgement, Case No. 1 of 1921, 26 Sept. 1921, Court of Special Tribunal, MPP No. 222 (Conf.), 16 Mar. 1926, p. 47, MRO; petition of Narayanan Nayar, 25 Nov. 1921, exhibit B, Cases No. 116 and 116A of 1922, Court of Special Judge, Calicut, Referred Trial No. 37 of 1923, p. 37, MHCA; depositions of P.W.s No. 2, 3 and 4, Pavoov Velu Nayar, Aloor Ittiri Nayar and Arukkat Velu Nayar, 13 Mar. 1922, Case No. 42 of 1922, Court of Special Judge, Criminal Appeal No. 328 of 1922, p. 9, MHCA.

2 Special Correspondent, Calicut, 23 Sept. 1921, Madras Mail, 24 Sept. 1921, p. 8 and Hindu (weekly), 29 Sept. 1921, p. 18.

In view of the murderous treatment of the jenmi during the long history of the Moplah outbreak it might appear remarkable that, despite every opportunity, the 'fanatic zone' Moplahs refrained from killing more than a tiny handful of landlords in the few days the area was completely at their mercy after 20 August 1921.<sup>1</sup> This phenomenon is indeed extraordinary if the interpretation of the Moplah outbreak depends on the appeal to such unadorned agencies as 'fanaticism' and 'homicidal mania'.<sup>2</sup> On the other hand if, as argued above<sup>3</sup> the blood-letting the outbreak entailed was part of a terrorisation of the dominant high-caste Hindu, deemed unavoidable in circumstances which permitted little other opportunity for challenging his ascendancy, the apparent complete destruction of that power would render murder a vanity. The entire history of the rivalry between 'fanatic zone' Moplah and local jenmi power was one of a struggle over the control of local resources,

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1 Malabar Magistrate to G.R.F. Tottenham, Under Sec., Govt. of Madras, 5 Oct. 1921, MPP No. 1086 (Conf.), 27 Dec. 1922, p. 2, MRO; Viceroy (Home Dept.) to India Office (tel.), 27 Aug. 1921, item 14, Parliamentary Papers, Vol. 26, Cmd. 1552, 1921, p. 10. See also demi-official report of District Magistrate, 19 Oct. 1921, G.R.F. Tottenham (ed.), loc. cit., p. 222 for the start of the rebellion in the Arikkod area. It had been the assumption of officialdom at the first outbreak of violence after 20 August 1921 that the Nambudiri and Nair jenmis faced massacre, see for example Willingdon to Reading, 28 Aug. 1921, Willingdon Papers, Vol. 5, p. 63 and Willingdon to Sec. of State Montagu, 27 Aug. 1921, ibid., Vol. 4, p. 225.

2 See for example Hitchcock, loc. cit., p. 10; Govt. of U.K., Statement Exhibiting the Moral and Material Progress and Condition of India in 1921, p. 73; M. Hammick, Insp.-Gen. of Police, to Chief Sec., 9 June 1896, L/PJ/6/433, 2060/96, MJP No. 1567, 30 Sept. 1896, p. 87.

3 See Chapter 1.

basically the agrarian. For the short space of time between the defeat of the Collector's party at Tirurangadi and the return of the British Government in force these resources lay in the hands of the interior south Malabar Muslim and the jenmi existed only on Moplah sufferance. For a fleeting moment of history the Ernad Moplah experienced almost complete victory in his struggle with the jenmi.

It is true that, after this initial stage of the Moplah rising, the few jenmis who remained in the rebellion area became increasingly liable to murder at the hands of the rebels.<sup>1</sup> To some extent this is explicable in terms of the increasing insurgent hostility to Hindus as a whole as the rebellion took its course<sup>2</sup>. As non-Muslims with a very definite background of allegiance to the British Raj the Nambudiri or Nair jenmi was an obvious assassination target for a movement increasingly concerned with the elimination of all potential support for the Government in the south Malabar interior.<sup>3</sup> On the other hand the murder of jenmis after the earliest stage of the rising must in certain cases be traced directly to agrarian disputes. One instance seems to have been the slaughter on 14 November 1921

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1 Ibid., p. 75; judgement, Case No. 92 of 1922, Court of Special Judge, Malappuram, 30 June 1922, ibid., pp. 255-56; Malabar Magistrate to G.R.F. Tottenham, Under Sec., Govt. of Madras, 31 Oct. 1921, MPP No. 1086 (Conf.), 27 Dec. 1922, p. 3, MRO.

2 See above p. 376.

3 For instances of murders best explained in this light see statements of Karat Moideen Kutti Haji, 24 May 1922, Hitchcock, loc. cit., p. 188 and of Abuvoker Musaliar, 9 Aug. 1922, ibid., p. 197.



of almost the entire household (of 9 persons) of P. Narayanan Nair, a wealthy landlord of Nannambra along with the destruction of all his registered documents, promissory notes and vouchers of unsecured debts, by a gang of Moplahs, who were tenants of his with a record of litigation and ill-feeling between them and the Nair.<sup>1</sup> The collapse of Moplah hegemony and the advancing threat of victory of the power which had always sustained the authority of the jenmi would naturally dictate a method of dealing with the Ernad landlord in a fashion other than that which left him and his family intact with the chance of regaining his old ascendancy. The murder of jenmis was always a resort of desperation in the face of massive British power, whether in the outbreak period or in the final stages of collapse of the 1921-22 rebellion.

### Location

Since the rebellion of 1921-22 represented the Moplah rural dweller's attempt to carry through a definitive solution of the problem of British-supported high-caste Hindu ascendancy, the insurrection was sustained by the local population only in those places where a Muslim agriculturalist population of considerable size was confronted with jenmi power at its most overweening. The rising was never at any stage an urban phenomenon. Of the 1,570 rebels incarcerated in Bellary Camp during 1921 no

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1 Judgement, 17 Feb. 1922, Cases No. 116 and 116A of 1922, Court of Special Judge, Calicut, Referred Trial No. 37 of 1923, pp. 1 and 3, MHCA; petition of Narayanan Nayar, 25 Nov. 1921, exhibit B, ibid., p. 37. See also Hitchcock, loc. cit., pp. 289-91.

less than 80 per cent were returned as 'engaged in agriculture and with animals',<sup>1</sup> a figure higher than the proportion of the total Moplah population of Malabar pursuing such occupations.<sup>2</sup> The large Moplah population of Calicut, though by no means generally enthusiastic about British rule, and though under some pressure from rebels from outside the town to participate in the rising, never in fact did so.<sup>3</sup> The Moplahs of Ponnani town, though they had made it a centre of the Khilafat agitation before 20 August 1921, were so unwilling to countenance insurrection that a party of leading citizens, both Khilafat and anti-Khilafat, were able at the outset to turn away the insurgents from the town.<sup>4</sup> Nowhere, even in rural areas of the most overbearing landlordism, where Moplahs were few did the rising find local sustenance,<sup>5</sup> and despite the absence of physical barrier

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1 'Statement showing details of Convicts admitted into Bellary Camp during 1921', Report on Administration of Jails, Madras Presidency, 1921, P/11256, ML(G)P No. 1588, 27 June 1922, pp. 30-31.

2 According to the 1921 census 60.3 per cent of Malabar Moplahs were definitely engaged in agriculture (in the categories 'agricultural labourer', 'cultivators', 'landowners and tenants' and 'plantation workers'), though a proportion of the 10.3 per cent returned in the category 'others' might have been agricultural workers. 61.5 per cent of the total Malabar population was supported by agriculture. G.T. Boag, Census of India, 1921, Vol. XIII, Pt. I, pp. 216-22 and 206.

3 Answer of Sir Wm. Vincent, Home Member, Govt. of India, to question of Mahmood Schamnad Sahib Bahadur, 11 Feb. 1922, Legislative Assembly Debates, Official Report, 1922, Vol. II, Part II, p. 2345; Hitchcock, loc. cit., pp. 40-41; District Magistrate to Govt. of Madras (tel.), 23 Aug. 1921, G.R.F. Tottenham (ed.), loc. cit. p. 58.

4 See above p. 321.

5 Viceroy (Home Dept.) to India Office (tel.), 30 Aug. 1921, L/PJ/6/1782, 5364/21 in 1/22; Madras Mail, 27 Aug. 1921, p. 7, 29 Aug. 1921, pp. 7 and 8 and 19 Dec. 1921, p. 7.

or adequate military force<sup>1</sup> the rebellion failed to spread into such largely Hindu rural tracts as southern Walluvanad and Palghat taluks. The dynamo from which all the energy of insurrection was generated was located in the traditional 'fanatic zone' of Ernad, northern Walluvanad and the adjoining parts of Ponnani taluk where the most acute Moplah-jenmi antagonism had produced outbreak after outbreak over a preceding period of some eight or nine decades.<sup>2</sup>

In fact the 'rebellion zone' of 1921-22 coincided very nearly with the old 'outbreak zone' except in a few districts, most notably the eastern part of Calicut taluk, which overlapped into those rural areas, identified above<sup>3</sup> as coastal and northern Malabar, with a considerable proportion of Moplahs but where the jenmi stood out less clearly as an oppressor. It was in the coastal and northern parts of rural Malabar, where, even if he faced it less disadvantageously than in the 'fanatic zone', the Moplah agriculturalist still confronted jenmi power, that during the period 1836-1919 there was always the possibility of Moplahs occasionally<sup>4</sup> being infected with the 'fanatical' spirit which produced outbreaks so frequently in Ernad. Under these circumstances the chance of the 1921-22 rebellion spreading beyond the

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1 Hitchcock, loc. cit., p. 1.

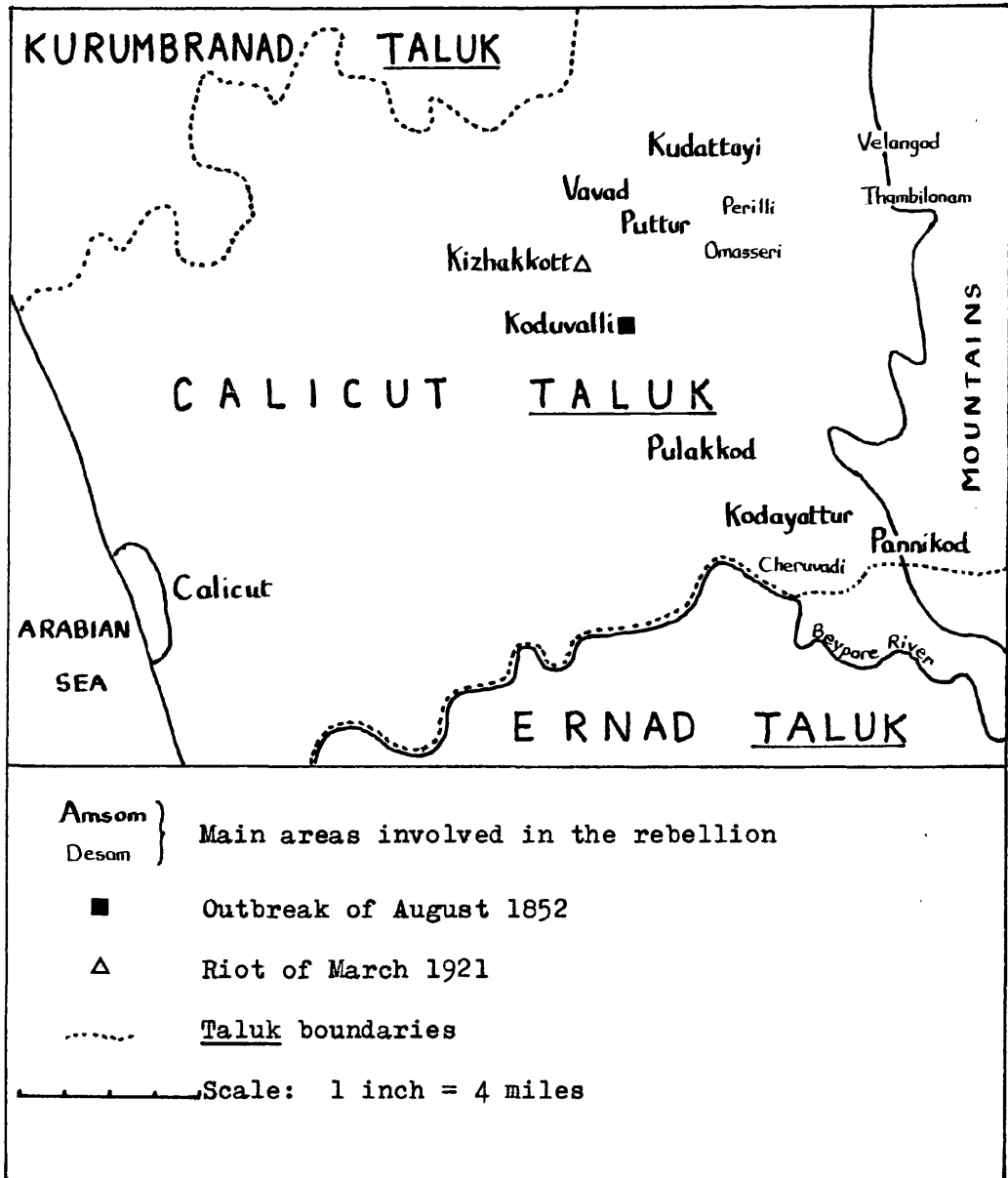
2 Hitchcock, loc. cit., pp. 54 and 138; F.B. Evans, 'Note on the Rebellion', 15 Mar. 1922, G.R.F. Tottenham (ed.), loc. cit., p. 48; demi-official report of G.O.C. Madras to Govt. of Madras, 1 Dec. 1921, ibid., p. 160; interview with Sir Thomas Austin, 20 Mar. 1974.

3 See p. 115.

4 For examples see above p. 28.

MAP TO SHOW THE AREA OF CALICUT TALUK INVOLVED IN THE

1921-22 REBELLION\*



\* Main source of information Hitchcock, loc. cit., pp. 79-80 and 127-34; statement of Palakkamthodi Abuvoker Musaliar of Puttur amsom, Calicut taluk, 9 Aug. 1922, ibid., pp. 197-98.

bounds of the 'fanatic zone' was always greatest in the case of those rural areas, heavily populated with Moplahs, which were contiguous with the initial zone of insurrection. Indeed the beginning of the rising in the south Malabar interior was accompanied by clear signs of rural Moplah unrest in the coastal strip of Ponnani taluk and to the north of Ernad.<sup>1</sup> In the event no locally-sustained challenge to British rule materialised in these areas until in October 1921 Karat Moideen Kutti Haji and the Konara Tangal fomented the rebellion in the eastern parts of Calicut taluk.<sup>2</sup> Although this was one of those rural areas in which Moplahs, whilst forming a high proportion of the inhabitants, had rarely perpetrated 'fanatical' outbreaks,<sup>3</sup>

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1 O/C Madras to General Staff Branch, Army H.Q., (secret), 10 Sept. 1921, L/PJ/6/1782, 6552/21 in 1/22; Hitchcock, loc. cit., pp. 25, 137 and 144; Madras Mail, 18 Oct. 1921, p. 6; answer of Sir Wm. Vincent to question of Mahmood Schammad Sahib Bahadur, 11 Feb. 1922, Legislative Assembly Debates, Official Report, 1922, Vol. II, Part II, pp. 2345-46; F.B. Evans, 'Note on the Rebellion', 15 Mar. 1922, G.R.F. Tottenham (ed.), loc. cit., p. 48; Postmaster-General, Madras to Govt. of Madras, (tel.), 25 Aug. 1921, ibid., p. 59.

2 Hitchcock, loc. cit., pp. 73, 79-80 and 138; Lord Rawlinson, Commander-in-Chief, India, Conf. Report on Operations in Malabar, 20 Aug. 1921 to 25 Feb. 1922, 6 Oct. 1922, L/PJ/6/1782, 6096/22 in 1/22, p. 7; F.B. Evans, 'Note on the Rebellion', 15 Mar. 1922, G.R.F. Tottenham (ed.), loc. cit., p. 50. See map p. 390. British officials at least once before (at the time of the disarming of south Malabar in 1885) had apparently selected this part of Calicut taluk, which adjoined Ernad, as that section most likely to be affected by the recalcitrance shown by the Moplah further south, see W. Logan, Malabar Magistrate to Chief Sec., 1 May 1885, P/2634, MJP No. 1337, 21 May 1885, p. 98.

3 The one occasion was the Koduvalli outbreak of August 1852, see above p. 17.

Table to show the high proportion of Muslims in the amsoms of Calicut taluk chiefly involved in the 1921-22 Rebellion<sup>1</sup>

<u>1</u> <u>Amsom</u>	<u>2</u> <u>Hindus</u>	<u>3</u> <u>Muslims</u>	<u>4</u> <u>Total</u>	<u>Percentage,</u> <u>Col.3 to Col.4</u>
Kodayattur	603	2553	3156	81
Koduvalli	590	1898	2488	76
Kudattayi	373	567	940	60
Pannikod	1049	1085	2134	51
Pulakkod	1527	1032	2559	40
Puttur	1213	1845	3058	60
Vavad	771	1826	2597	70

there can be no doubt that the local Muslim population here willingly participated in the attempt to establish Moplah rule in the face of the power both of the Raj and the jenmi. This was, indeed, the same area in which the riot by 'Khilafat' Moplahs at Kizhakkot had been staged against local Hindus in March 1921<sup>2</sup>. At the same time just as the Kizhakkot Moplahs had found the ministrations of a 'fanatic zone' Mussaliar necessary before openly challenging local authority, the Moplahs of eastern Calicut taluk generally were only induced to rebel under the influence of external prompting. Such a drastic challenge to authority as insurrection was offered by the eastern Calicut Moplahs only when stimulus and even leadership were provided by the Moplah raj which had already been established with

1 Govt. of Madras, Census of 1921: Village Statistics, Malabar District, Madras Presidency, pp. 2-6.

2 See above p. 250. Some Kizhakkot Moplahs later played a prominent part in the rebellion, though the amsom itself was apparently not involved, Hitchcock, loc. cit., p. 25.

no outside direction in that part of Malabar which for so long had been the stronghold of resistance to the Government and the powerful high-caste Hindu: Ernad taluk.<sup>1</sup>

### Conclusion

Every salient characteristic of the rebellion of 1921-22 demonstrated its shaping by patterns of mobilisation dictated, by local circumstances hostile to extensive organisation on a regular and methodical basis, to a community wanting the more spacious secular modes of contact available to the social groups forming the leadership of the non-co-operation movement. Preparation was almost wholly immaterial and consisted in an emboldening incitation, which, at the crucial moments in the march towards insurrection, at Pukkotur on 1 August 1921 and at Tirurangadi on 20 August 1921, drew on the invocation of the traditional appeal of Moplah solidarity. Organisation was of the greatest efficiency in the smallest local arenas between which the attempted co-ordination was posited on the claims of a communal identity. Leadership was parochial in its appointment and sacerdotal in its legitimacy. Support was confined within the boundaries of community. Prosecution was increasingly responsive to the infatuations of prejudice at the expense of the dictates of calculation. Location was a function less of the vicinity of inordinate

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1 Hitchcock, loc. cit., pp. 17 and 127; statement of Abuvoker Musaliar, 9 Aug. 1922, ibid., p. 197; demi-official report of F.B. Evans, 3 Nov. 1921, G.R.F. Tottenham (ed.), loc. cit. p. 258; E.V. Amu, Deputy Supt. of Police, Calicut to Supt. of Police, 17 June 1922, Govt. of Madras, Under Sec.'s Safe, Secret No. 360, 5 Sept. 1922, MRO; report of Calicut Insp. of Police, 24 Nov. 1922, MPP No. 907, 28 Nov. 1923, p. 4, MRO.

landlord power than of the diocese of local Islam. The Malabar rebellion of 1921-22 was the rising of disadvantaged and confined interior south Malabar Islam.



CHAPTER 6Conclusion

From at least as early as the time when Sir Thomas Munro as Commissioner in Malabar had expressed his conviction that the lower orders "always follow the impulse given by their superiors"<sup>1</sup> the tendency to conceive the lowly Muslim rural-dweller of Ernad as a mere pawn had constantly recurred in the ruminations of officialdom on the problem of the Moplah. When the low rustic Moplah perpetrated his 'fanatical' outbreak against high-caste Hindu power it was because his spiritual 'master' the Tangal or his immediate secular 'overlord' the big kanamdar intermediary was manipulating him.<sup>2</sup> When the possibility of rebellion by the same low Ernad Moplahs was considered in 1880, it was rejected as impossible without the supply of the supposed absence of leadership and organisation.<sup>3</sup> When 1921 saw the subaltern Ernad Moplah rise in his tens of thousands against the Raj, it had to be, for some officials, a result of the machination of the priesthood and/or Congress conspiracy.<sup>4</sup>

This recurring inability to appreciate that the lower-order Ernad Moplah, besides having very material grievances of his own, was quite capable of mobilising in the attempt to resolve them, certainly tended to vitiate official interpretation of

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1 See above p. 94.

2 See above pp 69 and 90.

3 See above p. 150.

4 See above pp 284 and 330.

Moplah violence. It also might therefore handicap British attempts to frame policies adequate to the task of preventing such turbulence. The tendency in the mid-19th century of official rationale of the violence in Ernad to rely on the positing of a perverse fanaticism of the lower-order Moplah, fomented by the priesthood and directed by the more substantial Moplah laity, resulted in punitive policies which, whilst rendering Moplah combativeness less frequent could not eliminate its expression. Only when the threat of rebellion in 1880 resulted in the enquiries which produced the measures of 1887-1900, designed to give wide sections of the rural subordinate a degree of legitimate defence against the landlord, did Moplah violence cease until such a time as the bulwark of legislation had been severely attenuated by jenmi counteraction. The resurgence in 1915 of the pugnacity of the low Ernad Moplah seemed however of insufficient menace to induce a reassessment of his potency by the administration. It seems that it was the idea in 1917 that it was the jenmi rather than the tenant who was the key to political safety in Malabar which prevented the Government of Madras acceding to the pressure for agrarian reforms in favour of the tenant which might have forestalled insurrection four years later.<sup>1</sup>

The 1921-22 rebellion occurred not because non-co-operator or other manipulators had provided a blueprint of insurrection to organise Moplah 'fanaticism'. It occurred because the Ernad

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1 See above p. 222.

Moplah, with grievances unresolved, because the administration was prepared to take his subordination for granted, had for long been waiting for a sign of the prostration of the power which sustained the jenmi, and in August 1921 the omens seemed sufficiently clear that the moment of opportunity had arrived. The blossoming of organisational talent that marked the removal of British authority in the south Malabar interior after 20 August 1921 was a demonstration that the inferior Ernad Moplah was no mere object passively available for external manipulation. It is true that rebel organisation was, in conformity with the traditional dictates of local circumstance, of most substance at the lowest levels of precinct over which mere suzerainty was the aspiration. Even so, the organisation and leadership of the 1921-22 rebellion, whilst chiefly parochial was by no means ineffective and was certainly an indigenous accomplishment. The fact that Moplah rebels not uncommonly saw themselves as 'Khilafat people' and their rule as 'Khilafat raj'<sup>1</sup> was no indication that the rising owed anything much more to the Khilafat non-co-operation movement than some symbols and the trigger to insurrection of the belief in victory. What it did signify was the identification of the insurgents with a community Islamic in definition.

But the fact that the disadvantaged Ernad Moplah could mobilise without external support only via the community of religion rather than through purpose-built organs of struggle

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1 See above p.380.

could be an impediment to the resolution of his anti-jenmi grievances. The fact that the Ernad disturbances of 1915 seemed directed against the apostate and the rule of the 'infidel' rather than against the jenmi did not help those who afterwards argued for legislation in favour of the tenant.<sup>1</sup> The fact that the leadership of the movement which in 1921 precipitated the Ernad Moplah's rebellion, as a result of that leadership's own partly antagonistic relationship with the Moplah, failed to provide the more modern methods of organisation which he so patently lacked was of paramount importance in the defeat of the 1921-22 challenge for power. whilst meeting with intoxicating success against both Government and the jenmi in its initial stages, the insurrection could not extend beyond the realm of Moplah numerical profusion, even within which the non-Muslim section of the population generally shrank in aversion from a régime to which they might easily fall victim. The very means of organising defiance of authority, dependent as it was on a rallying to the call of communal solidarity, was one guarantee of the isolation which in the end proved fatal to the Moplah rebellion.

But although, as an attempt to establish Moplah raj, the rebellion proved abortive, there are grounds for supposing that the rising of 1921-22 was not entirely a failure in the context of the attempt of the Ernad Moplah to resolve his traditional grievances. Though it might be unreasonable to

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1 See above p.222.

expect official confirmation of the fact, it seems reasonable to suppose that the fact of the Moplah rebellion having occurred influenced official response to the pressure for agrarian reform which had been evident since before the rising. In 1930 official assent was given to a Malabar Tenancy Act<sup>1</sup> which represented the first step to curb jenmi power taken by the authorities since the legislation of 1887-1900, itself the product of a preceding history of Moplah violence.

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1 Fort St. George Gazette, 25 Nov. 1930, pp. 443-68.

APPENDIX 1INTERVIEWS MADE USE OF IN THE THESIS

<u>Date</u>	<u>Place</u>	<u>Medium</u>	<u>Person interviewed</u>
1 20 Mar. 1974	Wimbledon	English	Sir Thomas Austin Sub-divisional Magistrate, Malappuram in 1921. Cut off in Malappuram by rebels 20-26 August 1921. Afterwards active in the suppression of the rebellion.
2 21 Aug. 1974	Guildford	English	E.H. Colebrook In charge of rubber estate at Karuvarakundu for 8 months before the rebellion at the outbreak of which he escaped over the Nilgiris. Served with the Malabar Special Force in the suppression of the rebellion from October 1921.
3 6 Dec. 1974	Kozhikode	English	Jenab A. Muhammed Sahib Originated from Vadakkad, south Ponnani taluk. In 1921 at 19 years old, was Congress Secretary of Kottayam taluk, north Malabar where he organised Khilafat and non-co-operation committees. Was a student delegate at Ottapalam Conference, April 1921. Arrested in Calicut 27 August 1921. Was in contact in Cannanore jail with rebellion participants like Kunhi Qadir of Tanur. After release engaged in administering Congress relief work in rebellion zone.
4 11 Dec. 1974	Kozhikode	English	K.P. Kesava Menon Born 1886 in Palghat taluk, a member of Palghat Rajah's family. Trained at Bar in England. Joined Congress 1915. Started practice as lawyer and politician. Secretary of Calicut Congress and Home Rule League. Was Secretary of Kerala Congress when non-co-operation started. 3 weeks before rebellion went to preach non-violence in Tirurangadi after receiving report local Khilafat Moplahs making arms. At 22.30 hours 19 August 1921 heard that Collector's party had left for Ernad. Sent Muhammad Abdul Rahman, Secretary, Kerala Khilafat Committee into Ernad. 21 August 1920 himself visited Kondotti and Tirurangadi areas. Soon after, with Collector's permission went to Tirurangadi with 24 Congress workers to try to persuade Ali Mussaliar to surrender. Failed. Returned same day to Calicut.

	<u>Date</u>	<u>Place</u>	<u>Medium</u>	<u>Person interviewed</u>
5	14 Dec. 1974	Mambram	Malayalam <u>via</u> translator	A.P. Kunhahamed Native place Kolappuram, close to Mambram. 21 years old in 1921.  Cultivated 3 acres paddy land on <u>verumpattom</u> directly under <u>jenmi</u> . Participated in Khilafat movement but not a member. Was one of Ali Mussaliar's volunteers. Was in one of the mobs which attacked Collector's party at Tirurangadi, 20 August 1921.
6	15 Dec. 1974	Tiruran- gadi	Malayalam <u>via</u> translator	K. Moideen Kutty Native place Tiruran- gadi where residing 1921. 18 years old 1921.  Khilafat volunteer and Congress member. 1921 his father was timber trader and he helped. Was taken under arrest by Collector's party from Tirurangadi to Calicut, 21 August 1921.
7	17 Dec. 1974	Kozhikode	English	K.P. Kesava Menon
8	21 Dec. 1974	Tiruran- gadi	Malayalam <u>via</u> translator	M.K. Haji Native place Tiruran- gadi. 16 years old 1921. Was one of Ali Mussaliar's volunteers in 1921. Had 'no occupation'. June 1921 left for Madras for employment.
9	21 Dec. 1974	Tiruran- gadi	Malayalam <u>via</u> translator	Chelupadan Mohammed Native place Tiruran- gadi where was seller of Moplah literature in 1921. Then 20 years old. With father was Khilafat volunteer. Present in Tirurangadi at time Collector's raid. Participated in fighting against troops at Tirurangadi, Pandikkad and Vengara during rebellion. Father shot dead by troops.
10	21 Dec. 1974	Just out- side Tiru- rangadi	Malayalam <u>via</u> translator	Kazungunthottathil Evamutti Native place Tiruran- gadi where was important cattle dealer. 54 years old in 1921(!). Brother was Khilafat member but not himself. Thought it "would not be beneficial". Not for or against it. Brother shot though not a rebellion participant.
11	23 Dec. 1974	Kakkad, Tiruran- gadi	Malayalam <u>via</u> translator	P. Unneen Native place Vengara. Was teashop-keeper in 1921.

	<u>Date</u>	<u>Place</u>	<u>Medium</u>	<u>Person interviewed</u>
12	23 Dec. 1974	Malappuram	Malayalam <u>via</u> translator	Sadhu P. Ahamed Kutty Native place Malappuram. Was 10 years old in 1921. Father Kunhahamed took refuge in Malappuram barracks on outbreak of rebellion because pro-British. Family originally a commercial one, came from Calicut 200 years ago and took <u>kanam</u> land in Malappuram area. Father 30-35 years old in 1921, native of Malappuram. Had 2 acres <u>kanam</u> land (paddy) under <u>jenmi</u> Para Nambi. Cultivated himself and with labourers. Family had had more property but reduced by subdivision in father's time. Father also trader in paddy and cloth.
13	23 Dec. 1974	Melmuri	Malayalam <u>via</u> translator	N. Kunhalavi Haji Native place Melmuri. In early teens in 1921. Father was cultivator of 15 acres paddy and garden land. Some <u>jenmom</u> land but mostly <u>kanam</u> land held from Manjeri <u>kovilagom</u> , Tamarasseri Nambudiri and Para Nambi. Land not leased out but cultivated with labourers. Father supported Khilafat movement but not a volunteer. Uncle was appointed president Khilafat committee in Melmuri. Saw father and sister taken from house and shot by British troops in rebellion.
14	23 Dec. 1974	Mundu- paramba, Malappu- ram	Malayalam <u>via</u> translator	N. Checku Native place Munduparamba. 22 years old in 1921. Labourer. Sympathiser with Khilafat agitation. Helped destroy communications at start of rebellion. Jailed for 2 years for looting.
15	27 Dec. 1974	Vellan- gad	Malayalam <u>via</u> translator	Variankunnath Ahamed Native of Vellangad. 17 years old in 1921. Khilafat movement activ- ist. Son of rebel leader Variankunnath Kunhamad Haji's brother.
16	27 Dec. 1974	Pandik- kad	Malayalam <u>via</u> translator	C.P. Moideen Haji Native of Vellangad, but in Pandikkad in 1921 when was 25 years old. Became servant to military in 1921, before which was contractor in road building, hiring labourers. Had been passive Khilafat movement supporter. Father was agricultural labourer.



	<u>Date</u>	<u>Place</u>	<u>Medium</u>	<u>Person interviewed</u>
17	27 Dec. 1974	Pandikkad	Malayalam <u>via</u> translator	K.T. Alavi Native of Anakayam, but lived in Pandikkad in 1921 when was 22 years old. Shared 2 bullock carts with his 3 brothers. Supporter of Khilafat agitation and appointed member of local Khilafat committee, though it held no meetings.
18	28 Dec. 1974	Manjeri	English	Manjeri Karnopad Was student in Calicut when rebellion broke. The local Manjeri rajah.
19	28 Dec. 1974	Anakkayam	Malayalam <u>via</u> translator	T.K. Kammunni Native of same area. 25 years old in 1921. Cultivator of 2.7 acres paddy land held from Manjeri Karnopad on <u>panayam</u> (mortgage). Cultivated with Cherumar labourers and his own labour. Attended Manjeri Conference, May 1920. Khilafat activist. Arrested for participation in attack on Manjeri Treasury in August 1921.
20	28 Dec. 1974	Anakkayam	Malayalam <u>via</u> translator	K.M. Mahomed Haji Native of Anakayam. 21 years old primary school- teacher in 1921. Son of a cultivator. Supporter Khilafat agitation. Present at Variankunnath Kunhamad Haji's distribution of pledged valu- ables at the Nambudiri Bank at Manjeri in August 1921. Did not participate in rebel hostilities.
21	1 Jan. 1975	Parappan- angadi	Malayalam <u>via</u> translator	A.E. Anandan Menon Native of Parappanangadi. 25 years old in 1921, process server in local Munsiff's Court. <u>Kanamdar</u> family. Witness to start of rebellion in Parappanangadi. Accompanied Collector's party part of way from Parappanangadi to Calicut but left because of attacks on them. Spent rest rebellion period in home area.
22	1 Jan. 1975	Parappan- angadi	Malayalam <u>via</u> translator	M. Govindan Menon Native of Parappanangadi. 25 years old in 1921, <u>amin</u> in local Munsiff's Court. <u>Kanamdar</u> family. Witness to start of rebellion in his locality.

<u>Date</u>	<u>Place</u>	<u>Medium</u>	<u>Person interviewed</u>
23 18 Mar. 1975	Adyar, Madras	English	G. Karunakara Nair Personal Assistant to District Superintendant of Police Hitchcock during rebellion and working with same in Malabar police force March-May 1921. Responsible for main- tainance of rebellion records. 1923-24 in Madras prosecuting rebellion cases in High Court.

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APPENDIX 2Summary of putative outbreak plots and quasi-outbreaks<sup>1</sup>

Date	Location	Victims		Participants
		Caste	Class	
3 Oct. 1850	Puliyakkod (Ernad)	1 Mussad (Brahmin)	<u>Jenmi</u>	4 ('thwarted' by arrest)
5 Jan. 1852	Cavaye (North Malabar, later Cherikkal <u>taluk</u> )	1 Nair	<u>Jenmi</u>	5 ('thwarted' by arrest)
28 Feb. 1852	Melmuri and Kizhumuri (Ernad)	1 Nair	<u>Jenmi</u> and moneylender	16 ('thwarted' by arrest)
14 May 1852	Tirurangadi area (Shernad)	1 Nair	<u>Peon</u> , slave- owner and sub- stantial land- owner	3 ('thwarted' by arrest)
11 Sept. 1857	Ponmala (Ernad)	1 Nair	Rich and of 'good family'	8 ('thwarted' by arrest)
17 Sept. 1865	Nemini (Walluvanad)	1 Nair	Moneylender	3 (attempted to conceal crime; arrested)
27 Mar. 1877	Irumbuzhi (Ernad)	1 Nair	Unknown	5 ('thwarted' by arrest)
20 June 1879	Paral (Walluvanad)	Intended victim not known		7 ('thwarted' by arrest)
4 Mar. 1884	Chembrasserri (Ernad)	1 Pattar (Brahmin)	<u>Jenmi</u>	2 ('thwarted' by arrest)
18 June 1884	Kizhumuri (Ernad)	1 Tien	Cooly	3 (attempted to elude authorities after commis- sion of crime; captured)

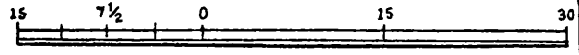
continued ...

24 Feb 1894	Pathakara (Walluvanad)	1 Tien	Unknown	12 ('thwarted' by arrest)
1 Nov. 1915	Thekkumpat (Ernad)	1 Tien	Wealthy cultivator	2 (attempted to elude authorities after commission of crime; captured)

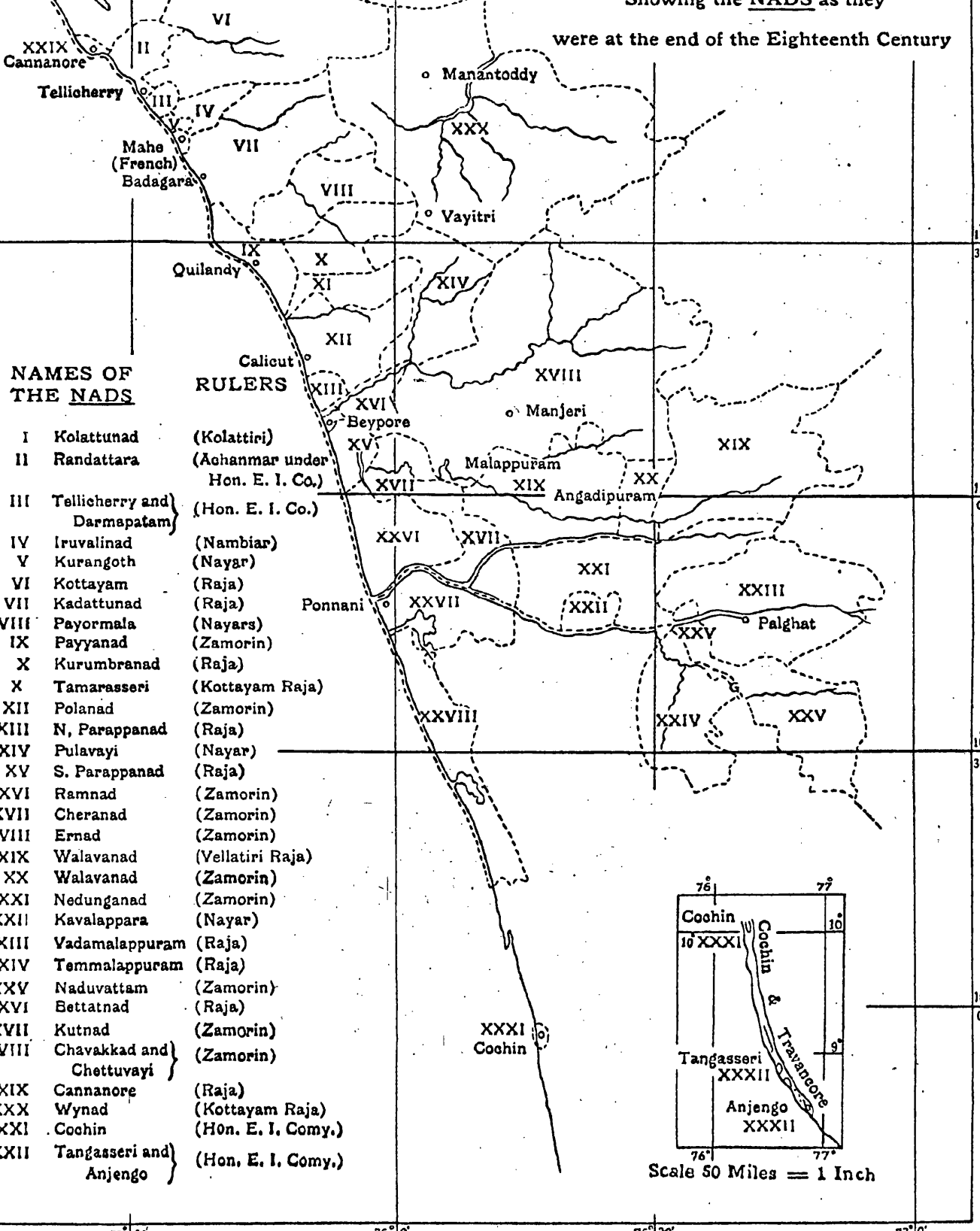
1 Chief sources: P/327/33, MJP No. 767, 3 Dec. 1850, pp. 5044-52; report of T.L. Strange, 25 Sept. 1852, P/327/60, MJP No. 483, 23 Aug. 1853, pp. 4518-75; P/327/60, MJP No. 33, 23 Apr. 1852, pp. 4507-09; P/328/24, MJP No. 1359, 16 Oct. 1857, pp. 142-47; P/328/52, MJP No. 1550, 31 Oct. 1865, pp. 1781-98 and MJP No. 1653, 20 Nov. 1865, p. 1903; P/1094, MJP No. 1134, 5 May 1877, pp. 586-98; P/1427, MJP No. 1656, 16 July 1879, pp. 1043-58; MJP Nos. 1605-11 (Conf.), 2 July 1884, pp. 3-65, MRO; P/2401, MJP Nos. 2776-81, 1 Nov. 1884, pp. 1-16; P/4620, MJP Nos. 1333-37, 1 June 1894, pp. 11-24; P/11 (Conf.), MJP No. 3008, 6 Dec. 1915, pp. 2-11.

MAP  
OF THE  
MALABAR DISTRICT

Scale 15 Miles = 1 Inch

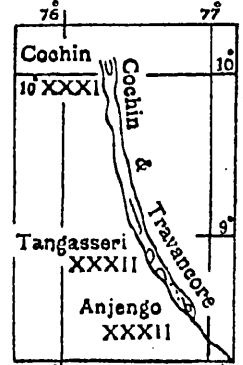


Showing the NADS as they  
were at the end of the Eighteenth Century



**NAMES OF  
THE NADS**

RULERS	
I Kolattunad	(Kolattiri)
II Randattara	(Aohanmar under Hon. E. I. Co.)
III Tellicherry and Darmapatam	(Hon. E. I. Co.)
IV Iruvalinad	(Nambiar)
V Kurangoth	(Nayar)
VI Kottayam	(Raja)
VII Kadattunad	(Raja)
VIII Payormala	(Nayars)
IX Payyanad	(Zamorin)
X Kurumbranad	(Raja)
X Tamarasseri	(Kottayam Raja)
XII Polanad	(Zamorin)
XIII N. Parappanad	(Raja)
XIV Pulavayi	(Nayar)
XV S. Parappanad	(Raja)
XVI Ramnad	(Zamorin)
XVII Cheranad	(Zamorin)
XVIII Ernad	(Zamorin)
XIX Walavanad	(Vellatiri Raja)
XX Walavanad	(Zamorin)
XXI Nedunganad	(Zamorin)
XXII Kavalappara	(Nayar)
XXIII Vadamalappuram	(Raja)
XXIV Temmalappuram	(Raja)
XXV Naduvattam	(Zamorin)
XXVI Bettatnad	(Raja)
XXVII Kutnad	(Zamorin)
XXVIII Chavakkad and Chettuvayi	(Zamorin)
XXIX Cannanore	(Raja)
XXX Wynad	(Kottayam Raja)
XXXI Cochin	(Hon. E. I. Comy.)
XXXII Tangasseri and Anjengo	(Hon. E. I. Comy.)



Scale 50 Miles = 1 Inch

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