

HIS6B11 HISTORY OF MODERN KERALA

MODULE-1

TOPIC- AGRARIAN UNREST OF 19th C MALABAR

Prepared by

Priyanka.E.K

Dept of History

Little Flower College

Guruvayoor

- Agrarian unrest of 19th C Malabar- result of new agrarian policy & revenue system of British
- New revenue system- helped landlords to exploit poor peasants
- Peasants could no longer bear atrocities – reacted violently- led to several peasant revolts especially in south Malabar in 19th C
- 95% of landlords were Hindus & majority of peasants were Mappila Muslims
- British officials & imperialist historians characterized the peasant uprising as ‘Mappila Outrages’
- British authorities in Malabar- hostile towards Muslims from the beginning of British occupation on the belief that they had helped Mysore Sultans

- So the British authorities entrusted the Hindu landlords to collect land rent from peasants- fixed share was given to company
- Landlords were given a free hand to extract land rent from the peasants as much as they could
- Hindu landlords fully utilized the situation- extracted high land rent – paved way for agrarian unrest – manifested in the form of rebellions & revolts
- Mappilas of south Malabar- felt that British authorities were basically against them
- Muslim religious leaders helped in kindling hatred among the illiterate ordinary Muslims against British
- Several revolts took place in south Malabar
- British officials Innes & Evans reported that 22 agrarian revolts took place in Malabar b/w 1836 & 1853

- All these revolts took place in south Malabar except Mattanur revolt of 1852
- T. L Strange – Commissioner to enquire the Mappila uprisings in Malabar- submitted report in 1852- reported that first revolt took place at Pantallur in 1836- two other revolts took place at Pallipuram village in Valluvanad & Mannur village in Eranadu in 1841
- Participants of revolt, Mappilas & their revolts were against their immediate oppressors, the landlords
- State intervened with the armed forces & suppressed them brutally
- 1843 witnessed similar revolts at Tirurangadi & Pandikad
- Manjeri revolt of 1849- significant for large number of peoples participation- led by Manjeri Athan Kurikkal against Raja of Nilambur, biggest landlord of south Malabar

- Immediate cause for the insurgence was the demand of Raja that all his tenants, both Hindus & Muslims must give one year rent as donation to construct a Hindu temple - not acceptable to his tenants, majority of them being Muslims
- Force was used to collect donation, the Mappila peasants reacted & resulted in insurgency
- At the request of Raja, the company forces came & suppressed the revolt
- Kulathur rebellion 1851- marked the killing of Jenmi, his assistants & moneylenders – insurgents burnt the records & documents kept at the residences of moneylender & the land lord
- British officials & imperialist historians deliberately characterised these as communal revolts
- Revolts took place against landlords ie Hindus & participants were poor peasants ie Muslims

- But it is clear that these riots were not Hindu- Muslim but land lords versus peasants
- Hindu peasants , less in number also participated
- Peasants attacked only landlords, their assistants & moneylenders
- Reported that altogether 83 persons were killed in uprisings out of which 43 were jenmies, 11 govt officials & remaining were karyasthans of jenmies & moneylenders