

THE OLD CHIEFS OF MALABAR.

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Malabar from time immemorial were divided among various chieftains who remained in-tact till about the middle of the 15th Century. Even now, the descendants of these families carry on their existence as local Jenmis, though much shorn of their power and a good part of their local glory. Many of them receive a pension from the Ruling power, British or Indian. The old spirit of Malabar survives in these families—the love, hospitality and honour coupled with the natural impracticability of hereditary nobles.

Apart from the traditionary accounts of these chieftains contained in the *Kēraḷpaṭṭi* we have good and authentic accounts left by the Dutch commandeurs or Governors at Cochin. It was the custom of these Governors to leave a memorandum of the affairs of Malabar on the eve of their retirement. These are confidential documents intended to enlighten their successors about the conditions of the strange land of Malabar. They begin with a list of the various princes and princelings among whom Malabar was divided and with whom it is advisable for a commercial company to be in politic agreement if they were to carry on commerce with advantage. Not unfrequently these accounts contained a description of the personal character of individual rulers, which counted a great deal in dealing with their states. The dissensions and quarrels are also hinted at. This will help the new Governor in dealing with them.

Many of these Memoranda are now published among the Dutch records by the Madras Government which are well worth studying by those who wish to know something of the old organisation of Malabar. For the old system continued right up to the conquest of Malabar by Hyder and the consolidation of Travancore by King *Mārṭhāṇḍa Vārma*. There is mass of records of which a selection has been published in about 14 volumes; of these only two or three has been translated by

Mr. Galetti. The rest remain untranslated and hence almost unknown to the historians of Cochin. The very first of the memoirs is by the first and most celebrated of the Dutch Governors, viz., Van Rheed, the illustrious author of *Hortus Malabaricus* or the Malabar garden, containing a description of the plants of Malabar with careful diagrams of the plants.

Van Rheed's memorandum has not been translated, and it is from the original Dutch that the following list of the Rajahs of Malabar is taken.

The Memorandum is dated A. D. 1677 (i.e., 852 M. E.). This is about 70 years before the Rajah who died in Kurikād with whose name the list in the Cochin *Panchangam* begins. The extent of each realm is expressed in terms of the number of soldiers the Chief could command,—the territorial extent not being taken into consideration. Of course there are traditional boundaries for each Nāḍ over which the individual chieftains held sway. Broadly speaking, the various branch of the Ṭrippāppi Swarūpam held sway from the Cape Comorin up to Kāyankulam. The family consisted of six branches at the time. Beginning from the extreme south of the Peninsula, (i.e.,) Cape Comorin, it was in the following order:—

(1) Ṭiruvāncūr; (2) Aṭṭungal; (3) Eḷayēdeth; (4) Perunthali (Nedumangād); (5) Dēśinganād (Quilon); and (6) Chiravāya.

Together they commanded about 2,28,000 fighting men. Of these the first mentioned family was the strongest, commanding about a lakh of men.

The next group of states were included in Ōḍaṅād. Of these the most important was Kāyankulam which commanded about 50,000 men. Attached to Kāyankulam was also Pānānvāli with about 15,000 men. In this Nāḍ was one Kṣhaṭriya chieftain, viz., Chembālanūr or Panṭalam who was the friend of the Ṭrippāpūr family as against the Kāyankulam Rajah. Panṭalam had command of only 3,000 men. In all, Ōḍaṅād commanded about a lakh of men considerably less than half the importance of Ṭrippāpūr Swarūpam, with an enemy inside.

Next comes the Kaimals of Chēṭṭuvāya of whom there were four commanding in all three thousand men.

Then there were the powerful Manayampilli Perumpula Kaimals (divided among many families) each with fifteen thousand men.

Then Vemmañād with Tekkankūr Rajahs with their 1,52,000 men and Vādakkankūr. In the former territory was the Kṣhaṭṭriya chieftain Pūññattil Perumāl. The power and privileges of the latter were divided among four families with 63,000 men. Kuṭṭaṇād was under the Chempakassēri Rajah, known more popularly as Ambalappuḷa Rajah or Puṭakkād family, with 30,000 men.

Iṭappalli Rajah with 50,000 men was a Brahmin.

Kurūr ṇād consists of:—

(1) Kurūr Swarūpam with 15,000 men.

(2) Viilārvaṭṭam with the same number. These two were Kṣhaṭṭriyas.

Perumpadappu ṇād:—There were five families each with three thousand men, thus in all 15,000.

From the list we see that at the time we are speaking, the Perumpaṭappu family was only one of the minor Rajahs in their own right though they had relation with the more powerful Kuruñād princes. Another thing we notice is that the Kṣhaṭṭriya princes were less powerful than the Sāmanṭha princes. Perumpadappu family owned the land lying between the backwater and the sea from Ponnāni up to Chērthala. The rest of the territory of what is now the Cochin State was divided among powerful feudal lords of the Perumpaṭappu swarūpam who were often more powerful than their chief as the list shows.

The list given by Van Rheed may be taken as the condition at the time of the European domination of Malabar. The 175 years of European influence was causing ferment in the body politic, though the effect was not noticeable. The Portuguese seem to have had only very slight influence inside Malabar. The Dutch with their commercial instincts had direct relations with even the minor chieftains and established a monopoly by treaties.

Then began the procedure, strange in Malabar history, of absorption of smaller states by bigger states.

Look at the list of states given by the Governor Van Gollensse in his Memorandum, dated 1743 A. D. (918 M. E.). It was the time of King Mārṭṭāṇḍa Varma of Travancore. Here we find that, of the seven states in what is now South Travancore, only Travancore and Quilon remained.

In Odañād, Kāyankūlam was annexed to Quilon in 1734 A.D. as well as the others.

There only remained the Ṭekkankūr and Vaṭakkankūr Rajahs between Cochin and Travancore. All the others were conquered between 1734—1742 A. D.

Chempakassēri remained—an ally of Cochin.

Kurūr Nād with its two families also merged in Perumpadappu, of which only two branches remained—Chāḷur and Eḷaya Tāvāli. Of these again the former was out of power and the Eḷaya Tāvāli on account of its friendship with the Dutch East India Company was supreme in the land. We find also the feudal chieftains exercising more or less sovereign powers greatly curbed by the Rajah with the help of the Dutch. In this period we find the Pāliam family coming into prominence.

In the north we find the Zamorin absorbing the smaller states north of Ponnāni river. In the next list, taken from the Memorandum of Van Moons in 1781, on the eve of the Hyder's invasion, we find the process complete. The whole of Malabar is now divided among three absolute rulers, The Zamorin, Cochin and Travancore. The first and the last being Sāmanṭha powers on the aggressive with the Kṣhaṭriya state of Cochin losing ground on both sides standing purely on the defensive looking for support to the declining Dutch.

The three lists of States given below would explain the situation better than any essay.

I would also state that the Dutch records published by the Madras Government will be of immense importance to the Historian of Cochin when they are translated into English or Malayalam and suggest that is one of the works the Research Institute may with advantage take up.

Van Rheeде A. D. 1677 (852 M. E.)	<i>List given by</i> Van Collensse A. D. 1743 (918 M. E.)	Van Moens A. D. 1781 (956 M. E.)	
<i>Trippappi swarupam</i>			
Tiruvankur	100,000	<i>Tiruvankur.</i>	
Attingal	30,000		
Elledathswarupam	} (Annexed to Tiruvankur) (1734—1742)	Travancore	
Perinthali			50,000
(Nedumangad)			3,000
Desinganad (Quilon)	30,000	Kollam	
Chiravaya	15,000		
	228,000		
<i>Odanad.</i>			
Kayankulam	50,000	(Annexed to Quilon) 1734	
Panavalli	15,000	(Attached to above)	
Maruthukulangara	15,000	Conquered in 1734 by Travancore	
Karingampalli (Vettimanz)	15,000		
Chembalanur (Pantalam)	3,000	(Kshatriya—Friend of Travancore; enemy of Kayankulam	
Venmeni Adigal	3,000		
	101,000	Trikunnapizha— belonged to idapalli	
<i>Chittuvaya Kaimais.</i>			
Thailachalli			
Vakke Kaimal			
Elechondara			
Mataparambu	3,000		
<i>Mayampalli.</i>			
Edamane			
Ponnuruthi		Madambimar (18 plus 2)	
Mayampalli	15,000		
Bommanad			

List of Malabar States given by

Van Rheeде	Van Gollensse	Van Moens
A. D. 1677 (852 M. E.)	A. D. 1743 (918 M. E.)	A. D. 1731 (956 M. E.)
Bommanad		
Kilpoli } Cheruvay }	75,000	
Madaihingalkur	57,000	Thikkankur
Thekilankur	37,000	(Kottayam)
Punjattil Perummal	3,000	Adopted from Sarkara
	----- 1,52,000 -----	Conquered by Travancore 1762
Vadakkankur		Vadakkankur
Manjat Ilom	30,000	
Muthakazhi	3,000	
Vaypilkur	15,000	
Kilmalakur	15,000	
	----- 63,000 -----	
Kuttanad		Purakkad
Chembakasseri (Ambalapizha)	30,000	
Idapalli		Idapalli
Elangathur	50,000	Treaty with Cochin 1740
Chenganad		
Eledathkur	10,000	
Muthakur	10,000	
Ambadikur	10,000	
Karur Nad		Joined to Cochin
Kurur Moothakoil	15,000	Died out
		The last adopted by Elaya Thavazhi
Villarvattam	15,000	Cochin
	----- 30,000 -----	
Perumpadapur Nad		
Madatbinkil Thavazhi	3,000 }	Died out
		Cochin

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Van Rheede		Van Gollense	Van Moens
A. D. 1677 (852 M. E.)		A. D. 1743 (918 M. E.)	A. D. 1781 (956 M. E.)
Mootha Thavazhi	3,000	} Out of Power In power	
Palluruthi	3,000		
Chazhur	3,000		
Elaya Thavazhi	3,000		
	<hr style="width: 50px; margin-left: auto; margin-right: 0;"/> 15,000		
		Thevankal Nayar Anji Kaimals Vaduthala Nam- buri	Cochin
<i>Chittakathu Nad.</i>			
Chittakathu Kaimal	15,000		
Patinjaredath Kaimal	8,000		
	<hr style="width: 50px; margin-left: auto; margin-right: 0;"/> 23,000		
<i>Thiruvella Nad</i>			
Koilpad	1,000		
Pindanivattathu Nad			Annexed to Tra- vancore—1762
Nambyathari	15,000	Parur (Pindinivattam)	
<i>Manganad</i>			
Velutha Thavazhi	10,000	} Manganad; 1735	Annexed to Tra- vancore—1762
Karutha Thavazhi	15,000		
	<hr style="width: 50px; margin-left: auto; margin-right: 0;"/> 25,000		
<i>Vaipu Nad</i>			
Vaipu Namburi	6,000	Paliyam	Cochin
Airur Nad			
Mootha Kovil	1,000	Airur	Airur
Patinjare Koil	1,000	Kodunkollur	Kodangalore
	<hr style="width: 50px; margin-left: auto; margin-right: 0;"/> 2,000		
		Payancheri (Manalpuram)	{ Manattapurambu Panangad Vilad
<i>Muriya Nad</i>			
<i>Nambiyar</i>			

Van Rheeде	Van Gollensse	Van Moens
A. D. 1677 (852 M. E.)	A. D. 1743 (918 M.E.)	A. D. 1781 (956 M.E.)
Nannillatha Nad	Four Kaimals	Cochin
Kodusseri Kaimal 30,000		
Korathi 5,000		
Changarankotha Kaimal 5,000		
Patamukhathu Kaimal 3,000		

43,000	Chittur Namburi	
-----	Pappinivattam	
	(Dutch)	
<i>Thalapilli Nad.</i>		
At Ainikuttil		
Nambidi 15,000	Punnathur	Zamorin
Manakulam 15,000		
Chithul Nambidi 15,000		
Kakkathu Nambidi 15,000	Manakad	
-----	(Paliyam)	
60,000	(Mullurkara)	

Chithur Nad		
Chithur Thekke Nayar 15,000		
Mapranam		Dutch
Valossu Nambiyar 3,000		
Valluva Nad		Zamorin
Valluva Konari 30,000		
<i>Ernad.</i>		
	Zamorin	
Kunnalu Konaro 40,000		
Kottathu Koil 4,000		
Parappu Koil 3,000		
Beppur Kovil 2,000		
<i>Tamarasseri Nad.</i>		
Ayyar Nad 20,000		
Payya Nad 15,000		

35,000		
