

A Restorative Rebellion In Malabar

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When the concept of nationalism as an idea had not originated in its true sense in Malabar and Travancore revolts broke out in resistance to foreign power from princes with support of the local people. These revolts by Kerala Varma Pazhassi Raja in North Malabar and Velu Thampi in Travancore inspired by grievances of local, regional and personal nature, however, acted as inspiration for the future nationalist upsurge. These movements did not have the effect of paving the way for the overthrow of British power, as is held by historians, yet it weakened the strong foundations of the British Empire in India.

The regional struggle against the aggressive and exploitative policy of the English East India Company was started before the Great Revolt of 1857. The Company declared that both the rulers and their subjects should be under its control. The people were required to pay the high taxes under pain of stringent action. This led to anti-British feelings everywhere in Malabar. When new officers were appointed to collect taxes, disputes began to surface. Kerala Varma Pazhassi Raja was one of the first among the indigenous local ruler to rise in revolt against the English East India Company.

Following the friendly relations with the British and the conclusion of treaties with them, Kochi and Travancore accepted their suzerainty. Against the attempts to intervene in the internal affairs of Travancore Divan Velu Thampi took an independent position. The Divan opposed the move of the Company to appropriate huge amounts from the royal treasury. Thereupon he attempted to resist the British by strengthening anti-British feelings among the people. The Kundara Proclamation of 1809 was part of this move. In Kochi too Paliath Achan raised the banner of revolt against British hegemony. The early struggle between the Poligars of south and English East India Company although essentially over tax collection, had a strong political dimension. The Kurichia revolt of Wayanad was a reaction against the revenue reforms introduced by the British. Those who were in arrears of tax

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were punished by the British by confiscating their properties, household utensils, ransacking their huts, eviction from land etc. *It was the British land revenue policy and economic exploitation that formed the basis of anti-British revolts.*

The revolt organized by Pazhassi was unforgettable one in the history of freedom struggle movement in India. Malabar of the times was weakened by the attacks of Hiderali and later Tipu Sultan. So the Kings of Malabar, including Pazhassiraja, were forced to support British to fight against Tipu in return of the offer made by East India Company to grant freedom to Malabar. It was also very clear through the Thomas Wilkinson's letter to Pazhassi on 1st December 1796.¹ Tipu was eventually defeated and according to the agreement of Srirangapattanam in 1792, Malabar was annexed to British Colony. But the Company neglected their earlier offer, and in the case of Kottayam, the right to collect tax was taken away from Pazhassi Raja and given to his uncle and enemy, the King of Kurumpranattu.

But when he realized the real intention of the Company, he led a revolt against them. Kerala Varma knew very well that it was difficult for him fight the well equipped army of the British. He expected that in the feud among the members of the royal family the Company should stand by him. But he was disappointed. It was in this context that he mobilized his forces against the Company. Pazhassi played an important role to organize the dissatisfied peasants, tribal's and native rulers against the misrule of East India Company. He was a ruler who questioned the British usurpation of the right to collect taxes and the removal of royal power. The revolt staged under his leadership was very difficult for the British to deal with.

After the fall of Tipu Sultan in 1792, the English East India Company extended its territorial authority in Malabar.² By the treaty of Srirangapattanam the whole Malabar territory of Tipu come under the direct control of Britishers. The situation changes in 1792, when the opportunity for direct extracting surplus produced by the Kerala economy developed. This was extracted under tribute or land revenue. Since the basis of tribute payment was also land revenue, the two may be taken together. *The important shift of colonial policy in Kerala was the change from trade surplus to trade surplus plus land revenue, as the financial provision of colonial activities. Pazhassi's "annihilation became necessary for the stability and security of the Government."*

In 1795, Pazhassi Raja stopped the tax collection of Kottayam challenging the Company. In 1796, the troop led by Gordon attacked Pazhassi's Palace and plundered it. Pazhassi moved to Wayanad and engaged in guerilla war with the help of Kurichiya tribes. Company had no option but to settle with Pazhassi Raja. He returned to his land but the good days did not last long. Pazhassi Raja had again a tough time with British and he declared unconditional war with the Company. Severe wars were fought between Pazhassi Raja and British. Heavy damages were caused on the sides of British and they were forced to sign a treaty with Pazhassi Raja in the presence of Governor Jonathan Dunken with the King of Chirackal as a mediator. As Tipu was killed in 1799, Company wanted to annex Wayanad to

their territory, which was opposed by Pazhassi Raja as it was part of Kottayam. And this led to war again.

Immediately after the assassination of Kattabomman of Paanchalamkurichi, the main leader of the Poligars rebellion by Collector Jackson in 1799, a confederacy consisting of Marudu Pandyan of Sivaganga, Gopala Nayak of Dindugal, Kerala Varma of Malabar and Krishappa Nayak and Dhoondaji of Mysore was formed. With the support of all Pazhassi continued his fight against the Company with full vigor. The hanging of his aide Kannavathu Sankaran Nambiar was a great blow to Pazhassi. But he never gave up. He had all the supports of the Nair and Kurichya forces. The leaders in South Malabar, Unnimootha Mooppan, Atthan Kurikkal, Chempan Pokkar were considered Pazhassi as their real leader in their struggle against British policy. The leaders like Kannavath Sankaran Nambiar, Edachana Kungan, and Karingali Kannan etc; were also giving full support to Pazhassi. But the real force of Pazhassi's struggle against the British was Kurichiars under Thalakkal Chandu.

The Company had to face a series of armed rebellion by the Pazhassi Raja, who was supported by several landholding families and the tribal's. The company records generally identified these disturbances as the Pychy revolt or Cotiote rebellion after the name of Kerala Varma of Pazhassi palace of Kottayam House. *The ideology behind those disturbances was not the desire for some kind of social transformation and restructuring of social and economic relations for a new order. The inspiration for this came from the traditional past.* They were looking backward for an ideal situation. Therefore the cultural elements like religion, feudal loyalty and social and caste organizations played an important role in shaping those revolts against the authority of the Company.

The new organized attack under the leadership of Thalassery sub collector Thomas Harvi Baber in 1804 gave a new dimension to the war. He sought the support of the selfish traitors of the land too. The Kurichya leader Thalackal Chanthu was caught and hanged with the help of these traitors. Pazhassi was cornered in the forest. But he fought bravely and was shot dead by the British in 1805. Baber calls Pazhassi an "extraordinary and singular character"³

The administration of the Company had articulated the peasant grievances. Therefore in these revolts the peasants whose economic interests were involved and adversely affected stood by their chieftains and landlords. Their ambition was to preserve the pre-British economic relations of Malabar society. The Company records stated that, the Nair's and their Ryots of this country are all of them in the interest of Pychy Raja and are armed in his favour, determined to support him in his pretensions to the country and to drive us out of it. The principal Nair's and their revolts were the major force behind the rebellion. Their purpose was to drive out the English. Therefore the riots came under the classification of "Restorative Rebellions" to drive out the British and restore earlier rulers and social relations.⁴

Land is the mainstay of tribal's and more than 90 per cent of them depend on agriculture and allied activities. Land is the only tangible asset of the tribal's and,

therefore, they have an emotional attachment to the land. The tribal communities in Kerala also continued to face marginalization over decades. Consequently, they are forced to create a specific space for themselves (though they constitute a small minority of 1.10 per cent of the State's population). The fact that more than three-fourth of the tribes are landless and that their social conditions (in areas such as housing, health and sanitation, education, welfare etc) remained very much below the state average shows the extent of marginalization.

In this context the peculiar land policy adopted by colonial authority in Malabar, which they directly administered, deserve special attention. They interpreted the *janmam rights* as equivalent to absolute ownership rights and gave the landlords legal sanction to extract a large share of the produce through forcible expropriation (take away for public use) from the peasantry. The *janmies* forfeited to the colonial masters their judicial power, exercised as the custodians of law and order in the traditional society, were now made to act as intermediaries in the collection of revenue from the producers of surplus.⁵

Thousands of tribal peasants lost their opportunities for empowerment through agriculture mainly by the land revenue policy adopted by the Britishers. By the capitalist mode of agriculture was introduced in Wayanad, the tribal's were converted to be a class of landless agricultural labourers. The agricultural labour class of may be grouped as those owning land and those without it. The basic problem confronting this category of people is that they do not have enough land to provide for a decent living nor enough work to keep them gainfully employed.⁶

Two kinds of tenancy had been in existence in the past in Malabar. The Kanam tenancy, mostly in the hands of the Nair's and the verumpattam tenancy mostly with the Tiyyas, another major social group.⁷ While the Namboodiris were the real Jenmis, the artisans were also some sort of janmies but who depended for their livelihood mostly on their craft. This large class of peasantry in turn organized into a hierarchy in which Nair's were at the top, Tiyyas and Muslims in the middle, with the Harijans at the bottom, forming as they did a large group of landless agricultural laborers or serfs.⁸

The agrarian situation in Travancore was far better than in Malabar and it was further improved by progressive State action in later period. The land system of Cochin had the characteristics of both Malabar and Travancore. The cultivators of cultivable lands were in a deplorable position, on account of the unrestricted powers of the Jenmis over their lands and the State's refusal to take any action to control the landlord-tenants relationships. The tenants had no recognized rights on these lands. As regarding the revenue systems in Travancore, Cochin and Malabar E.M.S. Namboodiripad has stated that, "*the practice was that if the Revenue officer just plant a stick in the land that indicated default of tax payment and the ban imposed the tenant from harvesting the crop. Thereafter he would be allowed to gather the harvest only if the tenant cleared the arrears of tax which invariably would have accumulated and would be more than what was actually due from the small piece of land he cultivated*"⁹ Thus the question of tax affected the tenants.

The land problems had been further intensified by the migration of peasantry to Northern Malabar from Travancore. The innocent tribal's were exploited not only by the new settlers, but also by the rural money lenders. In every type of development and policy initiated by the authorities, it seriously affected the real existence of innocent people especially tribal's.

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Historical Writings of Grant Duff And G. S. Sardesai

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Historiography tells us about the successive stages of evolution or development of the historical writings. It includes the evolution of the ideas and techniques associated with the writings of history.¹ Just as the seventeenth century in Europe was the Age of Scholarship, the eighteenth that of Enlightenment and Reason, the nineteenth was the century for history. The century for history witnessed a profound revolution in the conception, methodology, technique and principles of the study of history.²

The nineteenth century saw an unparalleled intellectual revolution in the field of historical ideas. Historians began "to think in terms of change and of change as having causes." The evolutionary trend in historical thinking was positivism. Under its influence a new historiography arose which may be called positivistic historiography. Positivistic historiography had two distinctive features—ascertaining of facts and discovery of laws. European historiography accepted only the first part of the positivistic programme.³

Germany, the home of historical criticism, witnessed a good deal of intellectual exercise in the theory of history. German scholars have always regarded the historians as scientists, history taking the place of nature. But the most brilliant and enduring aspect of German historiography is its scrupulous adherence to facts, accuracy of details, detachment and impartiality and steadfastness in holding on to the truth. This is the legacy bequeathed to posterity by two leading representatives of German historiography, Niebuhr and Ranke.⁴

In France the Annals school was dominating the field. The Annals methods contributed substantially to the development of historical writings. It tackled many genuine deficiencies but clearly it was not all. The Marxist historian claims social evolution is coeval with Darwin and that he should be justly regarded as the Darwin of the social sciences. Marx's historical materialism or materialistic conception of

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history is a direct reaction against Hegel's idealism and Feuerbach's mechanical materialism. Marx adopted Hegelian dialectic with its characteristic feature of thesis, anti-thesis and synthesis and applied it in explaining historical development.⁵

Modern Indian Historiography began with the writings of the administrator-scholars of the English East India Company. The approaching bicentenary of the battle at Plessey which symbolizes the beginnings of British political as distinct from commercial empire in India in an appropriate time to review the theme of imperialism and colonialism in modern works on Indian History.⁶ The eighteenth and early eighteenth century British historians used the concept of nationality along with that of the state in their approach of medieval India. The general acceptance of western concepts and methods by the twentieth century Indian historian writing in English makes them more akin to the British historian of medieval India. In this time there are two approaches the first is orientalist approach and second is Utilitarian approach. The first school began during the period of Governor-General, Warren Hasting, when scholars like William Jones, Mark Wilkins and Colebrook. They are formed high opinion of early Hindu civilization while others denounced it. They thought that changes in Indian life should be brought about slowly due to the old institutions of the natives. Second approach challenged the old idea and schools of thought the eighteenth century when the age enlightenment influenced the historiography. This approach become evident when James Mill and Elliot and Dowson adopted the theory of banthemite utilitarian philosophy⁷

The early decades of the twentieth century that Indian scholars turned to a study of the medieval period in any significant way. In ancient and medieval period the beginning of historical studies was inspired by regional pride and the conscious desire to recapture the memory of old glories. Thus were born studies in Maratha History, Sikh History and Rajput History etc.⁸

Grant Duff

James Grant Duff was born on 8 July, 1789 in a Scottish family of John Grant of Kincordine O'Neil at Banff at age of sixteen, he came to India and join the service of East India Company .He was selected by Elphinstone for the office of the Political Agent to Satara state. It was here in Satara that he collected all this source material of Maratha history and also prepared his draft.⁹

Duff wrote *The History of Marathas*. Duff was quite aware that no authentic history of Marathas, especially its earlier portion could be satisfactorily narrated without consulting Persian source. He also consulted Frishta, Khafi Khan, Abul Husain, Qazi's History of Bijapur, Mir Ibrahim's History of Bijapur, and Narrullas's History of Ali Adil Shah and History of Bijapur written by Syed Moidin Pirzada in 1821etc.¹⁰ Actually, he consulted a number of scholars eye witnesses on certain events while preparing the draft his history. His manuscript was read by Elphinstone, William Erskine, Johan Briggs Kennedy, the Secretary of the literary society, Bombay. The narration of the size and fall of the Maratha power presented a number

of problems to him. He did not care much for the fate of his book. He could imagine how the John Bull would yawn at his Maratha history. Duff has also defined his objectives in Maratha's history. According to him, his objectives was to gain knowledge about the condition of the Maratha under the Muslim to explain the causes of the rise and expansion of the Maratha power and to analyses the cause of the defeat of the Maratha's at the hands of the English.¹¹ It would be assumed that Duff's history is almost entirely political. It is as much a political history as it is a social history, for Duff does pay attention to religious, social and literature habits of the Marathas.

Indeed, Duff's starting point is why the Marathas rose but how they rose, how they built a vast empire which extended from sea to sea with "Satrapies" and "Cleruchis" not why it defined but how it declined. In his book Duff says that the rise of Shivaji, the Maratha powers was slowly rising. Guha considers this opinion of Duff as correct. Duff writes that without understanding the fall, history of the rise, progress and fall of the Marathas would not be possible to understand how the process of the establishment and expansion of the British Empire in India took place. In this book, the administrative setup, land revenue system and the realization of 'Chauth' and 'Sardeshmukhi' were also studied by Duff. He has thrown light on the war strategy of the Marathas and their conflict with the enemies. He has given the due importance to the study of the social, religious and literary activities of the Marathas. The events of Maratha history from the birth of Shivaji till 1818, a period of 169 years, have been narrated by Duff in the three volumes of his book.¹²

G.S. Sardesai- Sardesai was a famous Maratha historian, who was in the service of the state of Baroda as reader and personal clerk to Maharaja Sayaji Rao Gaekwad. He was also a tutor to the Maharaja's children. By teaching their children, he became historian by accident. Sardesai's greatest achievement was the series of books published on Maratha History as Marathi Riyasat. The eight volumes' series in Maratha history from beginning to 1848.¹³

His work Maratha Riyasat was divided into three parts. First Purva Vibhag is up to 1707, vol I; the second Vol. II is Madhya Vibhag, 1707 to 1774. The III Volume is on Uttar Vibhag, 1774 to 1884. The Riyasat contains vast information's of a number of places Sardesai refers to the sources and analysis them. He wrote about Shivaji and other heroes of Maratha history. But rarely undertakes the tasks of evaluating their contribution. In this book, he compares Shivaji with Alexander, Caesar and Napoleon etc.

The beginning of his writing is in a very readable style. Each chapter is given in a title which is very apt and meaningful with its contents. The paragraphs of a particular chapter are often introduced by expressive subtitles while revising his Maratha Riyasat for the third edition, he divided it into reign-wise. In this edition, he gave a ornamental language and the career of Shivaji has been into ten parts which make very fine reading, like that a boy of Maval, a leader of the Deshmukh, a mendicant of self rule, a champion of independence, a servant of region, the ruler of Maharashtra, the challenger of the emperor, the savior of his nation, the enthroned

monarch, the career of Hindu empire etc.¹⁴

G.S. Sardesai's greatest work is *The New History of the Maratha*. In this book, Sardesai gave a fantastic, scholarly and remarkable history of Maratha. In the Vol. I, Sardesai compare Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva with Shivaji. It is from *Radhamadhava Viulas Champu* and the full verse is worth quoting, not much for its historical and poetical qualities.¹⁵

In this book, he says that Shivaji was manifestly a highly gifted personality and ready to meet any challenge with supreme self confidence. Sardesai says that Shivaji succeeded not only in establishing his own independence but also in bringing about the necessary solidarity among the scattered various elements of his homeland so that the Marathas might be transformed into a nation and a power of the first rank in the country.¹⁶ In this regard, seeing the talent of Sardesai, Maharaja Gaekwad asked him to translate Machiavelli's 'Prince' and Sealy's 'Expansion of England' into Marathi, Sardesai style is quite him lucid. Being a friend of J.N. Sarkar, a famous scholar, who persuaded him to write in English. Sarkar and Sardesai prepared and edited 64 volume of original document quite useful for the students of Maratha history. Sarkar's style of writing history gave a romantic touch to the history of Marathas. His portrait of Shivaji was inspired by Carlyle's idea of heroes as kings.¹⁷

Findings:-The Indian historical studies and thinking were profoundly influenced by the ideas of western historical scholarship. European historical ideas, its techniques of research concepts, principals, methodology and above all its view of history come to mould and influence the Indian historians and the writing of Indian history. Indian historian first browed techniques and methods then concepts and finally system from the west. The important developments in Indian historiography which grew upon the European model.

This is true that all imperialist historians had prejudices and biasness with the history of India with special reference to Maratha history. In this context regional history emerged in a chronological way. Maratha regional history started by Grant Duff and Maratha regional historians writing regional history like other scholars of regions. The name including G.S. Sardesai, M.G. Ranade, K.T. Telang, V.K. Rajwade, V.V. Khare and D.B. Parasnis. In this paper I discuss the Historical writings on Grant Duff and G.S. Sardesai in the context of imperialist and Indian nationalist point of views. Duff in his *History of Marathas* gave the detail of political history of Marathas. According to Guha, Duff has also thrown light on social, religious and literary activities of the Marathas. He also tells about that Duff did not analyse courses of the rise and downfall of the Maratha. Although he tried his level best to be simple and lucid in his presentation yet at same places his style becomes terse and language difficult to follow. The toughness of the subject the language used in the contemporary works, the paucity of time may be considered as responsible for such shortcomings. In spite of these shortcomings, the history written by Duff can be regarded as a valuable contribution to the subject. His work inspired the Maratha scholars to study the history of their region.

Indian nationalist point of view, G. S. Sardesai gives an approach to the inspired by Grant Duff. In this regarding, style and presentation was a constant problem with Sardesai. He was aware of his deficiency in this aspect of historical writing. His knowledge of world history and literature was poor. But he was the first Marathi Scholar who was given us a cogent history of the Marathas. He has paved the path of posterity to follow. Thus Sardesai was a good scholar of Maratha historiography.

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Role of Muslim Women In The Freedom Struggle: (1906-1942)

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Women's active participation in India's freedom struggle is a remarkable episode. The earliest women freedom fighters were Lakshmi Bai, Rani of Jhansi, Rani Take and Begum Hazarat Mahal of Lucknow.¹ In this context the role of Muslim women in Indian freedom movement achieved a unique importance. During the period of 1906A.D to 1947A.D the Muslim women discarded the curtain custom. They freed themselves from the narrow identity of either a mother or someone's wife. Overcoming this limitation, they build their own individual self alias identity. They plunged into a strong Anti-British rally. The Muslim women joined programmes like picketing or procession as much as the men. The objective of this of my discourse is to highlight the role and limitation of Muslim women in freedom struggle.

Muslims women's entry into the freedom movement dates back from the very beginning of the colonial rule in India. During the Revolt of the Fakirs and Wahabis, Rani Lal Bibi and Begum Zebunnesa assisted the revolutionaries with money and jewels in order to drive away the British.² During the Swadeshi Movement, a section of educated liberal Bengali Muslims supported the anti-partition agitation. Among them Abdul Rasul, Abdul Halima Ghuznavi. During Swadeshi movement Khairunnesa an ardent supporter of the movement, inspired the Bengali women through her writing. In her opinion Swadeshi would stop economic drain and help industrial development, which in its turn would help the poorer section of the Muslim community.³ It is surprising that Khairunnesa propagated Swadeshi thought at the time when a large section of the Muslims had kept themselves aloof from the Swadeshi movement. 'The Islam Procharak' described the Swadeshi movement as the movement of the Hindus. One of the major weaknesses of the Swadeshi movement was the Muslim community that in

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general did not directly participate in it. The Hindu nationalism infused the movement with religious colour and thus restricted Muslim's participation in the cause.

As the large section of the Muslims joined the Non-cooperation movement, Muslim women did not lag behind. Be-Amman (Abadi Bano Begum), mother of the Khilafat leaders Ali brothers, should be mentioned in this respect. She was an outstanding Muslim women leader, active in Muslim women's Association and Khilafat movement. Mrs. Abdul Kadir was another Muslim lady who played an active part at Lucknow. A committee of women was formed under the Presidentship of Mrs. Abdul Kadir for organizing work among women.⁴ Be-Amma thanked the people for their kind feeling toward her and her son. Be-Amman ardently advocated the use of Khaddar and the Hindu-Muslim unity. In a meeting at Simla in September 1922, she made a special appeal to women to take up Khaddar. Swaraj, she said could not be had by asking, but was sure to come if people had courage and women a heart to make sacrifices for the cause.

Be-Amma continued the political work so dear to her till her death in 1924. Though Be-Amma had never been in Bengal, her role in the Non-cooperation movement inspired the Bengali Muslim to a great extent.⁵ In Bengal Muslim women, though small in number, came out to support the Non-cooperation movement. The eminent Muslim educationist, Begum Rokeya did not directly participate in the nationalist movement, but she inspired women with her nationalist thought and ideas. Rokeya opinionated that without cooperation of women, no country could be independent.

The civil Disobedience movement brought several Muslim women into public life. Among the Muslim women involved in the civil Disobedience movement (1930-32), Zubeda Khatun Chaudhurani (b.1901) was prominent.⁶ She did not get much formal education because of strong opposition from her family. She threw off all barriers and fearlessly fought for freedom. Zubeda, along with Hindu women of Sylhet, marched on the road for breaking salt laws and forest laws. In 1930 Daulatunnesa participated in the Civil Disobedience Movement almost a whole time. In 1932 when the movement spread all over the country, the Gaibandha Samiti violated the British laws under the leadership of Daulatunnesa and Maya Bhattacharya. Fulbahar Bibi was another prominent woman who participated in the Civil Disobedience Movement. In 1932 Hosneara organized Women's procession at Calcutta Maidan on the occasion of celebrating Independence Day. She composed in prison many patriotic poems of which "Muktir Bani Hoini Ajo Rakto Akore Lekha" is quite famous.⁷

In the third decade of 20th Century, Muslim women were active in the leftist movement in Bengal. Muslim women participated in these leftist organized movement, Among them Laila Ahmed, Maksuda Begum, Nazimunnesa are worth mention. Before the Mahila-atma-Raksha samiti came into existence in 1943 as a broad mass Organization, the Calcutta women's self Defence League was formed with Mrs. Ela Reid, the famous journalist. Sakina Begum and Nazimunnesa Ahmed

were the members of the committee of the League.⁸ Sakina Begum's role in the workers' movement are exceptional for Muslim women from the upper rung of the society at the time. Sakina played a vital role by organizing the workers (dhangars) of the Calcutta corporation. Her house almost became the movement headquarter where these under privileged men and women often found shelter in.⁹

The women of Bengal had been taking part in the freedom struggle ever since the beginning. People of Midnapur district played notable part in the movement of 1942. Women of Tamluk division marched in procession. One procession was led by a 73years old lady Matangini Hazra. Zulekha Begum(wife of Maulana Abul Kalam Azad)was a very courageous women. She faced financial problems many times because of Maulana's participation in the freedom struggle but did not disturb him at all.¹⁰ Aruna has been a staunch soldier of army of the freedom fighters. She addressed meeting prepared salt Satyagraha and also led procession. The commissioner of Delhi was deeply alarmed by her activities.¹¹ On August 1942, when the British govt' was arresting the major leaders of congress, young Aruna Asaf Ali presided over the remainder of the session on 9th August and hoisted the congress flag at the Gowalia and maidan. Aruna was dubbed the Heroine of the 1942 movement for her bravery in the face of danger and was called Grand Old lady of the Independence movement in her later years.

The first half of the twentieth century marked the beginning of Women's participation in the freedom struggle. But Muslim women lagged behind the Hindus in the early phase of the freedom struggle. The Bengali Muslim women mostly from upper and middle strata of society began to participate in it from the late 1930s. Modern scholars argue that Muslim women could not spontaneously participate in the nationalist movement due to Hindu revivalist ideologies which took dominant role in the formation of Indian Nationalism. Aurobindo Ghosh, developed the philosophy of political Vedanta. Bipin Chandra Pal, introduced Kali Puja and Shivaji festivals into the nationalist agenda. Even Chittaranjan Das was deeply influenced by Vaisnavism. Some of the Hindu female freedom fighters regarded the role of 'Shanti' in Bankim Chandra's Anandamath as their ideal. During the Swadeshi movement the Hindu practices like the Rakhi- Bandhan and Arandhan were observed.¹² In the Gandhian movement, The identification of the freedom struggle with deshpuja and the invocation of Shakti continued, making women's entry into politics smooth. Gandhi used to tell his audience that India needed women like Sita, Damayanti and Draupadi. But Muslim women, however, did not subscribe quite fully to the Sati-Sabitri imagery. They rather liked to subscribe to the image of mother Amina Bibi, Fatima, Marim etc. A section of Muslim community viewed the worship of monotheistic tenets of Islam.

While analyzing on the unabashed Hindu tinge of the national movement, Prof. Susobhan Sarkar rightly remarked that the political awakening was rousing intense pride and self-confidence and in view of the backwardness of the Muslim people, it naturally tended to take on a Hindu grab more decisively than before. Muslim women who participated in the struggle for freedom found themselves in

the midst of a complicated and tense political environment. During the Swadeshi days the use of Hindu symbolism and the revivalist rhetoric by militant nationalists intensified latent tensions between the Hindus and Muslims in east Bengal, where the majority of cultivators were Muslims. In the 1920s, the khilafat issues helped the Hindus and the Muslim to stage a common programme of agitation the British Government. But the failure of Khilafat movement widened the gulf between the two communities. The Muslim league and the Hindu Mahasabha were creating communal tension centering round the Cow-slaughter and other issues. Several Muslim nationalists left the congress after death of C.R Das (1925) with the breakdown of the Hindu-Muslim pact. They felt that the Bengal Congress could no longer be trusted to safeguard Muslim interests. The Communal Award of 1932 was a great blow to the Hindu-Muslim unity and it kept the Muslim community away from the mainstream of freedom movement.

The most unequivocal declaration of the Hindus the and Muslims as separate nationalities was made at the Lahore session on 22March, 1940. Rahmat Ali ,a young undergraduate at Cambridge, proposed in 1933 that the Muslims were fundamentally different from the Hindus in respect of religion, culture, history ,tradition, literature, economic system, laws of inheritance, succession and marriage. A direct attempt to mobilize Muslims to join separatist politics was made by the Muslim League and as a result a large number of women began to participate in the movement for the formation of Pakistan. As many of the nationalist Muslim were emotionally attached to the ideas of Pan-Islamism, the orthodox revivalist trend became the principal moulding factor of the Indian Muslim society.¹³ But in the midst of complicated political scene and conflicts of Hindu-Muslim revivalist ideologies, Muslim women's participation in the nationalist struggle is significant .The presence of women in politics, of course, did not create a significant change in the lives of the majority of the female population.

From the above discussions it may be concluded that the active involvement in the freedom struggle helped to bring about a remarkable shift in women's perspectives towards life, their world view, self image and ambitions.¹⁴ Above all, it oriented women's personality. Muslim women's struggle for emancipation showed considerable capacity for growth and change. They were themselves the products of new age as well as one of its agents of change. Their advocacy in improving the status during the period under review was not static, having an unchanging ideological characteristic.¹⁵

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Techniques And Methods of Social Reform Movement In Post Independent In Odisha: A Discourse on Dalit Movement

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1. Introduction:

Society is a component of people and environment. Since Indus Valley Civilization till to date society goes through its origin, development and degradation with ups and down. Each and every society runs with some provisions under which all are bounded. Society never remains constant and it changes continuously because human mind and attitudes are broadening day to day. The principles of society are the product of human mind and thought which is always changing with the changing of environment.

India is a largest and oldest country having five thousand years history. From later Vedic to present days peoples have been divided in the name of region, race, caste religion, language etc. though they born as a human being. But Manu divides people into a number of castes like Brahmins, Kshatriyas, Vaishyas and Sudras and ultimately these Castes fractioned into a number of sub-castes.

Odisha is one of the province of India posses the historical events from third century B.C to till the present century. The Odishan society is the product of tribal and non-tribal, urban and rural social order where the four major caste peoples are living with having so many sub-castes. There are 62 types of Tribals and 95 Scheduled Castes along with higher castes living in this state (Data Handbook: 2006). Out of the total population 16.53% is SC and 22.13% is ST and rest is upper caste people residing in Odisha .¹

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The Scheduled caste peoples of 93 community composed 16.53% of total population of the state.² Among these communities some are touchable and some are untouchable. All the scheduled castes are projected as Dalits but it is appropriate to accept that the untouchable scheduled caste peoples are only the Dalits who are the real sufferer in the society. Even their shadow also consider as impure. They are residing in slum areas and streets which are outside of touchable streets.³ They render all manual labour to the touchable castes of Odisha and major participation in production and construction but they do not get minimum share for their livelihood. There is structural problem in caste have been ruling since Vedic period and inequitable distribution of wealth strengthen the suffering of Dalits in Odisha. The higher Caste and higher Class people never extend their hands towards the Dalits for uplift them up to main stream of the society in Odisha. Even in this contemporary social order, the constitution of India have given them certain rights to minimize and equalize the gap of between higher and lower castes, rich and poor and have class and have not class of the society. Still then all these elements of the society never changes in one side and in another side no one interested to change these elements for betterment of the society.

2. Society before and after Independence:

Odishan society is tribal based society. Its culture, traditions, habits etc. are signifies the tribal elements. Since long time Odishan society is biased with traditions, customs, rites and rituals. Social order was fully based on evil traditions, blind beliefs and witchcrafts. The Odishan society was based on intolerant institutions and irrational customs. The caste rigidity, untouchability, seclusion of women and other irrational practices became the conspicuous feature of Odishan society.⁴ Human sacrifices, infanticide was prevailing in remote tribal areas of Odisha before independence. Though, human sacrifice was stopped but infanticide, untouchability, evil customs and witchcraft still prevailing in our social order. Among all social evils untouchability of caste is a black spot in human rights of human being. This divides people into touchable and untouchable, higher and lower castes in the society. The untouchables and lower castes who well known as Dalits the lower ladder of social order of India is real sufferer by the existing social systems. The Dalits are known as *Panchamas or mlechhas*.

3. Reform Movements in Odisha:

Odisha is a land of faith and believes. People believe in different gods and goddesses and in their life believe blind belief and dangerous social customs. Infanticides, child marriage, polygamy, the burning of widows were prevailed.⁵ There were so many reform movements have been occurred in Odisha with different time and persons. The movements like Brahma Movement and Mahima Movement took place for socio-religious reforms during the 19th Century. There are different

movements which have been staged in post independent Odisha like Peasant Movements, Tribal Movements, Dalit Movements, Backward Caste Movements, Women's Movements, Industrial Working Class Movements and Students' Movements. The Dalit Movement is one of them which have been continuing by the Dalits as a Dalits, as a poor Dalits and as an untouchable. All these movements are for the reformation of existing socio-religious and eco-political system of the peoples of Odisha. The reformation movements are for the depressed and oppressed class of peoples who have been losing their rights since long back. Some communities of Scheduled Castes particularly who are untouchables in the social strata are known as Dalits losing their rights even if constitution grants them equal status.⁶ It is the matter of grave concern that having all types of facilities and scope to enjoy life still then the Dalits is deprive from it. Out of this, the seeds of reformation movement started in Odisha.

4. Dalit movements in Odisha:

Among all sections of peoples of Odisha, Dalits are the lower group in the social ladder. Though the Dalits movement started in Odisha after independence but this movement has been occurred in Maharashtra and Andra Pradesh much earlier. This movement was slowly begun in Odisha after independence of India in 1947. But, there was no such an example of intensified movement. There is no such example which has influenced the Dalits of Odisha quick after independence. The lives of Jyotiba Rao Phule and Dr. Ambedkar have been influenced at large. The life and contribution of Kansiram provoked for Dalit movement in Odisha and also the influence of liberalization, privatization and globalization. In the last decade of twentieth century the Dalit movement vigorously occurred in Odisha. The movement staged in different levels and different aspects. The nature of the movement is as silent and active, with force and without force. This movement also happened in the form of spread of education, social liberation, more financial rights and religious freedom for life with equal status in the society. The General Baptist Missionaries of England came to Odisha in 1822.⁷

5. Theory of Acceptance and Rejection:

When we are talking about the social reforms and its elements for reformation, then there we have to see the social structure. The Indian Society is constituted of four major castes such as Brahmins, Kshatriyas, Vaishyas and Sudras. Odishan society is not out of this social order. The Sudras are the lower in the social ladder of the social strata and among them there are Sudras and Atisudras which is synonym to touchable and untouchable. The Atisudras or untouchables are really known as Dalit in the language of Jyotiba Rao Phule, Dr. Bhimrao Ambedkar and Kansiram. Though the Nature has given equal status to each and every being of this universe and constitution of India again sanctioned equality among the Indians still then

there is inequality in huge scale prevailed because of the theory of *Pull and Push and also Acceptance and Rejection*. In this theory the above must pull to the lower and there should be a mechanism to push above the lower to equalize with the above groups. It means the higher castes or have class must pull the Dalits or lower class to above and in this connection government should implement policies to push this Dalit to higher level. The both higher and Dalits should change their attitude to mingle each other to bring parallel in the social life. The high Castes should accept the Dalits by rejecting the prevailing social order and the Dalits must wish to move upwards. The reform movement never be speed up unless this. The above theory indicates both are the most important factor in this process and both are the causes and results.⁸All the techniques and methods will work out properly in this process of social reform movements

.6. Technique and methods of social reform movement in Odisha:

Each and every movements going on with certain process whether it is silent or action. The history is witnessed to speak on particular technique and method for the particular movement or revolution. Without proper process no revolution could have been successful. The Dalit movement is one of such movements where some particular technique has been adopted for its success. The techniques may be classified into two parts such as positive or constructive and other is negative or rejection. In the positive or constructive techniques that the reform movement is happening through creating awareness for education of children, teaching them on the provisions incorporated in Indian Constitution for their development, the Government facilities available time to time for them and in negative techniques building awareness among the Dalits on social evil practices, blind believes, superstitions and rejecting caste system as well as so called Hinduism. The Dalits are advised to discard Hinduism from their life and accept Buddhism because caste and religion are the major social problem for development.⁹ Alcohol is one of the basic problems of Dalits. The Dalits frequently uses liquor in social and religious functions.¹⁰ It is the prime step to stop the alcoholism among Dalit to intensify the reform movement. All these techniques and methods should be executed through the principles like educate, unity and struggle given by Dr. Ambedkar. Educating the Dalits is one of the major challenges to the leaders of Dalits. Since they are depressed and oppressed for ages. Dalits must be uniting because Unity is the strength. This is the strong force and energy to pressure upon the systems and there should be continuous struggle till to achieve. In this way the Dalit social reform movement is going on in Odisha. I gathered information taking interview of Dalit leaders of different groups of different places that the movement is accelerating by forming Dalit associations in Panchayat, Block, District and State level. The movement becomes more and more vigorous and so deep with the implementation of Positive and negative techniques widely.

7. Effects of the Dalit Reforms in Odisha-

Newton's law says that each and every action has same and equal reaction. If we say that the Dalit movement is the product of social system and social mobility and social changing is out of Dalit movements. Now the Dalits are in the process of upwards with the support of government machinery and changing of attitudes of both groups. The Dalit force is now growing day by day and it going to be an instrument to change the system in the government and also in the society.

8. Conclusion-

Among all social movements in Odisha, the Dalit movement is one of them which are becoming a great force having ability to change any kind of systems in Odisha. The Dalits are now on the way of political, social and economic upward through organizing among themselves in unity, educating each other and trying to avail the govt. schemes and continuing struggle till to achieve.

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Retrospect of Ambedkarism

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Today Ambedkarism is a living in India it defines the ideology of the Dalit, Bahujan movement or to a large it is anti caste movement. Tell the slave, he is slave and he will revolt.¹ Babasaheb Ambedkar quoted that “The surest way for their salvation lies in higher education, higher employment and better ways of earning once they become well placed in the scale of social life they would become respectable.² Education is milk of lioness, those who drink, never stop themselves from roaring.

In 1936 Babasaheb Ambedkar wrote an article in the Janata saying that on the basis of the economic relations a building is erected of religions, social, and political institutions. If we want to change the base that has been constructed on it, has to be pull-downed. If we want to change the economic relations of society then the existing social, political, and other institutions will have to be destroyed.³ The land shall be let out to villagers without distinction of caste or creed and there will be no landlord, no tenant and no landless laborer so long as the present arrangement continues it is impossible for the untouchables either to free themselves from the yoke of the Hindus or to rid of their untouchability. If is the close knit association of the untouchability with the Hindus living in the same village which mark them out as untouchables. Therefore demand that the nexus should be broken and the untouchables who are as a matter of fact socially separate should be made separate geographically and territorially also and be settled in to separate villages exclusively of untouchable.⁴

The development of Ambedkarism in India can be seen as the particular expression of a worldwide democratic revolution.⁵ The soul of democracy is the doctrine of one-man one-value, unfortunately democracy has attempted to give effect to this doctrine only so far as the political structure is concerned by adopting the rule of one man, vote, if has left the economic structure to take the shape given by those who are in a position to mould it⁶

This has happened because constitutional lawyers never realized that it was equally essential to prescribe the shape and form of the economic structure of the

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society. If democracy is to live up to its principal of one man one value. Time has come to take a bold step and defined both the economic structure as well as the political structure of society by the law of constitution.

Ambedkar warned the depressed classes to beware of Gandhi and Gandhism, according to him, Gandhism was nothing a return to the village life, a return to nature, to animal life and anathema to the modern age of machine, having no passion for economic equality. It was a reactionary philosophy from both the social and economic points of view on its banner the call for return to antiquity. If there was any ism, which has made full use of religion as an opiate to tell the people into false beliefs and false security. It was Gandhism. He warned the untouchable to be on their guard against the inroads of Gandhism.⁷ Violence and ideology was the driving forces of history. Hinduism was nothing but the religious deception of Bhats to maintain their hold on the masses, peasant were exploited by Brahmans through the stated machinery and religious trickery.

No lasting progress can be achieved unless we put ourselves through a threefold process of purification we must improve the general tone of our demeanour return. Our pronouncements and revitalize once thoughts, you renounce eating carrion. It is high time that rooted out from our mind the ideas of highness and lowness among ourselves, make an unflinching resolve not to eat the thrown out crumbs we will attain self elevation only. If we learn self help regain our self respect and gain self knowledge.⁸

In April 1929 Ratngiri District conference was held at chiplun. Babasaheb Ambedkar gives his presidential address saying that you must abolish your slavery yourself. It is disgraceful to live at the cost of one's self respect, self-respect is a most vital factor in life without it man is a mere cipher to live with self respect one has to overcome difficulties it is out of hard and ceaseless struggle alone one derives strength, confidence and recognition.⁹ Ambedkarism stands on liberty equality and fraternity rejecting the graded inequality of Varna and caste. It gives social freedom to all without making any group or individual sub-servant to others. Ambedkarism upholding liberty, equality and fraternity for the establishment of a democratic society. It envisages and ideal democratic socialism or state socialism breaking the permanent economical arrangement of slave and master under Brahmanical economical system created by the different smirities. It gives equality of status and opportunity to all.¹⁰

It lays fundamental emphasis on education as the gateway to develop with self respect in various aspects of individual and social life. It gives education on the basis of science and reason as the weapon to destroy ignorance and darkness within and the inequalities exploitation and intellectual hypocrisies of the Brahmanical forces. It makes Educate! Agitate!! Organize!!! As the base to achieve social-transformation. It provides for intellectual freedom and self respect. It encourages independent original thinking on the various challenges and issues relevant to human society.¹¹

The doctrine of Ambedkarism gives 'one man one vote, one value' as the weapon to capture political power. It directs the Bahujan Samaj to develop participatory democracy and become governing class to end their misery and slavery. It directs that political power is the 'Master Key' to open every lock. Political power is the means for the end of socio-economic transformation. The logical end of the ideology. Political power is the means to establish social democracy. A future Indian society would be constructed not from the false nationalism of Brahmanical elite but from the energy of Shudra, Ati-Shudra masses and its construction should begin from the village.

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Tamils In Burmese Society

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Ancient Tamil Poetry exhorts that one should 'cross the seven seas to seek fortune,' and so it comes as no surprise to find a large presence of Tamils in Yangon (Rangoon) in Myanmar, formerly Burma. Tamil emigration to Burma had a notable impact on the Burmese society. This had caused many ripples in various spheres of human activity. The money lending Tamil Nattukkottai Chettiars, a few Indian middle classes and the labourers who had gone to Burma had contributed substantially to the Burmese society particularly the agricultural labour force. The enterprising Tamil money lending Nattukkottai Chettiars and entrepreneurs from India had changed many of the aspects in the Burmese society and economy. Generally the labour employed in Burma can be classified into two main divisions namely skilled and unskilled. The latter comprising of the greater proportion of immigrant labour. The skilled labour represented either trained or proficient in some particular section of industry or trade. The unskilled labour was of two classes namely that which came on its own freewill into the country and another that which was brought into the land under a system of contract through the agency of labour supplies or contractors.¹

Tamil Population In Burma

The Census reports of the Madras Presidency from the third quarter of the 19th century indicate that there was migration of Indians to Burma every now and then. Though there was a fluctuation in the number of migrants at certain times it is clear that flow of Indians to Burma never increased till 1941. During the pre Second World War period out of total Indian population in Burma, 60% were Tamils. The number of Tamils in Burma became less after the Second World War. During the 1930's 50,000 Tamils lived in Burma.²

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Year	Population	Indian Population	Indians %
1881	37,36,771	2,43,123	6.5
1891	80,98,014	4,20,830	5.1
1901	1,04,90,634	5,68,263	5.4
1911	1,31,15,217	7,43,288	6.1
1921	1,32,13,192	8,87,077	6.7
1931	1,46,67,146	10,17,825	6.9
1941	1,68,23,798	9,18,000	5.4

Source: N. R .Chakravarti, Indian Ministry in Burma,P-15

Most of the Tamils except the agricultural labours resided in the capital of Burma in the eastern and northern portions for reasons of employment.

Labour Conditions

The Tamils immigrated to Burma settled mainly for survival. Some Tamils had gone for the development of their business. Historical records and legendary accounts of the distant past unfold several significant and radical changes in the Burmese national life as a result of Indian emigration. However, the phenomenal exodus of Indian in general and Tamils in particular had taken place only after 1852 when lower Burma came under the British rule.³

During 1852-1940 the resident population of Indians, the floating population and immigrant laborers have grown continuously. The large scale inflow of Indian immigrant workers and businessman into Burma had been a continual occurrence till the outbreak of these fortune seekers in an alien land. They substantially contributed the society and economic structure of Burma. If any order of instruction was imposed on their immigration, it had corresponding impact on the social and economic life of Burma.⁴

The skilled labourers were employed in mills, dockyards and factories. The unskilled labourers found their livelihood in agriculture, rickshaw pulling and in the jobs such as menial service.⁵ Selection of labourers was done on contract as well as on free basis. Free labourers entered into Burma out of their freewill and were unfettered by any restriction and condition. The labourer from India also had no fixed idea about their employment in the Burmese soil.⁶ They were prepared to

engage themselves in any kind of work that was given to them. All these contracted labourers were recruited through the 'maistry' system.⁷

The 'maistry' was generally in control of the disbursement of wage besides he had the power of selection and dismissal of labourers. The workmen's breach of contract act of 1869 gave powers to the magistrate in Burma to award sentence to the worker to work under the contractor for certain period for the breach of the act.⁸

The Role Indian Labour In Burma

The great dependence of Burma on imported Indian labour, which included the requirement of a large number of the Tamils for working in her various industries, was a dire necessity. The condition at that time in Burma was that without a free and adequate supply of labour from India, the industrial activities of the province would receive a serious setback. While such was the situation it is surprising that better facilities were not provided for the comforts and safety of the Indian emigrants during the voyages that took place annually.

The Tamils who were brought to Burma by the 'maistries' for working as labourers in agricultural fields and industrial establishments contributed substantially to the economic development of Burma during 1850-1940.⁹ The Indian labourers in general and Tamil labourers in particular were responsible for this progress.¹⁰

All Tamil labourers along with other Indian labourers made Burma a developing region within a short span of fifty years. The skilled and unskilled labour from India and particularly from Tamil Nadu had changed the phase of Burmese land to a considerable extent.¹¹

Race	All Industries			Rice Mill			Saw Mill		
	S	U	T	S	U	T	S	U	T
Home Race	2831	812	3643	129	184	313	331	112	443
Indians	6203	20383	26586	304	6767	7071	787	4679	5466
Total	9034	21195	30229	433	6951	7384	1118	4791	5909

S-skilled; U-unskilled; T-total;

Source: N. R .Chakravarti, Indian Ministry in Burma,

Minimum And Maximum Salary Of Burma Tamils

S. No.	Labour category salary	Minimum Salary (Rs)	Maximum Salary (Rs)
1	Unskilled (Messengers, Peon, Scavengers, Gardeners, Watchmen and Crews of Govt. vessels).	15	30
2	Semi-skilled (Police constables, Jail Wardens, Drivers, Brick layers).	30	40
3	Skilled (Electrician, Plumbers, Welders, Mechanics, Cooks, Masons, and Carpenters).	40	60
4	Upper grade clerks and accountants 'Foreman, sub-engineers, assistant Surgeons and hospital assistants.	80	160
5	Lower grade clerks and Book keepers, surveyors druggists record keepers and Supervisors.	40	60
6	Head clerks and head accountants, high School teachers and head foreman.	160	275

Source: N. R .Chakravarti, Indian Ministry in Burma,

Indian Firms And Export Trade

It is difficult to make an estimate of the share of Indian trading firm in the conduct of Burma foreign trade. The total value of the foreign trade was roughly around Rs.800 million per year. It is well known that the participation by Indian firms in this trade was very large. In the total trade, the quantum of business carried on by the Tamils was substantial.¹²

Nattukkottai Chettiars Of Tamil Nadu In Burma

Among Indian business interested in Burma, the most important group was that of the nattukkottai chettiar community which came mostly from the chettinad region of Tamil Nadu. They played a particularly prominent role in Burma where, alas, they were typically demonized as rapacious usurers, responsible for all manner of vices concomitant with the colonial economy. This enterprising business community of Tamil Nadu had been maritime traders and bankers for centuries in the past.¹³

After the first Anglo-Burmese war the British occupation of Tenasserim

provinces in 1852, they firmly established themselves in Tenasserim province particularly in Moulmein, the chief port and business center of Tenasserim. With the gradual restoration of law and order in lower Burma, they spread their business activities to other centers of trade and business including Rangoon, Pegu, Prome, Nassein and several towns of the Irrawaddy delta.¹⁴

Chettiars firms in Burma were in fact operating mostly on borrowed capital and deposits obtained in Madras and Burma. They had a system of call deposits 'Nadappu Kanakku' (current account) between the firms in Burma and the current rates of interest 'Nadappu Vatti' (current rate) and these deposits were fixed by common agreement, solemnly affirmed at a meeting held at the chettiar temple in Rangoon during the middle of each month.¹⁵

These call deposits were a very important source of local finance and self help though the practice was mostly confined to large towns in Burma. Another source of chettiar finance was the current deposits (katha kanakku) and fixed deposits made by non-chettiars.¹⁶

In early stages, particularly, in the later part of the nineteenth century the chettiar had no desire to become landowners; they were only bankers and not farmers. Occasionally, the economic depression forced them either to foreclose or lose their investment. The Burmese on many occasions could not pay back their debts and there was no other option left to the chettiars. When they had foreclosed, they had to certainly retain the ownership of lands because there was no one to purchase the pledged commodities or lands from them.¹⁷

The Banking enquiry committee highly praised the qualities of chettiars and their financial system, the honesty of their dealings and the confidence they commanded in the minds of the local people despite their foreign origin.¹⁸

The chettiar firms were efficiently operating in Burma, a country outside their own country, among people very different from their own class, in language, manners and social habits. They were doing business, largely with money borrowed from others, at great personal risk in distant villages of Burma where law and order and other conditions were not satisfactory at certain times.¹⁹ The chettiars mainly concentrated on agricultural financing. Two – third loan in lower Burma were given to land owners. They financed tradesman belonging to Indian, Burmese and Chinese communities. They never ventured financial offers to labourers because of lack of security.²⁰

It is to be pointed out here that some of the practices of the chettiars deserve a special mention. Chettiars conducted their business collectively and their business premises were under one roof. All the chettiars in Rangoon conducted their business at Mohul Street in Rangoon. All the chettiar firms in Rangoon transacted their business in the 23 rooms within the short distance of the temple built by the chettiars. Also, the employees were mostly from their own community. They met each other either in the temple or within the 23 rooms for their development and mutual trust.²¹

Though the chettiars were conservatives they were not blind to the changes taking place around them.²² The Nattukkottai chettiars strongly believed that Burma

was the most important and prosperous area of their investment. From 1850 to the outbreak of the Second World War in the Far East, Burma continued to be their active center of money lending activities. Naturally it was here that chettiar temples were built in a large number of places. Important among these were the shore temple centers at 62 places. They also built a Vishnu temple at Kanbe near Rangoon.²³

The Nattukkottai chettiars did not attach much importance to caste distinctions. In 1933 the executive committee of the chettiar association of Burma decided to open all the 62 chettiar temples in Burma to the Harijans as a result of the temple entry movement in Tamil Nadu.²⁴

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