COLONIALISM AND COMMUNITY FORMATION IN MALABAR : A STUDY OF MUSLIMS OF MALABAR

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CONTENTS

ABBREVIATION

PAGE No.

INTRODUCTION		01-15
Chapter I	THE PHASE OF POPULAR ISLAM IN MALABAR	16-61
Chapter II	COLONIAL GOVERNMENTALITY AND THE MAKING OF A COMMUNITY	62-97
Chapter III	REFORM MOVEMENT AND EFFORTS FOR A SEPARATE IDENTITY	98-172
Chapter IV	PRINT AND THE IMAGINED COMMUNITY OF MAPPILAS	173-239
Chapter V	KHILAFATH AND PAN-ISLAMISM AS SYMBOLS OF SOLIDARITY	240-264
Chapter VI	REPRESENTATION OF THE REBELLION AND IT'S AFTERMATH	265-300
Chapter VII	TOWARDS A POLITICAL IDENTITY	301-329
CONCLUSION		330-336
MAP		337
GLOSSARY		338-341
APPENDICES		342-365
SELECT BIBLIOGRAPHY		366-386

ABBREVIATION

AICC	-	All India Congress Committee
AM	-	Arabi-Malayalam
CDM	-	Civil Disobedience Movement
CMO	-	Correspondence on Mopla Outrages
EPW	-	Economic and Political Weekly
FNR	-	Fortnightly Report
FMF	-	Freedom Movement Files
KJU	-	Kerala Jamiyyathul Ulema
KMD	-	Kerala Muslim Directory
KRA	-	Kozhikode Regional Archives
KPCC	-	Kerala Pradesh Congress Committee
MF	-	Micro Film
MMSP	-	Mahathaya Mappila Sahitya Paramparyam
MNNPR	-	Madras Native News Paper Report
MTSK	-	Makti Thangalude Sampoorna Krithikal
NMML	-	Nehru Memorial Museum and Library
PPRM	-	Peasant Protest and Revolts in Malabar
SKJU	-	Samastha Kerala Jamiyyathul Ulema
TNA	-	Tamil Nadu Archives
USSF	-	Under secretary's Safe Files

INTRODUCTION

INTRODUCTION

The present study 'Colonialism and Community Formation in Malabar: A Study of Muslims of Malabar' deals with the historical processes by which the Muslims of Malabar (generally known as *Mappilas*) became a well-knit community in the backdrop of colonial intervention. The study covers the period of a century from 1850 to 1950. It interrogates the generally held notion that communities are just survivals from pre-colonial phase or that they are natural, timeless spirits in search of incarnations appropriate to each epoch, As the present study problematises the community identity of *Mappilas* , it would be pertinent in this context to examine the various ways in which the category of 'Community' has been conceptualized in social science discourse.

Community as an Analytical Category

The concept of community has become a major analytical tool in the discourse of much of modern social sciences. We come across various ways of conceptualising 'community' in the recent writings of Benedict Anderson, Earnest Gellner, Raymond Williams, Partha Chatterjee, Dipesh Chakravarthy, Sudipta Kaviraj etc.[1] Ambiquity has been a particularly key element in the chequred career of the category of community, especially in the discipline of

[1] See , Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities* : *Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism,* London, Verso. 1991.

Earnest Gellner, "The Importance of Being Modular" in John A Hall (ed) *Civil Society: Theory, History, Comparison,* Cambridge Polity Press, 1995.

Raymond Williams, "The Importance of Community" in *Resources and Hope*, London, Verso, 1997.

Partha Chatterjee "Communities in the East", *EPW*, 33(6) 1998

Dipesh Chakravarthy, "Modernity and Ethnicity in India: A History for the Present", *EPW*. 30, 1995.

Sudipta Kaviraj "The Imaginary Institution of India" in *Subaltern Studies* VII (ed) P. Chatterjee and G. Pandey, OUP, Delhi, 1992, pp.1-39.

history. As Partha Chatterjee observed, 'Inspite of the fairly long history of its usage, there has been a poor theorization of the concept of community in modern social thought.'[2] For a long period community was considered a foundational concept and therefore treated as given which does not need reflection. It was in recent years that the concept has been the focus of interrogation. This new attempt to study the genealogy and implications of 'community' brought to the fore two diametrically opposite perceptions about this category - the Primordialist and the Constructivist.

The primordialist (or substantivist) perception is that any collectivity of people that seems to have some kind of enduring social identity, solidarity and boundedness can be regarded as a 'community'. They generally regard communities as natural groupings based on ties of shared blood, language, history, territory but above all this, culture. Communities, in this perception, are characterised by continuity, cohesion, boundedness and adherence to tradition. They placed communities against a series of oppositions: East/West, Irrational/Rational, Traditional/Modern, Spiritual/ Materialist and finally, community/class. In their perception, ultimately, through an evolutionary movement, community will disappear and will be replaced by more homogenous social forms like 'class'. But, contrary to such expectation about the eclipse of community with the dawn of modernity, Asian countries and even Western world during 1980's and 90's witnessed aggressive assertions of ethnicity based on religion against homogenizing logic of national and international political economies and thereby the 'renaissance of the community'.

As against this position, the constructivists argue that most of the communities and identities which we see today are not anachronistic survivals from pre-colonial times but have emerged in recent past, in particular during

[2] Partha Chatterjee, *op.cit*., p.279.

the colonial period. In other words, groups denoted as 'caste' or 'ethnic group' were of recent origin, constructed during colonial phase by the colonial state through the utilization of technologies of power such as measurement and enumeration. Such technologies freezed and fixated the received fuzzy identities from pre-modern period and made them in to categories of knowledge and power. Thus, the constructivists argue that modern community is a product of colonialism or specifically of colonial modernity. This colonial construction of community is both discursive and non-discursive. Drawing upon Foucault and Edward Said, they hold the view that community identity was invented under colonialism by the operation of certain political and discursive processes. A number of studies subscribing to this view of community have come up recently.[3]

The strongest proponent of this constructivist theory of identity is Dipesh Chakravarthy of Subaltern School of historians. In his opinion, Indians were measured, classified and quantified by colonial state through census and other information gathering exercises employing various community categories. As governing practices entailed the counting and categorization of people in terms of collectivities, people began to see and organize themselves in terms of these categories leading to the formation of

[3] See, Bernad. S. Cohn, "The Census, social structure and objectification in South Asia" in Cohn (ed.), *An Anthropologist among Historians and other Essays*, OUP, Delhi, 1987.

Nicholas Dirks, *Castes of Mind*, Delhi, 1992.

Muraleedharan. M., "Hindu Community Formation in Kerala: Process and Structures under Colonial Modernity", *South Indian Studies*, 2 July - December, 1996, pp.234-259.

Gerrald N. Barrier, *The Census in British India: New Perspectives*, Delhi, Manohar Books, 1984.

Gyanendra Pande, *Construction of Communalism in Colonial North India*, OUP, Delhi, 1996.

Terence Ranger, "Power, Religion and Community" in *Subaltern Studies*, Vol.VII, OUP, 1992.

religious identities.[4] Thus, colonial state is not only the source of modern collective identities but also of the ethnic conflict. The same idea is shared by his colleague in the subaltern school, Gyanendra Pandey, who argues that communalism in modern India, is the construction of the colonial state.[5] Subaltern historians generally subscribe to the constructivist position but deviate slightly from other constructivists. They retain a primordialist understanding of community within a professed constructivist theoretical framework. Nicholas Dirks is another constructivist historian who has examined how 'caste' was invented by colonial anthropology and institutionalised through census and other administrative practices. He held the view that 'forms of casteism and communalism that continue to work against the imagined community of nation state have been imagined as well.'[6]

Another proponent of the constuctivist position, Benedict Anderson, in his book *'Imagined Communities'* argues that identities (ethnic or national) uniting large number of people could arise only after a certain technological level had been attained.[7] To him, it was the print capitalism which facilitated the collective imagining of communities. Francis Robinson, based on Anderson's thesis, argues that print capitalism played a major role in fashioning muslim identity in India.[8] Eric Hobsbawm is another historian who subscribes to the constructed nature of traditions involved in the formation of community and national identities.[9] He argues that the invented traditions, unlike customs, create claims of authoritative legitimacy on the part of some

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[4] Dipesh Chakravarthy, "Modernity ad Ethnicity in India: A History for the Present", *EPW*, 30, 1995, p.3373.

[5] See Gyanendra Pande, *op.cit*.

[6] Nicholas B. Dirks, "The Invention of Caste" in H.L. Seneviratne (ed) *Identity, Consciousness and the Past*: *Forging of caste and community in India, Srilanka*, OUP, Delhi, 1997, p.135.

[7] See Benedict Anderson, *op.cit*.

[8] See Francis Robinson, "Technology and Religions Change: Islam and Impact of Print" in Robinson (ed.) *Islam and Muslim History in South Asia*, OUP, Delhi, 2000.

power seeking groups, be it either a community or a state. In short, the notions of 'invention of tradition' and 'imagination of community' are probably the most widely cited theories today about community formations in history.

The difference of view points between Primordialists and Constructivists have also found expression among historians who specialize on muslim ethnicity in India.[10] Francis Robinson holds a Primordialist view that the religious differences between Hindus and Muslims in Pre-modern times were fundamental and that some of these differences such as on idol worship, on monotheism and on attitudes towards cow, created a basic antipathy between the two communities, which helped set them apart as modern politics and self governing institutions developed.[11] Paul. R. Brass, on the other hand, accepts an instrumentalist position and argues that Muslim separatism was not pre-ordained but resulted from conscious manipulation of selected symbols of muslim identity by muslim elite groups in economic and political competition with each other and elite groups among Hindus. He recognizes the crucial importance of the attitude and policies of colonial Government with its enormous capacity for distributing economic and political favours and patronage.[12] This opinion is also shared by Asim Roy who argues that the growing Government pre-occupation with special muslim questions and problems related to education, employment and political representation, was integral to the policy of 'balancing' the communities.[13]

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[9] Eric Hobsbawm, "Inventing of Traditions" in Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger (eds), *The Invention of Traditions*, Cambridge Canto Edition, 1992, p.1.

[10] See Francis Robinson "Nation Formation: The Brass Thesis and Muslim Seperalism" and Paul. R. Brass, "A Reply to Francis Robinson", in *Journal of Commonwealth and Comparative Politics*, 15, 3, Nov. 1997, pp.215-234.

[11] Francis Robinson, *Separatism among Indian Muslims: The Politics of United Province's Muslims, 1860-1923*, London, 1974, p.13.

[12] Paul R. Brass, "Ethnic Communities in the Modern state" in Taylor and Yapp (eds) *Political Identity in South Asia*, London, 1979, pp.35-77.

[13] See Asim Roy, "Being and Becoming a Muslim: A Historiographic Perspective on the Search for Muslim Identity in Bengal", in Sekhar Bandhopadhyaya (ed.),

Thus, the survey of the existing literature on community as an analytical category reveals the fact that majority of the modern scholars broadly follow a constructivist perspective about community. Almost all of them identify colonial administrative practices and ethnology as the major sources of modern ethnic identities. The primordialist argument that certain groups possess a collective conscience, whose historical roots are in some distant past and are not easily changeable but are potentially available to ignition by new historical and political contingencies, is not acceptable to most of these modern scholars. As Sudipta Kaviraj rightly remarked, 'pre-colonial communities which had fuzzy boundaries were replaced by discrete categories which could be enumerated exactly and which claimed exclusive identification by their members. Modern governing practices thus reconstituted the meaning of community and ethnicity, producing a brand of modern ethnic consciousness in India in which politics of cultural difference is primary'[14] In other words, pre-colonial society was too fragmented by sub castes and local loyalties to have larger alliances to emerge.[15] At the same time one has to admit the fact that modern community identities do not spring fully fashioned out of nowhere. 'They commonly employ the myths and symbols of earlier forms of identity which may be less clearly formulated and more restricted in circulation but are nonetheless incipient cores of identity.'[16]

Bengal: Rethinking History: Essays in Historiography, Delhi, Manohar, ICBS, 2001.

[14] Sudipta Kaviraj "The Imaginary Institution of India", *Subaltern Studies* Vol. VII (eds) Partha Chatterjee and Gyanenda Pandey, OUP, Delhi, 1992, pp.1-39.

[15] Gyanendra Pande, *Construction of Communalism in Colonial North India*, OUP, Delhi, 1996, p. 199.

[16] See Antony D. Smith, *Ethnic Origins of Nations*, Oxford, Busil Blackwell, 1986.

C.A. Bayly and Vander Veer are of the opinion that supra local identities indeed existed in pre-colonial India and that these identities themselves were historically constructed and hence constantly in flux.

See C.A. Bayly, "The Pre-History of Communalism: Religious Conflict in India, 1700-1860", *Modern Asian Studies*: 19:2, 1985, p.202 and Van der Veer, *Religious Nationalism: Hindus and Muslims in India*, Berkely, University of California Press,

It is to be noted that a problem common to much of the constructivist literature is the tendency to regard social identities as discursively constructed, ignoring the concrete economic or political structures within which such constructions take place. Very often, the constructivists ignore the ways in which the colonial discourses get played in real social life.

About the Present Study

It is in this theoretical backdrop that the present study examines the process of community formation among *Mappilas* of Malabar during the colonial phase. It interrogates the common habit of writing the history of community as a 'given' thing. The study anchors on the basic premise of the constructivists that modern community - whether Hindu or Muslim - is a product of colonialism or specifically of colonial modernity. It tries to emphasise the fact that the existence of a clearly defined community is not a pre-determined social fact. Even though loyalty to Islam might have provided the basis for the development of a religious identity for *Mappilas* , it was through a process of change and transformation as well as systematisation and articulation of religious and cultural symbols that the boundaries of Mappila community actually took shape. The role of colonial government in this process was instrumental. The Mappila community, like a nation, was often, an imagined entity. This imagination could not have been possible without a socio-territorial base. Though the same text and sacred symbols profoundly affected the lives of *Mappilas* , they could not separate them from the real life in the peculiar geographical and cultural settings of Malabar. In other words, those religious symbols, divorced from the real life world of Malabar, could not be the basis of the community because "beyond the core of Islamic

1994, pp.12-24.

symbols, all other symbols proved to be divisive and could not be made congruent with religious one.'[17]

This was the case with muslims of other parts of India. Infact the muslims of India never constituted a homogenous community though they professed the same religion, but reflected the regional and linguistic varieties of south Asian Islam. 'Neither to its adherents, nor to non-muslims, did Islam seem monochromatic, monolithic or indeed mono-anything'.[18] What is important here is the fact that religion alone could not be a basis of a community.

Prior to the 20th century, masses of *Mappilas* in Malabar were so fragmented from within by caste like features and so widely separated from their upper class brethren that the notion of a community could hardly exist. It was by the early decades of 20th century, a self conscious Mappila community emerged in Malabar. Various factors were at work behind the emergence of a feeling of 'communitas' cutting across all diversities within. It included the discursive and non-discursive practices of colonial governmentality, improved means of communication like printing technology, colonial education, Islamic reform movement, increased tension between Hindus and Muslims in the post-rebellion phase, national movement etc. These factors contributed for a slow but steady growth of a concrete community identity among the *Mappilas* during the 20th century. Thus, the changing colonial context has to serve as the primary backdrop in any study of the discourse on Mappila identity in Malabar.

Review of Literature on *Mappilas*

[17] Paul R. Brass, "Elite groups, symbols, Manipulation and Ethnic Identity among Muslims of South Asia" in David Taylor and Malcom Yapp (eds), *Political Identity in South Asia*, London, Curzon Press, 1979, p.68.

[18] Peter Hardy, "Islam and Muslims in Asia", in Raphel Israeli (ed.), *The Crescent in the East: Islam in Asia Minor*, London, 1998. pp.39-40.

At the outset itself, it is to be stated that among the umpteen works that deal with *Mappilas* directly or indirectly, not a single work examines the transformation of *Mappilas* in to a community. Moreover, most of the studies, barring a few which deal with Malabar Rebellion, adopt the traditional narrative approach rather than analytical history. The corpus of historical writings on *Mappilas* is significantly small when compared to that on the Bengal muslims. This lacuna in historiography on *Mappilas* is due to the fact that much of the source materials related to them are either in Arabic or Arabi-Malayalam script. The thrust for the investigation of Muslim Malabar became noticeable only by 1980's and that too centered on the Malabar Rebellion of 1921. A major chunk of these studies revolve around the Rebellion and only in the context of the rebellion do they refer to *Mappilas* .

The earliest historical treatise on *Mappilas* is *Tuhfathul Mujahideen*, written in Arabic, by Sheik Zainudhin Makdum of Ponnani in 16th century AD.[19] Contextually, it is also the earliest historical treatise written in Kerala. Though it is written with the intention of inciting the *Mappilas* to fight against the Portuguese, it could be called a valuable source book for any study on the early history of Mappila community. Among the notable works of recent period, Roland E. Miller's *Mappila Muslims of Kerala* ranks first as the only comprehensive work on Mappila Muslims.[20] The book has got two parts: the 'Heritage of Past' and 'Encounter with Present.' The first part examines the growth of the community through centuries up to 20th century when the goal of *Mappilas* was 'survival, defense and the glory of Islam.' In this part Miller's converged with the formulation of Stephen Dale, who came out with his 'frontier thesis' in 1980, but of course without the latter's concern

[19] See, Sheik Zainudhin Makdum, *Tuhfuthul Mujahideen* (Trans:) S. Muhammad Husayn Nainar, Madras, University of Madras, 1942.
[20] Roland E. Miller, *Mappila Muslim of Kerala*, Orient Longman, Madras. 1976.

to develop an overall argument. He argues that during their long struggle with the Portuguese, the *Mappilas* had evolved an anti-western ideology in Malabar. The second part of the book examines the socio-religious changes that took place in the community in 20th century, specifically, the changing predilection of the community towards secular education. Overall, the book offers much information about the nature of Islam in Malabar. Even now the book is considered to be the master narrative on *Mappilas* of Malabar.

Malabar Rebellion of 1921 is the most widely researched area in Kerala history and we have got an abundance of literature on the subject. As David Arnold remarked, 'about the number and forms of Mappila disturbance, there has been little dispute but over their causation, a ding-dong battle has raged for more than a century.[21] The prominent scholars involved in this battle in recent years were Stephen Dale, Conrad Wood, M. Gangadhara Menon and K.N. Panikkar.[22] While Conrad Wood, K.N. Panikkar and M. Gangadhara Menon, though with variation in emphasis, view the outbreaks of 19th century and the Rebellion as examples of a long tradition of peasant protests and revolts, Stephen Dale deviates from this much treaded path and formulates a new thesis. He argues that the origin of Mappila violence lay much farther back in the arrival of Portuguese on Malabar coast in 15th century. He sees *Mappilas* fighting along two frontiers of *Dar-ul-Islam*, an external frontier, first that of Portuguese and then English and an internal frontier created by the pressure of Hindu landlord class. Unlike the other historians of the Rebellion, who confined to the period of the Rebellion or its immediate past, Dale goes back to 15th century and assumes that 'Mappila

[21] David Arnold, "Islam, *Mappilas* and the Peasant Revolts in Malabar", *Journal of Peasant Studies*, Vol. 9, No.4, July 1982, pp.255-264.

[22] Stephen Frederic Dale, *Islamic Society on South Asian Frontier: The Mappilas of Malabar, 1498-1922*, OUP, Delhi, 1980. Conrad Wood, *The Mappila Rebellion and its Genesis*, PPH, Delhi, 1987. M. Gangadhara Menon, *Mappila Rebellion*, 1921-22, Allahabad, 1989. K.N. Panikkar, *Against Lord and State: Religion and Peasant Uprisings in Malabar, 1836-1921*, OUP, Delhi, 1989.

Muslim Community always existed as an idea in their mind.'[23] In other words, right from 15th century, due to their fight against the two frontiers, the *Mappilas* had developed a sense of community which was reflected through this Islamic militancy. He adds that this strong sense of Islamic identity was strengthened by their peculiar settlement pattern.[24] As pointed out earlier, a liberal variant of this perspective could be seen in Roland Miller, who also examines the traumatic impact of the Portuguese on *Mappilas* . In analysing the religious context, not the religious content, of the Rebellion, K.N. Panikkar examines a variety of factors like the nature of early socialization, the influence of popular culture, the role of traditional intellectuals, etc.[25]

Most of the remaining works on *Mappilas* are of a narrative nature or deal with specific aspect of the history of *Mappilas.* A.P. Ibrahim Kunju's *Mappila Muslims of Kerala*, S.M. Mohammed Koya's *Mappilas of Malabar*, P.K. Muhammed Kunju's *Muslims and Kerala Culture*. M. Abdul Samad's *Islam in Kerala: Groups and Movements in 20th century*, Asgar Ali engineer's edited volume, *Kerala Muslims: A Historical Perspective*, K.M. Bahavudhin's *Kerala Muslims: The Long term Struggles*, K.T. Muhamadali's *The Development of Education among the Mappilas of Malabar 1800-1965* etc. belong to this list.[26]

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[23] Stephen F. Dale, *op.cit*., p.217.

[24] *Ibid*., p.64.

[25] K.N. Panikkar, *op.cit*., Specifically the Chapter 'The Making of a Tradition', pp.49-91.

[26] A.P. Ibrahim Kunju, *Mappila Muslims of Kerala: Their History and Culture*, Sandhya Publications, Trivandrum, 1989.

S.M. Mohamed Koya, *Mappilas of Malabar*, Calicut, Sandhya Publications, 1983.

P.K. Mohammed Kunji, *Muslims and Kerala Culture* (Mal.) Sahitya Academy, Trichur, 1982.

M. Abdul Samad, *Islam in Kerala: Groups and Movement in 20th century*, Kollam, 1998.

Asgar Ali Engineer, *Kerala Muslims: A Historical Perspective*, Ajanta, Delhi, 1995.

K.M. Bahavudhin, *Kerala Muslims: The long term struggles*, Trivandrum, 1992.

In this entire range of historical literature on *Mappilas* , one looks in vain for even a single contribution with primary focus on the question of Malabar muslim identity. What these literature share in common is the belief that *Mappilas* right from its inception in Malabar Coast formed a well-knit social unit without any internal contradictions and have been a community acting in unison. Hence, this notion of an exclusive ethnic identity existing right from pre-colonial phase is being interrogated in the present study. It tries to locate various discursive and non-discursive factors in the context of colonial rule in Malabar that helped the *Mappilas* to forge a community identity.

Organization of the Study

The present study is arranged thematically overlooking at times the chronological sequence of events. There are seven chapters apart from the introduction and conclusion. The first chapter 'The Phase of Popular Islam in Malabar' examines the nature of Islam as practiced by *Mappilas* during the pre-reformist phase. Various cults, beliefs and customs practiced by *Mappilas* during this phase do not converge with scriptural Islam and an understanding of this phase would provide the necessary background to perceive the changes that took place in the religious and social life of *Mappilas* during the 20th century.

The second chapter 'Colonial Governmentality and the Making of a Community' examines the various technologies of British Government in Malabar like census modality, counter-insurgency discourses, administrative devices etc. which helped to strengthen the community identity of *Mappilas* . In other words, it examines how modernization under colonial government had led to sharper articulation of identity among the subject population.

K.T. Mohammadali, *The Development of Education among Mappilas of Malabar, 1800 - 1965*, Delhi, 1990.

The third chapter 'Reform Movements and Efforts for a Separate Identity' tries to delineate the various reform movements as well as the works of individual reformers in Malabar. This phase is important in the formation of the community identity as the reformists made a conscious attempt to differentiate between Islamic and pagan beliefs. The reformist's emphasis on differentiating Islam in Malabar from local cultural tradition was a factor that brought about a separate identity.

This is followed by the chapter on 'Print and the Imagined Community of *Mappilas*, which analyses the self perception of community as reflected through print discourses. Following the formulation of Benedict Anderson about the role of print in nationalist imaginings, this chapter examines how print helped to foster community imagination among *Mappilas* . Bearing in mind the significance of print in identity formation, an exhaustive analysis of the entire print discourses has been attempted in this chapter.

The fifth chapter 'Khilafath and Pan-Islamism as Symbols of Solidarity' examines how pan Islamic concerns in the wake of Khilafath agitation amalgamated *Mappilas* in to the pan-Islamic community of Muslims and how such sentiments helped *Mappilas* to identify themselves with their co-religionists in North India.

The sixth chapter, 'Representation of the Rebellion and its Aftermath' examines how the Rebellion was covered in the print media, vernacular Press including the nationalist and the literary narratives. This 'prose of otherness' did help to the articulation of identity among the 'other' (*Mappilas*). Along with this, the chapter also examines the post Rebellion developments in Malabar especially the entry of all India players like Hindu Mahasabha, Arya Samaj JDT Islam, etc. and how their activities helped to sharpen the existing cleavage between Hindus and Muslims.

The final chapter, 'Towards a Political Identity', tries to examine how the religious identity that developed in Malabar due to various other factors was transformed in to a political identity under the banner of Muslim League. It also examines the various factors that contributed for the drifting of *Mappilas* from the nationalist politics.

This is followed by a brief conclusion which sums up the study.

The patterns of documentation followed in the study are in the conventional style. At times 'Note No' is used when two or more works of the same author is referred to in the same chapter. In such instances the author's name will be accompanied by a foot note number pertaining to the specific book of the same author already referred to in the same chapter. The Arabic and Malayalam terminologies are given in italics and their corresponding meaning in English has been given in brackets. A separate glossary of such terms has also been given.

About the Sources

As regards to the sources, considering the centrality of print in community formation, emphasis has been given to literary sources like Arabic, Arabi-Malayalam and Malayalam works composed by *Mappilas* . The back volumes of muslim journals and news-papers like *Mathrubhumi* and *Malayala Manorama*, etc. have been used as primary sources. The primary sources available at National Archives and Nehru Memorial Library at Delhi, Tamil Nadu Archives at Madras, and Regional Archives at Calicut have been tapped. Special mention may be made about the *Mahathaya Mappila Sahitya Paramparyam* (*MMSP*) co-authored by K.K. Mohamed Abdul Kareem and C.N. Ahmad Moulavi. This is a comprehensive source book on the life, culture and literature of the *Mappilas* of Malabar. Hence, throughout the study, the content of this source book has been profusely used. Similarly,

many valuable documents related to *Mappilas* , kept in the private archives of late K.K. Mohammed Abdul Kareem of Kondotty and Abdurahiman Mangad of Kakkove, have also been tapped for this study. Regarding the muslim journals used in this study, though most of these journals were published from outside the political boundary of British Malabar, the reading public of these journals were mainly *Mappilas* and hence all muslim print discourses, irrespective of location of print, have been utilized for this study.

Chapter I

THE PHASE OF POPULAR ISLAM IN MALABAR

CHAPTER I

THE PHASE OF POPULAR ISLAM IN MALABAR

The Muslims of Malabar (generally known as *Mappilas*) are either descendents of Arab traders or of 'Hindu' converts to Islam. Malabar was the chief centre of Arab trading activities right from 4th century AD and by about 7th century AD, several Arabs had taken permanent residence in some port cites of Malabar.[1] Hence it is probable that Islam came to Kerala almost immediately after it was founded in 7th century AD. Several Foreign accounts have mentioned about the existence of considerable Muslim population in coastal towns of Malabar between 9th and 16th century AD. Duarte Barbossa, who lived in Malabar during the first decade of 16th century, observed that 'the Muslims were so rooted in the soil throughout Malabar that it seems that they are a fifth part of its people, spread over all its kingdom and provinces.[2] Shaik Zamuddin in his *Tuhfathul Mujahideen*, written in 16th century, placed *Mappilas* at 10% of the total population.

Up to 16th century, as noticed by the contemporary observers, these *Mappilas* settled mainly along the coastal tracts. However between 16th and 19th centuries, the *Mappilas* had shifted to the interior parts of Malabar and so far no plausible explanation has been given to this shift. K.N. Panikkar is of the view that it was due to the increase in conversion and European intervention in Malabar that began in 16th century, which forced *Mappilas* to settle in the interior taluks of Malabar.[3] With the coming of Europeans, the

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[1] George F. Hourani, *Arab Seafaring in Indian Ocean in Ancient and Early Medieval Times*, Princeton, 1951, p.61.
[2] Duarte Barbossa, *The Book of Duarte Barbossa*, London, 1918, p.74.
[3] K.N. Panikkar, *Against Lord and State: Religion and Peasant Uprising in Malabar, 1836-1921*, Delhi, 1989, p.51.

Mappilas who had been participants and collaborators of Arab trade, were looked upon as enemies and as a consequence, a good number of *Mappilas* employed in ports might have been forced to migrate to the interior in search of alternate employment. What is relevant in this context is the fact that by about 20th century the Mappila population became predominantly rural. Unlike the coastal *Mappilas* who engaged in trade, the interior *Mappilas* were cultivating tenants, landless peasants and petty traders.

The British census data tell us about the steady growth of the community in Malabar. From 1,70,113 in 1807, the strength of the community rose to 10,04,321 in 1921[4]. The census tables show that the growth rate of Mappila population was much higher than that of other communities. Another notable aspect of demography of *Mappilas* was that 60% of them were concentrated in three southern Taluks of Malabar - Ernad, Valluvanad and Ponnani. By the census of 1961, the *Mappilas* constituted 31.43% of the total population of Malabar area, which comes around 67% of the total Muslim population of Kerala. As Gleason stated, 'Looking at a map there is no area so extensive with so concentrated a muslim population in all of peninsular India as in Malabar.'[5]

What was the nature of the religious and social life of *Mappilas* of Malabar during the pre-reformist phase or prior to 20th century? What was the nature of Islam they practiced in Malabar during this phase? Can it be called Scriptural Islam or was it a kind of syncretic or popular religion? These are the questions addressed in the following pages.

The Phase of 'Popular Islam' in Malabar

[4] The Census Report, Malabar Presidency, 1921.

[5] Henry Gleason, *Religious Communities in the Indias: A Regional Survey*. Fancy Gap, Va: By the author, 1946, p.91 as cited in Roland E. Miller, *Mappila Muslims of Kerala: A Study in Islamic Trends*, Orient Longman, Madras, 1976, p.34.

Everything that failed to measure up to norms and prescriptions of scriptural Islam was considered as folk or popular Islam which was attributed to either incomplete conversion or corrupting influence of 'Hinduism'. Almost all scholars who have worked on Muslim communities in India agree on this term. 'Folk Islam', 'Popular Islam', 'Hinduised Islam', 'Degenerated Islam', 'Census Muslims', 'Nominal Muslim', 'Syncretic Islam' are the terms used to denote the pre-reformed phase of Islamic communities throughout India. There is also a generally rooted assumption that syncretic beliefs and practices are mere relics and remnants from a pre-conversion cultural substratum.[6]

Islam as conceived and practiced by the mass of Muslims in Malabar prior to the emergence of Reform movement in 20th century was syncretic and contradicts the fundamentalist view of the beliefs and practices to which Muslims must adhere. A chronicle in Hadrmouth of 17th century AD says, 'Malabaries were people of great courage and zeal for Islam even though they have few scholars among them and no more of Islam than the merest name of it'[7]. It was with the emergence of an Islamization process by about the beginning of 20th century that the 'orthodox and orthoprax great tradition of textual Islam superseded the heterodox, heteroprax little tradition'[8] of Malabar. Though *Mappilas* acknowledge the five pillars of Islam - creed, prayer, fasting, alms (*Zakath*) and pilgrimage (*Haj*) as per the pattern laid down in *Quran*, *Hadith* and *Shariath*, the Islam they practiced up to the early quarter of 20th century was heavily underlined by elements which were

[6] Asim Roy, "Being and Becoming a Muslim: A Historiographic Perspective on the Search for Muslim Identity in Bengal" in *Bengal Rethinking History*, (ed.), Sekhar Bandopadhyaya, Delhi, 2001, p.198.
[7] As quoted in R.B. Serjeant, *The Portuguese off the South Arabian Coast*, Beiroot, Librainedu Libnan, 2nd edn. 1974, p.117.
[8] Francis Robinson, *Islam and Muslim History in South Asia,* OUP, Delhi, 2000, p.45.

accretions from the local environment of Malabar as well as Yemen.[9] In all Islamic societies we find this mixture of textual Islam and local pre-Islamic practices. In Java, Muslims pray to the Goddess of Southern Ocean as well as to Muslim saints. In Ottoman Turkey, the Bektashi Sufi order recognized an Islamic Trinity of Allah, Muhamed (the prophet) and Ali (the 4th caliph). In southern Arabia the Beduins practiced the pre-Islamic practice of sexual hospitality. In India, much in common with Islamic societies elsewhere, the Bengali and Tamil Muslim communities also practiced a syncretic Islam.[10]

Textual Islam, embodied in Arabic literature, proved unable to communicate to Muslim masses of Malabar, who knew only Malayalam. Adherence to folk beliefs should not be taken to mean that orthodox traditions had no place in Malabar Islam. There were many in the coastal towns who tried to remain as Islamic as possible. They were punctual in their daily prayers (*namas*) and observing fast during *Ramzan*. However, the bulk of the Muslim masses knew very little about the orthodox beliefs and practices. At the same time, in the coastal towns, there were men of letters in Arabic and proficient in textual Islam. They were observing Islam in its pristine purity. But the case of the bulk of *Mappilas* who lived in the interior of Malabar, was different. In Malabar, the idea of Islam as a closed system with rigid boundaries is itself largely a product of 20th century reform movements. Up to that phase, the line separating non-Islam from Islam appears to have been porous, tenuous and shifting. 'The rural Muslims,' as pointed out by Richard Eaton in another context, 'were remarkably open to accepting any sort of agency, human or superhuman, that might assist them in coping with life's everyday problems.'[11] The religious reform movements of 20th century were

[9] See, K. Moidu Moulavi, *Ormakurippukal* (Mal.), IPH, Kozhikode, 1992.
[10] For details see Imtiaz Ahmad, *Ritual and Religion among Muslims in India*, Delhi, 1981 and Susan Bayly, *Saints, Goddesses and Kings: Muslims and Christians in South Indian Society, 1700-1900*, Cambridge University Press, Delhi, 1992.
[11] Richard M. Eaton, *The Rise of Islam and Bengal Frontiers: 1204-1760*, OUP, Delhi, 1994, p.271.

found to regard such cults and rites as debasement of the pristine purity of Islam. Binaries were used by historians to demarcate between these two phases - Orthodox/Heterodox, Great Tradition/Little Tradition, Normative/Popular etc..[12] These binaries are used because as pointed out by Richard Eaton, generally scholars viewed indigenous Muslim cultural history from the standpoint of Arab heartland, understood as the natural home of an unadulterated pure orthodox Islam. This perspective necessarily consigned under to the role of periphery and hence its vast and diverse population of Muslims as practicing forms of religions that were debased or diluted, Middle East as exporter and India as importer of religious culture. The assumption is that any religion that is conceived in terms of pure essence, will, if mixed with another religion, yield debased, diluted or distorted offspring.[13] Joya Chatterji also observes that 'biological metaphors of insemination, implantation and germination abound in scholarly writings on conversion to Islam.[14]

It is a fact that Malabar could evolve its own variant of Islam which was rich, dynamic and flexible and marked by a capacity to accommodate themselves to indigenous patterns of faith and worship. In other words, Islam could take root in Malabar because of its capacity to forge links with the religions and peoples of a wider society. It is not orthodoxy but orthopraxy - adhere to a standard of identifiable Muslim behavior allowing considerable latitude. Certain basic forms of observance like that which govern the recitation of prayer, operation of mosque, practice of circumcision and key marriage forms were part of this Muslim behavior.

Most of the studies on Kerala Muslims ignore this eclectic side of Islamic religious life. It is often relegated to the domain of superstition or

[12] Richard M. Eaton (ed.), *India's Islamic Traditions, 711-1750*, OUP, Delhi, p.18.
[13] *Ibid*., p.18.
[14] Joya Chatterji, "The Bengali Muslims: A contradiction in Terms? An overview of the debate on Bengal Muslim Identity", *Comparative studies of South Asia, Africa, and the Middle East*, 16, Vol.2, 1996, p.17.

folk worship. Most of such studies concentrate on the domain of High Islam which of course was prevalent in certain pockets of coastal Malabar. Hence it is relevant here to analyse how the *Mappilas* of Malabar lived and practiced their many manifestations of Islam.

Channels of Acculturation

A major reason for this hiatus between Scriptural Islam and popular Islam was the peculiar social condition under which average Mappila lived. Majority of them were converts from the lower castes of Malabar. The census Superintendent in 1881 observed that 'among some of them there may be a strain of Arab blood from some early generation but the mothers throughout have been Dravidian and the class has been maintained in number by wholesale adult conversion.[15] Veliyamkodu Umar Qazi, the reformer and traditional intellectual of 19th century Malabar, referring to the vanity of elite *Mappilas* with regard to family pedigree, wrote:

'Aya faqiran binnasabi
Kaifata faquru
Wa asluku-min qablu
Thiyyan wa Nayaru
Wa Asari Musari
Wa Mannanu Pananu
Wa Koyappanu Chettiaru
Wa Nayadi Parayaru[16]

[You who boast about pedigree
What is your base?
Are you not converts from

[15] Edgar Thurston, *Castes and Tribes of South India*, Vol. IV, 1909, Government Press, Madras, p.456.
[16] *Umar Khazi*, (Biography) published by Veliyamkodu Mahallu Jamaath Committee, Veliyamkode, 1999, p.143.

Thiyyas, Nairs
Asari, Musari
Mannans, Panars
Koyappans, Chettiars
Nayadis & Parayars]

As this poem depicts, a major chunk of *Mappilas* were converts from various castes of Kerala. 'The size and distribution of Mappila population by the end of 18th century makes it obvious that conversion to Islam had persisted in Kerala for centuries.[17] The process of conversion to Islam continued in 19th and 20th centuries, although at what rate, it is impossible to say. We have got the periodic annual reports of *Mounathul Islam Sangam*, Ponnani, which was established in 1900 for the training of new converts, that testify to the fact that up to the mid 20th century, this process of voluntary conversion was taking place. Hence, as put forward by Fawcett in 1901, 'on the west-coast, where the Arab blood and influence is strongest, the religion is, so to speak, purely spiritual; in the interior, where there is little or no Arab blood, it is more animistic: the religion is more strongly infused with once universal ancestral worship and its concomitant phases. For example, on the coast the favourite *moulud* ceremony is entirely spiritual in its essence. . . but in the interior, where we find fanaticism, it is to obtain some favour from a deceased person who is invoked'.[18]

Thus the inherited beliefs and practices, which derived from folk traditions, had a powerful hold on the Muslim masses of rural Malabar. It is argued that these converts had no knowledge of even the basic tenets of Islam due to absence of any mechanism for the same. As mentioned earlier it was

[17] Stephen F. Dale, "Conversion to Islam in Kerala", in *Religions in South Asia* (ed.), G.A. Oddie, Manohar, Delhi, 1991, p.43.
[18] F. Fawcett, "War Songs of *Mappilas* of Malabar", *The Indian Antiquary*, Vol. XXX, November, 1901, p.499.

only in 1900 that the religious leadership began to think in that line. Thus, many non-Islamic beliefs became intermingled with Islamic belief system. Popular Islam or the folk beliefs and practices, which had evolved as a part of indigenous life habits for centuries, remained intact despite the formal act of conversion. It is to be noted that not all the unIslamic customs belong to indigenous traditions. Certain customs practiced by *Mappilas* were derived from countries like Oman and Yemen, from where Islam came to Malabar. Many of these customs of Malabar *Mappilas* could be seen prevalent in Oman.[19] The custom practiced by *Mappilas* like piercing of ear, carrying the Malappuram knife, shaving off head, tom-toying during festivities, use of family names, eating from common vessel, tying of scarf round the head, wearing Topi, and several mortuary rites like feast on the day of death, celebration of *Kannukku*, *Kurikalyanam*, particular dress genres like *kindan*, *tanipattu, kuttari, soop* (various forms of Mappila women dress) were derived from Oman.[20] Though basically Islamic and indigenous, the folk Islam in Malabar was thus vegetated by various foreign streams also.

Tomb Worship

A major feature of this popular Islam was the veneration of shrines containing tombs of Saints. Malabar *Mappilas* worshipped at shrines of a variety of holy men (*auliya*), whose identity was at best uncertain. Though tomb worship is contrary to Islamic tenets, it was part and parcel of Mappila religious life. As C.A. Innes observed, 'the religion of Koran is pure monotheism, but Mopla worships many saints (*auliyakanmar*) and martyrs (*shahids*); and his religion betrays not a few traces of primitive animism and ancestor worship. Celebrated Tangals such as the Tangals of Mamburam and men of holy and austere life were freely canonized and their tombs (*makham*)

[19] K. Moidu Moulavi, *op.cit.*, pp.196-197.
[20] *Ibid*.

become holy shrines and popular places of pilgrimage (*Ziyarath*)'[21]. About the tomb worship, E.K. Moulavi observes, 'a devotee, visiting such tombs, gives money to the custodian of the tomb and discloses his intentions. He will transmit this message to the dead *auliya* and after a while a handful of mud or ashes, or pepper will be given to the devotee which he will eat or smear on the body. After kissing the flag, he leaves the *Maqam*'.[22] The important *maqams* of Malabar were at Mamburam, Kondotty, Ponnani, Kootayi, Calicut, Pattambi, where annual *nerchas* were held with traditional pomp and gaiety. 'Canonization is often easily obtained, for it is both honourable and profitable to the guardian of such a shrine; and an unknown beggar who dies of starvation on the road side may be endowed with all sorts of virtues after death and worshipped as saint and miracle maker'.[23]

Except among the most orthodox, it is supposed that prayers offered through the intercession of a *vali* (saint) were more acceptable in the eyes of *Allah* than those offered direct. Many superhuman powers were attributed to the *Auliya* (Plural of *Vali*; Saints). They could avert any impending calamity or danger and cure all kinds of disease. It is the hymns composed in their honour that were chanted to ward off cholera and other epidemics. Their names were repeated to get out of present difficulties and to them are vows made to realize the objects of life. At Vettathuputhiyangadi (Malappuram Dt.) there was a *maqam* (tomb) of one Yahoom Thangal. When the cattle were lifted or banana stolen, the *maqam* keeper would put his head in to a hole and pull out his head with solutions. The usual mode of offering in the *maqam* was a bottle of oil[24]. It is to be noted that the land for this *Maqam* was donated by Ambatt Tarwad, a Nair family and at the time of annual *nercha*

[21] C.A. Innes, *Malabar District Gazetteer*, Government Press, Madras, 1903, Reprint, Kerala Gazetteer Department, Trivandrum, 1997, p.190.
[22] E.K. Moulavi, "Kerala Muslims and Anti-Islamic Rituals", *Sahrudayopaharam* (Mal.), *(*ed.,) E.M. Habeeb Mohammed, Quilon, 1930, pp.155-164.
[23] C.A. Innes, *op.cit.*, p.190.
[24] K. Moidu Moulavi, *op.cit*., p.37.

the oil to the lamp was usually supplied by another Hindu family, the Kizhedath family and the beaten rice provided by the nearby Kurulikkavu Temple.[25] People used to take the mud and stone of the holy tombs of saints for the treatment of abdomen pain and diaherrea.[26] The *shahids* (martyrs for the cause of Islam) were also commemorated in similar fashion and many tombs of martyrs who were killed in Mappila riots of 19th century were erected and worshipped. For example, Mutiara *Shuhadakkal'*s graveyard in Munniyur in Malappuram district was a pilgrim centre of *Mappilas* . Very often the British authorities tried to burn in to ashes the dead bodies of Mappila rebels in 19th century riots for fear of such veneration.

Hymns were composed in their honour and a major chunk of the Arabi Malayalam literature belongs to this genre. Among these the most popular were *Malappuram mala, Mampuram mala, Manjakulam mala*, etc. These songs and hymns were composed in praise of indigenous *auliyas* but in tune with the *Malappattus* of Muhiyudin, Rifai or Badar *Shahids*[27].

Recitation of these *malas* was specific to particular needs. At times the malas were chanted to ward off diseases. For e.g., *Manjakulam mala* was recited to ward off small pox, to cure insanity and for protection from thieves. The poem tells:

If you recite this *mala*
You will be relieved from
The witches of smallpox
The moment, you complete recitation.[28]

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[25] *India Vision* (News channel), 'Vasthavam', February 3, 2006.
[26] C.N. Ahmad Moulavi and KKM Abdul Kareem, *Mahathaya Mappila Sahithya Paramparyam* (Mal.), (herein after *MMSP*) Al Huda Book Stall, Kozhikode, 1978.
[27] See chapter 'Print and the Imagined Community of *Mappilas* ' for more details about these songs.
[28]Malabari, *Manjakulan mala*, Amina Printers, Trichur, 1970, p.2, This *mala* is an eulogy of Syed Husain who is believed to have died in the battle with infidels during Tipu's time and buried at Manjakulam in Palghat.

It tells further that when a worker destroyed the wall of the *maqbara* of this *Auliya*, in connection with railroad construction, he died on the spot due to the wrath of the saint. Similarly, at the time of *nercha* at the *maqam*, when a man denied water to the devotees, his house was burnt by the wrath of the *Auliya*. This kind of miracles were attributed to the *Mamburam Thangal* also. Even the mud stained with the saliva of *Mamburam Thangal* was considered to have healing power. Throughout India, the bodily secretions, especially saliva and human wastes were thought as being charged with a form of power and energy. The devotees perceive their lord's saliva as a medium which carries and transmits his *barakath*. 'Indeed it is wonderful what all good offices the saints are supposed to be able to perform',[29] says Qadir Hussain Khan.

The Cult of *Nerchas*

Nerchas, the largest public festivals of *Mappilas* were closely linked with this saint-worship. 'These were expensive and elaborate ceremonials which combine nominally Islamic elements with certain features of indigenous folk festivals.[30] Anniversaries of each of the *Auliya* mentioned earlier were celebrated in all the major centres of Malabar with great pomp and splendour. This celebration commences with the planting of a flag-staff (*Kodiyettam*) as in the Hindu festivals. As Qadir Husain Khan points out, 'the prayers offered to the deceased *Pirs, Thangals* and *Shahids* which, though contrary to the spirit of Islam, are very common in Malabar, where as it is well known that ancestral worship with all its concomitant phases was once widely prevalent'.[31] The respect paid to such notable dead, in some instance

[29] Qadir Husain Khan, *South Indian Mussalmans*, Bhramavadin Press, Madras, 1910, p.50.
[30] Stephen F. Dale, and M. Ganghadara Menon, "Nercha: Saint Worship among the Muslims of Kerala", *Kerala Muslims: A Historical Perspective* (ed.), Asghar Ali Engineer, Ajanta, Delhi, 1995, p.174.
[31] Qadir Husain Khan, *op.cit.*, p.52.

had bordered upon idolatry. It was believed that they had direct intercourse with the god and they can help a person to make or mar one's fortunes. Thus all the *nerchas* were conducted within a ritual framework derived from the worship of folk deities in Malabar. These were important just because of this hybrid character, that is, they provided examples of an especially complex variety of Islamic saint and martyr worship. The most prominent *nerchas* of Malabar were of Kondotty, Malappuram, Pukottur, Kuttayi, Mamburam and Idiyangara in Calicut. Though the pattern of ceremonies was almost similar, the saints commemorated through them were of different nature. Kondotty *nercha* honours the Sufi landlord Mohamed Sha, who settled at Kondotty during the period of Tipu Sulthan. The Pukottur *nercha*, which does not exist today, was held in memory of martyrs of 1921 rebellion. Malappuram *nercha* commemorates the martyrs of the revolt against Paranambi in 1728-9 AD. The *nercha* at Idiyangara in Calicut town, which is known as *Appa Vaniba Nercha* or *Idiyangara Shaik Urus* is the one which is celebrated in honour of Shaik Mamukoya, a sufi saint of Calicut who died in 1562 AD (H.E. 980). The tradition says that one night, some *Mappilas* dreamt that his grave which was near to the reefs, was in danger of being washed away and that they should remove his body to a safe place. They accordingly opened the grave and found the body quite fresh (after a lapse of 100 years) with no signs of decomposition. The remains were poisly re-interred in another place and a *maqam* was built known as Idiyangara Shaik Maqam.[32] An interesting aspect of this *nercha* is the offering of bread and hence the name *Appa Vanibha nercha*. The devotees believe that if they are having ailment in any part of the body, they may prepare bread in the shape of such body parts and offer to the shaik, the disease in that part of the body can be cured. The biggest in the history of the *Nercha* at Idiyangara was the one held in 1914 in which Srambikkal Mammad organized a *Varavu* (procession) with 20 elephants, a

[32] P.P. Mammad Koya Parappil (herein after Parappil Koya), *Kozhikotte Muslimgalude Charithram*, (Mal.), Focus Publication, Calicut, 1994, p.222.

cart full of vegetables, a cart of rice and 50 baskets of *Appam* (cake), accompanied by usual art forms of *Kolkali*, *Kalari* and *Daffmuttu*.[33] Kuttayi *nercha* honours the memory of a Sufi Shaik or atleast a Muslim who is believed to have been a Sufi for no one knows his name or even exactly when he came to the village.[34]

Whatever the content of these *nerchas*, these were celebrated annually in which *Mappilas* participated in large numbers. The Government report of 1868 says that the Kondotty *nercha* was attended by 8000 people with 20 carts, 15 *manchils* and 8 horses.[35] Similarly in Ernad and Valluvanad Taluks, barring the aged and invalids, 90% of the *Mappilas* attend the Malappuram *nercha* and it shows the sympathy and honour of *Mappilas* towards martyrs to the cause of religion.[36] At the same time it is pertinent to note that Hindus vigorously participated in Malappuram *nercha*. In the *nercha* held in March 1924, *Mathrubhumi* reported that besides the Mappila's drums, 'Hindu drummers were also participating in it and this showed that Hindu-Muslim unity had not been hurt in Ernad.[37]' In 1934 the Malappuram *nercha* was attended by 1500 *Mappilas* [38].

There were many minor *nerchas* in Malabar like *Pullara Nercha*, *Kottakkal Nercha* at Palapra Palli. In connection with Kottakkal nercha in 1932 there were fire works, and many types of gambling called *Chattikali*, *Pullivali* etc.[39] During the *nercha* in Tanur mosque in 1893 the local *Mappilas* had, without getting any license, arranged for fire works and gambling at a kind of roulette called Pot-roulette (*Chattikali*). Hearing this

[33] *Ibid*., p.224.
[34] Stephen. F. Dale and M. Ganghadara Menon. *op.cit.*, p.186.
[35] *Report on Fairs and Festivals in Madras Presidency* by Major J.L. Ranking, 1868, R. 201, XCVII, KRA.
[36] K. Madhavan Nair, *Mathrubhumi*, dated 31st May 1923.
[37] *Mathrubhumi*, dated 18th March 1924.
[38] *FNR*, dated 19th April, 1934, No.pp.4-8, TNA.
[39] *Mathrubhumi*, dated 29th March, 1932.

the police laid an interdict on the proposed amusement whereupon some 2000 *Mappilas* carried their illegal intentions.[40]

Hydros Kutty Moopan popularly known as *Manathala Shahid* is believed to be a lieutenant of Tipu and *nercha* was celebrated every year at his tomb in Chavakkad. He was the patron saint invoked by fishermen of both Hindus and non-muslims.[41] A replica of the *Jaram* (tomb) was taken out in procession through out the streets at the time of *nercha*. Similarly the fishing community of Badagara used to invoke the blessings of Cheru Seethi Thangal *Jaram* for a good catch.[42] The identity of many of the *auliyas* laid to rest in the *maqbaras*, where *nerchas* were held was very often unknown. No definite information is available regarding the historicity of '*Papamkoya Tangal* (Kasargod), *Munnupettumma* (Kannur), *Munambath Beevi* (Ponnani), *Kasart Auliya* (Ponnani) etc.[43]

Thus the *nerchas* not only reveal many of the variegated elements which form the mosaic of popular religious culture, such as the influence of *velas* and *purams* or the participation of *Harijans* but the *nerchas* also bring out many of the specifically Islamic aspects of Mappila practice which are not immediately evident in everyday life. This is particularly true of the influence of devotional religion which is present as an aspect of popular religious practice, but which does not seem to have an organized sectarian manifestation.[44] This explains the apparent reason behind the popularity of *nerchas*. At the one hand, it provided the rural *Mappilas* , including women, an opportunity to express genuine religious piety and on the other, it was a

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[40] *Kerala Pathrika*, dated April 1893, MNPR, 1893, TNA.
[41] V. Kunhali, *Sufism in Kerala*, Calicut, 2004, p.107.
[42] *Ibid.*, p.113.
[43] Sadaruddin Vazhakkad, "The Maqbara industry" in *Prabhodanam*, Kozhikode, February 10, 2007, pp.11-16. For details about the *Maqbaras* of Malabar, See K.P. Shareef, *Prasidha Ziyarath Kendrangal* (Mal.) Ashrafi Book Centre, Tirurangadi, 2005.
[44] Stephen F. Dale and M. Gangadhara Menon, *op.cit.*, p.193.

spectacular entertainment, featuring the *varavus* (arrivals), fire works, tom-toying, *Duffmuttu*, *Kolkali* and an occasion for shopping in clothing, toys, sweets and household utensils and agricultural implements. All these elements come together in different combination to make *nerchas* popular in Malabar.

The ceremonial pattern of the *nercha* reveals the fact that, it represents the Mappila adaptation of indigenous religious traditions. '*Mappilas* could have Islamized already existing festivals or created new ones using indigenous ceremonial patterns.[45] Most of the rituals connected with *nerchas* were similar to those of *poorams* or *velas* practiced by Brahmanic or non-Brahmanic communities. In terms of music, and dramatic performance as well as *Varavus*, (offertory procession), there was a marked similarity. Another link of *nerchas* with *puram* is the seasonal agrarian context. Majority of *nerchas* like *purams* take place during the harvest season. It is to be noted that Kondotty *nercha* began as a ceremony in which Muslim peasants brought agricultural produce to the senior Thangal.[46] Besides, the *Varavu* was common to both *nercha* and *pooram*. The use of decorated elephants, the fireworks, the hoisting of flags all further support non-Islamic aspect of the *nerchas*. A remarkable aspect is the participation and *varavus* of untouchable organizations of villages and the artisan groups like goldsmiths. This participation of non-muslims also testifies to the syncretic nature of *nerchas*. It was this syncretic nature and its disjunction with scriptual islam that led reformist group to despise *nerchas* as unislamic. All these were in direct conflict with the teachings of the prophet who did not even favour the building of a tomb at the place where his sacred remains was interred.

Thus, as Aysha Jalal opined, 'The shrines of holy man as a place of devotion may be deemed contrary to the strict precepts of Islam. Yet

[45] *Ibid*., p.179.
[46] Roland E. Miller, *op.cit.*, p.96.

Maqbara or tombs of Sufi saints have been the focal points of religious devotion, often cutting across the communitarian divide.[47]

Almost similar is the ritual called *Kodikuthu nercha* or flag hoisting *nercha*. When there occurs famine due to drought, the devotees of certain *Auliyas*, go to the custodians of *Maqbara*, give an amount, take the flag off the *Maqbara* and carrying this flag, huge crowd of devotees with tom-toying circumvent the entire village and thereby the procession sanctify the Muslim residential areas[48]. Another variant of this was *Nadappu Moulud* which was performed to ward off contagious disease. Taking a lamp from mosque and reciting *moulid*, devotees in large numbers circumvent the village.[49]

Sandanakudam, sandalwood paste anointing was another popular ritual among *Mappilas* . But this was more popular in southern part of Kerala. It involved the ceremonial parading of pots of sandal paste to the *maqbara* (tomb). The devotees anoint the tomb with sandal paste and distribute it to the devotees. This practice was quite identical with Hindu festivals all over India. As in the case of *nerchas*, Hindu devotees also take part in this procession. Barring the high caste groups, all the people of Malabar, irrespective of creed and caste, shared a common perception of sacred power and this common cults cut across formal boundaries of communities and sects.[50]

Though the *Mappilas* identified themselves as *Sunnis*, they had actively participated in the *Shia* rite of *Muharrum*, the great festival of

[47] Aysha Jalal, *Self and Sovereignty: Individual and Community in South Asian Islam since 1850*, OUP, Delhi, 2001, p.17.

[48] M. Abdulla Kutty Moulavi, "Alquran wa Sunnath", in *Al-Ameen*, Prophet's Day issue, 1930, p.58.

[49] M.N. Karassery, *Pulikkottil Krithikal*, Mappilakalasahityavedi, Wandoor, 1979, Preface, p.xi.

[50] Despite the efforts of reformist, tomb worship continues in Malabar even in the 21st century. Even progressive political parties contest the election to the governing bodies of *Jarams* like Perumpadappu which receive a huge amount annually as vows. Also note the legal battle around the ownership of Mampuram *Jaram* today.

mourning and penitence. It commemorates the slaughter of the historic *shia* martyrs of Hasan and Husain, the sons of Ali, the orthodox caliph. As Yousuf Moulavi observed, 'this *Shia* festival came to Kerala from Persia and both *Shias* and *Sunnis* and even non-muslims began to celebrate it as an opportunity for merry making'.[51] During the procession, *Tazias*, known in Malayalam as '*Koodaram*' was paraded. Muharram was elaborately celebrated in Kannur and Calicut during 19th and early 20th centuries. It was celebrated with elaborate merry makings even in 1930 at Kannur as testified by a report in *Mathrubhumi*.[52] Very often, the non-muslims wore the characters of animals in the procession. By 1920's, both reformists and traditionalists urged their followers to distance themselves from *Koodaram* festival.

Sufi cult in Malabar

In order to understand the cult of intercession which was widespread among *Mappilas* , one has to examine another aspect of popular Islam - the Sufi cult. By about 16th century, many Sufi *Tarikas* (orders) had found a favourable and fertile ground in Malabar and in course of time the veneration of Sufi *shaiks* came to be regarded as an integral part of Malabar Islam. V. Kunhali has observed that it was the *Taifa* stage in the development of Sufism which became popular in Malabar.[53] During this stage the disciples were not longing for spiritual elevations but only for fulfillment of some worldly desires with the *baraka* (blessings) of the saint. Very few Sufi divines who had come over to Malabar, set up their own shrines. Most of the ancient mosques are known by the name of certain sufi Shaiks. In Calicut

[51] M. Yusuf Moulavi, *Deepika*, Vol.1, Issue 6, 1931 in *Deepika Ottavalyathil*. Vakkam Moulavi Foundation, Trivandrum, 1992, p.259.
[52] The reports says that one Kanaran was indicted by committee for prevention of cruelty towards animals for squeezing the blood of a goat at the time of *Koodaram* procession (*Mathrubhumi*, dated 10th June, 1930).
[53] V. Kunhali, *op.cit.*, p.8.

itself we come across '*Mohiyudin Palli', Shaduli Palli, Rifai Palli* etc. named after Sufi *shaiks*, popular in Malabar. It also shows that the prominent Sufi orders in Malabar were those of *Qadiriya, Shaduli* and *Rifai.* As already mentioned, the most popular *Moulids* of Malabar were of Abdul Qadar Jilani and Shaik Rifai. Besides this, there was the Sufi order of Kondotty Tangal, considered to be of *Shia* orientation.

Qadiriya, which was founded by Shaik Muhiyudin Abdul Qadir Jilani (1077-1166), was the oldest Sufi order in Islam. The growth of Ponnani, 'the little Mecca of Malabar' as a Muslim centre of learning is related to one saint called Ibn Abdul Qadir Khurasani, a disciple of Shaik Jilani.[54] Kondotty Tangal was a descendant of Persian Mohammed Sha.[55] Shaik Zainudin-ibn-Ali-al-Mabari (1467-1521) belonged to *Chisthi Tarika* which was founded by Hazrath Kwaja Muinudhin Chisthi.[56] *Rifai Tarika* also claimed a good number of followers in Malabar as is evident from the popularity of *Rifai Mala* and the number of its reprints in Malabar. But among these, the most popular one was of *Qadiriya Tarika*. Until recently, an average Muslim in Malabar used to call out 'Muhiyudin Shaik' in times of trouble. The *Qadiriya*, which had a high reputation for orthodoxy, was on the whole literary, rather than propagandist and is said to maintain a higher standard of Islamic instruction than its rivals.[57] Perhaps this may be the cause for the relatively high piety of Malabar Muslims even now.

Thus, it could be seen that by about 19th century, the Malabar *Mappilas* were polarized in to many *Tarikas* and heated debates were going on in Malabar between the disciples of this *Tarikas*. As Thurston observed, 'There

[54] Syed Mohiyudeen Sha, *Islam in Kerala*, Trichur, 1974, p.43.
[55] C.A. Innes, *op.cit.*, p.415.
[56] A.P. Ibrahim Kunju, *Mappila Muslims of Kerala: Their History and Culture*, Sandhya Publication, Trivandrum, 1989, p.22.
[57] I.M. Lewis, "Sufism in Somaliland", *Islam in Tribal Societies* (eds.), Akbar S. Ahmad and David M. Hart, Routledge, London, 1984, p.138.

are always religious disputes between these sects of Kondotty Tangal and Ponnani Tangal and the criminal courts are seldom called in to settle them'.[58] Each sect was vying each other and trying to get followers from other sects. For, *Muhiyudinmala* warns the followers of other *Tarikas*:

"Leaving him, where do you go (rely) oh! people.

All the cocks will crow and stop.

But Muhiyudin's cock will crow up to *Qiyamam* (Dooms day).

Oh! The people who yearn *Akhiram* (Life after death).

Be his *Murids* without delay".[59]

The local founders of these orders like Kondotty Thangal and Mamburam Thangal were often sanctified after their death. Their veneration gave rise to cults, which often overshadowed the devotion due to the true founders of the *Tarika.* This explains why the cult of Kondotty Tangal and Mamburam Tangal were of extreme importance, ignoring the ideology and sufi philosophy, they espoused during their life time. The ejaculatory prayer 'Oh Muhiyudhin Shaik' was so popular in Malabar. Similarly 'by the feet of Mamburam Tangal' was a sacred seal to a mappila contract. Tottenham says, 'It is quite common now for *Mappilas* to invoke Mampuram Thangal when in difficulties. I have heard a little Mappila who was frightened at my appearance and ran away across a field calling out 'Mampuram Thangal . . . Mampuram Thangal".[60] Their tombs became shrines tended by descendants of the *Shaiks*. To the Shrines, devotees come and take part in pilgrimage on the anniversary of his death.

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[58] E. Thurston, *op.cit.,* p.461.
[59] *MMSP.* pp.152-156.
[60] As quoted in Edgar Thurston, *op.cit.*, p.463. Pulikkottil Hydru (1879-1975) the Mappila poet wrote in one of his poem, 'No one other than you had touched me, By the feet of Mampuram Thangal, I swear'. See M.N. Karassery, *Pulikkottil Krithikal*, Wandoor, 1979.

Very often, these Sufi *pirs* claimed *Sayid* (Prophet's lineage) pedigree for that would enhance their prestige. They were the earthly reminders of God's presence. For the rural *Mappilas,* the theological polemics of *Ulema* were often remote and hard to grasp, but the saint was a ready exemplar of reality of divine forces in the universe. By performing *Karamaths* (miracles) or having people believe he does, through use of his divine power (*barakath*), the saint demonstrates the immediacy of *Allah*'s existence.[61] Both the founder as well as the local *pirs* was considered imbued with such miracles. Muhiyudin Shaik is described as 'one who, since born in *Ramzan*, did not drink mother's milk for one month' and as 'one who made the skeleton of cock to crow and fly or 'one who sees the heart of disciple like an object inside a glass.'[62] We have already seen the miracles attributed by disciples to Mamburam Tangal. The devotees believed that by the *barakath* of Mamburam Tangal, bullets can't pierce through the body and, out of this belief, many indulged in heroic fight with British soldiers in 19th century.

Similarly, goats were dedicated to Muhiyudhin Shaik and such goats were butchered and feasts were organized during the death anniversary of the *Shaik.*[63] Vowing the cattle to Nagore Shrine (Tamil Nadu) was also prevalent in Malabar. A considerable number of devotees used to visit this shrine of Shahul Hamid (1532-1600 A.D), a Sufi missionary buried at Nagore in Tamil Nadu.[64] Such bulls vowed to Nagore were paraded with green shawls along the streets, weeks before the actual *nercha* at Nagore. The accompanying devotees would carry a box with silver objects in the shapes of leg, arm, ear, genital organ etc. of human bodies. The devotees believed that by vowing a

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[61] Stephen L. Pastner, "Feuding with Spirit among Zikri Baluch: The saint as champion of the Despised", Akbar. S. Ahmad and David M. Hart (eds) , *op.cit.*, p. 303.

[62] K.V. Muhammad Musliar, *Muhiyudhin mala Vyakhyanam,* Quilandy, 1986, pp.25-45.

[63] E.K. Moulavi, *Al-Ithihad* (Arabi - Malayalam) I[st] Feb. 1954, Book I, Issue I.

[64] Roland E. Miller, *op.cit.*, p. 243.

particular organ of the body, the illness of that part of the body could be cured by the grace of Nagore *Andavar*.[65]

The Cult of *Ratibs*

It was the sufi cult which introduced *Ratibs* in Malabar and attached with every mosque, there was *Ratib* house (*Ratib pura*) to perform recitation of *dikr* on every Thursday evenings.[66] The most popular Ratib recited in Malabar was *Haddad Ratib* composed by Abdulla Ibn Alavi al Haddad (d. 1726 AD).[67] *Ratib* was a ritual in which members of a *Tarika* form an immense circle and recite the hymns eulogizing their sufi *shaik*. At a particular phase of the *Ratib*, they begin to recite their formulae in rancorous saw-like voices rhythmically swaying their bodies. The influence of *yoga* could be seen in this practice. The *Rifai* devotees practiced 'Rasping Saw' *dikr* like '*Ha, Hy, Ha Hu, Hu, Allah*.' Walking on fire and swallowing live snakes were the miracles of *Rifai* Sufis.[68]

A special *Ratib* was performed by the devotees of *Shaduli Tarika* called '*owl Ratib*' in which they practiced a kind of rhythmic humming and finally fall down foaming to the ground in induced epileptic convulsions.[69] Special *Ratibs* were organised in times of epidemics like cholera and small pox. Another form of this *Ratib* was *Kuthuratib* in which the participants swing left and right and to and fro, calling out '*ya Shaik Muhiyuddhin*' or '*Ya shaik Rifai*'. 'After a while one of them stabs on his belly with a dagger, another cut his tongue, still a third piercing his cheek with a needle. This *Ratib* of self mortification was usually performed by professionals called

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[65] K. Umar Moulavi, *Ormayude Theerath*, (Autobiography) Cochin, 2000, pp.234-35.
[66] Till 1940's, at Muhiyudin Mosque in Calicut, there was a *Ratib khana*, *Ibid*., p.106.
[67] V. Kunhali, *op.cit.* p.23.
[68] *Ibid*., p.64.
[69] K. Moidu Moulavi, *op.cit.*, p.40.

Qalandars.[70] '*Al-Burhanul Munir*', an Arabic work by Qasi Mohamed Ibn Ali written in 1927, despised this *Ratib* as un-Islamic.[71]

Another cult associated with Sufism was *Jinnuseva* (propitiation of spirits) which was derived from the Sufi practice of *Arbainiyya* (Forty days retreat to solitude). It was believed that once a man retreats to jungle and completes his meditation of 40 days, he can perform miracles with the help of *Jinns* at his command.

An interesting aspect of Sufi cult was the practice of placing the *Silsila* (the complete genealogy of the order from the founder to the diseased) in the grave of the disciple and it was believed that when the angels realized his identity, he would be left unhurt. Very often this written genealogy was kept in bottles to protect from moths. This practice of putting *silsila* bottle in graves was prevalent in Malabar until recently.[72] Again, the *murids* used to hand over their jewellery and even land to the local *pir*, as he is taught by the *pir* that all wealth belonged to God. Hence, to get paradise, the disciples present their worldly assets to these *pirs*. As observed by Makti Thangal, 'these *shaiks* tantalized their disciples boasting that they had 20,000 *murids* and their grand fathers had 50,000, just like the provincial landlords boasting about their wealth in terms of coconut trees'.[73] A major share of the revenue of Kondotty Tangal was in the form of such offerings from the *murids*. Mohammed Sha Tangal of Kondotty came from Bombay and he belonged to the *Muqaddam* sect. Kondotty Tangal turned to be a big *janmi* of Ernad as he was given considerable landed property by his *murids*.[74] Even Tipu Sulthan was his *murids* and had given the right to collect tax in that area. His

[70] *Qulandars* is a family name in Malabar even now.
[71] V. Kunhali, *op.cit.*, p.23.
[72] K. Moidu Moulavi, *op.cit.*, p.38.
[73] M. Thangal, "La Maujudin la point" in *Makti Thangalude Sampoorna Krithikal* (Mal), (herein after *MTSK*) ed. by K.K. M. Kareem, Kerala Islamic Mission, Tirur, 1981, p.647-656.
[74] *M.M.S.P*, *op.cit.*, p.193.

disciples used to prostrate before him. It was on account of this that there arose schism in Malabar Islam called *Ponnani - Kondotty Kaitharkam*. As Kunjain observed, 'The reason why they (the disciples of Kondotty Tangal) are believed to be heretics and as such outcast is that they are enjoined by their preceptor (the *Tangal*) to prostrate before him. Prostration (*Sujud*) according to strict doctrines is due to God alone.'[75]

Thus, these Sufi leaders exercised a marked influence, not only on the spiritual but socio-political life of Malabar *Mappilas* . The belief that a Muslim should have a leader in his life (*Imamuzzaman*) was strong among *Mappilas* and it was this belief that was exploited by the *Shaiks* of *Tarikas* and made people to accept these saints as their pirs.[76] As Baber observed in 1822, "both *Tarammal Tangal* (Mampuram) and Kondotty Tangals pretend to an extra ordinary sanctity and such is the character they have established that the people believe it is in their power to carry them harmless through the most hazardous undertakings and even to absolve them of most atrocious crimes.[77] To propitiate them, their votaries were lavish in their presents. The *Thangal* (Malappuram) possess great influence in the Taluks of Ernad and Valluvanad and resides for half the year at Malappuram and for the other half at Ponnani. The late collector Canaran regards the character of this man as quite inoffensive man, fond of good things of life and anxious for nothing better than to enjoy in peace the offerings of his numerous disciples.[78]

All these point to the fact that Sufism contained two elements - a sophisticated intellectualism which is represented by Ibn-Arabi and Al-Gazzali, as well as simple minded manifestations of folk religion as seen in

[75] P. Kunjain (Mopla Deputy Collector) *Malabar Quarterly Review*, 1903, cited in E. Thurston *op.cit.*, p.462.
[76] K. Moidu Maulavi, *op.cit.*,. p.38.
[77] Cited in E. Thurston, *op.cit.*, p.463.
[78] Letter, A. Mac Gregor, Magistrate to Chief Secretary, Madras. 19th Jan. 1874, Judicial Dept. 23rd April 1874, KRA.

Malabar with its amulets, *nerchas*, exoctic ceremonies and half-illiterate saints. The Malabar experience also tell us the fact that although Sufism is a product of sophisticated civilized centres of Islamic world, it is also suitable to a tribal society. It provides an interpretation of Islam which while preserving the supreme absoluteness of *Allah*, mitigates the uniqueness of prophet in favour of more accessible and more immediate intercessors.[79] They claim to be within strict *Sunni* orthodoxy (except the Kondotty Tangal, who was a *Shia* but later gave up his *shia* affinity after the *Kaitharkam*) but, later, they were accused of heresy by the reformers of 20th century. Makti Tangal who initiated Islamic reform in Kerala says, 'Islam does not permit to disclose the spiritual secrets to ignorant and to make the spiritual advice as means of livelihood by enlisting clients (*murids*) and collecting dues from them. But wherever you go in Kerala, you can see this 'give and take' (between *pirs* and *murids*) and the 'scramble' for *murids*, both men and women'.[80]

Despite this isolated attacks on the part of the early reformers, the emotional attachment of average Muslim to his Sufi saint, living or dead, and his faith in his immense miraculous powers was so deep and pervasive that no amount of denunciation could undermine his devotion. Many felt that it was through the intercession of the *Shaik* alone (*Thavasul Isthigaza*), they could come closer to God. This immutable conviction of average *murids* proved an insuperable problem for the later reformists and encouraged the fundamentalist theologians to come forward to oppose the reformists. As pointed out in a subsequent chapter, the reformist and the traditional *ulema* engaged in very long heated debate on this single issue of intercession through Sufi *Shaiks* during the period of 1930's & 1940's. Thus, Sufism as

[79] I.M. Lewis, *op.cit.*, p.159.
[80] KKM Kareem, *MTSK*, *op.cit.*, p.656.

practiced in Malabar was part and parcel of the popular religion and not the part of sophisticated intellectualism.

As Richard Eaton observed in the context of Bijapur, 'devotion to some saints, exercised through the veneration of his descendants and his tomb' exerted a powerful appeal among common folk whose goal was not the mystic's goal of spiritual affinity with god but the simpler one of achieving relief from worldly anxieties or attaining possession of worldly desires. It was through the intercession of saints that God's help could be secured in attaining these goals. This explains the introduction of astrology, magic, belief in Talisman and Charms and other superstition as means of prescribing the flow of *baraka* from saints'.[81] This observation is applicable to most of the saints of Malabar too. Trimmingham has identified three phases in the evolution of Sufism in Islam: *Khanqha* Phase, *Tarika* phase, and the *Taifa* stage. If Sufis in *Kanqha* phase surrendered to God and in the *Tarika* phase to a method of discipline, in the *Taifa* stage they surrendered to a person, the *baraka* possessing saint of whose cult they were members.[82] Hence, it could be argued that Sufism reached Kerala in 16th and 17th centuries, when it had reached its *Taifa* stage. Sufism in Kerala betrays all the characteristics of *Taifa* stage, when disciples were not longing for spiritual elevations, but only fulfillment of some worldly desires with the *baraka* of a saint.[83] It also explains the high popularity of *Muhiyudin Mala* of Qazi Mohammed (1607) while *Kappappattu*, which is highly philosophical, could not gain that popularity among *Mappilas* .[84]

Other Folk Beliefs of *Mappilas*

[81] Richard M. Eaton, *Sufis of Bijapur: Social Roles of Sufis in Medieval India*, Princeton, 1978, pp.30-31.
[82] Spencer Trimmingham, *Sufi orders in Islam*, Oxford, 1971, p.102.
[83] V. Kunhali, *op.cit.*, p.61.
[84] For details see chapter 'Print and the Imagined Community of *Mappilas* '.

The influence of surrounding Hinduism is also found in the belief in magic, in the practice of exorcism and such other black arts which commonly obtain amongst the Muslims in Malabar, notwithstanding the distinct expression of condemnation in Islam of all such beliefs and practices as treason against God.[85] Though magic is condemned by Quran, the Mappila was very superstitious and witchcraft was not by any means unknown.[86] The *Musaliyars* and *Thangals* pretend to cure diseases by writing selection from *Quran* on a plate with ink or on a coating of ashes and then giving the ink or ashes mixed with water to the patient to swallow. This was the most popular method of curing diseases among *Mappilas* of Malabar right up to the middle of 20th century. They also wore charm cylinders round the waist (*Elassu*), which contained copper scrolls inscribed with sacred verses to avert misfortune. The Mappila *jinn* and *shaithan* corresponded to the Hindu demons and were propitiated in much the same way. The rumour that the *elassu* provided by Konnara Tangal and Chembrasseri Tangal would protect the body from bullets, was widespread in Malabar during the 1921 Rebellion.[87]

One of the methods of witchcraft was to make a wooden figure to represent the enemy, drive nails into all the vital parts and throw it in to the sea after the curses in due form.[88] A square cavity, closed by wooden lid, is cut out of the middle of the abdomen of such figures and fills with hair, scorpion, ganja (Indian hemp) etc. Such exorcists pretend to have power to cause death or injury to enemies, to increase worldly prosperity, to command victory and in short to accomplish all wishes, spiritual and material, which the

[85] Qadir Husain Khan, *op.cit.*, p.54; For a detailed idea of Witchcraft among *Mappilas* , see K. Hussain Randathani, *Social and Cultural History of Mappila Muslims*, Ph. D. Thesis, Calicut University, 1998.
[86] E. Thurston, *op.cit.*, p.489.
[87] K.K. M. Kareem, *1921-le Kalapavum Ali Musliyarum*, (Mal) Tirurangadi, 1982, p.131.
[88] E. Thurston, *op. cit.*, p.489.

seeker desires. As this belief in evil spirits was most common, witchcraft was a lucrative business in Malabar. Very often the *Mappilas* sought the help of exorcists, who belong to *paraya* and *pulaya* castes. When a lady conceives, the village *musaliyar* (priests) writes selections from the *Quran*[89] on the plates (*Pinjanamezhuthu*) and the plate is washed with water and the pregnant lady drinks this water. Similarly, she is asked to stick a *yanthram* (cabalistic signs) on her both thighs.[90] *Homam* (a form of exorcism practiced on terminal patients) *Kuppi Thukal* (to hang a bottle on the roof with inscriptions from *Quran* in it) and to bury the copper plates with inscriptions in or outside the house, are other forms of magic practiced by *Mappilas* .

Many evil spirits were propitiated by *Mappilas* in Malabar. 'Parallel to '*Chathan*' and '*Kuttichathan*' or '*Gulikan*' of the neighbouring sects, there were the Muslim versions of the same known by different names like *Chekkuttypapa* or *Kanjirakudam*. In Muslim houses, there were separate rooms and stools, which were dedicated to such spirits.[91] *Kunjirayinpapa* was another popular evil spirit propitiated by *Mappilas* in South Malabar. It was actually a tribal spirit, the lower orders of Malabar believed in and once they converted to Islam, they also islamized this evil spirit with a Muslim name.[92]

Belief in *Jinn* was quite common and innumerable ballads in Arabi-Malayalam, which dealt with the miracles of *jinns* like *'Valiya jinnpattu*' and '*Cheriya jinnpattu*' were popular among *Mappilas* . *Valiya jinn pattu* deals with an imaginary battle between Hazrath Ali, the orthodox caliph, with *jinns*.[93] These are songs which extol Ali and hence belong to *Shia* cult. Other important works that belong to the *shia* cult and popular among *Mappilas*

[89] Usually, the *Musaliyar* selects '*Ayathul Kursi*' a particular chapter from Quran for Pregnant women.
[90] K. Moidu Moulavi, *op.cit*., p.20.
[91] P.K. Muhammed Kunji, *Muslingalum Kerala Samskaravum*, (Mal), Trissur, 1993 (Reprint), p.264.
[92] K. Moidu Moulavi, *op.cit.*, p.20.
[93] P.K. Muhammed Kunji, *op.cit*., p.265.

were *Pakshipattu* (Birds song), written by Naduthopil Abdulla and *Kuppipattu* (Bottle song), many versions of which were available and *Thalipattu*, written by Syed Husain. All these songs were sung with veneration by *Mappilas*, without being bothered about its contents, even when the orthodox Muslims considered *shi'sm* as outside the fold of Islam.[94]

Belief in *Rouhani* (soul of dead) was also popular. Those who were caught up by *Rouhani* were exorcised through *Asmah* (witchcraft) by *musaliyars* as well as non-muslim sorcerers, with the help of articles like copperplates, egg, tender coconut, cock etc.[95]

Though *Quran* denounces the idea of prying in to future or the unknown, several varieties of divination were popular among *Mappilas* like divination by astrology, dreams and oracles. Specialists in casting horoscopes were there among them. Otherwise they sought the help of traditional *Kaniyans* (Hindu Astrologers). Oracular divination was much popular in Malabar.[96] Inspired Shamanists who inhale divine afflatus were consulted and their replies were delivered in frenzy just like the oracles in *Poorams* and *Theyyams*. These professional convulsionists worked themselves in to violent hysterics and thundered out such curses or prophecies as the occasion demanded. Even in 20th century Malabar, we come across newspaper reports of convulsionists called *Faqir papa* and *Bibis*.[97]

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[94] *MMSP, op. cit.,* p.474.
[95] Qadir Husain Khan, *op.cit.,* p.59.
[96] Usually, the *Musaliyar* selects *Ayathul Kursi*, a particular chapter from Quran for pregnant women.
[97] *Malayala Manorama* reported in 1922 that 'at Muhiyudhin mosque in Calicut, a Thangal from South Travancore was staying and performing miracles. When a toddy tapper approached him complaining about the scarcity of toddy yield, he asked him to bring the next day's yield to the mosque. Surprisingly, he got an abundant yield next morning and brought it to the mosque, and the Thangal sold the whole toddy from the mosque itself. The report added that no Muslim objected to this deed of *Thangal*. The *Thangal* was also seen leading a huge procession comprising boys and elders shouting the slogan 'let the dawn come and Badr crack down; Let the jasmine blossom and the fragrance spread' and the devotees attribute

The annual report of Basel Medical Mission of Calicut in 1907 says that 'it is regrettable that the people during epidemics (cholera and smallpox) do not resort to hospital medicines but ascribe them to the devil's scourge. Especially the ignorant and superstitious *Mappilas* believe that cholera is due to demoniac possession and can only be cured by exorcism.[98] Another Mappila form of treatment in Malabar was *Kombuvekkal* (Treatment with horn). With the use of animal horn the bad blood was sucked out of the body. This was done by *Shaiks* with the assistance of *Ossans* (barbers). This was the treatment especially for acute headaches. Even now this system of treatment is prevalent in Saudi Arabia which shows that this was derived from Arabia.

Belief in evil eye was also prevalent among *Mappilas* . In order to avert the evil eye, black threads were tied round the animal or child's waist. Similarly, the steady gaze of the hungry at a man eating, causes indigestion and stomach pain. In such cases, some red chillies are taken in hand; a prayer uttered and put it in to the oven. Evil eye may also affect new buildings and an effigy, a pot covered with cabalistic signs, a branch of cactus were installed near the new building to catch the evil eye of the passers-by. This is also done in paddy fields until the crop reaches maturity. All these were things they shared with their non-muslim neighbours.

Umpteen rites, the *Mappilas* observed on the occasion of death have also been adopted from the non-muslim brethren in Malabar. The mortuary rites of *Mappilas* were almost similar to that of other communities in Malabar. The idea of death pollution (*pula*) prevalent among *Mappilas* , was altogether foreign to Islam.[99] On the day of death, the family members

umpteen meanings to this utterance of *Thangal* (*Malayala Manorama* dated, 3rd October, 1922)

[98] As quoted in E. Thurston, *op.cit.*, p.467.
[99] Qadir Husain Khan, *op.cit.*, p.75.

abstain from food. The second day, food is being prepared in the neighbours house. But on the 3rd day (*Kannook*) elaborate feast is arranged in the house itself, with which the mourning ends. Members of the bereaved family weep aloud sitting in front of the dead body.[100] During the observances of grief (*Pula*) in the house of the dead, *Ossans* (barbers) used to shave off the hair of those who visit the house and he will be paid by the relatives.[101]

Another mortuary ritual of *Mappilas* was *Talqin*, a catechism read to the deceased after burial. *Mappilas* thought that reminding the dead the tenets of their religion spared them from harsh beating by vengeful angels. Not content with this, there was also the practice of placing a paper which contains the answers related to the questions, the angels are supposed to ask. Usually this was performed by *musaliyars* for which he was paid. The appropriateness of *Talqin* was an important issue of contention between the reformists and orthodox sections in twentieth century Malabar. If the family could afford, prayers were conducted at the graveside for forty days (*Kuzhikkaloth*) and at house on third, fifteenth and fortieth days of death and on each anniversaries after death, a *moulid* was read at house.

Widows of the diseased had to keep secluded in their own house for three months and ten days without seeing any of the male sex[102]. Similarly, if the dead were rich, there was the *Yamoth* (recitation at the tomb) for seven days in specially built *Yamapura* (a thatched house built on the tomb). On 15th and 40th day of death, sumptuous feast and *moulids* were performed.[103] Usually, the site of the tomb was fixed by the eldest member of the *Mahal* committee. The dead bodies of the rich were buried near to the mosque; usually the poor were buried far away from the mosque in cemetery. All

[100] Holland Pryor, *Mappilas or Moplas*, Culcutta, 1904, p.42.
[101] P.K. Muhammad Kunji, *op.cit.*, p.267.
[102] C.A. Innes, *op.cit*., p.194.
[103] K. Moidu Moulavi, *op.cit*., p.63-64.

these were on the basis of the economic status of the individual. Contextually, 'when Attakoya Thangal died at Mecca in 1886, his 15th day of death ritual was organized in *Miskal* mosque in Calicut with a grand feast of 40 *mooda* (one *mooda* contains 50 kg) of rice. The food was served inside the mosque which was opposed by *Valiya Qazi* and finally the mosque was sealed by *Cheriya Qazi*.[104] All these ceremonies observed after the funeral were not part of Islam but were part and parcel of the animistic belief system prevalent in Malabar. These practices like building any structure around the grave, chanting near the grave reciting Quran at the home of the deceased etc. were vehemently opposed by the reformists in 20th century.

Numerous innovative practices were seen in the ceremonies held in connection with birth, marriage, circumcision etc. One among this was *Kathukuthu Kalyanam* or the ceremony of ear boring. All Mappila ladies bore their ears just like women of Hindu castes like *Thiyyas*. P. Kunjain, the first Mappila Deputy Collector says, 'As many as ten or fourteen holes are bored in each ear, one being in the lobe and the remainder in the *ala* (helix). The former is artificially widened and a long string of ornaments of beautiful manufacture suspended from it. As strict *sunnis* of *Shafi* School, the boring of the nose is prohibited.'[105] Thurston also writes, 'Mohamedan women have their ears pierced all around the outer edges and as many as twenty or twenty five rings of iron or gold are inserted in the holes but the lobes are not elongated.'[106] Arab and Persian women did not have so many bores in their ears as in Malabar.[107] Ear-piercing of girls, which corresponds to the circumcision of boys, was celebrated as of a marriage festival with feasts. 'As amongst *Tiyans* and *Mukkuvas,* a great number of ear-rings were worn; the

[104] Parappil Koya, *op.cit*., p.129.
[105] *Malabar Quarterly Review*, 1903 as cited in Edgar Thurston, *op.cit*., p.488.
[106] Edgar Thurston, *Ethnographic Notes on South India*, Government Press, Madras, 1906, p.371.
[107] Qadir Husain Khan, *op.cit*., p.46.

rim of the ear was bored in to as many as to or a dozen holes in addition to the one in the lobe.[108]

Markakalyanam, or circumcision was performed after the boy attained seven years of age. This was performed by *Ossan* (the Muslim barber) with a sharp razor. The ceremony was the outward sign of the boy's admission in to the fold of Islam. It was celebrated with elaborate feasting and rejoicing, spending huge sums of money. As in the case of marriage, the rich used to print cards for inviting friends and relatives.[109] Fireworks, *Kalari* performance and caparisoned elephants were arranged in connection with this ritual. On the seventh day, the boy was taken to the nearby mosque with new attire. This was called *Ezhukuli* (bathing on the seventh day of circumcision). Similarly *Tirandukuli* (bathing on the seventh day after puberty) was observed by the *Mappilas* of Malabar. On the seventh day, the girl was dressed in bridal fashion and sweets (coconut and jaggery) were distributed to friends and relatives.[110]

In ceremonies related to marriage, the only religious ritual practiced by *Mappilas* was *Nikah*, which consists in the formal conclusion of the contract before two witnesses and the *Qazi*, who then registers it. The rest of the functions had nothing to do with the religion. For instance, the betrothal or settlement of the dowry was arranged by the parents of both bride and bridegroom before the *nikah* itself. Large dowries were expected, especially in north Malabar, where husbands were at a premium and a father with many daughters needed to be a rich man. E.K. Moulavi, the reformist leader, considered this as anti-islamic and an adoption of Hindu custom and exhorted the wealthy section of the community to come forward against this evil.[111]

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[108] C.A. Innes, *op.cit.*, p.188. For details see the 'Kathukuthumala' of Pulikottil Hydru, in M.N. Karassery (ed.) *Pulikkottil Krithikal*, Wandoor, 1972.
[109] For samples of the invitation cards see.Parappil Koya, *op.cit*.,
[110] P.K. Mohamad Kunji, *op.cit*., p.303.
[111] E.K. Moulavi, Note no. 22, p. 160.

The dowry system was not sanctioned by Islam and what was prescribed by Islam was the system of *Mahar* which was nothing but a present by bridegroom to the bride. Similarly, despite the fact that Muslims all over the world are patriarchal, in North Malabar and coastal towns of south Malabar, the bride lived in her own house, with her mother and sisters, till death, unless her husband was rich enough to build her a house of her own. Due to this system, polygamy was rarely practiced in North Malabar, where as in South Malabar polygamy was the rule. In South Malabar 80% of husbands were having two wives or more and 20% three or four.[112] Again while in North Malabar divorce was comparatively rare, in South Malabar it was most common. This difference related to marriage and divorce was due to the systems of inheritance followed.

Matriliney among *Mappilas*

In North Malabar and in coastal towns of Malabar generally, the *Mappilas* followed the Marumakkathayam system of inheritance, though it was opposed to the precepts of Quran, but a man's self-acquisitions usually descended to his wife and family, in accordance with the Mohammedan law of property.[113] This combination of two systems often led to much confusion and troubles in Muslim joint families. This practice of matriliny was ascribed to the orders of Raja of Chirakkal and seemed to have been further encouraged by the example of the Bibi of Arakkal, the only Muslim royal family and head of North Malabar *Mappilas*.[114]

Mahar is the amount which husband is required to pay his wife as a formal nuptial gift. It is one of the most important conditions of Islamic

[112] C.A. Innes, *op. cit.*, p.193.
[113] Edgar Thurston, *op.cit.*, p.491.
[114] Qadir Husain Khan, *op.cit*., p.78.

marriage. There was no limit to amount of *mahar*. But among *Mappilas* , the amount of *mahar* was determined and fixed by customs. The amount of *mahar* of a group was correlated with its social status. The higher the amount of *mahar*, the higher was the social status.

Many Hindu rituals connected with marriage like lamp lighting, and smearing of rice (*Ariyeriyuka*) at the time of bride's arrival, *vettilakettu* (presentation of betel leaves), sprinkling of rose water at the time of the arrival of bridegroom etc. were practiced by *Mappilas*.[115] Generally, *Makhathayam* system was followed in interior parts of South Malabar. It is to be noted that succession to religious posts like that of *Valiya Jarathingal Thangal* of Ponnani, usually went according to matrilineal system. The sacred offices of the *Makhdooms* were also inherited in the female line, the nephew and not the son being the successor.[116] *Marumakhathayam* system, lacking provision in Islam, was a major issue of debate in Malabar in 20th century. Contextually, it is to be noted that the minute division of property between a man's heirs, which *shariath* prescribes, was considered as the cause of the poverty of South Malabar *Mappilas* and the absence of it as the cause of relative affluence of their brothers in north Malabar.[117] At the same time, even among those who follow *Makhathayam* in South Malabar, the Hindu joint family system was kept up and father and sons had community of property to be managed by the father and after his death by eldest son.[118]

Art and Architecture

Sacred architecture was another site where one could see the indigenous influence. Mosques in Malabar were built according to the

[115] K. Moidu Moulavi, *op. cit.,* p.45.
[116] Francis Buchanan, *A Journey from Madras through the countries of Mysore, Canara and Malabar* (Reprint), Vol. II, Madras, 1870, p.103.
[117] C.A. Innes, E. Thurston and Fawcett, share this view.
[118] Quadr Husain Khan, *op. cit.*, p.79.

architectural style of temples. No mark of Islamic architecture could be seen in them. As Fawcett remarked, 'the mosque of Moplas are quite unlike those of other Muhammedans. Here one sees no minarets . . .The mopla mosque is much in the style of a Hindu Temple even to the adoption of the turret-like edifice which among the Hindus, is here peculiar to the temples of *Shiva*. They often consists of several stories, having two or more roofs, perhaps in imitation of *Kaaba* at Mecca, one or more of upper storeys being usually built of wood, the sides sloping inwards at the bottom. The roof is always pent and tiled; there is a gable end at one extremity, the timber on this end being often elaborately curved.[119] The introduction of German mission-made tiles brought about a metamorphosis in the architecture of Hindu temples and Mappila mosques. The mosque, though no better than the hovel, was always as grand as the community could make it and once built, it could never be removed, for the site was sacred ever afterwards.

In place of the *srikovil* of temple, the mosque had got an inner room which is surrounded by courtyards which were used for *dars* (religious teaching) and keeping books. There were many doors and windows and thick wooden columns. Certain mosques were having roof tops covered with copper plates. Similarly the *mihrab* was constructed in the form of *snake's* hood. 'Ornamentation of the *mimbar* was like that seen in *srikovil* of a temple and such *mimbars* were not seen in Arabia[120]

The pulpits were exquisitely carved out in wooden plank. The closed prayer halls and sloping tiled roofs were peculiar to Malabar because of the monsoon climate. 'The distinction of Malabar mosque from Indo-Islamic mosque was not simply the result of physical forces or any single casual factor but was the consequence of a whole range of socio-cultural factors that

[119] F. Fawcett, *Indian Antiquary,* xxx ,1901 as quoted in Qadir Husain Khan, *op.cit*., p.83.
[120] K. Moidu Moulavi, *op. cit.,* p.197.

moulded the Muslim culture of Malabar. The Saracenic tradition did not reach Malabar where the Arabic tradition of simplicity of structural forms had combined itself with indigenous Hindu style of temple construction'.[121] The Hindu architects who built mosques followed the *shilpa sastra* tradition for the construction.

Enough floral designs including lotus were inscribed on the wooden column and paintings. The *mimbars* (the special stage for friday sermons) were adorned with wooden sculpture which reminds one of the *Garbagriha* (*sanctum sanctorum*) of temples. These traces of Hindu influence were due to the fact that both temples and mosque were built by the same masons. Thus, in terms of structure, sculptures and motifs used to decorate the wooden structure, the mosques followed the pattern of Hindu temples.

Now, if we turn to the cultural life of the *Mappilas* , this mix of micro and macro traditions or indigenous and the exotic become more visible. An investigation of the historico-semiotic discourse of the arts and festivals of *Mappilas* of Malabar would certainly shed light on the cultural interface that made them possible and on the experience of diverse communities, who came together to enact the vital moments of their shared existence.[122]

Kolkali or *Kolattam* was a folk art mythologically traced back to lord Krishna.[123] The Mappila brand of *Kolkali* retained the basic structure of original folk form, but used songs written by Mappila poets. These songs deal with life stories of holy saints like Mamburm Tangal or stories related to prophet or holy warriors. Thus it attained the status of Mappila art form. In *Oppana* too, this blend of indigenous and Islamic expressions could be

[121] K.J. John, "The Muslim Arabs and Mosque Architecture in Malabar" in Asghar Ali Engineer, (ed.), *op. cit.*, pp.47-54.
[122] Dr. V.C. Haris "From Structure to Communities and Back: Notes on the Arts and Festivals of Muslim of Kerala" in Asghar Ali, Engineer, (ed.), *op. cit.*, pp.200-206.
[123] See Mohanachandran S., *Kolkalipattuka:. Oru patanam* (Mal), Thiruvananthapuram, 1989.

noticed. Here, one can trace the influence of certain indigenous art forms such as *Kaikottikali* and *Thiruvathirakali*, but songs are related to Islamic themes like prophet's marriage.

Another aspect of this cultural symbiosis was *Theyyam*. There were popular Mappila *Theyyams* like *Aryapukanni*, *Bapuriyan* and *Alichammundi*. The *Tottams* (eulogies recited at the time of *Theyyam* performance) of *Aryapumkanni* and *Bappuniyan* contain reference to the origin of *Mappilas* of Malabar.[124] It tells about conversion of Cheraman Perumal and the arrival of Tajudhin to Kerala and the establishment of mosques including Madayi mosque.[125] Similarly, many *Theyyam* characters like *Kalandumukri*, *Kozhimammad* and *Alichamundi* explicitly deal with the Mappila situation. Certain *Theyyams* introduce Mappila character during interludes, often for the sake of comedy. The Muslims had nothing to do with a *Theyyam* performance normally, yet they figure in some *Theyyam* in a prominent way which indicates the cultural interaction at the most fundamental level, that of the shared experiences of the village folk.[126] In terms of costumes and language, these *Theyyam* characters were *Mappilas* . Some scholars are of the opinion that the *Mappilas* were also involved in certain rituals of *Theyyam*.[127]

Social Stratification among *Mappilas*

Caste system as it is ordinarily understood, was a distinctive feature of Hinduism and has got no provision in Islam. But it is interesting to find that the spirit of caste prevailed among the Muslims of Malabar until the early decades of 20th century. As observed by Victor, S. D'souza, 'despite their

[124] For details see B. Mohamed Ahmad, *Mappila Folklore* (Mal), Samayam Publications, Kannur, 2006.
[125] K.K. Ramachandran Nair, *Keralacharithrasakalangal* (Mal), Kottayam, 1969, pp.50-51.
[126] Dr. V.C. Harris, *op.cit*., p.203.
[127] Kuttamath Sridharan, "Theyyam: Samoohathile Ekikarana Sakthi", in *Mathrubhumi*, 18th March, 1979.

similar origin and many common characteristics, such as religious persuasion language, dress etc, the Moplas do not constitute a homogenous group for certain reasons of ethnological and political diversities'.[128]

Among the *Mappilas* , the main body was termed a Malabaris and other sections were called the *Thangals, Arabis*, the *Puslars* and *Ossans*. But interestingly enough, these distinctions were not familiar to the non-muslims. Among these, the *puslars* were considered as the inferior caste. The term *Puslar* literally means 'new Muslims' or Muslims who are later converts. Whether it was among Muslims or Christians, the new converts as a rule did not have the same status as the people who had been in the faith for many generations. Generally the *Puslars* were converts from among Hindu fishermen called *Mukkuvans*. Due to their low occupation of fishing and late conversion to Islam, they were allotted low status in the Mappila social hierarchy. The *Puslars* regarded themselves as untouchables and were not ready to sit at dinner by the side of *Mappilas* .[129] Similarly, the *Ossans*, the barbers among the Malabar Muslims, by virtue of their low occupation were ranked the lowest. Their women folk acted as midwives within the community and also as singers on weddings. Though it is enjoined by Islam that for Friday congregation, the Muslims of a town should meet in a common mosque, in many coastal cities like Calicut, Ponnani and Tellicherry, the *Mappilas* and *puslars* were not only having different mosque for daily prayers but they also had separate *Jumua Masjids* (which conduct Friday prayers).[130] They also had separate burial grounds. Until the middle of 20th century, in these towns, there were mosques called *Puslan palli*. Thus, there existed a huge social gap between the *Mappilas* and *puslars*.

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[128] Victor S.D'souza, "Status groups among the Moplas on the South West Coast of India" in *Caste and Social Stratification among the Muslims* (ed.), Imtiaz Ahmad, Manohar Books, Delhi, 1973, pp.45-60.
[129] Qadir Hussain Khan, *op.cit*., p.61.
[130] Victor S. D' Souza, *op.cit*., p.54.

Among the *Mappilas* , the highest sect was the *Sayyids*, which trace ancestry through the progeny of prophet's daughter Fathima. In Malabar, these *Sayyids* were called by a respectable term of *Thangal.* Most of these *Thangals* were immigrants from the Hadramouth of Yemen and by virtue of their descent from *Ahl-Baith* (prophet's family), they were held in high esteem by all *Mappilas* . When *Thangals* were invited to social functions, they were provided with separate seating arrangements and had to be served separately.[131] Their women were honorifically addressed as *Bibi* or *Bu*.[132] *Arabis* were small groups concentrated in certain coastal pockets like Quilandy, Calicut etc. They were descendants of Arab men and local women and had retained their Arab lineages. Since they traced their lineage from Arabia, they occupied a high status next to Thangals.

Besides this distinction on the basis of descent, there was the distinction based on system of succession. The father-right and mother-right *Mappilas* usually formed two different compartments. While the *Mappilas* of coastal regions in North and South Malabar were matrilineal, the interior *Mappilas* of south Malabar were patrilineal. Inter marriage between these different groups, formed either in terms of descent or system of inheritance or profession, was not possible. Generally these were endogamous groups and only in rare cases inter-marriages had taken place. But even such marriages were strictly hypergamous type in which only male members of superior group marries the female of an inferior and not vice versa. For eg, a *Thangal* woman could not marry a man other than a *Thangal*.

Prejudices like those of caste were commonly found among the *Mappilas* . The word *Puslan* was used as a derogatory term by the *Mappilas* generally. Marriage between a *Puslan* and other Muslims was never possible. The *Dakkini* Muslims formed another endogamous group and there were

[131] *Ibid.*, p.53.
[132] *Bu* was the term used to address the ladies of Kondotty *Thangals*, while the ladies of all other *Thangals* were addressed as *Bibi*.

separate mosques for them which *Mappilas* did not frequent.[133] Similarly we come across instances of clash between *Mappilas* and Ahmadiya Muslims of Calicut with regard to the possession of mosques and cemetery.[134] As remarked by Q.H. Khan, 'the separation had gone so deep down in this matter that though *Hanafis* and *Shafites* really represent two schools of jurisprudence, they had separate mosques of their own, even when they lived in one and the same street.[135] The *Mappilas* even disliked being styled as *Sahib* which was generally used by the *Dakkini* Muslims.

The stratification was visible also in terms of wealth. Among the *Mappilas,* the exogamous section called *Keyis* enjoyed a high status, they being big merchants and bankers in the past. They had separate mosque and burial grounds. As in the case of *Thangals*, they were given differential treatment like separate seating and eating arrangements in social functions. The *keyis* may well be termed the aristocracy among the *Mappilas* of North Malabar, next only in importance to the Sultan Ali Raja. The Odathil mosque built in 18th century by the *Keyis*, had its own graveyard, where the *Keyis* were buried.[136] The Arakkal *Tharavad* also enjoyed high social status in north Malabar. Being the only royal family of Kerala, the women of Arakkal family did not marry from Cannanore, however, respectable they were, as the latter were regarded as their subjects. Among other *Mappilas* , the husband addresses his wife in singular as *ni* (thou) but the Arakkal ladies had to be addressed in the plural as *ningal by* their consorts and generally the husbands were subservient to their wives.[137] Members of Arakkal *tharavad* had a separate mosque, separate *qazi* and separate burial ground. The *Koyas* of

[133] Until the dawn of 20th century, the *Pattala Palli* in Calicut which was established by the Government for soldiers of *Hanafi* sect in 1848 was not frequented by *Mappilas* . It was in 1925 that one Moideen Musliyar transformed it to a *Shafi* mode of prayer (*Mathrubhumi*, 12th February 1925).
[134] *Mathrubhumi*, 29th April 1933 and Ist February 1934.
[135] Qadir Husain Khan, *op.cit*., p.63.
[136] Churiya Vasudevan, *The Keyis of Malabar*, Tellicherry, 1930, p.2.
[137] Victor S. D'Souza, *op.cit*., p.55.

Calicut region occupied a position similar to that of *Keyis* in north Kerala and they followed matrilineal system.

Even among father-right *Mappilas* of interior South Malabar, social division had existed. For instances, in Ernad Taluk, the *Kurikkal*, *Naha*, *Moopan*, families formed an endogamous group of highest status. The *Tharavads* of Koorimannil, Valiamannil, Kodithodi etc. formed another group just below them. Similarly, the *tharavads* of Avunhippurath, Puzhikuthu, Athimannil etc., composed of another group in the third position. It was these elite families, who were the wealthiest within the community and who were the custodians of mosques, organised *nerchas* and settled disputes.[138] Barring the *Thangals*, whose status rested on pedigree, the social divisions among *Mappilas* were based on consideration like wealth, occupation and family connections. Even within the mosque, there were separate seats for the members of such families. 'There was the distinction between inner portion (*Akathey palli*) outer portions (*Purathey palli*) within the mosque. While the inner side of the mosque was reserved for the elites and mosque Committee members, the outer sides were meant for the subalterns like labourers, *Ossans*, *puslans* etc. Specific space was given to the *Karanavars* (elders) of respected families in the front raw of the inner hall. Even if one *Karanavar* was absent on a friday, that space was kept vacant.[139] Mosque functionaries like *Mukri* (Muezin) *Thanneer Kori* (water carrier) *Khabran* (gravedigger) were given a degraded position. Members of respected families never accepted such posts and it was difficult for such functionaries to get spouse form ordinary families.[140]

In the business world, even religious injunctions were not honoured. Muslim merchants in Malabar who engaged in liquor sale were not given a low status. 'In the early decades of 20th century the *Mappilas* of north Malabar began to dismantle the *Thiyya* monopoly in toddy trade. The

[138] *Ibid*., p.59.
[139] K. Umar Moulavi, *op.cit.*, p.85.
[140] K. Moidu Moulavi, *op. cit.*, p.27.

profession of liquor extraction and distribution was coming under attack from temperance campaigners, rhetoric as yet in the wings'.[141]

Members of the elite families were the trustees of mosque committees and on account of this position, they excercised unbounded power over the entire community. Mosque functionaries like *Mudaris*, *Khatib*, *Mukri*, *Molla*, *Musaliyar*, *Khabran* (gravedigger) *Thaneer kori* (water carrier) were all dependents of this *Umarakkal* (trustees of mosques). It was these sections who fixed the marriages, divorces, partition of property of the families under the jurisdiction of a *Mahal*. On weddings, only after their arrival, food was served. At the time of death of a Muslim, they would fix the spot for the burial and the wages of those involved in burials were distributed through them. They collected the subscription to mosques, managed the *madrassas*, organized the *wa'az* etc.[142]

All these facts show that though Islam does not formulate any caste system, the *Mappilas* were affected by the influence of the social organization of the 'Hindu's and social stratification was rampant among the *Mappilas* until the middle of 20th century. The social distance among these caste-like sections among *Mappilas* were very great and they practiced endogamy. The interaction of those of higher castes was treated deferentially. The sections ate separately; they had separate mosque, separate religious organization and separate burial ground[143]. Thus the Islamic traditions in Malabar, 'hardly escaped certain aspects of one time micro traditions, transformed in to the component of Brahmanical macro traditions, for instance, the institutions of lineage, caste and hierarchical ranking.[144]

[141]Dilip M. Menon, "Becoming 'Hindu' and 'Muslim', Identity and Conflict in Malabar", Working Paper No. 255, January, 1994, CDS, Thiruvananthapuram, p. 6.
[142] K. Moidu Moulavi, *op.cit.*, pp.63-64.
[143] Victor S. D'souza, "Social Organization and Marriage Customs of the *Mappilas* on the South West Coast of India", *Anthropos* 54, 1959, pp.487-516.
[144] Rajan Gurukkal & Ragava Varier (eds), *Cultural History of Kerala*, Vol.I, Government of Kerala, Thiruvananthapuram, 1999, p.29.

Conclusion

Thus, the above survey of the cultural life of *Mappilas* underlines the formulation of K. Umer Moulavi in his autobiography. He says, 'The *Kathukuthukalyanam, Pettinirikkal, Mara Avasanippikkal, Tirendu Kalyanam,* assignment of cattle to *jaram*, welcoming a bride with lamp and rice sprinkling, lighting the *khabar*, covering *jaram*, placing the boy on elephant's back on the initiation ceremony, receiving the *Musaliyar* for *wa'as* with fire works, and tom-toying, music and fireworks with weddings, *Kodikuttu nercha*, procession carrying the *maqam* flag in times of epidemics, eclipse or drought, *chandanakudam*, *nercha* etc. were the marks of Muslim life in Malabar until the middle of 20th century'[145]. Moidu Moulavi also has observed that during the early decades of 20th century, there was very little Islamic spirit in the life of common Muslims. *Namaz*, fasting, *Haj*, *Zakath* or even *Jumua* (Friday congregation) were not observed. Often, due to the scarcity of required number of devotees, Friday congregations were disbanded.[146] In short there was nothing Islamic about the life of rural *Mappilas* . A report of 1822 tells about the interior *Mappilas* 'as not quite abstemious in the use of liquor as their brethren on the coast[147]. It shows that the interior *Mappilas* never bothered about the religious injunction against the consumption of alcohol. Thus the *Mappilas* had either retained or adopted many of the manners, customs and even religious beliefs and practices of the neighbouring communities, from whom they had sprung or amidst whom their lot had been cast. As put in by Romila Thapar, 'those from across the Arabian sea who settled as traders along the West Coast and married in to the existing local communities - the *Khojas* and *Bhoras* of Western India, the *Nawayaths* of Konkon, and the *Mappilas* of Malabar assumed many of the

[145] K. Umar Moulavi, *op.cit*., p.88.
[146] K. Moidu Moulavi, *op.cit*., p.89.
[147] H.S. Graeme, *Report of the Revenue Administration of Malabar,* dated, 14th January, 1822, Calicut, 1898, p.7.

customary practices of these communities and sometimes even contradicting the social norms of Islam.[148]

The belief in evil spirits and methods adopted to placate their wrath, the veneration of saints and offerings at their tombs, the faith in divination and magic, the caste like divisions with gradations, elaborate rituals and extravagance connected with marriage, birth and death, the system of inheritances; in all these, one could find resemblance between popular Islam and popular Hinduism. At the same time, all these were in violation of important Islamic principles. Hence, what we could see was the blending of the inherited beliefs and practices of Hindus with the manners and customs which were essentially of Arab origin, especially those of Yemen and Oman. The result is variously called 'fusion' and 'amalgam' or 'syncretism'. Syncretism is often defined against an abstract normative model of Islam. But, it is interesting to note that *Mappilas* during the pre-reformist phase rarely perceived their own practice as non-Islamic, as very few among *Mappilas* were conversant in scriptural Islam. It is also sometimes assumed, blanket fashion, that syncretism offers greater possibilities for communal harmony and tolerance. In fact, syncretism does not preclude religious conflict either inter-or intra-group or eruption of violence.[149] The experience of South Malabar in 19th century, with intermittent isolated riots between *Mappilas* and upper caste Hindus, often due to the issue of land control and even apostasy, underlines this formulation.

Despite all this, the fact remains that Islam in Malabar was embedded in indigenous social and religious order of Malabar and its surroundings. About the *Mappilas* of interior North Malabar, Dilip M. Menon observed that 'they worshipped at local mosque shrines of holy men as well as a variety of

[148] Romilla Thapar, "Tyranny of Labels", *Cultural Pasts*, OUP, Delhi, 2004, p.1005.
[149] Shail Mayaram, *Resisting Regimes: Myth, Memory and Shaping of Muslim Identity*, OUP, Delhi, 1997, p.38.

shrines devoted to snakes, tribal deities and local divinities, loosely within a Hindu pantheon. There may have been little sense of 'us' and 'them' except at the level of popular prejudice regarding differing life styles and patterns of speech'.[150] This kind of flux and assimilative dynamism precluded the possibility of a uniform islamisation in Malabar or even in India. It was against this syncretism of *Mappilas* that the reformists in 20th century started a crusade by which they tried to shake off most of the factors in social and religious life, which they had in common with their Hindu brethren but which went against the spirit of their religion. In a way, the reformist movement of 20th century was a 'movement back from communitas to structure.'[151] The victory of the Reformists was also a victory of an orthodox great tradition of Islam over a heterodox, heteroprax little traditions of Malabar Islam.

[150] Dilip M. Menon, *op. cit.*, p.6.
[151] Dr. V.C. Harris, *op.cit.*, p.205.

Chapter II

COLONIAL GOVERNMENTALITY AND 62-97THE MAKING OF A COMMUNITY

CHAPTER II

COLONIAL GOVERNMENTALITY AND THE MAKING OF A COMMUNITY

There is a consensus among scholars regarding the role of colonial state in giving impetus to the construction of collective discourses, be it Hindus or Muslims. 'In making religion the primary factor in the definition of community, the British laid the basis for a discourse that claimed to represent the interest of loosely conceived social categories.'[1] The colonial power needed to create a reliable body of knowledge on the colonized in order to harness them effectively. Hence, there developed an elaborate mechanism for enumerating peoples, resources, flora and fauna and several other things as part of colonial knowledge production. This mechanism of colonial state contributed to the formation of communities by recognizing religion as the unit for its social, political and administrative measures. 'Religion was the colonial reference point and it was this practice which culminated in the formation of separate electorate.'[2] Thus contesting identities were accentuated by the politico-administrative and documentary practices of colonial state, including novel institutional models and technologies of communication. Though colonial state was the primary point of reference for communitarian discourse, the print capitalism served as the main fount of its construction and dissemination.

Census Modality and Community

The census, introduced in India by the British in 1871, was instrumental in creating categories and fixing them within such imaginary

[1] Aysha Jalal, *Self and Sovereignity: Individual and Community in South Asian Islam Since 1850*, OUP, Delhi, 2001, p.39.

[2] K.N. Panikkar, *Communal Threat, Secular challenge*, Earth worm, Madras, 1997, p.110.

boundaries that people themselves felt as real in course of time. In the pre-colonial phase, identities were multiple and not fixed. 'Pre-colonial communities' opines Sudipta Kaviraj, 'which had fuzzy boundaries were replaced by discrete categories which could be enumerated exactly and which claimed exclusive identification by their members. These discursive operations induced people to participate in public sphere in terms of collective identities defined by the state. Modern governing practices thus reconstituted the meaning of community and ethnicity, producing a brand of modern ethnic consciousness in India.'[3] Interestingly enough, contrary to its policy in home country, the British brought a religious dimension in the census enumeration which began in 1871 and the categories of 'Hindu' and 'Muslim' were created without bothering what these categories infact constituted. The Decennial census cast the die making religion the central factor marginalising all other forms of social relationship. The census enumerators found the syncretic or liminal identities as troublesome and unmanageable and hence to be tamed and shaped. The census reports formalised the meaning of religion to mean a community comprising individuals bound by a formal definition and accorded characteristics based on the data garnered by enumerators. Thus, as Kenneth W. Jones observed, 'they [British enumerators] created a sense of community more detailed and more exact than any existing prior to the creation of census'. [4] The British, in their social engineering, paid little heed to the internal differentiation of class, linguistic, regional or sectarian factors.

We have already seen in the first chapter, the popular and fuzzy nature of *Mappilas* of Malabar in the pre-census period and this would help us to pinpoint the breaks in social constructions, which made the new community possible. The 1881 census of Malabar classify the people of Malabar in to

[3] Sudipta Kaviraj, "Modernity and Ethnicity in India: A History for the Present" *EPW*, 30, 1995, p. 3378.

[4] Kenneth W. Jones, "Religious Identity and Indian Census" in *The Census in British India: New Perspectives* (ed.) N. Gerrald Barrier, New Delhi, 1991, pp.78-84.

three distinct Nationalities – Hindus, Mohammedans and Christians.[5] Further these three Nationalities are subdivided into different castes. For instance, Mohammedans are subdivided in to *Arabs, Lubbais, Mappilas , Mughals, Pathans, Syeds, Sheiks* and 'Other Mohammedans' (not stated).[6] Many of this divisions were absolutely absent in Malabar. In the table of 1881 Census the Hindu, Mohammedan and Christians and others were introduced as Nationalities. Thus Nationality is the overall category within which we have castes, subdivision of castes, sex, age, marital status, occupation, education and language. It is interesting to note, as Kenneth Jones observed, that 'the only area of the census without a religious dimension was the section on infirmities- the deaf, dumb, blind, lepers and insane'.[7] To the census enumerators, the infirmities were beyond religion or nationality. Thus, a pointed out by Muraleedharan, 'the Census Table achieves the effect that there are so many Hindu *Kollan* families in Malabar in 1881 as truth and the truth itself has become an axiom.'[8]

Each category of Mohammedan Nationality was considered as a caste for the Census Report of 1871 says, 'The Mohammedan community of south has, strictly speaking, no caste system but the influence of Hindu brethren is apparent in several divisions among them'.[9] Besides this caste division, the religious sects were also given as *Sunnis, Shias, Wahabis, Farasis* and others not specified.[10] Sectarian affiliations like *Sunnis* and *Shias* were recorded till the census of 1931. Sometimes sect was treated as caste. The criteria of all

[5] Census of 1871 Vol. I, Madras, 1874, K.R.A. See Appendix No. I.

[6] *Ibid.*

[7] Kenneth W. Jones. *op.cit.,* p.80.

[8] Muraleedharan. M. "Hindu Community Formation in Kerala: Process and Structures under Colonial Modernity", *South Indian Studies*, 2, July-Dec. 1996, pp.234-259.

[9] The Report on Census of Madras Presidency 1871, Vol. I, Madras, 1874, KRA.

[10] See Appendix II.

these varies from region to region and from census to census, reflecting the concern of authorities at a given time. In short, religion, in the minds of census officials was not merely a basic category but a factor, which cut across nearly all of human existence.[11] The pervasive character of religion did not disappear from later census reports, but only increased. Religion was further elaborated throughout a number of statistical tables and discursive sections of the report.

Very often, the census enumerators and other officials found it difficult to determine the religion of certain sects. For instance, about *Marakkayars*, the District Gazetteer says, 'some of them used turban and waist clothes and their women kind dress exactly like Hindu women. There seems to be a growing dislike to the introduction of Hindu rites in to domestic ceremonies and the procession and music which were common at marriages, are slowly giving place to a simpler ritual more in resemblance with '*nikah*' ceremony of Mussalman faith'.[12] Such syncretic or liminal groups were compressed in to grand tables according to the 'common sense' of the officials.[13] In other words, the modern taxonomic system of British created categorical identities leaving out crossings and overlapping spaces. There was no acknowledgement of any intermediate reality in this dichotomous mode of thinking.

Out of a vacuum, two distinct communities (or Nationalities)-Hindus and Mohammedans-were constructed and the lower castes like *cherumars*

[11] Kenneth Jones, *op. cit.*, p.81.

[12] Edgar Thurston and K. Rangachari, *Castes and Tribes in Southern India*, Vol.V, Madras, 1987 (Ist edn. 1909). p.2.

[13] A census number (census of Madras 1901) painted on a village temple in Tamil Nadu enumerated the deity inside, in the following way. Name: Ganesha, Religion: Hindu, Sex: Male, Civil status: Married, Age: About 200 years, Means of subsistence: Offerings from village (Census of Madras 1901, vol. 15, part I, Madras 1902.p.127). It clearly shows the arbitrariness or fuzziness of census data.

were incorporated in the mega category of Hindus. Earlier, they were referred to as 'animists'. The enumerators were hard pressed to make people fall in to either this or that category. They could not feel easy with the fuzziness of communities that they encountered. Thus, 'one of the major consequences of census was the use of a single term 'Hindu' to designate a population that ranged, so widely in belief, practice, identity and recognition'.[14] Conversely, ignoring all the internal differentiation and stratification, a mega category of 'Mohammedan' was also constructed. These enumerated categories were significant in identity formation of communities. Once the British constructed such communities, communitarian narratives began to flourish by about the close of 19th century, which shows that the natives unhesitatingly imbibed this construction. They now began to conceive themselves as members of enumerated communities bound by doctrinal creeds ignoring the diversities within the community itself. This perception of Indian society as an aggregation of religious communities also led to the representation of identity in idioms emphasizing difference, not commonalities, between Hindus and Muslims. Thus 'the census reflected the official British perceptions of Indian society rather than any social reality'.[15]

The census also discussed the size of each religious community, its percentage of total population, relative and absolute growth or decline. The census of 1881 gives a table showing the increase/decrease in the percentage of Muslim population of Malabar in 1881 as compared with that in 1871.[16]

District	1871	1881	Difference	Percentage

[14] Nicholas.B. Dirks, *Castes of Mind*, Permanent Black, Delhi, 2002, p.255.

[15] Bernad S. Cohn, "The Census, Social Structure and Objectification in South Asia" in *Anthropologist among Historians and Other Essays*, OUP, Delhi, 2001, pp. 224-254.

[16] Table 12, Imperial Census, Madras Presidency 1881, p.39. See Appendix III.

Malabar	5,81,609	6,53130	71,521	+12.59%

This gain of 12.5% in Muslim population was being explained in the following words: 'This is clearly due to some disturbing influence outside the gain by natural increase and that the influence is not far to seek. The extensive conversion to Mohammedanism of lower caste Hindus in Malabar has for some years been a matter of notoriety. The social distinction created by Hindu castes is very marked in parts of West coast district and some of the lower castes occupy a much degraded position. The advantage, which *Mappilas* enjoy in this respect, is obvious enough and this seems at last to have dawned on the lower caste Hindus'.[17] In this way the census analyst attributed the conversion to the republican character of the domestic constitution of Mohammedan society. It may be interesting to note that the population growth was also attributed by census analysts to the greater virility of Muslims due to their dietary habits and the practice of widow marriage. Makti Thangal, a Muslim reformer of 19th Kerala, used this census data to prove his point against the Christian missionaries. Quoting the census data of 1881 Makti Thangal wrote, 'In India between 1871 and 1881 censuses, the Muslim population has increased by 92 lakhs while the increase in Christian population is just below one thousand. It is an ample proof to the appeal of Islam as a religion.[18] Here, following the formulation of the census analyst, Makti Thangal too upholds the republican character of Islam. This also shows the internalization of the census data by the subject population.

In census data, the conversion of certain animist groups to Islam was depicted as a loss of Hinduism and a gain of Islam. For, the census Report of 1881 with regard to the question of conversion of *cherumars* in Malabar

[17] The Report on Two Census of India, Madras, 1881 (Madras 1883). p. 39.

[18] Makti Thangal, "Christhiya Vayadappu" (Mal.) in KKM Kareem (comp) *Makti Thangalude Sampoorna Krithikal* (hereafter *MTSK*) KIM, Tirur, 1981, p. 290.

wrote, 'This caste [*cherumars*], which numbered 99,009 in Malabar at the census of 1871, is returned at only 64,725. This is a 'loss' of 34.63% instead of the gain of 5.71% observed generally in the district. There are therefore 40,000 fewer *cherumars* than there would have been but for some disturbing causes- conversion to Mohammedanism'.[19] The census of 1891 went one step further, 'The Mussalmans have increased in that district [Malabar] by 18% while the increase of Hindus is only 9.89%... If the Hindus and Mohammedans continue to increase at the same rates as between 1881 and 1891, their numbers will be equal in 121 years from February 1891'.[20] This kind of calculations had its impact in the society especially in the backdrop of growing religious competition. On another occasion, the Census Report of 1871 commented, 'Islam is ever active in seeking for proselytes. In Tipu's time, thousands of Hindus in Malabar and Canara were forcibly circumcised and compelled to confer Mohammedan faith'.[21] By about 20th century, the educated sections of Malabar increasingly turned to the census reports for an official view of their own world and this official view supported many of their hopes and fears.

It was by citing the census reports that communal organizations like Arya Samaj and Hindu Mahasabha, sought to strengthen their community through militant proselytisation and re-conversion in Malabar in the Post-Rebellion Period. In order to stop the drain of Hindu population, aggressive campaign of reconversion was launched in Malabar. Hindu leaders demonstrated growing concern over a possible diminution of their community through conversion and later through differential growth rate which favoured non-Hindus. For instance B.S. Moonje, in his report of 1923 on conversion in Malabar, used Census Report of 1921, to show the alarming rate at which the

[19] Report on census of India, Madras, 1881, Vol.I (Madras 1883) p.40.

[20] Report on Census 1891, Vol.XIII, p.67.

[21] Report on Census 1871, Appendix by Cornish, Vol.I (Madras 1874) p.71.

Hindu population decreased in Malabar.[22] The Muslims also cited census data to prove their points. Referring to the Aryasamaj's attempt to convert *Ezhavas* at Palghat, *Qaumi Report*, a muslim paper from Madras, wrote, 'the political life of Mohammedans will be seriously affected, if 18 lakhs of *Ezhavas* become Arya Samajists, is as clear as day. Every Muslim must have felt the disadvantage on account of numerical inferiority. It is therefore the bounden duty of Mohammedans of the presidency to help the missionary society in their national and religious work' [the conversion of *Ezhavas* to Islam].[23] This shows that each community was worried about its numerical strength, as addition to the community played an important role in deciding the proportion of representation in legislative bodies. Census provided the necessary data for raising such communitarian appeals. Similarly, V. Attakoya, in his presidential speech at the 33rd conference of *Maunathul Islam Sabha* of Ponnani, remarked, 'Today the Muslim population of Kerala is 21 lakhs... During the last 34 years, 18000 were converted to Muslims through this *Sabha*. But the *Sabha* lacks sufficient fund'.[24] In this fashion, he was addressing the 21 lakhs of Muslims of Kerala and appealing for their benevolence for enhancing the numerical strength of the community.

In a similar vein, Krishna Aiyer wrote in *Mathrubumi* in 1931 that 'the number of Hindus was shrinking and the cause of that was conversion to other religions. As long as other communities were engaged in proselytisation, Hindus should not sit idle... and they had to chalk out device to avoid the lower castes embracing other religions'.[25] Had there been no census data, nobody would have been able to know about the relative gain or loss of these different communities and to raise hue and cry over such issues. What *Indian*

[22] *B.S. Moonje Report*, 1922, File No.12, NMML, Delhi.

[23] *Qaumi Report*, (Madras) 14th Nov, 1925. MNNPR, 1925, Octo-Dec. p.1476, TNA.

[24] *Mathrubumi*, 29th April 1934.

[25] *Mathrubumi*, 11 June 1931.

Social Reformer opined in 1922 is contextual in this regard. The paper wrote 'The greatest difficulty, however, is the Indian census and other official publication in which differences and distinction are emphasized and exaggerated and even sometimes discovered, when they have been forgotten or never existed'.[26] All these prove that communal identities that developed in the first half of 19th century, was neither natural nor intrinsic to Hindu-Muslim relations, but rather it was a colonial construction.

Another variable measured in census was the degree of literacy. It drew comparison between various religious communities indicating their relative literacy. Literacy, education and religion were presented in considerable detail relating each to other and always stated relatively one religious community's progress against all others.[27] Much of the communitarian narratives of *Mappilas* in the sphere of public education, were based on the census data. It was in tune with the census data of 1921 and 1931 that an article in *Mathrubumi* in 1932 analyzed the poor growth of Mappila education in Malabar.[28] Malabar Educational Officer, Abdul Hameed, in his speech at the conference of Mappila teachers at Tirur, cited the census reports of 1921 to show the pathetic situation of Muslim women in the sphere of education.[29] Again, it was on the basis of census data that *Kerala Muslim Conference* submitted a memorandum to Madras Educational Director, focusing the educational problems of the *Mappilas* .[30] Speaking at the Kerala Muslim Conference held at Tellicherry on 22nd August 1931, the Chairman complained that 'not even a single Muslim High School existed in a

[26] *Indian Social Reformer*, (Bombay), Nov. 4, 1922.

[27] Kenneth Jones, *op. cit.*, p.82.

[28] *Mathrubumi* 23rd Feb. 1932.

[29] *Mathrubumi* 19th Aug. 1931. He said, 'out of 33 lakhs of people of Malabar, Muslims constitute 10 lakhs; out of 80,000 students at secondary school level, Muslims are 200; out 15000 girl students, Muslims are 10 or 12'.

[30] *Mathrubumi* 25th Nov.1933.

district where there were ten lakhs of Muslims.[31] Such communitarian demands could not have been made without the backing of census data.

The Census Reports also examined the wider occupational patterns and relative wealth of religious and caste groups. Community-wise distribution of people in various departments of government, also was provided in such reports. The census officials saw in economics as in so much else, a religious dimension. In the backdrop of such data, communitarian demands were aired by vernacular papers and community organizations. *Yuvalokam*, a Muslim journal, in its editorial dated 17th July 1929, alleged that 'the Muslims of Malabar, who formed one third of population of the district, were not at all adequately represented in public service. Just because there were more qualified men among Hindu and Christian communities, the Mohammedans should not be deprived of their rights'.[32] Again, *Kerala Muslim Majlis* Committee, in 1934, alleged that not a single judge from Muslim community was appointed in Madras High Court.[33] *Kerala Muslim Conference* held at Tellicherry on 22nd August 1931 passed a resolution demanding reservation for Muslims in Government services and in local bodies.[34]

The Decennial censuses provided the required stimulus periodically for the growth of communal/communitarian politics in Malabar/India. Though, the ground for communitarian politics in India was set by about 1870's itself, it was by the time of 1931 census, the idea of politics as the contest of essentialized and enumerated communities took firm hold of local and regional politics.[35] The census was instrumental in igniting community

[31] *Mathrubumi* 23 Aug. 1931.

[32] *Yuvalokam*, Calicut, 17th July 1929, MNNPR, TNA.

[33] *Mathrubumi* 14th March 1934.

[34] *Mathrubumi* 25th August 1931.

[35] Arjun Appadurai "Number in Colonial Imagination" in *Orientalism and the Post-Colonial Predicament: Perspectives on South Asia* (eds.), Carol A.Breckridge and Peter Van der Veer, OUP, Delhi, 1994, pp.314-345.

sentiments among *Mappilas* and various Muslim organizations and journals began to demand special consideration for Muslims in various domains. Kerala Muslim Conference in its first annual meeting held at Tellicherry on 22nd August 1931 passed a resolution demanding reservation for Muslims in local bodies.[36] Similarly the same organization, in its second annual conference held at Calicut on 12th May 1933 passed another resolution demanding ten seats for Malabar *Mappilas* out of twenty nine seats reserved for Muslims in Madras Legislative Assembly.[37] *Yuvalokam*, a Muslim journal from Calicut alleged that 'Muslims of Malabar who form one-third of population of the district were not adequately represented in local boards and municipalities and suffered many disabilities in consequence'.[38] Such political demands were raised by other Muslims journals, which have been elaborated in another chapter on political identity of *Mappilas*.[39] Thus, the census played a vital role in igniting the communitarian spirits among various group in Malabar. As G. Karunakara Menon observed in 1897, 'along with educational progress, there is a tendency among different classes, inhabiting this country, to split themselves in to separate communities. Thus, while formerly, the only recognized communities among us were the native and the Europeans, the consciousness of self-interest has now created several divisions among the former. The Mohammedans first claimed that they belonged to a different community and religion from those to which the rest of the people acknowledge allegiance, then came the native Christians who wanted to form themselves into a separate community with their special organs to ventilate their grievances'.[40]

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[36] *Mathrubumi* 25th August 1931.

[37] *Mathrubumi* 14th May 1933.

[38] *Yuvalokam*, (Calicut) 17th July 1929. MNNPR, TNA.

[39] See chapter 'Towards a Political Identity'.

[40] G.Karunakara Menon, "The Mappila Problem" in the *Madras Review*, Vol. III, No.9, May 1897, TNA reproduced in K.N. Panikkar (ed.) *Peasant Protests and Revolts in Malabar* (hereafter *PPRM*) ICHR and PPH, Delhi, 1990, p.488.

Such communitarian demands were aired through organizations and the print media to extract maximum mileage from the colonial perception of religion as the primary factor dominating all aspects of indigenous society. Anxieties, which no doubt existed prior to the introduction of census, now took on a concrete form based on the authoritative evidence provided by the government itself. Muslim press and organizations cited statistics provided by the census, on the percent of jobs held by each community and on educational progress achieved by each community, in short, whatever they could find in the census to substantiate their case. On the other hand, Hindu counterparts cited census data to show the extent of Muslim conversion as the number of *Mappilas* increased unproportionally in each of the decennial enumeration. Thus census itself became an arena for conflict and manipulation in Malabar, as elsewhere in India.

Another purpose served by the census modality was the making of stereotypes out of castes and communities. While its effects could have been derogatory in the case of *Mappilas* of Malabar, it helped essentialising social factions. The continuous reproduction of such stereotypes in other types of colonial texts and ethnographic works shows the primacy that such representation achieved. As Bernard S. Cohn observed, 'Census was the necessary pre-requisite both for imperial gazetteer and for 'The Caste and Tribe Series'.[41] About the *Mappilas*, the Census Report of 1871 said, 'they [*Mappilas*] are almost entirely uneducated and their religious fanaticism is, under these circumstances, a source of danger to the public peace. Under the influence of religious excitement they are reckless of their own lives and of others and the presence of European troops in the district has always been considered essential to the preservation of peace'.[42] On another occasion, the

[41] Bernard S. Cohn, *op. cit.*, p.242.

[42] Census Report of Madras Presidency, Appendix by W.R. Cornish, Vol.I, Madras 1874, p.173.

report repeated the same idea- 'they [*Mappilas*] are mostly traders, agriculturists, fishermen, sailors etc. They are bigoted in their religious belief and for the most part wholly uneducated'.[43] This image of *Mappilas* was repeated in all successive censuses during the British period, which need not be elaborated here. The comment of Karunakara Menon in 1897, in *Madras Review* deserves mention in this context. He wrote, 'Although the European officials and those who are not well acquainted with *Mappilas* , are apt to treat the whole class as a set of disorderly, disreputable fanatics, the large majority of them are orderly, as peaceful as well-behaved as any other class of people'.[44]

The most pervasive impact of this census modality upon the social landscape of Malabar or India was that it, rather than being a passive instrument of data gathering, created, by its practical logic and form, a new sense of category-identity in India, which in turn, created the condition for new strategies of mobility, status politics and electoral struggles in India. As observed by Arjun Appadurai, 'in the long run, the enumerative strategies of the British helped to ignite communitarian and nationalist identities that in fact undermined the colonial rule.[45]

Other Colonial Discourses and Making of a Stereotype 'Fanatic Mappila'

It is interesting to note that the Census Reports, District Gazetteers, Ethnographic Surveys, counter-insurgency Reports, missionary narratives- the entire gamut of colonial discourse on *Mappilas* tended to impinge upon one another. Observation about *Mappilas* was taken up from one publication in to another with or without the benefit of citation and without even bothering the structural changes that had taken place within a period of a century. The

[43] *Ibid.*, p.72.

[44] G. Karunakara Menon, *op. cit.*,, p.490.

[45] Arjun Appadurai, *op. cit.*, pp.314-345.

remarks of Francis Buchanan in 1800 could be seen incorporated without alteration in almost all British records on *Mappilas* in the first half of 20th century. Through such repetitive discourses, the British constructed and perpetuated certain stereotypes about *Mappilas* . As observed by Mushirul Hasan, 'colonial knowledge perpetuated myths and conjured up stereotypical images of peoples and countries as part of an imperial design of fortifying the ideological edifice of empire'.[46] It would be pertinent here to examine the genealogy of such colonial stereotypes about *Mappilas* of Malabar.

Representation of the 'other' (*Mappilas*) runs back to the early days of British colonialism in Malabar. As early as 1800 Francis Buchanan, one of the earliest British Officers, who provided a detailed description of Malabar and its folk, depicted *Mappilas* thus : 'Moplas of Malabar are both traders and farmers. As traders they are remarkably quite industrious but those in the interior parts of Malabar have become farmers and have been encouraged by Tipu in a licentious attack on the lives, persons and property of Hindus, are fierce, blood-thirsty bigoted ruffians'.[47] Such pejorative terms like 'fanatical' 'rapacious' 'blood thirsty' 'wretched' were profusely used in almost all British official discourses right from 1792, when the British annexed Malabar. *Mappilas* were almost universally reported to be religiously fanatic, anti-social and unprogressive in character. This negativity is a discursive feature of writings produced within the colonial context. As per colonial commonsense, those people who resisted colonial incursion were 'barbaric' and 'fanatic' and the colonial power felt justified in their attempt to suppress them.

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[46] Mushirul Hasan, *Legacy of a Divided Nation: India's Muslims Since Independence*, OUP, Delhi, 1997, p.31.

[47] Francis Buchanan, *A Journey from Madras through the countries of Mysore, Canara and Malabar* (Reprint), first impression 1807, Delhi, 1988, p.422.

As mentioned earlier, from the very beginning of their rule, the British were negative towards the *Mappilas* and favourable towards the upper caste Hindus. This animosity was due to the fact that the *Mappilas* had given their support to Hyder Ali and Tipu Sulthan, the most formidable enemy the British encountered in India, while the upper class Hindus had opposed Tipu. It must be in the wake of this that Alexander Walker, a member of Malabar commission, deputed to report on the insurrection of 1800 AD, was instructed to prohibit the diabolical caste [*Mappilas*] from coming in to it [Canara district] because 'if permitted to settle them in Canara, stealing children, robberies and murder will follow'.[48] Even the Imperial Gazetteer of India represented them as a 'tribe remarkable for the savage fanaticism in successive revolts against Hindus'.[49] All these representations illustrate how the structure of a master narrative appears again and again in the colonial discourses of successive periods. It also shows that the British officials approached his subject from a general position of dominance and what they said about *Mappilas* was said with little reference to what anyone but other British officials had said. What Homi K. Baba said in another context is pertinent here : 'The same old stories of Negro's criminality, the stupidity of Irish must be told again and afresh and are differently gratifying and terrifying each time. The repetition of colonial stereotype is an attempt to secure the colonized in a fixed position but also an acknowledgement that this can never be achieved'.[50]

Counter- Insurgency Narratives

[48] Walker papers as cited in Conrad Wood, *Mopla Rebellion and its Genesis,* PPH, Delhi, 1987, p. III.

[49] Imperial Gazetteer of India, Madras, 1881, Chapter VIII, p.438.

[50] Homi K. Baba, *Location of Culture*, Routledge, London, 1994, p.77.

This becomes conspicuous, when we examine the counter-insurgency narratives of the British officers in Malabar.[51] The social tension created by the British colonial policy in Malabar led to a series of violent outbreaks, which lasted about a century, from the 3rd decade of 19th century to the 3rd decade of 20th century. Ever since the first Mappila outbreak in 1836, the British government spent much time and energy in trying to comprehend the causes of these uprisings and suggest remedial measures. That is why the very first accounts of Mappila revolts in Malabar came to be written up as administrative documents of one kind or another; despatches on counter-insurgency operations, departmental minutes, reports of investigations etc. As Ranajith Guha rightly commented, 'the discourse on peasant insurgency made its debut quite clearly as a discourse of power'.[52]

In Malabar, umpteen volumes of official records about the rural revolts of 19th century as well as the mega revolt of 1921 are available and together they constitute a genre of 'Prose of counter-insurgency', which analyse the apparent causes and measures to be adopted for quelling these rural revolts. The earliest of such records was of H.V.Conolly, the district collector of Malabar from 1840 to 1844, who was murdered by *Mappilas* .[53] Almost all records of the later officials including that of Hitchcock in 1921 impinge upon the report of H.V. Connolly. But among the different counter-insurgency narratives the most enduring and the one, which became a master narrative on Mappila riots, was the Report of T.L. Strange, the first commission on

[51] For details, see, P.P. Abdul Razak, " The Prose of Counter- Insurgency and the Representation of *Mappilas* " in K.N.Ganesh (ed),*Culture and Modernity:Historical Explorations*, Publication Division,Calicut University , 2004, pp.193-207.

[52] Ranajith Guha, *Elementary Aspects of Peasant Insurgency in Colonial India*, OUP, Delhi, 1982, p.2.

[53] Extracts from the Correspondence on Mopla Outrages in Malabar (CMO) Vol.2. pp.175-195. TNA. Also see, K.N. Panikkar (ed.), *Peasant Protest and Revolts in Malabar* (*PPRM*) PPH, Delhi, 1990, pp. 89-390.

Malabar riots.[54] It was Strange Report, which reified the colonial stereotype of 'fanatic Mappila'.

The picture drawn by both H.V. Connolly and T.L. Strange was so one sided that the community was known only for its brutality and irrationality and the positive aspects were covertly or overtly ignored. The following statement of H.V. Connolly substantiates this point : 'the *Mappilas* of interior Malabar have always been a troublesome and dubious description of subjects. My records show that from the time we took possession of the country, they have been noted as men of dangerous habits and for many years, they were gang robbers and general disturbers of peace'.[55] A similar negative tone could be seen in T.L. Strange report also : 'The fruits of all this culture of Mohammedanism has necessarily been a deepening of pride, bigotry, intolerance and above all hatred of Kaffirs which characterise the members of this creed'.[56] As pointed out by Gyanendra Pandey, the watchwords in the colonial accounts of native violence were terms like 'religion', 'fanaticism' and 'ignorance'. It cannot be inferred that both these officials depicted *Mappilas* in this manner out of their own experience in Malabar, but they were relying on some previous official narratives. As put in by Edward Said, 'All interpretations are what might be called situational, they always occur in a situation whose bearing on interpretation is affiliative. It is related to what other interpreters have said either by confirming them or by disputing them or by continuing them. No interpretation is without precedents or without some connection to other interpretation'.[57] Each official report on *Mappilas* impinges upon the report of his predecessors. In the case of H.V. Conolly, he

[54] *CMO*, Vol.I, pp.399-477.TNA.

[55] Letter of H.V. Conolly in K.N. Panikkar (ed.), *PPRM*, p.141.

[56] T.L. Strange Report, *CMO*, *op. cit.*, p.445.

[57] Edward Said, *Covering Islam*, Vintage, London, 1997, p.162.

was specifically depending on the accounts of Commissioner Richards, written in 1804.[58]

It was out of such ingredients found in all official reports and out of 'official common sense' about the people they governed that the image of 'fanatic Mappila' got embedded in the popular discourse of Malabar. What the colonial narratives sought to do was to give violence of *Mappilas* a cause and the cause a name, fanaticism, thus emptying it of all other significance. Almost all accounts about divergent riots, which T.L.Strange analyses, begin with the common comment, 'no one can give a rational account behind this riot'. Or as about the Pandikkad outbreak of 1894, the official history of the district says that 'the saddest part of the whole affair was its want of reason'.[59] What is implied in this kind of narrative is that *Mappilas* are basically irrational and their acts could not be assigned to apparent reason other than their fanatic spirit, ignoring the economic, social and political content of these outrages. Colonialism was thus absolved of its oppressive role and rebellions were attributed to the inherent irrationality of *Mappilas* . The minutes by J.F. Thomas related to Mappila riots, clearly underlines this idea, as it states, 'if there is one point more peculiarly striking and of more marked significance than another in every record of Mopla outrages, is the entire absence of ill feeling towards government and its officers. Although the government is necessarily *Kaffir* and its officers in the same eyes of every bigoted Mohammedan, neither in the proceedings of fanatics, nor of those who encouraged them is there any trace of ill will to the government, nor has the fanatic spirit been directed against the government'.[60] What these 19th century colonial narratives seek to do is to promote a picture of colonial state as a

[58] Conolly's Letter, K.N. Panikkar (ed.), *PPRM*, *op. cit.*, p.123.

[59] C.A. Innes, *Malabar District Gazetteer*, Govt. Press, Madras, 1903 (Reprint 1951), Chapter II, p.87-88.

[60] J.F.Thomas's Minute, CMO, p.482-83.

wise and neutral power. It is almost clear that Mampuram Thangal, whom the government considered as the instigators of the revolts, in his 'Saiful Bathar' exhorted the *Mappilas* to fight against the 'farangi rule',[61]realizing well that it was the 'white folks' who were supporting the oppressors of *Mappilas* . The murder of H.V. Connolly in 1855 and the attempt to murder C.A Innes prove beyond doubt that anti-British sentiments were strong among the rural *Mappilas* . Still, the officials absolved the colonial regime of any responsibility for making the Mappila's (peasant's) life too miserable to bear.

Again, fanaticism of Moplas is not a new phenomenon but it pre-exists even the British occupation of Malabar. Often the British officials repeated phrases like 'habitual anarchy of *Mappilas* ' or 'innate character of *Mappilas* ' that make for the history of *Mappilas* of Malabar. To them, this was the hallmark of a very low state of civilization and exemplified in those periodical outbursts of crime and lawlessness to which all wild tribes were subjected. 'The objective of this kind of discourse', as put in by Homi K. Baba, 'is to construe the colonized as a population of degenerate type on the basis of the social origin in order to justify conquest and to establish systems of administration and instruction.'[62]

Another feature of this colonial 'Othering' was the representation of the rural revolts of Malabar as one of Hindu-Muslim riot and as a part of a continuum, a tradition, one of those convulsions which had frequently occurred in the past owing to the religious antagonism of Hindu and Muslim sections in Malabar. H.V. Connolly's statement illustrates this point : 'The ancient enmity between Mopla and Hindu so strongly described by Mr. Commissioner Rickards in 1804, is far from being at rest; occasions occur but

[61] See, *Saiful Bathar* as translated in C.K. Kareem (ed.), *Kerala Muslim Charithram, Statistics Directory*, (Mal) , Vol. I, Chaithram Publications, Cochin 1997, pp. 546-558.

[62] Homi K. Baba, *op. cit.*, p.70.

too frequently to revive it'.[63] T.L. Strange echoes the same idea when he wrote. 'The antipathy between Hindu and Mohammedan, prevalent everywhere, are very strong in these parts. A hatred and mistrust of each other of a very deep kind, has been engendered and bred between them'.[64] Hitchcock too airs the same view when he observed that 'the two races [Hindus and *Mappilas*] were always in opposition and the result, lawlessness, violence everywhere'.[65] Gyanendra Pande's dictum that communalism is a form of colonialist knowledge used to describe a kind of inborn, 'primitive', behaviour, characterised by religious bigotry and irrationality which the British believed was endemic to India',[66] assumes significance in this context.

All these discourses reflect the colonial perception that religion or religious communities are the moving force of all Indian politics. The British held the notion that adherence to one or other of the religions was not merely a matter of belief but defined membership more generally in a larger community. To be Hindus or Muslims by itself explained much of the way Indians acted. 'Riotous behaviour, no matter what its actual character,' as G.Gyanendra Pandey observed in another context, 'was often made to express enduring antagonism between two opposed and self contained communities'.[67] In other words, the origin of rural revolts lay in the peculiar religious sensibilities of the colonized people. In the case of Malabar, it was the *Mappilas* who used to provoke Hindus for 'the Hindu inhabitants were naturally mild and forbearing, if not provoked or driven to extremities and the

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[63] H.V. Conolly's letter, in K.N. Panikkar (ed.), *PPRM*, p.123.

[64] T.L. Strange Report, 1852, *CMO*, p.443.

[65] R.H. Hitchcock, *A History of Malabar Rebellion 1921* ,Reprint. Delhi,1983, p.8.

[66] Gyanendra Pandey, *The Construction of Communalism in Colonial North India* Delhi, OUP, 1990, pp.6-10.

[67] Gyanendra Pandey, "The Colonial Construction of Communalism: British writings on Benares in 19th century" in R.Guha (ed.), *Subaltern Studies IV*, Delhi, 1989, pp.132-168.

provocation has always been on the Mopla side'.[68] The loyalty and obedience to British rule or Pax Britanica is the criterion for mildness and civilization while resistance and disobedience to it was the mark of barbarism. As per official perception, the criminals and plotters in all cases had been Moplas and the victims and those threatened in all, Hindus. In this kind of narratives, there is no mention about the class composition of both Hindus and Muslims involved in the riots. The economic status of both rebels and the victims are consciously ignored. The rural revolts of Malabar, which essentially were peasant's resistance to their class enemies, were misrepresented as nothing but communal or racial protest based on sectarian or ethnic attitudes.[69]What is wrong with this kind of explanation is not that it emphasized some of the communal elements in such combinations of rural masses, but that it underestimated or even ignored their class character.[70]

Again, as per colonial narratives, violence always belonged to pre-colonial tradition. The imposition of British rule, the displacement of an earlier balance of power, the structural changes brought about by colonialism etc had nothing to do with Mappila riots. In other words, the pre-history of Malabar, as the history of the nation before the entry of British, was chaos. To Hitchcock, the chaos in Malabar started with Tipu who transformed *Mappilas* into a turbulent race. He says, 'The Mohammedan invasion let loose in the Mappila all worst passions that ignorance and suffering foster and provided him with the excuse of religion, if he thought any excuse is necessary'.[71] Contextually, it is to be remembered that almost all press reports

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[68] T.L. Strange Report, *CMO*, 1852, *op.cit*., p. 443.

[69] See K. N. Panikkar, "Peasant Revolts in Malabar in the 19th and 20th centuries" in A.R. Desai (ed.), *Peasant Struggles in India*, Delhi, 1979. Also see Conrad Wood, *The Mopla Rebellion and its Genesis*, PPH, Delhi, 1987.

[70] Ranajith Guha, *op. cit.*, p.170.

[71] Hitchcock, *op. cit.*, p.8.

about Malabar Rebellion also echoed these sentiments and traced the cause of the rebellion back to Tipu.[72]

The most striking aspect of these official narratives is the tendency to attach fanaticism or bigotry of *Mappilas* not with particular traits of the community but with Islam itself. For T.L. Strange states, 'The fruit of all this culture of Mohammedanism has necessarily been a deepening of pride, bigotry, intolerance and above all the hatred of *Kaffir* which characterize the members of this creed. These feelings are fomented and intensified by the circumstances that the higher order of priests in Malabar are of Arab extraction and that the intercourse with Arabia, where Mohammedanism exist in all its native force is thus directly kept up'.[73] Fawcett, an officer in Malabar also attributed fanaticism of *Mappilas* to Islam by pointing out 'the extra-ordinary effect which Islam has on untutored races'.[74] Francis Buchanan shared this sentiment when he commented : 'In this cruel and impolitic undertaking he [Tipoo] was warmly seconded by the Moplays, men possessed of a strong zeal and of a large share of that spirit of violence and depredation, which appears to have invariably been an ingredient in the character of the professors of this religion in every part of the world where it has spread'.[75] The western mindset is reflected in all these observations. The British officials in general believed that the turbulent behaviour of Muslims had its origin in the very nature of lslam as a religion in Arabia. 'Most British officers came to India with their pre-conceived notions about the strong bonds that tied Indian Islam with Arabian peninsula, about Muslims forming a well-knit religious entity, acting as a monolith and keeping the desert faith pure in

[72] See Chapter, ‘Representation of the Rebellion and its Aftermath’.

[73] T.L. Strange Report, *op. cit.*, p.445.

[74] F. Fawcett, "War songs of *Mappilas* of Malabar", *Indian Antiquary*, XXX (1901), pp. 499-505.

[75] Francis Buchanan, *op. cit.*, p.550.

the land of idol worshippers.[76] These British writers perpetuated a repertoire of images, construing Islam as an emblem of repellent otherness.

The 19th century official common sense prevailed even in 20th century. During the 1921 Rebellion almost all British officials repeated the old stereotypes about *Mappilas* in their accounts. The remarks of a judge of Malabar special tribunal which tried the rebels of 1921 shows that British authority had not changed their opinion about *Mappilas* even after the lapse of a century. He states, 'for the last 100 years at least the Mappila community has been disgraced from time to time by murderous outrages. In the past they have been due to fanaticism. The *Mappilas* of Ernad and Walluvanad have been described as a barbarous and savage race and unhappily the description seems appropriate at the present day'... We find in this case that Ali Musaliyar and 37 of his men surrendered. This is remarkable (for it was never one in earlier rebellion) but the simple explanation is that they were no longer driven by mere fanaticism but simply by desire for insurrection'. [77] The rebels now are no longer 'driven' by mere fanaticism but simply by desire for insurrection. Not mere fanaticism but fanaticism compounded. Not unreason alone but unreason multiplied. It is the character of the rebel that explain rebellion in the east'.[78]It also tells that, over a period of a century, no visible change has occurred in the character of *Mappilas* , they were essentially a violent community who would always be liable to break out in to violence for no reason at all. Referring to the uprising of 1896, Hitchcock wrote 'The saddest part of the whole affair was its want of reason'.[79] Even crime was

[76] Mushirul Hasan, *op. cit.*, p.29.

[77] Judgement appended in R.H. Hitchcock , *op. cit.*, p.245.

[78] Gyanendra Pande, Note no. 66, pp. 196-97.

[79] Hitchcock, *op. cit.*, p.13.

considered to have been performed without any agency and just as a function of habit or usage.[80]

In this way the communal riot (Peasant revolts) narratives represented a form of colonialist knowledge used to explain violent outbreaks in terms of historic antagonism that the British believed, existed between different religious communities. What these narratives succeeded in doing was to help freeze popular perceptions of Hindu and Muslim identities by portraying animosities between the two as an historical inevitability. One can identify close similarity between the indigenous narratives including the vernacular press reports on 1921 Rebellion and that of the colonial narratives on the same, which shows that the former was a derivative discourse from the latter.

Thus, through Census Reports, District Gazetteers, Ethnographic Surveys, Counter-insurgency Reports, the stereotype 'fanatic Mappila' got embedded and it found its place in indigenous including nationalist discourses. Colonialist images and propositions surface with notable frequency in indigenous writings on *Mappilas* .[81] What Edward Said commented about Brahmins in a different context seems to be relevant in the case of *Mappilas* too. 'The Brahman [or Mappila] becomes a trans-temporal, trans-individual category, purporting to predict every discreet act of Brahman behaviour on the basis of some pre-existing Brahmanic essence... Each particle of Brahman tells of his Brahmanness, so much so that the attribute of being Brahmanical overrides any countervailing instance'.[82] Even a negative representation could be a powerful unifying force for a divided Mappila community. Self hood is also shaped by ways in which others view ‘us’. The

[80] See, Nicholas D. Dirks, *op. cit.*

[81] This has been elaborated in chapter on 'Representation of the Rebellion and its Aftermath'.

[82] Edward Said *Orientalism*, London, 1980, p.231.

self-perception of *Mappilas* owed a great deal to this colonial discourse on them.

Colonial Educational Policy and reification of Communitarian identity

Another domain where the British intervention made lasting impact on the social life of Malabar was Education. The growing government pre-occupation with special Muslim problems relating to education was integral to the colonial policy of balancing communities. By institutionalising separate facilities offered to Muslim interests in the form of 'Mopla schools' the government initiated a policy of segregation.

This special treatment of Muslim education was partly in consideration of the prevailing circumstances in rural Malabar. The rural *Mappilas* were under the grip of the traditional priests who considered any education other than Islamic learning irrelevant and heretical. English was dubbed as the language of hell and western education was considered a passport to hell. The traditional priests were dissuading the rural people from sending their children to school. As late as 1932, Kadampalath Moidunni Musaliyar of Ponnani, in his Friday sermon prayed thus : 'Oh lord, make us not of those who study in schools and accept government jobs'.[83] Even the study of Malayalam, which they designated as *Aryanezhuthu* was treated as anathema.[84] A typical prayer of orthodox Mullas was 'Oh God! Make us not of those who speak Malayalam language well'. This induced many *Mappilas* to look unkindly on school education. At the same time, the educated among the *Mappilas* had realized the value of secular education in the competitive world of jobs but were reluctant to come out openly in favour of it. Besides, the ordinary *Mappilas* did not want their children to mingle indiscriminately with the non-Muslim students. It was in such a backdrop that the government devised a separate

[83] *Mathrubhumi*, 15th June 1932.

[84] Any book printed in Malayalam was despised as *Ramayana*.

system of education to the *Mappilas* . Added to this was the concern of government about the increased rural revolts of Malabar during the latter half of 19th century. Most of the officials who tried to detect the causes of these revolts diagnosed that 'the best safeguard against the recurrence of Mopla outbreaks would be the spread of education in the caste.[85]

Meanwhile, the British government decided to change the method of their approach towards their Muslim subjects and made an announcement of special state patronage of Muslim education in 1870. The Government of India Resolution of 7th May 1871 made the following directions.

a) To encourage classical and vernacular languages of Mohammadan in schools and colleges.

b) To appoint Mohammaden teachers in English schools in Muslim dominated districts.

c) To assist Mohammadans to open schools of their own.

d) To encourage Arabic and problem literature in the University course.[86]

Following the Hunter commission's directives, in 1885, Lord Dufferin introduced a Resolution, which is considered to be the Magna Carta of education in India. The Hunter Commission contained the following recommendations.

a) A special section be devoted to Mohammadan education in Annual Report of Public Instruction.

b) To provide scholarship to Mohammedans.

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[85] C.A. Innes, *op.cit.,* p. 300.

[86] Extracts from the Proceedings of Government of India, Education Department 15th July 1885, p.33.

c) To appoint Mohammadan officer to inspect Muhammadan education.[87]

This first suggestion put a formal stamp of approval on separate treatment of Muslim case for education and it widened the gap between Muslims and other communities.

It was in tune with the Imperial Educational policy that the provincial Government initiated their educational efforts in Malabar. In 1871, the Madras government appointed a committee to look in to the matters of Muslim education in Malabar.[88] As per the recommendations of the committee the government initiated a programme of providing secular education to Mopla boys from their traditional *Othupallis* attached to mosques. The *Mullas*, the religious instructors of *Othupallis*, were given special training to teach children elementary lessons in Arithmatic and Malayalam, along with Islamic subjects. The Government gave inducement to *Mullas* in the form of salaries and grants for each child successful at inspection by a Mohammadan officer. Though the *Mullas* were basically against providing secular education, they were lured by the money received through this new arrangement. As they had been getting a meager remuneration in the form of *pidiyari* (grains collected form individual house holds), the new system was so attractive to them. But the saddest part of it was that the *Mullas* were generally incompetent to teach anything but Arabic and that too only *Quran*. However, by 1872 itself, the government had sanctioned the establishment of separate schools for Moplas and wherever necessary Mohammadens should be taught separately from Hindus up to a certain point.[89] Thus at the primary level atleast, separate schools in the form

[87] Hunter, W.W, *The Reports on Indian Education Commission*, 1882 (Calcutta, Govt. Press 1883), p.506.

[88] C.A. Innes, *op.cit.*, p.300.

[89] G.O.No.288 dated 7th October 1872, Government of Madras as cited in K.T. Muhammadali, *The Development of Education among the Mappilas of Malabar 1800-1965*, Delhi, 1990, pp. 73-74.

of *Othupallis* were maintained throughout Malabar during the last quarter of 19th century and Hindus and other non-Muslims were excluded from such schools. Government schools meant for all were treated by Moplas as 'Hindu' school.[90] Even these measures could not attract *Mappilas* to school education and a large chunk of them remained aloof from school education.

In the meantime, the efforts of the government to solve the Mappila violence did not succeed and Mappila outbreaks continued to occur at regular intervals in South Malabar. The government was advised by officials as well as the vernacular press to take necessary measures for the spread of Muslim education in Malabar. In the wake of 1894 Perinthalmanna revolt, the *Madras Review* observed, '*Mappilas* as a class are steeped in ignorance. Ignorance always breeds fanaticism. It is therefore imperative that extension of elementary education should be recognized as being of prime necessity under existing condition of lower classes of *Mappilas* .[91]

Kerala Patrika of Calicut, referring to the same matter, remarked that 'howsoever the Moplas may be educated unless they have a true conception of their religion; they will not lay aside their fanaticism'.[92] For this, the paper suggested that religious instruction should be given in the schools along with secular education. *Manorama* of Calicut advised the government that 'a man who is adept in Islam should be made to deliver religious lecture at least once a month in these schools in order that the *Mappilas* who sacrifice their lives on account of their wrong notion in respect of religious principle may desist-from doing so.[93] The government sought the opinion of *Himayathul Islam Sabha* of Calicut in this regard, and the *Sabha* proposed to the government to

[90] Even as late as 1960's the *Mappilas* of southern Malabar held that apathy towards Government schools and preferred Mopla schools at elementary level.

[91] *The Madras Review*, Vol. II No: 6 August 1896 in K.N. Panikkar (ed.), *PPRM op.cit.*, pp.486-87.

[92] *Kerala Patrika*, 19th January, 1895, MNNPR, TNA.

[93] *Manorama*, Calicut, 7th January 1895, MNNPR, TNA.

concentrate more on education and appealed to open a free boarding school each in Ernad and Walluvanad Taluks for the Moplas.[94]

Considering these types of advice, the government in 1894, officially recognised the *Mappilas* of Ernad and Walluvanad taluks as backward classes for educational purpose, thereby Mappila students were entitled to get free education in elementary schools. Schools were separated from *Othupallis* to free it from the clutches of *Mullas* and were converted in to Aided Mopla schools, which were placed under the jurisdiction of local boards and encouraged by Grants-in-Aid.[95] Around 14 additional Mopla schools with exclusively Mopla teachers were opened in southern Malabar. Almost 50% of the aided Mopla schools were originally *Othupallis* converted in to schools.[96] A Mopla scholarship scheme was also introduced and to supervise Mopla education two additional inspecting officers were appointed. Through such measures, by 1921, the total number of public schools for Mappila boys rose to 558 and that of private Mappila schools to 421 in Malabar.[97] Despite this phenomenal increase in number of schools, these schools served to perpetuate the segregation of the community. As the Malabar District Board President observed in 1898, 'after 1894, the Government established Mopla schools in Malabar and allowed grants double to that of ordinary schools. But these Mopla schools turned to be instruments for making the *Mappilas* alien in their own homeland'.[98]

Despite all these civilizing efforts through education, the Malabar *Mappilas* broke out in Rebellion in 1921 and the vernacular press including

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[94] Confidential Report, Dist. No 514/M.G1 dated 6th June 1894, TNA.

[95] C.A. Innes, Note no. 85, p.300.

[96] C.N. Ahmad Moulavi and KKM Kareem (eds) *Mahathaya Mappila Sahitya Paramparyam* (Mal),(hereinafter *MMSP)*, Calicut, 1978, p. 78.

[97] *Report on the Public Instruction in Madras Presidency* for the year 1921-22.

[98] As cited in Dasarathi, *Malabarile Mappila Lahalakal* (Mal), Jayabarath, Calicut (First impression, 1972) Reprint 1992, p. 101.

the nationalist papers made scathing criticism of the system of communal schools which foment the exclusiveness of the *Mappilas* . In a long article about the Rebellion in *Malayala Manorama* in 1921, Moorkoth Kumaran observed: "Now what we see in Malabar is special Mappila schools and special *Mappila* officers to inspect them. This system denies the opportunity for Mopla boys to study together with Hindus and to cultivate friendly relation with them. This is a serious defect. They should be taught in common schools with students of other religions and with the same textbooks. The post of special Muslim inspectors also is to be stopped. If these measures are undertaken, the Mopla fanaticism and *halilakkam* (frenzy) could be removed within a period of 50 years'.[99]

Naveena Keralam, another Malayalam paper, raised their concern over separate schools thus: 'what we thought was that separate education and election to legislative councils were the means to widen gulf between Hindus and Muslims. When one sees that instead of making separate arrangements for religious instruction, separate schools are established so as not to allow children of two committees to learn and play together and to cultivate friendly relations, what can be thought of it except that it is a trick used to widen the gulf between two communities'?[100] *Manorama* of Calicut expressed their off-repeated opinion that separate school would only intensify communal cleavage.[101] *Kerala Samchari* also suggested that 'compulsory education in Ernad and Walluvanad, not in schools manned by Mopla teachers but in common schools, where they mix with other communities could alone prevent Mopla outbreaks'.[102] Besides the print media, many intellectuals of the day including the 'nationalist Muslims' lashed out at those who advocated separate

[99] Moorkoth Kumaran, "Jonakappaqda" article in *Malayala Manorama*, 17th September 1921, NMML, Delhi.

[100] *Naveena Keralam*, 24th July 1992, MNNPR, p.838.

[101] *Manorama* (Calicut) 21, July 1922 MNNPR, p. 838.

[102] *Kerala Samachari*, 28th September 1921 MNNPR, p.399.

schools and asked the government for the total abolition of Mopla schools as an unworthy system which helped to perpetuate orthodoxy and communalism. At the 8th conference of *Aikya Sangam* held at Trivandrum, Abdul Hamid Moulavi, the Educational officer of Malabar made this point clear. 'In reality, it is not desirable for Muslims to have separate schools. In common schools, where Hindus and Muslims can study together, no kind of communal feeling will exist. As far as religious instruction is concerned, it could be imparted before school schedule'.[103]

In spite of all these discourses against the communal school, Muslims were not ready to do away with the system of denomination school and Muslim journals countered all the allegations against communal schools. *Malabari*, a Muslim journal from Calicut, pleaded for the continuation of separate schools on the ground that religious instruction should hold pre-eminence in both sects of schools and observed that, 'if all Mopla schools worked like *Himayathul Islam* Arabic school at Calicut, the education of the right sort would gradually spread among the *Mappilas* .[104]

In the wake of this heated debate regarding the communal school, the Government appointed a committee to investigate the question of abolition of separate schools for *Mappilas* .[105] Ignoring the popular sentiments against the communal school, the committee unanimously recommended to the Government that separate Mopla elementary schools should be retained. It also recommended for the implementation of compulsory education in South Malabar and for the appointment of Arabic teachers for religions instruction in government training school at Malappuram. Another recommendation was to form a textbook committee to compile books in Malayalam from *Quran*

[103] *Mathrubhumi*, 25th May, 1930.

[104] *Malabari*, 23rd August 1922 MNNPR, TNA.

[105] Report on Public Instruction in Madras Presidency for 1922-23, p. 29, TNA.

and *Kitabs*. All these were implemented with immediate effect.[106] Two text books were prepared by this committee in 1924, *Hidayathul Muslimeen* by Vallanchira Kunhi Mohamed and *Muslim Sanmargadeepam* by Gafoor Sha, the Educational Inspector of Malabar.[107] P.N. Mohamed Moulavi was appointed as religious instructor at Malappuram Training School, the only Muslim Training School in Malabar, to teach 'original religion'. An Oxford educated Muslim from Madras, Capt. Abdul Hamid was appointed as educational officer of Malabar. The British deliberately used the title *Moulavi* with his name to make him acceptable to *Mappilas* . In 1931, Capt. Hamid entrusted C.N. Ahmed Moulavi the task of teaching 'original religion' to the *Musaliyars*.[108] These *Musaliyars*, who were to impart religious instruction in schools, were the only untrained teachers in schools. As early as1925, *Al-Ameen* had invited the attention of authorities to the necessity of employing *Moulavi* teachers in Muslim schools. It held that if education should be compulsory without appointing *Moulavis* to teach religion, it would amount to an unwarranted interference on the part of the government in Muslim religious matters'.[109] For female education, the government started 15 separate girls' schools for Hindus and Muslims in the same villages of Ernad.

Thus what we witness in the 1930's and 1940's was a scenario in which throughout Malabar five types of schools co-existed – Hindu Boys, Hindu girls, Muslim boys, Muslim girls and *Adi-Dravida* Schools (for lower castes).

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[106] *Ibid.*

[107] ,*MMSP*, pp.75-76.

[108] *Ibid.*, p. 76.

C.N. Moulavi has given a narrative of his traumatic experiences at Malappuram Training School in his *MMSP* (pp.76-78). In the first class itself, the *Musaliyars* objected to his writing Arabic verses of *Quran* on black board as they believed that it was against their religion. The next day when geography teacher tried to enlighten them about the shape of earth, they stood adamantly with their old notion that earth was flat. When the drawing teachers drew the picture of animals on board, they objected to it on the ground that drawing of living things were forbidden in Islam.

[109] *Al-Ameen*, 12th July 1925, MNNPR, p.965.

This situation seriously affected the secular fabric of Malabar. The imperial government itself thought of abolishing the denominational school and they introduced the Champion Scheme in early 1930's, which envisaged the abolition of separate, and exclusive education system of Muslims. It was in this background, the District Board President, K. Kelappan, in his public speeches in 1937 took the line that separate school for Muslims was opposed to Hindu-Muslim unity. About this Government secretary remarked, 'considering that separate Muslim schools are one of the chief objects of the leading *Mappilas* in the district and that an extra form has just been opened in the Muslim High School at Malappuram with considerable ceremony, he [Kelappan] is likely to set the *Mappilas* generally by the ears'.[110] On August 22 1938, Malabar district board took the decision to abolish the communal school in Malabar within a period of ten years. As the government secretary foresaw, the Muslims began to raise a hue and cry over the issue of abolition. The Muslim members of the Board like Attakoya Thangal, Abdulla kutty and Muthukoya Thangal opposed the decision and argued for the continuance of communal schools.[111] KPCC, in a resolution appealed to the District Board to repeal the decision as the majority of Muslims were against it.[112] Condemning this decision of KPCC, *Mathrubhumi* editorial said, 'it is non-sense to argue that separate schools are meant for protecting their religion and culture. It is difficult to perceive how communal schools that inculcate communalism in the young hearts, help to flourish nationalism... If it is the case, separate constituency, separate play ground and separate municipal councils and finally special royal rights will have to be allotted to the Muslims. Who knows KPCC may not argue that it is the real nationalism'.[113]

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[110] FNR, dtd. 18th June 1937, p.4-11, TNA.

[111] *Mathrubumi* 24, Aug. 1938.

[112] *Mathrubumi* 3, Sept. 1938.

[113] *Mathrubumi* 12, Aug. 1938.

Despite such criticism, the Muslims generally stood against the abolition of communal schools. *Al Murshid*, a Muslim journal from Tirurangadi in its editorial opined, 'The decision [to abolish Mopla schools] would adversely affect the Mopla education in Malabar. The dynamism and enthusiasm which we see in Muslim education today is due to communal schools... Even KPCC has opined that the decision is against the policy of the Congress...This decision may help only to deepen the communal spirits in Malabar'.[114] Even the anti-Islamic context of textbooks in common schools was being cited for legitimizing the claim for separate schools. Mahinkutty in his book observes, 'If you turn to any books in English accepted as text books in schools, you can see the hidden agenda of Christian Missionaries. Even the works of Milton and Shakespeare are not exceptions. Hence such works should not be taught in schools and colleges'.[115] The first District Muslim League Council meeting held at Tellicherry in 1937 under Sulthan Ali Raja passed a resolution demanding the repeal of District Board decision to abolish separate schools.[116] *Kerala Jamiyyathul Ulema*, the reformist ulema organisation also stood firm for the continuation of separate schools. KJU had sent a deputation under M.C.C Abdurahiman to meet Madras Education Director and the deputation made the following submissions to the government.

a. Special Teachers for religious instruction in schools.

b. A Board to frame curriculum for religious study.

c. Appointment of *Mappila* teachers alone in *Mappila* schools.

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[114] *Al. Murshid* (A.M), Tirurangadi, September 1938.

[115] B. Mahinkutty, "Valal Prachariccha Matham Ethu?" (Cochin, 1936) as reproduced in a book review by MB in *Mathrubumi* 7th March, 1936.

[116] *The Report of District Muslim League Council*, Telicherry, 1937, p.16.

d. Introduction of Arabic in colleges.[117]

The result of all these discourses was the continuation of the separate school system in Malabar throughout the colonial phase. In the 1940's the steps already taken to foster *Mappila* education were only continued except that compulsory elementary education was introduced in certain areas of Malabar.

The government tried to legitimize the special treatment of Muslim Education by showing their backwardness as revealed in the census and periodical educational reports. The Muslim organizations like *KJU*, Muslim Majlis and the Muslim league carried on their propaganda demanding special attention to educational problems of *Mappilas*, which ofcourse were isolationist in principle. Thus, the colonial educational system in Malabar with its Mopla schools, separate Muslim teachers, separate Muslim inspectors, and separate curriculum, only helped to heighten the separate identity among the *Mappilas* .

Primary socialization, which takes place within the family, tended to foster religious identity in the minds of Mappila children. Elaborate rituals like *Moulud, ratib*, religious rituals like *namaz*, created the cultural milieu in which the *Mappila* child was initiated in to a religious identity. In the case of Mopla children because of these communal schools, secondary socialization did not help to dissolve this early influence. As K.N. Panikkar observed, 'what could have helped to overcome the prejudices imbibed by primary socialization was participation in open and secular institutions'.[118] But the communal educational system introduced by the British in Malabar only helped to reinforce the identity that the Mappila child imbibed at the level of

[117] *Mathrubumi*, 26 March 1936.

[118] K.N. Panikkar, *Communal Threat, Secular Challenge*, Earthworm, Madras, 1997, pp.25-26.

primary socialization. In other words, at the level of secondary socialization also, the religious exclusiveness came to play among the *Mappilas*. Thus the British Educational System introduced in Malabar led to the sharpening of communitarian identity among *Mappilas*.

Chapter III

REFORM MOVEMENT AND EFFORTS FOR A SEPARATE IDENTITY

CHAPTER III

THE REFORM MOVEMENT AND THE EFFORTS FOR SEPARATE IDENTITY

The growth of a collective consciousness among *Mappilas* has two definite stages, the first as a religio-cultural community and then as a political community. While the available literature on *Mappilas* scantly deals with the first phase, the final stage when *Mappilas* emerged as a political community has been covered widely in these studies. Hence, this chapter is devoted to the first phase of the emergence of the collective consciousness of *Mappilas* .

As we have seen in Chapter I, the practice of Islam in Malabar and many of the popular mentalities, which supported it, were shaped and moulded by the 'folk' and 'elite' religions of wider Hindu society. As people with narrow horizons and limited world view, *Mappilas* were supposed to be given to 'lax' and accommodated variants of folk worship because they were close to the forces of nature, their religious life was parochial and localized incorporating spirit cults and other traditions derived from non-Muslim sources. But once, as pointed out by Barbara D. Metcalf in another context, Muslims began to have their horizon widened through the experience of overseas trade or through other forms of economic and social modernisation which gave rise to greater physical mobility and an opening up of contacts and world views, they began to loose this attachment to local cults.[1] The religious reform movements, which started in Malabar by the beginning of 20th century, regarded this syncretic cults and rites as debasement of the pristine purity of Islam. According to the reformists, the practice of Islam by the majority in Malabar was 'deviant' and 'corrupt'. Hence, the most venomous condemnation of such debased Islam in Malabar came from large

[1]Barbara D. Metcalf, *Islamic Revival in British India: Deoband, 1860-1900,* Princeton, 1982, p.124.

volumes of polemical and didactic writings of the reformists and revivalists in 20th century. In a discussion on the formation of a Muslim identity in Malabar, it is of vital importance to have a critical evaluation of the impact of those anti-syncretic fundamentalist movements of 20th century in Malabar on the changing perceptive of identity. A much clearer understanding of the reform movement in Malabar may be derived from analysing the 'cultural' and 'societal' aspects of its impact both ultimately converging on the process of formulating and strengthening the collective Islamic consciousness of Malabar Muslims. [2] By the middle of 20th century the reform movement of Malabar brought about revolutionary transformation of the religious and cultural self-image of Muslims of Malabar.

The reformists, right from the last quarter of 19th century onwards, launched a vicious and sustained attack on the non-Islamic accretions and excrescences of Malabar Islam and urged Muslims to return to the purity of Islam. This forced on the *Mappilas,* both individually and collectively, a growing awareness of what they believed and practiced as Muslims. The first motive power towards this was supplied by the reform efforts of Sanaulla Makti Thangal, who was the pioneer among the Muslim reformers of Kerala.

Makti Thangal and the Early Reform Efforts

Reforms in Muslim society mean getting rid of all un-Islamic habits and customs that were lingering on in the life of Muslims as survivals of ancestral traditions or as a result of acculturation. The necessity of the reform of *Mappila* community was felt under the influence of British rational traditions. Reformers like Makti Thangal (1847-1912) emerged to rationalize Islam according to the change in the society. [3] By the dawn of 20th century, the urge for reform of the existing society was visible among almost all

[2]The religious aspect of the reform among Kerala Muslims has been discussed in M.Abdul Samad, *Islam in Kerala: Groups and Movements in 20th century,* Kollam, 1998.

communities of Malabar, but the pace of change was relatively poor in the case of *Mappilas* . Makti Thangal was a product of colonial modernity and he was exposed to colonial values. At the same time, he anchored on Islamic scriptures, when he attacked the blind beliefs and archaic practices of *Mappilas* . Thus, the early reform movements were both reformist as well as revivalist. On the one hand they tried to purify Islam from all later accretions, which run contrary to its original teachings, on the other, tried to uplift the community through secular education, stressing even on the education of women.

The Reform movements contributed much to strengthen the community identity as these reforms were directed against un-Islamic practices and customs. Neither the early reformers, nor the later reformers were against the tenets of texts of Islam - *Quran* and *Hadith*. What they attempted was to bring *Mappila's* life in conformity with textual Islam rather than to regulate their life according to the standards of colonial modernity.

Makti Thangal was influenced by western values, ideas and methods and showed a keen interest in cleansing Islam of impurities. But, for him, the necessity of reform arose from *Quran* itself and not from modern ideas. It was the modern ideas that pushed Muslim intellectuals to turn to *Quran* itself to find answers to the problems of the community.

Makti was born at Veliyamkode in 1847, as the son of Sayid Ahmad Tangal, the disciple of Veliyamkode Umar Khazi. He belonged to the Sayid family, the descendants of Prophet Mohammed.[4] He acquired both secular and religious education from Ponnani. Besides Arabic and Malayalam, he

[3]Fortunately, the complete works of Makti Thangal, have been collected and compiled by K.K.M. Abdul Kareem with the title *Makti Thangalude Sampoorna Krithikal* (Mal), Kerala Islamic Mission, Tirur, 1981, (hereinafter *MTSK*).

[4] K.K.M. Kareem, *Sayid Sanaulla Makti Tangal* (Biography- Mal), Kerala Islamic Mission, Tirur, 1981, p.11.

was proficient in English, Hindusthani, Persian and Tamil. He served the British government as an Excise Inspector for a short span of his life, which he resigned for concentrating on his missionary work.

The second half of 19th century witnessed the hectic Christian missionary activities in Kerala and umpteen tracts were published denigrading Islam and Muslims. They published such tracts even in Arabi-Malayalam to attract the *Mappilas* . Another means for propagation adopted by these missionaries was the street sermons. Through both oral and print means, they attacked Islam and used extremely objectionable language in describing the prophet and other heroes of Islam, deriding the personal character of prophet Mohammed. One such tract wrote that 'Mohammed's character was worse than his religious teachings and there was no one equal with him in licentiousness and doing wicked acts. He did not consider age or relationship in gratifying the cravings of flesh. He was a notorious robber.[5] There were two missionary societies in Kerala, which actively indulged in missionary works- Bible society, and Tract society.[6] These Christian missionaries represented Muslims in pejoratives and in the most uncivilized language. Even a liberal missionary like Herman Gundert spoke about prophet Mohammed in deregatory terms like 'womanizer' or 'opium eater' etc.[7] It was in this backdrop, *Jaridha Rozgar*, an urdu journal from Madras commented, 'The opponents of Islam especially Christian missionaries attack our religion and publish stupid canards, trumped-up stories and unfounded statements against Muhamedan religion and prophet.[8] The paper then requested the co-religionists to help in furthering the cause of Islam against its opponents.

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[5] *Ibid*., p.11.

[6] K.K.M Kareem, *MTSK, op. cit.*, p.573.

[7] M.R. Raghava Varier, *Ammavazhi Keralam*, (Mal) Kerala Sahithya Academy, Trichur, 2006, pp.147-48.

[8] *Juridha Rozgar*, (Urdu) Madras, 13th May 1893, MNNPR, TNA.

It was against this background of missionary bitings that Makti endeavored to create a kind of literature designed to restore Muslims' confidence in the faith of Islam and arouse consciousness in them of the superiority of Muslim culture. He was agitated by this debasement of missionaries and resigned his government job in 1882, at the age 35, and started his crusade against Christian missionaries.[9] He used his pen and tongue, both sharp as razor, to counter the arguments of Christian missionaries against Islam.

In 1884, he brought out his first book *Kadora Kudaram* (The Ferocious Axe) which literally cut the Christian allegations in to sizes. He laid bare the hollowness of the Christian belief in 'Holy Trinity'. As expected it triggered off a controversy throughout Kerala and one Christian missionary, Vidwan Kutty came with a counter-tract. In reply to this, Makti brought out another pamphlet titled *Kadora Vajram*.[10]

It has to be noted that Makti shifted his centre of activities to Travancore and from there, he moved to different centres of Kerala cutting across the boundaries of Travancore, Cochin and Malabar, propagating his arguments against Christianity by organizing debates and distributing religious tracts. He was the first, who effectively used print media for disseminating his ideas. It was for this purpose that he established a printing press called Muhammadiya Press at Aleppey, by collecting a *Kasu* each from his well-wishers at Cochin. He published a journal called *Nabinanayam* (Prophet's coin) from Cochin. The idea behind its publication was to publish counter arguments to the allegations against Islam by rival sects and to establish the truth of his *Uppappa* (grand grandfather i.e., prophet

[9] K.K.M. Kareem, Note No.4, p.14.

[10] Detail of his books have been given in chapter on 'Print and the Imagined Community of *Mappilas* '.

Mohammed).[11] Through this term *uppapa*, he was indicating his pedigree which could be traced back to prophet.

For about 35 years, he led the life of a missionary giving 'tit for tat' to Christian missionaries. He trained youths to propagate Islam at his own expense. He engaged in many polemical debates with Christians all over Kerala and was cunning enough to give curt reply to the questions of Christians. Once, in one such debates held at Changanassery, he was asked, 'if god is omnipresent, where will you piss? He retorted, 'I will do it on cross where Jesus (your God) was crucified'.[12] Again, at Trivandrum during a court session, he made an objectionable remark *Kazhuveri* about Jesus, which in Malayalam is a deregatory term. While the judge asked him to withdraw the term, he replied, 'As per Richard Collin's dictionary, *Kazhu* means 'cross' and *Eri* means 'to climb' and hence, the term meant nothing but one who 'died on cross.' The court stood aghast.

In a pamphlet *Iman Salamath* (Protection of Faith) he wrote, 'prophet was always worried about his '*Ummath*' (community) till his last breath.... But being part of that *Ummath*, you are not worried about prophet, being abused as *Rakshasan* (demon) and his wife Aysha as 'whore'. How will you get the mercy of prophet in the next world?'[13] This kind of sentimental appeals did create a kind of community spirit in the minds of *Mappilas* .

The attack of Christian Missionaries against Islam in market places, through sermons and religious tracts, created a sense of danger to one's cultural identity. *Mappilas* cutting across economic divisions, were agitated

[11] Makti Thangal, *Nabi Nanayam*, pp.2-3 as quoted in K.K.M Kareem, Note no. 4, p.19.

[12] K.K.M. Kareem, Note no: 4, p.75.

[13] *Ibid.,* p.24. Compare this with the words of Mehrulla, the counterpart of Makti at Jessore in Bengal. In 1899 Mehrulla wrote, 'Men, whilst professing Islam, can put up with the denigration of prophet, are not worthy of the name of Musalman'. As quoted in Rafudhin Ahmed, *The Bengal Muslims; 1871-1906* : *A Quest for Identity*, OUP, Delhi, p. 98

by the barbed slights at their faith by Christian missionaries. Hence, the cultural defence against Christianity led by Makti Thangal, did help to arouse a community consciousness among *Mappilas* of Malabar.

Against Sufi Tarikas

A major concern of Makti during this period was to liberate the Muslim masses from the clutches of the Sufi influence. In 1909, he published a tract *La Maujudin Law Point* (The law point of the philosophy of *La Maujud*', the philosophical monism in Islam).[14] This work is a staunch critique of the Sufi cult in Malabar. A heated debate was raging among Muslims of Kerala with regard to the provisionality of the *dikr* (hymn) *la Maujud illallah* (None exist other than Allah). The *Ulema* of Kerala were divided in to two warring groups, one arguing that it was permissible to recite this *dikr*, while the other group, argued that Islam does not permit it. Even Mappila songs were composed legitimizing both the positions.[15]

Makti vehemently opposed this *dikr,* which he argued was against the spirit of Islam and an adoption from eclectic Sufi philosophy. He toured throughout Malabar speaking against this Sufi philosophy. He was against all Sufi *Tarikas*, popular in Malabar. He wrote, 'these ignorant fools (Sufi pirs) prevail upon the ignorant *Mappilas* to accept their leadership, telling them that not to accept the leadership of a *Imam* (leader) is anti-Islamic, enroll them in their register and collect the dues from them annually'. [16] Thus, he had realized that it was the Sufi *pirs,* who kept the Muslim masses in eternal darkness. He was rebuked and manhandled at Tellichery and Valapattanam by the *murids* of Sufis. Those who supported the 'Islamic monism' published a tract called *Maktiyude Mudanthanvadam* (The False argument of Makti) in

[14] K.K.M. Kareem, *MTSK*, pp.648-658.

[15] *La Moujid illallah Pattu* and *Radd la Mauju du illallah Pattu,* were popular among *Mappilas* during the first decade of 20th century.

[16] Makti Thangal, *La Maujudin Law Point*, p.2 in *MTSK* , p. 649.

Arabi-Malayalam.[17] Through this attack on intercessionary Sufism, Makti was determined to rid the world of its enchanted places, that is of anything that might diminish the believers' sense of responsibility. He was determined to assert the principle of *Tauhid* (oneness of God).

Against *Marumakhathayam*

Another issue, which Makti took up, was *Marumakkathayam*. As we have seen in Chapter I, this was prevalent among the *Mappilas* of North Malabar and certain coastal towns of South Malabar. He criticized it in the light of Quran. He published umpteen pamphlets both in Malayalam and Arabi-Malayalam, criticizing the system as a remnant of Hindu culture. In *Parkaleetha Porkalam* he wrote, 'on material basis, this people (Northern *Mappilas*) follow the system, introduced by Sankaracharya. Even the Hindus realized the injustice involved in the system. It is a wonder that the Muslims, who are money minded, do not feel so. … His beloved wife does not obey or honour him. He is compelled to leave the *tarawad*, once wife or her father insists. ... Islam does not permit this kind of injustice. Muslims don't feel ashamed of permitting wives to act as husbands. Even in terms of human nature, a man cannot admit this system'.[18] Here, Makti spoke about the system from a patriarchal point of view. In February 1902, in a sermon at Shaduli mosque at Koothuparamba, he told the Muslims that 'even the animals would not practice Marumakkathayam and those who practice it are not eligible for the grace of God and prophet'.[19]

Once he was manhandled at Kannur while speaking against the system. At this hour of despair, it was the Hindus who came to rescue him from the mob.[20] At Taliparamba, he spoke to Muslims to getrid of the evil system of

[17] KKM Kareem, Note no. 4, p.30.

[18] *Parkaleetha Porkalam* in *MTSK*, pp.224-225.

[19] KKM Kareem, Note no: 4, p.48.

[20] Makti Thangal, *Makti Manaklesam*, (Makti's Mental Worries), p.65 in K.K.M. Kareem *MTSK*, p. 1035.

Marumakkathayam, which was introduced in Kerala by Parasurama. He added that 'as *Allah* instructed through *Annisah* (Chapter in Quran), those who practice it would be punished for negating the rights of one's parents'.[21] Thus, Makti was cutting the roots of the shared traditions of Malabar and thereby, dragging the community to an exclusivist identity. These discussions in public, backed by printed discourse, sharpened the Islamic consciousness as well as greater differentiation of Muslims from non-Muslims. The early two decades of 20th century was, thus, the formative period for developing a scripture based conception of religion in Malabar.

Makti against the *Mullas*

Makti was also in the forefront of the attack against the traditional priesthood of Malabar. The slogan, which was printed in the front page of Arabi Malayalam journal, which he started from Cochin in 1895, was,

> He has'nt the hearth or home
>
> Nor has he met any learned
>
> He has'nt learnt any lores
>
> Still, *fatwas* are not in dearth. [22]

These four lines was a true depiction of the inadequate knowledge of the *Musaliyars*, in true religious teachings of Islam. Through out his life, he remained as the betenoire of the traditional *mullas*. Quite naturally, the orthodox *Ulema* utilized every opportunity to oppose him. They even acted as witnesses against him in certain civil suits filed by Christian missionaries.[23] They also issued *fatwas* stating that religious sermons were not permissible in Islam and those who hear and attend his sermons were outside the fold of

[21] Makti Thangal, "Nammude Sancharam" *Salahul Iqwan* (Arabi Malayalam) (ed.) C. Saidalikutty, Tirur, Vol.3, Issue 4, 1903.

[22] KKM Kareem, *MTSK*, p.4.

[23] KKM Kareem, Note no:4, p.68.

Islam.[24] At the same time, there were some among the traditional *ulema* who issued *fatwas* in favour of religious sermons initiated by Makti Tangal. For instance, Puthiyakath Abdurahiman alias Bava Musliyar, the then *Maqdoom* of Ponnani had issued a *fatwa*, stating that the religious sermons with the intention of educating *Kafirs* (infidels) about Islam was mandatory on the part of every Muslim.[25] As seen earlier, at this juncture also, he was supported by the Hindu friends. They were much impressed by his scholarship in Hindu philosophy and mythology and hence, in his struggle against Christian missionaries, they stood with him firmly. He had acknowledged this in his autobiographical work, *Makti Manaklesam* (The Worries of Makti). He says 'As my attempt was novel and the might of my enemies was stronger, my own relatives and well-wishers were afraid of supporting me. I was waging a lone battle, without being supported morally or financially. In my endeavour to start the first journal *Paropakari*, the help came from my Hindu friends'.[26]

The trials and tribulations that he encountered in his efforts to eradicate the evils of Malabar society are vividly described in his autobiographical work *Makti Manaklesam*. He was a true *Mujaddid* (reformer). He stood against *shirk* (worship of any object other than God) and *Bidaath* (innovation) with firm conviction. Kunhippokkarkutty Sahib says, 'He spoke to the people that those who pray to anybody other than God and those who believe in the intercessionary powers of *Auliyas*, are not true Muslims. He said all this on the basis of Quranic injunction and it was this that infuriated *Musaliyars* (priests) against him'.[27]

Makti's Efforts in the field of Education

[24] *Ibid.*, p.69.

[25] *Ibid.*, p.70.

[26] K.K.M. Kareem, *MTSK*, p.1034.

[27] P. Kunhippokkarkutty, *Satya Prabhodhanam*, preface, Amina Book Stall, Trichur, 1963, p.4.

Education was another domain, which Makti was concerned about. He realized that only through education, the *Mappilas* could be liberated. It was with this intension that he organized a *sabha* at Kannur in 1889, with the support of Sultan Ali Raja.[28] He reminded the Muslims of the rich heritage of ancient Muslims in the development of modern education. He argued that the cause of the revolutionary growth of Islam in each period was not sword, but their contribution in the field of science and philosophy. They translated many works of physics and science from Greek to Arabic. It was from the Arabs that Europeans got all this progress. During this golden age of Islam, *Madrasas* were not centres of religious learning but secular subjects like Geography, Astronomy, Algebra, Maths, Logic, Medicine, Craft, Sculpture, Science, Philosophy etc were taught there'.[29] The message he tried to drive home was that it was the progress in secular knowledge that led to the progress of Islamic societies in the past and the *Mappilas* had to regain that heritage of their brethren in the past.

He was also worried that the Muslims of Kerala were reluctant to study English and Malayalam. Regarding this he wrote, 'Malayalam is the language that satisfied the material needs as well as the *guru* that teaches all knowledge about God and the Islamic practice, knowledge in English empowers one to enter politics and to acquire knowledge to earn money and prestige. They who argue that the study of these languages is against Islam, are ignorant about religion'[30]. He was happy to see *Mappilas* reading or writing articles and making public speeches in Malayalam.'[31] He made scathing criticism against the 'Malayalam' spoken by *Mullas*, who used to speak and write without bothering phonetics, meaning and tense. He mocked at the *Mullas* for using

[28] KKM Kareem, Note No:4, p.56.

[29] Makti Thangal, Pamphlet 5, in KKM Kareem, *MTSK*, pp. 700-704.

[30] KKM Kareem, *MTSK*, p.709.

[31] *Ibid.*, p.1006.

terms like *lacha* (Raksha) *chicha* (Shiksha) *Manoharam* (cleaning after pissing) *Naskathram* (Nakshatram) etc. When, once he was asked by a Muslim youth about his opinion regarding the Musaliyar's *fatwa* that English was the language of Hell, his reply was that one should learn English for if he happened to be in Hell, he could ask the angels in Hell for a glass of water in their language.[32] A recurring prayer in the night sermons (*wa'az*) by *Musaliyars* was, 'Oh God, save us from the sin of speaking in Malayalam as it is the language of *Kuffar* (infidels) and hence the language of *Jahannam* (Hell)'.[33]

Through this kind of scathing criticism, he could get rid of the blind notion prevalent among *Mappilas* that English was the language of Hell and Malayalam, the language of Hindus. He felt that all the books on Islam and its *fiqh* had to be rendered in Malayalam, so that pupil could easily comprehend it. It is in this context, he made the following observation about the traditional educational system of *Mappilas* in a pamphlet 'Muslims and Education'. "Children at an early age are entrusted in the hands of *Mullas*. For about three years they teach them to read *Quran, which* is followed by *Pathu Kitabs* [a collection of Ten Arabic books including *Mutafarid* and *Nurul Absar*, probably the lecture notes of *Maqdoom* scholars]. Since these are in Arabic, the students are taught the meanings of each Arabic word in Malayalam and this Malayalam is ridiculed even by the aborigines of highland.....Throughout the course, Malayalam is not taught.... If the *Pathu Kitabs* are translated in to Malayalam the students can learn it within two months, instead of a year. For the last 700 years this system continues....".[34] By exposing the hollowness of the existing system of religious education, he was arguing for a structural change in the religious education of *Mappilas* .

[32] KKM Kareem, Note no: 4, p.79.

[33] K. Umar Moulavi, *Ormayude Theerath* (Autobiography), Cochin, 2000, p.8.

[34] KKM Kareem, Note no:4, pp.40-43.

He initiated a crash programme for the improvement of religious education. In *Makti Manaklesam*, he made certain suggestions for the improvement of religious instruction.[35] He believed that the current system was a waste of energy and time. Hence, he made the following suggestions for improvements. (a) A Board in each class where the teacher writes the alphabet and pupil copy it. (b) To institute the system of divisions instead of single class system. (c) To improve the Arabi-Malayalam taught in *Othupallis*, he published *Thahleemul Iqwan*, in which he tried to evolve certain new alphabets equivalent to the Malayalam sounds. He also suggested that not only religious knowledge, but secular knowledge also had to be disseminated through *Othupallis*. He realized that only through education the blind and obnoxious beliefs of the community could be eradicated. He held the view that the reluctance of priests to speak to the people in public and their preference of midnight hour for religious sermons, was due to their ignorance of proper Malayalam. Again, he believed that the ignorance of Muslims about civil law caused much economic loss to them. He exhorted Muslims to study Indian classics and epics.[36]

It was connected with this that Makti fought for *Khutuba* (Friday Sermon) in vernacular language. *Khutuba* was delivered only in Arabic, though it actually was meant for educating the worshippers about the day-to-day affairs connected with the community. In *Salahul Iqwan* of 21st December 1900, Makti wrote, 'As per *fiqh* books, except the *Sharth* (compulsory section) the advisory part of *Khutuba* could be in any language'.[37] Later C. Saidalikutty Master of Tirur, published the Malayalam translation of Ibn Batatul Misri's *Khutuba*, which was widely used in Malabar in its Arabic form. This was translated by Vailathur Moideenkutty Musaliyar

[35] KKM Kareem, *MTSK*, pp.1025-1034.

[36] Makti Thangal, *Muslims and Education* in *MTSK*, p.45.

[37] KKM Kareem, Note no: 4, p.83.

and approved by 40 leading *Khatibs* (those who read *Khutuba*) of Malabar, Cochin and Trivandrum. This was really a revolutionary movement as far as the first decade of 20th century was concerned.

Translation of Quran

Makti also tried to bring out the translation of *Quran* in Malayalam. As early as 1894, *Kerala Sanchari* of Calicut, in its editorial, suggested that *Quran* should be translated in to Malayalam and the Government should render help in doing it. This was an urgent matter as in South Malabar, the *Mappilas* did not know Arabic and the *Quran* was taught by *Thangals* and *Mullas*, whose words the Mappils regarded as gospel truth.[38] In *Thandan Kondamala*, Makti said that 'though 1120 years have passed since the introduction of Islam in Kerala, not even a single chapter of *Quran* has been translated in to Malayalam and the complaint that no one among Kerala Muslims knew the meaning of the basic text exists. As nobody studies the *Quran* through vernacular, it becomes an impediment to the progress of religion, proper perception of *Khutuba* and effective religious sermon'.[39]

Though he tried to publish the first *Quran* translation of Mayin Kutti Elaya of Kannur by improving its language, it did not materialize. The notion that translation of the holy book in to Malayalam is forbidden, was strong among *Mappilas* . About this Makti wrote in *Makti Manaklesam*, 'In the absence of proper command over Malayalam language, the idea that *Quran* cannot be translated into it, is quite justifiable and even laudable too. But even after the lapse of 1000 years, it is pathetic that no one realizes the urgency of translation of *Quran* into the vernacular.'[40]

Makti on Gender Equality

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[38] *Kerala Sanchari*, Calicut, 23rd May 1894, MNNPR, TNA.

[39] Makti Thangal, *Thandan Konda Mala* (1894) in *MTSK*, p.43. *Thandan Konda Mala* is a tract published by Makti as a reply to the questions of one Kesavan, a convert to Christianity.

[40] KKM Kareem, Note no:4, p.62.

Makti was ambivalent regarding his position about women's education. When Moosakutty (died in 1930), a contemporary of Makti, argued for the education of women, both religious and secular, Makti wrote *Nareenarabhichari* and countered the arguments that women are equal to men. He considered women "an object of pleasure for men, wombs to deliver off his children and as a fertile field for sowing the seeds of men".[41] Again, his critique of Marumakkathayam was not only on the basis of scriptures but also on the basis of his patriarchal moorings. He also held the view that women are to be secluded in their houses because when they go out, they would attract the attention of other men. Hence he recommended only the *ilm ul farz* (compulsory knowledge related to tenets of Islam) for women. Later Moosakutty wrote a critique to this fundamentalist position of Makti in *Swadeshabhimani*. Makti contested these through two tracts *Moosakuttikkorutharam* (A reply to Moosakutty) and *Moosakuttikoru Mukhuthi* (A nose ring to Moosakutty). Anyhow, later in the second edition of *Nareenarabhichari*, he revised his earlier position on women's education and argued that 'women should get education but should not cross the limits of *Shariath*'. Though he was not as progressive as Moosakutty, in a milieu where education of women was considered forbidden, this was really a step forward.

At a later stage, in an article *Rajyabhakhthiyum Desabhimanavum* (*Loyalty and Patriotism*) he even ridiculed those who stood for separate schools for girls. He argued that without causing any ruins to Islamic norms, Muslim girls could study in common schools. Hence, such separatist demands were meaningless and contrary to the rights of citizens and would be branded as disloyal by the Government.[42] By this time, the colonial

[41] Makti Thangal, *Nareenarabhichari, MTSK*, pp.924-925.

[42] Makti Thangal, *Loyalty and Patriotism*, (Mal) in *MTSK*, pp.726.

authorities might have prevailed upon him, for changing his position regarding women and women's education.

Makti and Malayali Identity

In *Desabhimanam* (Patriotism), he exhorted *Mappilas* to have patriotic feeling towards one's country. 'Though Keralites are divided into many religious groups, their birthplace is Kerala and hence forms a community. It is the bounden duty of every Keralite to honour the motherland and to strive for its progress. All Muslims of Kerala have to be patriotic and work for the progress of the Malayali community.'[43]

Even when, the idea of a united Kerala was a remote dream, he had a vision about it and he travelled through out Malabar, Cochin and Travancore, wherever people spoke Malayalam and exhorted them to develop a Malayali identity. He was the first Muslim writer to speak and write in standard Malayalam. Titles of his books reveal that he used a peculiar Malayalam mixing Sanskrit and Malayalam words (eg: *Kadora Kudaram, Dampachara Vichari, Moodahankaram Maha Andakaram* etc.)

Makti's ire was also turned against atheists and *Qadiyanis*. He published a tract in 1912 exposing the arguments of one Kunhikanaran, an atheist, in the columns of *Kerala Sanchari*.[44] Similarly in *Hindu Muhammadan Samvadam*, he exposed the hollowness of Ahmadiya concept about prophethood. In that tract, he praised the British authorities for taking action favourable to Muslims, when they were involved in a dispute with *Qadiyanis* in North Malabar.[45]

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[43] Makti Thangal, *Desabhimanam*, *MTSK*, p.730.

[44] KKM Kareem, *MTSK*, p.973.

[45] KKM Kareem, *MTSK* (Revised edition), Calicut, 2006, p.788.

Makti himself had assessed his contributions to the Muslims of Kerala thus: 'Protected Islam from the Christian danger; wiped out the evils crept in to the *Iman* (belief) of Muslims and their religious education; protected Muslims by dragging them away from the path of violence; opened the doors of progress for Muslims; provided the materials for religious sermons and wiped out the stagefright of Muslim preachers'.[46]

Thus, at the one hand, Makti tried to improve the material condition of *Mappilas* through education and employments and on the other, he tried to bring them to the path of doctrinal Islam or Textual Islam. For the former, he sought the help of the British government and even exhorted Muslims to be loyal to the British. He asked the Muslims 'to have respect for the crown which is equal to devotion to God, as far as the dictates of the Crown did not contradict with the will of God'.[47] He acknowledged the help rendered by the Government and appealed the Muslims to utilize the opportunities provided by it to join the Government services.[48] One can notice a striking resemblance between the reformist ideas of Makti and Sir Syed Ahmed Khan, inspite of the disparities in their views on western culture and Christianity.[49] Due to this loyal attitude of Makti, his service was sought by the Government to pacify the *Mappilas* in South Malabar during the outbreak of 1896. He travelled throughout Malabar organizing speeches urging them the hollowness of the belief that 'getting killed in an attempt to sue his enemy leads to salvation.'[50] He provided new interpretation to *Jihad* (holy war) as it was widely misused in Malabar during 19th century. According to him, *Jihad* was

[46] KKM Kareem, *MTSK*, p.559.

[47] *Ibid.*, p. 722.

[48] *Ibid*., p. 722.

[49] Ashraf K.K, *Reform and Revival among the Muslims of Kerala- A Study of Kerala Muslim Aikya Sangam, 1922-34*, An unpublished M.Phil Dissertation, JNU, New Delhi, 1998, p.47.

[50] Makti Thangal, *Rajabhakthiyum Desabimanavum*, in *MTSK*, p. 722.

a fight not with sword but through educating the non-Muslims about religion and there by winning them to the side of Islam.[51] Thus, Makti adopted the idioms of modernity without disavowing the basic grammar of Islamic learning. He was interested in demonstrating Islam's capacity to absorb modern science, though it drew acerbic comments from orthodox sections of the community. The press formed the transmission belt for conveying his ideas to larger segments of Muslim population.

K.N. Panikkar's observation about 19th century cultural defence in India is pertinent in this context. He held the view that this cultural defence was manifested in two ways; to create an alternative to the colonial cultural practices and the revitalization of traditional institutions. While the concern about education and language underlined the former, inquiry in to traditional knowledge and an effort to translate it into contemporary practice formed a part of the latter. [52] Makti's attack against Christian missionaries through umpteen tracts, his efforts in the field of religious education and improvement of Arabi-Malayalam, his position about women, and his attack against *Marumakkathayam* are but different shades of the cultural defence he undertook in Kerala.

Other Early Reformers

Makti, the poineer of Muslim Reform Movement, had inspired many in Kerala during his life time and after his death in 1912. As Moidu Moulavi put it, 'the later reformers of Muslim community were either disciples or legatees of this great *Mujaddid* (reformer)'.[53] Other reformers like Chalilakath Kunhahamad Hajee (died in 1919) Shaik Hamadani Thangal (died in 1922)

[51] Makti Thangal, *Hindu –Muhammadan Samvadam* in *MTSK*, (Revised edition) Calicut, 2006, p.790.

[52] K.N. Panikkar, *Culture, Ideology, Hegemony: Intellectual and social consciousness in colonial India*, Tulika, New Delhi, 1995, p.105.

[53] E. Moidu Moulavi, Preface, *MTSK*, p. 4.

Vakkom Abdul Qader Moulavi (died 1932) came to the forefront of reform in their respective states of Malabar, Cochin and Travancore. Since all of them were using the print media as a vehicle for disseminating their new ideas, their works had a direct impact on Muslims of Malabar also.

Chalilakath Kunhahamad Haji (died 1919)

Chalilakath Kunjahamad Hajee was the second important Muslim reformer of Kerala. In the backdrop of his efforts to improve the system of religious education, he is called 'Sir Sayyid of Kerala'. [54] Born in Tirur, he was educated at *Dars* (seminaries) in Kozhikode and Ponnani and later at Latheefiya College Vellore. He was the first Malayali Muslim to take degree from Vellore. From Vellore he studied philosophy, astronomy, astrology and languages like Urdu, Persian, and Tamil.

It was his scholarship in astronomy that led him to write *Risalathul Hisab*, a treatise for determining the timings of *namaz*, the daily prayers. His tract regarding the direction of mosque triggered off a controversy in Malabar known as *Qibla* dispute'.[55] Chalilakath, on the basis of an Arabic text *Risalathul Maradini* argued that the mosque should be directed to west straightly but with slight deviation to north.[56] At Pulikkal, a polemical debate was organized on 20th December 1910 between two schools known as *Kibla Ain* (the group of Chalilakath) and *Kibla Jihath* (the opposite camp)[57]. He issued a number of *fatwas* in this regard, which were compiled and published

[54] C.N. Ahmed Moulavi and K.K. Kareem, (eds.), *Mahathaya Mappila Sahitya Paramparyam* (Mal.) (hereafter *MMSP*), Calicut, 1978, p.68.

[55] Mecca is the *Qibla* (direction) of Muslims all over the world. Hence mosque are built heading towards *Ka'ba* (the holy shrine of Mecca) which lies to North West of Kerala.

[56] K. Moidu Moulavi, *Ormakurippukal*, IPH, Calicut, 2001, p.56. Also see KKM Kareem, *K.M. Moulavi Sahib*, Tirurangadi, 1985, p.38.

[57] *MMSP*, p.484.

as *Tuhfathul Ahbab* (A.M) by Sulaiman Musaliyar.[58] This dispute rocked the Muslim community in Malabar in the early decades of 20th century and initiated the reform movement in Malabar. It helped the *Mappilas* of Malabar to realize that many a practice prevalent among them were not according to the norms of Islam and had to be changed.

In 1909, he was invited to *Darul Uloom*, a prominent institution of religious learning in Vazhakkad, where he joined in 1909, as the chief instructor. He was given full freedom by the management, and he initiated a series of reforms in the basic structure of the system of education.[59] His first reform was the introduction of class system as per the level of knowledge of students. Benches, desks and black boards were introduced. Malayalam was adopted as the medium of instruction. He wrote *Aksharamala* in Arabi-Malayalam for the students of lower classes.[60] For the upper classes, he wrote books like *Tahleemul Quran, Diniyath, Amaliyath, Al-luguthul Arabiya, Madarijul Qurath, Kitabul Surf and Kitabul Nahv*.[61] Besides religious instruction, Arithmetics, General Science and Malayalam were taught at elementary level itself while logic, geography and astronomy were taught in higher classes. He also introduced modern devices like globe and maps for effective teaching. At a time when orthodox Ulema denounced newspapers and journals as *lahvul Hadith* (meaningless utterances), Chalilakath advised his students to read newspapers in different languages.[62] He even advised the students to study *Kerala Paniniyam* of A.R. Raja Raja Varma. He introduced all these changes at a time when the orthodox *Musaliyars* stood against any changes in the traditional system of pedagogy in

[58] *Ibid.*

[59] M. Abdul Samad, *op.cit.*, p.50.

[60] K.K. Kareem, *K.M. Moulavi Sahib*, (Biography- Mal), Al-Khatib Publications, Tirurangadi, 1985, p.62.

[61] *Ibid*., p.63

[62] M. Abdul Samad, *op. cit*., p.50.

Othupallis. They even composed a Mappila song, which says, "M' is the last letter of *Jahannam* (Hell). Since the first alphabet of *'M'adrasa* (M) is the last alphabet of *Jahanna'm',* the path to *Madrasa* is the path to Hell'.[63]

He also stood for education of women and he set an example by sending his daughter to schools, defying the dictates of orthodox Ulema.[64] They who were dare enough to send their children to schools were branded as *Kafir* by the orthodox *Ulema*.[65] These *Ulemas* turned against him and prevailed upon the management of *Darul Uloom*, urging that *Waqf* properties should not have been used for Madrasa education. They even held the view that the chalk-dust, fallen on the ground while writing the name of *Allah* on blackboard, would be treaded by human feet and this would be equal to dishonouring God himself. Finally, Chalilakath left *Darul Uloom* but established similar institutions at Mannarkkad, Valapattanam, Badagara, etc.[66]

Through these *dars* at various pockets of Malabar, he fostered a gang of disciples who propagated his programme throughout Malabar. Through these *dars*, he could produce hundreds of erudite scholars capable of carrying on his ideas further. Among them, the notable were K.M. Maulavi, E.K. Moulavi, Chalilakath Abdurahiman, P.K. Moosa Maulavi, Sulaiman Musliyar, Cherusseri Ahmed Musliyar, E. Moidu Moulavi, P.N. Moulavi and

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[63] K. Ummer Maulavi, *op.cit.*, p. 9.

'*Oru Kalathum la Thajalul Banina*

Madrasa Vazhiyil Yatha allamuna

Miman li Madrasathin Wamimu Jahannami

Onnanu Changathi Bila Thavahumi' (K. Moidu Moulavi, *op. cit*., p.86).

[64] *MMSP*,*op.cit*., p.485.

[65] One Kunhi Mayan of Tellicheri was branded as 'Kafir Kunhi Mayi' for sending his daughters to colleges. (K. Moidu Moulavi *op.cit.*, p.44). Also see Kasim Irikkur, "Kafar Mayine Talasseri Vindum Anyeshikkunnu" in *Madhyamam,* Annual Issue, 2007.

[66] *MMSP*, *op.cit*., p.486.

P.P. Unni Moideen Kutty. These were the scholars who spearheaded the *Islahi* (Reform) movement in Malabar during 1920s and 1930s. Following the footsteps of Makti, Chalilakath too propagated against *Qadiyanis*. He wrote a critique to *Tuhfathul Malabari* written by Ibn Hasan, an *Ahmadiya*.[67] Through this work, he distanced *Qadiyanis* from the fold of Islam. This strategy of exclusion was part of forging a new identity for the Muslims.

Hamadani Thangal (d. 1922)

Though Hamadani Thangal and Vakkom Moulavi were working in Cochin and Travancore respectively, their efforts to reform the community did have its impact in Malabar. Hamadani Thangal was the moving spirit behind the formation of *Nisphakha Sangam*, which was the forerunner of *Kerala Muslim Aikya Sangam*. Similarly, his efforts to translate Islamic Classics into Malayalam and his Arabic-Sanskrit-Malayalam Dictionary did influence the Muslims of Malabar. Like Chalilakath, he worked for educational emancipation of Muslims. For the progress of the community, Hamadani put forward a Five Point programme through *The Muslim* in 1916. It included, (a) establishment of Madrasa in all areas on the model of elementary schools, secondary Madrasas in towns and one higher centre for specialised studies in *Quran* and *Hadith* in each state; (b) Religious and secular education for women, as it was essential for a healthy society (c) establishment of companies and co-operative societies for the economic growth (d) Formation of welfare committee for weaker sections.[68]

In his *Ilfath-ul-Islam*, he advised his fellowmen to desist from quarrelling with each other like pre-Islamic Arabs.[69] He said, 'Muslims should

[67] *Ibid.,* p.485.

[68] Hamadani Thangal, "Chila Nirdesangal", (Mal) *The Muslim*, Vol. V. No.8, Meenam 1091 (1916).

[69] E.K. Moulavi, "Islahi Prasthanam" in *Al-Ithihad*, Vol. III, No.3, April, 1954.

consider *Quran* and *Sunnah* (words and deeds of prophet) as the basis of their life. *Muhammadiya Tarika* (the order of Prophet Muhammad) is beyond all *Tarikas* (Sufi orders). Any rituals, which are against *Sunnah*, have to be given up.[70] This book made profound impact among Muslims of Malabar. E.K. Moulavi considered it as the guide for his later reform activities.[71] He founded many Muslim organizations like *Muslim conference* (Travancore) *Lajnathul Muhamadiya* (Aleppey) *Lajnathul Hamadaniya* (Azhikode) *Lajanathul Islam Sangam* (Eriyad). In short, he provided the framework for later Muslim reformers of Malabar. He was given eight acres of land at Alway for the establishment of a Muslim college on the model of Aligarh by Sir C.P. Rajagopalachari, the then Diwan of Travancore. Though he worked hard to establish this institution at Alwaye, his long cherished desire was not materialized, due to dearth of support from the community.

Vakkom Abdul Kader Moulavi

Vakkom Abdul Kader Moulavi (1873-1932), of Travancore, was another reformer of this period, who tried to revitalize the Muslim community through the print media. He firmly believed that 'revitalization of Islam meant bringing back to it the pristine purity and wiping out the accretions from outside.[72] Through his journals *Al-Islam* (AM), *Deepika*, and *Muslim*, his message reached the length and breadth of Malabar. As put in by Roland E. Miller 'There is no doubt that Vakkom Moulavi's five issues of *'Al-Islam'* sowed the seeds of Islamic reform in Kerala. They created a storm which swept through from one end of Kerala to the other'.[73] Through this

[70] K.K.M. Kareem, "Reform Efforts before Aikya Sangam" (Mal) in *Shabab*, Seminar issue, Calicut, 1997, pp.108-111.

[71] E.K. Moulavi, *Al-Murshid* (Mal), Tirurangadi, September 1966, p.6.

[72] Mohamed Abda (ed.), *Vakkom Moulaviyude Therenjedutha Krithikal*, (Mal), Vakkom Foundation, Vakkom, 1976, p.158.

[73] Roland E. Miller, *Mappila Muslims of Kerala*, Madras, 1976, p.271.

journal, he scathingly criticized all kinds of superstitious beliefs and *bidath* (innovative practices) of the Muslims of Kerala and naturally the ire of the traditional Ulema turned against him and they branded him as *Wahabi* (the follower of Ibn Abdul Wahab) which was a deregatory term in those days.

Early Reformers against faked *Tarikas*

Besides these known figures, there were many scholars who tried to wipe out the syncretic religious practices of Muslims in Malabar. A major concern of these scholars of late 19th and early 20th century was the rotten *Tarika* cult of *Mappilas* . Umpteen *fatwas* were issued in this regard as well as other non Islamic rituals by the leading *Muftis* of Malabar during 19th century itself.[74]

During the 19th century, a series of *fatwas* were issued against the *Tarika* of Konditty Thangals, pointing out the un-Islamic side of the practice followed at the *Takia* of Kondotty. *Majmuathal Fatwa,* compiled in 1858 is a collection of *fatwas* of different *muftis* of orthodox Sunni fold against Ishtiaq Sha of Kondotty, who used to ask his *murids* to perform *sujud* (prostration) before him, at the time of *baiyath* (official pledge).[75] Kunjamutti Haji of Kozhikode (d. 1843), in his *fatwa,* advised that 'those who are eager to enter heaven, ought to keep away from such people (*Kondotty Tarika*) and those who have already fallen in to their trap, have to return to religion'.[76] Qasi Abdulla of Tellichery (d. 1838), *qazi* of north Malabar in reply to a question raised by Abdul Fatah, the *qazi* of Kondotty, issued a *fatwa* which says 'as per *Quran* and *Hadith*, prostration before humanbeing is *Kufur'*.[77] Similarly, Shaik Ahmed Makdoom of Ponnani (d. 1853) in reply to the query of

[74] KKM. Kareem, Note no: 72, p.110.

[75],*MMSP,op.cit*., p. 280.

[76] *Ibid*, p.282.

[77] *Ibid.,* p.283.

Muhiyudin Musaliyar, a disciple of Kondotty *Tarika*, issued a *fatwa* which says 'your shaik (Ishtiaq sha) is outside the fold of Islam. Our protest against your practices like shirking of *namaz*, use of alcohol and ganja are not issues of peripheral importance or polemics related to minor issues'.[78] Again Puthiyakath Ahmad Musaliyar (d. 1878) qazi of Tirurangadi, issued a *fatwa* stating that 'prophet, *Ashabs* and *Ulemas* in the light of *Shariath*, *Haqaiqath* and *Mahrifath*, had made it clear that 'one who prostrate to human being, even if he is a prophet, or *Wali* would be a *Kafir*.[79]

Baithal Ahmed Musaliyar (d. 1897) the *qasi* of Payyanad, also issued *fatwa* against Kondotty *Tarika*. Chalilakath Ali Hasan Moulavi (d.1938) of Tirurangadi also opposed Kondotty and *Naqshabandi Tarikas* on the basis of Islamic scriptures[80]. Moulana Chalilakath Kusai Haji, popularly known as 'Kutthayi Haji' (1818-1863) of Tirurangadi, a contemporary and friend of Umer Qazi, issued *fatwas* against Kondotty *Tarika*.[81]

All these *fatwas* testify to the fact that through out Malabar, a new awareness had developed with regard to what was Islamic and un-Islamic in the practices of Mappila Muslims. This created new consciousness among the Muslims to check every age old custom in the light of scriptures.

Against Un-Islamic Rituals

The early reformers also turned against other innovative practices of *Mappilas* of Malabar. In 1888, Moulavi Mammi Ibn Moosa (Manjeri) issued a *fatwa* called *Ilharul Haq* criticizing the rituals associated with death called *Chavadiyanthiram*. The same was approved by Mankada Unnin Moulavi.[82]

[78] *Ibid.*

[79] *Ibid.*, p.284.

[80] *Ibid.*, p.328.

[81] *Ibid*., p.280.

[82] *Ibid.*, p.110.

Umar Qazi of Veliyancode (1765-1857) was a social critic and ridiculed the elitist thought of big Muslim families of Malabar. He wrote a poem which cuts the very root of ethnic and communal consciousness of *Mappilas* and heralded the renaissance among *Mappilas* .[83] He did not spare the Ulemas and their group fights. He wrote 'The first syllable of *'Alim*' (scholar) has changed in to '*la*' which means *lalim* (villain) and hence religious scholars (*Alims*) have turned in to villains'.[84] He opposed *Nercha, Chandanakudam* and all kinds of *bidath* (innovations)[85] Along with his disciple Parappanangadi Abubacker Musaliyar, a reformer, he issued *fatwas* against Kondotty *Tarika* also.[86]

Karipanakkal Kunhipokku Musaliyar, in his *Irshadul Amma,* took a similar position. He wrote, 'In Kerala some are claiming that the rites associated with death like *Kannuk* (3rd day death ritual), *Othikkal* (recitation at tomb) *Nalpath* (40th day of death) are part of *Sunnath*. Hiding the fact that these practices are forbidden by authorities in Islamic theology, they (*Ulema*) concoct new *Ibaraths* (evidence).[87] Another work of this genre is *Vaithulyam* (A.M), a work by Syed Fakrudhin alias Koyatti Thangal, which vehemently criticizes the faked *Tarikas* of Malabar. This was written during the last decade of 19th century. In it, he says 'Likewise certain ballads like *Mohiyidin Mala* are venerated as sacred texts by those who claim to follow *Ahl ul Sunnath* (the followers of prophet's path). But such practices are not permissible'.[88] Similarly Kottalungal Kunji Marakkar Musaliyar, in his

[83] See Chapter on 'The Phase of Popular Islam in Malabar'.

[84] Husain Randathani, *Mappila Malabar* (Mal.), Islamic Publishing Bureau, Calicut, 2005, p.130.

[85] C.K. Kareem (ed.), *Kerala Muslim Directory*, Vol.3, Cochin, 1991, p.253.

[86] *Ibid*., p.253.

[87] *Ibid.*, p.110. Also see KKM Kareem, Note No: 62, p. 185.

[88] Syed Koyatti Thangal, *Vaithulyam* (p.278) as quoted in KKM Kareem, Note No. 72, p.111.

Thanbi hullalleen, printed at Tirur in 1915, argued that any new additions, even with good intentions, which contradict *Quran* or *Hadith* or *Imam's* injunctions, would be considered *Bidaath* (innovation).[89]

Syed Abdulla Thangal, nephew of Mampuram Alavi Thangal was another early reformer of Malabar. He started the first Arabi-Malayalam Magazine *Hidayathul Iqwan* from Tirurangadi. He worked for the spread of modern education among the Muslims.[90] E. Marakkar Musaliyar (father of E. Moidu Moulavi) composed a poem called *Durachara Mardanam* in 1927, which exposed the blind beliefs, related to miracles of saints at Thanur and Muthupetta. He wrote:

> 'Those who were to Muthupetta
> Cameback, realizing the hollowness of 'miracle'
> Similar is case with '*Kuttayi water'*
> Fraud was the thing that prevailed there too
> How many have fallen in that trap'[91]

Here, he exposes the irrationality of the belief in the healing power of Muthupetta *Maqam* and the 'sacred water' at Tanur *Maqam*[92]. Kattil Veetil Ahmad Koya popularly known as 'Awwa Musaliyar' was another scholar who fought against the un-Islamic practices of *Mappilas.* In 1923, at the time of *Appani nercha* in Calicut, he led a procession with burning torches against the *nercha* and picketed the *Maqbara*.[93] He also composed songs and distributed pamphlets to enlighten people against ritualistic religion. His

[89] KKM Kareem, Note no. 72, p. 111.

[90] K.K. Kareem, Note No: 72, p.110.

[91] E. Marakkar Musaliyar, *Durachara Mardhanam* (Mal), Kodungallur, 1927. Also see, *MMSP,op.cit.*, p.513.

[92] *MMSP,op.cit.*, p.513.

'*Paurohitythinte Maranamani*' (Death knell to Priesthood) was one such work with definite purpose. Valanchira Kunhahammed (1842-1912) of Manjeri was another Muslim reformer of South Malabar. He was a disciple of Makti Thangal and he wrote books comparing the beliefs of both Islam and Christianity and engaged in debates with Christian missionaries. He was a staunch critic of the blind beliefs of *Mappila.* [94] He was the brain behind the first Muslim organization in South Malabar called *Hidayathul Muslimeen Sabha* of Manjeri, established in 1897. He went to Madras to meet the governor and got permission to build two mosques at Manjeri.[95] His *Akbarul Hind* deals with the heroic fight of Hyder and Tipu against the British.

Saidalikutty Master of Tirur, (1856-1919) a school inspector and a multifaceted scholar of Malabar, was another reformer who tried to understand the real problems of Muslims. In order to awaken the Muslims from their slumber, he started two journals in Arabi-Malayalam. The first *Salahul Iqwan* was started in 1899 and continued till 1906 and the second, *Rafiqul Islam* lasted till 1910. The impact of these two journals was immensely high at a time when religious education was not properly managed and secular education was anathema to Muslims[96]. He wrote textbooks for students, which were followed in schools for many years. His book, *Matavijnana Rashmi* ('Rays of religious knowledge') published in 1908, deals with the belief and principles of Islam. His journals published articles related to Turkey Sulthan and stories like Arabian Nights.[97] He was the man behind the publication of the translation of *Jamua Qutuba* in to Malayalam and he prevailed upon forty *Khatibs* of Malabar to follow the same in their respective

[93]P.P Mammed Koya Parappil (hereafter Parappil Koya), *Kozhikotte Musalimgalude Charithram*, Focus Publication, Calicut, 1994, p.338.

[94] C.K. Kareem (ed.), Note no. 87, p.363.

[95] *Ibid.*, p.364.

[96] *Ibid.*, p. 368.

[97] *MMSP,op.cit.*, p.408.

mosques. He was also instrumental in the foundation of *Maunathul Islam Sabha*, the missionary organisation founded in 1900. His books like *Musligalum Naveena Vidhyabhyasavum* (*Muslims and New Education)*, *Musligalum Sasthravum (Muslims and Science)*, *'Mathavijana Rasmi'* etc did yoemen service in reforming Muslims.

Pulikottil Hydru (1879-1975), a native of Wandoor was a well-known Mappila poet of Malabar. Though he was loyal to the British and opposed to the Congress, he stood firmly with reformists in religious perspectives. With a reformist zeal, he wrote a number of poems, which had magical impact on average Muslims. The poems, which belong to this genre, are *Dhuracharamala, Kaliyugam, Kathukuthumala, Streemardhimala, Maranmarude Thakararu etc.*[98] Thazhekot Ahmadkutty (d. 1940) wrote a poem *'Kathukuthumala'* depicting the horrors and un-Islamic content of the ear piercing.[99] Similarly, M. Kunhava Musaliyar composed a song *'Bidath Mala',* criticizing the innovative practices crept in to Malabar Islam. Chalilakath Ali Hasan Moulavi of Tirurangadi (d.1938) was a staunch critic of *Chavadiyanthiram* and *Kodikuthu nercha*.[100]

All these were efforts in the path of reform carried out by individual leaders. These were isolated attempts by individuals without any organizational basis. Very often, they failed to get the support of the Muslim masses. Makti Thangal was always complaining about the lack of support for his efforts from among the Muslims. One common thread that could be seen in all of them, was that they were against the superstitious beliefs among *Mappilas* and therefore strived hard to bring them to the fold of scriptural

[98] See M.N. Karassery (ed.) *Pulikkottil Krithikal* (Mal), Mappila Kala Sahitya Vedi, Wandoor, 1979. A detailed analysis of his poems is given, in chapter on 'Print and the Imagined Community of Mappila'.

[99] *MMSP,op.cit* p.507.

[100] *Ibid.*, p.325.

Islam. The early reformers felt that the basic cause of the spread of pagan beliefs among Muslims was lack of knowledge in the basic principles of Islam and hence, they adopted the method of teaching and preaching true Islamic tenents, as propounded in *Quran* and *Hadith*.

Due to different factors, these leaders could not bring about an extensive movement itself. One major block was the educational backwardness of the community. The state of Muslim education throughout 19th century and early decades of 20th century was pathetic, as testified by William Logan C.A. Innes etc. Similarly the absence of interaction with their fellow brethren inside and outside Kerala was another factor. They were cut off from Muslims of North India by the barriers of geography as well as language. While North India was severely influenced by puritanic ideology of Abdul Wahab in 19th century, Mappila Muslims remained aloof from it, and through their *Thangals* from Yemen, they remained under the conservatism of Arab Sunni Orthodoxy. The early reformist preachers, by their constant emphasis on exclusive character of Islam, urged Muslims to discard all un-Islamic accretions from local beliefs and practices.

Kerala Muslim *Aikya Sangam* and the beginning of Oraganized Reform Movment

As we have seen already, the early individual efforts in the direction of reform of the Muslim community, brought about a distinct cultural consciousness among them, at least in a rudimentary form. But by about 1920's, this consciousness was crystallised in to a movement, with the formation of *Kerala Muslim Aikya Sangam*.

The traumatic experience of Malabar Rebellion prevailed upon the educated sections of Muslims to think about the ways in which they could overcome the pathetic situation and save the community from the stalemate.

They also realized that only through organized efforts, not through individual initiatives, they could chalk out a programme for improvement of the community. The real push came when the internal disputes between the leading families of Kodungallur reached its climax and began to threaten the unity of the community. In this background, a group of spirited leaders invited the Muslim scholars of Kerala to attend a conference at Eriyad (Kodungallur) in 1922, to discuss the main issues related to the Muslim community of Kerala and to form an organization to give vent to their grievances. Kodungallur was one of the few Muslim pockets in Kerala, where there was a wealthy and educated Muslim intelligentia. During the Malabar Rebellion, most of the scholars of Malabar like K.M. Moulavi had been given assylum at Kodungallur. Thus, in 1922, the learned Ulema and the reformist leaders like K.M. Moulavi, Hamadani Thangal, Manapatt. P. Kunbahamed Haji, Seethi Mohamed etc. formed an association called '*Nishpaksha Sangam'*, to settle the disputes among Muslim families of Kodungallur.[101]Hamadani Thangal, the chairman of the meeting in his presidential speech (published later in Arabi-Malayalam as *'Kutubatul Hamadaniya*') urged the Muslims about the need for an organization. He said, 'It is obligatory on every Muslim, by the command of *Allah,* to support and help each other, to form an organization to advise the good and prevent the evil ..... If such an effort is not made, the Islamic rituals will become meaningless and the vice will overpower the virtue'.[102] In this speech, one can see a clear sign of the community identity slowly but steadily gaining ground in Kerala.

Though the *Sangam* failed to stop the family-feud in Kodungallur, which ofcourse was its initial objective, its activities began to spread in the

[101] K.K.M. Kareem, Note No: 62, p.42.

[102] Hamadani Shaik, "Kutubatul Hamadaniya" Presidential Address in the Formation Meeting of *Nispaksha Sangam*. Kodungallur, 1922.

neighbouring areas. Following the advice of the chairman, the *Sangam* convened its first meeting at Eriyad in 1922 itself and decided to expand its activities and renamed it as *Muslim Aikya Sangam*.[103] Thus, the first Muslim organization representing the Muslims of Malabar, Cochin and Travancore was set up in 1922. The pan-Kerala stamp of the organization is evident from the fact that the first annual conference of the *Sangam* at Eriyad in 1923, was attended by leaders from the length and breadth of Kerala like Mohemad Serul Sahib (Kasargod) Mohamed Kunji and Mammu Sahib (Tellichery) T.P. Moidu (Mahe) Vallanchira Kunji Moyi (Manjeri), Vakkom Kader (Travancore) etc.[104] Besides, the political leaders associated with Khilafath Movement in Malabar, like E. Moidu Moulavi, Mohemad Abdurahiman Sahib, K.M. Moulavi and E.K. Moulavi were also active in it. Basically it was an association of the educated Muslim middle class and the enlightened religious leadership of the community and lacked popular support.

It was Makti Thangal who had made Kodungallur a favourable soil for the efflorescence of reformist ideas. He had fostered a young Muslim group in Kodungallur, receptive to reformist ideology.[105] The general mood of the audience in the meeting was to transform it in to a permanent organization with a pan Kerala stamp.

The following were the main objectives of the *Sangam*.

1. To unite Muslims of Kerala for the general good of the community, setting aside their internal feuds.

2. To enlighten Muslims through oral and print media.

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[103] E.K. Moulavi "Kerala Muslim Aikya Sangavum Navothanavum" in P.A Said Mohamed (ed.), *Kerala Muslim Directory*, Cochin 1960, p.470.

[104] K.K.M Kareem, Note no. 62, p.144.

[105] N.K. Ahmed Moulavi, "Aikya Sangavum Kerala Muslimkalum" *Shabab* Seminar Issue, Calicut, 1997, p.114.

3. To set up a *panchayath* to settle disputes within the community.

4. To eradicate all un-Islamic practices and to strive for the religious, moral and economic betterment of the Muslims.[106]

Thus, the main focus of the *Sangam* was unity of the community and upholding of the concept of *Tawhid* (unity of God). It held the view that the real cause of the dilemma of the Muslims was that they deviated from the teachings of the scriptures and hence, it advised exhorted them to go back to *vedas* or *Quran* and *Sunnath*. Quite naturally, its primary target was the destruction of 'popular Islam' in Malabar. The Sangam vehemently opposed the un-Islamic practices like *Chandanakudam*, *Kodikuthu nercha, Ratib, Mala and Moulud*.[107] They could stop the *Chandanakudam* at the *Saipinte Palli* in Ponnani and tried to stop the *Kodikuthu nercha* at Manathala Hydroskutti Moopan's *Maqam*. It was as per its mediation that Beeran Sahib, who used to finance the Kodikuthu, declined to assist it financially.[108]

A prominent achievement of the *Sangam* was the formation of an *Ulema* association called *Kerala Jamiathul Ulema* (hereinafter *KJU*). The first conference itself had decided to from an organization of that sort and E.K. Moulavi was entrusted the task of framing its constitution. In the second conference of *Aikya Sangam* held at Alway in May 1924, the *Kerala Jamiathul Ulema* was officially formed, which later spearheaded the *Islahi* movement in Kerala. The leaders of *Aikya Sangam* had toured all over Kerala, inviting *Ulemas* to the meeting, scheduled at Alway in May 1924 with the intention of forming an association of religious scholars.

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[106] *Muslim Aikya Sangam Niyamangal* (Constitution of Muslim Aikya Sangam) published by Aikya Sangam, 1923, p.3.

[107] N.K. Ahmed Moulavi, *op. cit.,* 1997, p.117.

[108] *Ibid.*, p.117.

Kerala Jamiathul Ulema was formed in 1924 with M.Adbul Kadir Moulavi, as president and C.K. Moideenkutty as secretary. Prominant religious scholars of Kerala like E.K. Moulavi (Kadavathur) P.N. Mohemad Moulavi (Pulikkal) Moosakutti Haji (Kannur) P.M. Abdul Qader (Kottayam) B.V. Koyakutti Thangal (Chavakkad) Palassery Kammu Moulavi (Kuttur) P.P. Unnin Kutty Moulavi (Pulikkal) etc were the working committee members.[109]As suggested by the chairman of the conference, Abdul Jabbar Hazrath, a five point programme was accepted by the conference as the agenda of *KJU*.

1. To bring unity among Muslim *Ulemas*, who were at daggers drawn.
2. To form a Muslim *panchayath* to settle dispute among them.
3. To set up a *Darul Ifta* to issue *fatwas* (religious decrees).
4. To strive to ascertain the real faith among Muslims, purging out the anti-Islamic accretions.
5. To organize Islamic missionary activities.[110]

Hazrat Abdul Jabbar, in his inaugural address, urged the Muslims to put an end to the ongoing polemics among various Sufi orders like *Shaduli* and *Chisthi* and between schools of jurisprudence like *Shafi*, *Hanafi* etc. and to work for the integration of Muslims in Kerala.

A remarkable achievement of *Aikya Sangam* was the publication of two journals, *Muslim Aikyam* in Malayalam and *Al-Irshad* in Arabi-Malayalam, with P.K. Muhamedunni and E.K. Moulavi as editors respectively. In *Mathrubhumi*, Manappatt P. Kunhi Mohamed wrote, 'The sole cause of the decline of Kerala muslims is ignorance about religion and

[109] *Kerala Muslim Aikya Sangam*, Second Annual Report, 1924, pp. 40-41.

[110] *Ibid*., p.31.

blind beliefs. No permanent cure is possible without knowledge of religion. Hence, a journal to advise Muslims about religious teaching in Arabi-Malayalam, which alone could be followed by majority, is essential in the present context'.[111] Another journal called *Al-Islah* (A.M) was also published by *Sangam*. Though these journals could not last long, due to the opposition of the orthodox wing and the general indifference of Muslims to reading culture, their impact was tremendous.

The subsequent conferences of the Sangam were held at various centres of Kerala like Calicut (1925), Thalasseri (1926), Kannur (1927), Tirur (1928), Ernakulam (1929), Trivandrum (1930), Malappuram (1931), Kasargod (1932), Eriyad (1933) and Kannur (1934).[112] The 12th and the last conference was held at Kannur in 1934, along with the conference of *Kerala Muslim Majlis*, the first organisation of Muslim League sympathisers, formed in 1931. In this conference, the *Aikya Sangam* was dissolved and merged with *Kerala Muslim Majlis*, as both were striving for the same goal. The *Waqf* properties of the Sangam were transferred to *Rousathul Uloom* Association of Feroke, which founded Farook College, the first Muslim college in Kerala.[113]

Crusade against *Bidath* (Innovations)

If one goes through the innumerable resolutions passed at various conferences held between 1923-1934, it could be seen that the main focus of *Aikya Sangam* was regaining the pristine purity of Islam in Kerala. They stood firmly against all accretions to Islam that contradict the basic tenets of Islam like *Kodikuttu nercha*, *Chandanakudam*, *Kathukuthu*, *Marumakkathayam*, etc. which were part and parcel of popular Islam in Malabar. In a pamphet, *Al-hidaya* distributed at the 3rd conference in 1925,

[111] *Mathrubhumi*, 8th March, 1924.

[112] K.K.M Kareem, Note no. 62, pp.142-154.

[113] *Ibid.*

the *Sangam* unequivocally opposed the tomb worship, covering of *Jaram*, *Chandanakudam*, *Kodikuthunercha*, etc.[114]. This was based on the *Ibaraths* of Ibn Haitami's '*Sawajir*'. It was this tirade against *bidath* (innovations) practiced and supported by the orthodox Ulemas that compelled them to turn against *'Aikya Sangam'*. K.M. Moulavi's Arabi-Malayalam work '*Al-Hidaya Ila Mahqil Bida Wadwalala*' criticized the mortuary practice and tomb worship, in the form of Chandanakudam, Kodikuthu, etc.[115] In short *Sangam* leaders were against all kinds of polytheism and they strictly adhered to the Islamic concept of *Tauhid*. As put in by E.K. Moulavi, 'it is an undisputable fact that all the enlightenment and encouragement that is visible in Kerala in these days, is the product of the activities of *Aikya Sangam* within a period of 12 years.[116]

K.M. Moulavi, the foremost leader of *Aikya Sangam*, along with his trusted leftenant E.K. Moulavi, played a prominent role in the dissemination of reformist ideology in Malabar, through his reform-oriented journals mentioned earlier. He stormed the citadels of orthodoxy, incessantly fought against all forms of *shirk* (polytheism) and *Bidath* (innovations) that were rampant in Muslim society. Through his public speeches, articles and *fatwas* (decrees on religious issues) published through such journals, he carried on his crusade against the evils of Muslim community.

What prompted the leadership of both *Aikya Sangam* and *KJU* to stand against *bidath* was their concern about *Touhid* (unity of God), which they believed was the very foundation of Islam. They held that saint worship; tomb worship and invoking the help and intercession of the dead (*Thavassul Isthiqaza*), were contrary to monotheistic foundation of Islam. They opposed

[114] N.K. Ahamad Maulavi, *op. cit*., p.122.

[115] K.K. Kareem, Note no. 62, p.181.

[116]E.K. Moulavi, "Kerala Muslim Aikyasanghavum Navothanavum", in P.A. Sayed Mohammed (ed.), *op. cit.*, p.470.

all forms of *Bidath* like *nerchas*, *Chandanakudam*, *Moulud*, *Ratib*, dowry system, matriliny and such practices, which had no sanction in *Quran* and *Hadith*. They rejected *Taqlid* (blind acceptance of views of early *Imams*) and accepted the validity of *Ijtihad* (independent research based on scriptures). In other words, the reform movement initiated by *Aikya Sangam* and *KJU*, exhorted Muslims to return to *Quran* and *Hadith* and abandon anything that run contrary to the original teachings of Islam.[117]

The reformists alleged that the traditional *Musaliyars* were responsible for all the decay and distress of the community. In an article, in 1930, A. Mohemad Kunnu, a reformist scholar, exposed the *Musaliyars* and their unscientific methods of religious instruction thus: 'What do the *Musaliyar* do with *Quran* which ought to be the light of the Muslim? They use it to recite on the tomb (not when he is alive) and to ward off the evil spirits... In this way they amass wealth. There is no convergence between what God intended with *Quran* and what *Musaliyars* do with the same... They strive hard to topple all attempts to eradicate the evils like *Moulud*, *nercha* and tomb worship and thereby, they negate the very basic principle of Islam, *Touhid*.... They have neihter the eyes to see the pretty face of Islam, nor the nose to enjoy the fragrance of Islamic ideals.'[118] K.C. Komukutty Moulavi, in his presidential speech at the meeting of *Kozhikode Muslim Sangam*, Calicut in 1926, shared the same view thus : 'Though many causes can be discerned for the decline of *Mappilas* , the prominent one ofcourse is *Musaliyars*. They used Islam as a puppet in their hands and the community is suffering on

[117] E.K. Ahmed Kutty, "Islam and Social Reform Movements in Kerala", *Journal of Kerala Studies*, Vol. V, December 1978, part III & IV, pp.439-451.

[118] A. Mohamed Kannu, "Parishkara Vairikal" (Fundamentalists among the Muslim Community), article in E.M. Habeeb Mohamed (ed.), *Sahradayopaharam*, (Mal) T.V. Press, Quilon, 1930, pp.9-17.

account of that. They discourage all means of modernization like schools newspapers etc. and *Aikya Sangam* is anathema to them'.[119]

Moulavi Abdul Hameed, the Chairman of 8th Annual Conference of *Aikya Sangam* (1930), also drew the attention of the audience to the evil influence of *Musaliyars,* in perpetuating ignorance and idolotory among Muslims.[120] Moidu Moulavi, in his article, 'The *Thangals* and *Musaliyars* of Malabar' in *Al-Islam*, a journal published by Vakkom Abdul Kader Moulavi, despised the *Thangals* and *Musaliyars* for exploiting the ignorant *Mappilas*.[121]

E.K. Moulavi, a prominent leader of reformist school in Malabar, in an article "Kerala Muslims and anti-Islamic rituals", deals with four anti-Islamic practices followed by Muslims, (a) *Marumakhathayam* (b) Spend thriftness (c) Dowry (d) Tomb worship.[122] About *Marumakhathayam*, he opined that it undermined a chapter in *Quran* and ruined the unity and fraternity of Islam.[123] He also opposed the expensive ceremonies connected with wedding, ear piercing and circumcision.[124] His attack against tomb worship was emphatic when he says, 'some argue that this tomb worship is *Siyarathul Qubra* (visit of tomb, which is meritorious indeed) and they, who oppose it are opposing the visit to tomb itself. Had it been a meritorious deed, the *Salafis* (companions and contemporaries of prophet) would have done it. This evil has crept in to Islam from other religions. Certain false *Shaik's* miracles and the meaningful silence of *alims* (knowledgable persons) led to its spread in

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[119] *Mathrubhumi*, 7th January, 1926.

[120] *Mathrubhumi*, 25th May, 1930.

[121] K.K.M. Kareem, Note No:62, p.179.

[122] E.K. Moulavi, "*Kerala Muslims and Anti-Islamic Rituals*", E.M. Habeeb Mohamed (ed.), *Sahradayopaharam* (Mal) T.V. Press, Quilon, 1930, pp.155-164.

[123] *Ibid.*, p.159.

[124] In connection with his daughter's wedding Kallai Kunhahamed Koya spend 5000 Rs.5000 for fire works and for two consecutive days, the inhabitants of Kallai turned duff (*Malayala Manorama*, 21st October, 1922).

the community[125]. He further argued that as per Islamic *shariath*, no building is permitted on tombs and praying to an intercessor was *shirk.*[126]

The reformist stressed that saints were great men, worthy of respect but that prayers should never be offered to them with the intention that they would pass them on to *Allah* (Tawassal Isthigaza). Only *Allah* could be the recipient of prayers.[127] The worshippers of saint become guilty of *shirk* (idolatry). Hence, the reformists relentlessly fought against *bidaath* like *Muharam, Kodikuthu, Maqbara* building, *Chawadiyanthiram* (death rituals) etc.[128]

The sole aim of the reformist was to spread the message of *Quran* and *Hadith* and to familarize Muslims of the methods of *Salafis* (companion of prophet). Organization of religious sermons, publication of articles and books distribution of pamphlets, restructuring of *Madrassa* syllabi as per *Quran* and Hadith etc. were envisaged as the effective means to achieve the above aim.[129] There was no other difficult task than to convince the Muslim masses that what they had been practicing for centuries in the name of Islam was not Islam at all. The reformists criticized the *Musaliyars* for following the out dated system of pedagogy in *othupallis* and for engaging in hair-splitting debates on unimportant issues. They were asked to comprehend the real spirits of *Quran* and to try to achieve a proper understanding of *Sunnath*. The reformist held the view that for the revitalized understanding of religion, speculative reconstruction (*Ijtihad*), blind imitation (*Taqleed*), was necessary.

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[125] E.K. Moulavi, *op.cit*., p.161.

[126] *Ibid.*, p.163.

[127] 11th Annual Report, 1935, *Kerala Jamathul Ulema*, Pulikkal, 1935, p.4.

[128] *Ibid.*, p.5.

[129]M. Mohemad Abdul Kader, "The place of Muslims in history of Kerala," *Sahrdayopaharam* (ed). Mohemad Habib, *op. cit.*, p.8.

The emphasis on *Touhid* (unity of God) led them to abhor all practices, which smacked of polytheism. Socio-religious festivals of Muslims must be in accordance with Islamic tenets and hence, they denounced all un-Islamic rites like tomb worship, devotion to pirs etc. In other words, they advised to abandon all practices and traditions, which had encouraged syncretism between Hindus and Muslims. Social exclusiveness was the base for building up community exclusiveness. During the pre-reformist phase, the Muslim masses had been more influenced by common traditions shared with Hindus in the past. The reform movement enforced a break with this past in the lives of Muslim masses.

When the *Aikya Sangam* was amalgamated with Kerala Muslim Majlis, the focus was turned to socio-political interests of Muslim community. The most important aim of *Aikya Sangam* for a decade had been the theological reform of Muslims and this was sidelined by *Kerala Muslim Majlis.* Realizing this danger, K.M. Moulavi took the initiative to reactivate the *Kerala Jamiathul Ulema* (hereafter *KJU*). K.M. Moulavi, along with his close associates re-organized the *ulema* association and got it registered under Societies Act XXI on 23 February 1933.[130] From 1935 onwards, *KJU* initiated vigorous campaigns through *Wa'az* (religious sermons) to educate the masses about the dangers of superstitious beliefs and practices in the name of Islam.

Wa'az (Sermon) as a means of Religious Education

The most important means to impart religious education to the masses during this period was public lecturers called *Wa'az*. These were usually held in mosque premises in the midnight hours. A host of scholars like Issudin Moulavi, P.K. Moosa Moulavi, M.C.C. Abdurahiman, K.M. Moulavi, Paravanna Muhiyudin Moulavi etc. were engaged in such *Wa'az* programmes

[130] 11th Annual Report 1935, *KJU*, Pulikkal, p.2.

all over Malabar and within a period of two decades (1930's and 40's) the reformist ideology spread in the length and bredth of Malabar.[131] *Wa'az* made the rural Muslims intensely aware of issues concerning life in Islam, which was far beyond the narrow limits of his daily existence in remote villages. The *Wa'az* was peaceful assemblies designed to address the masses on the importance of leading a pious life. These were effective means of communication with the masses in the rural Malabar. With the introduction of public address system, more *Wa'az* programmes were organized to galvanize public support for their ideology. In every village, such *Wa'az* were organized. Normally *Wa'az* programme lasted for about seven days and during *Ramzan*, it lasted for about two weeks. These were occasions also for raising funds for building mosques and *Madrassas*. These *Wa'az* provided opportunity to bring rural Muslims together and made them concious of their own identity. It strengthened the bonds of unity among Muslims of various localities at a time when transport and communication facilities were meagre. At the same time, these were occasions when *Moulavi's* exhorted the Muslims to stay away from syncretic practices of *Kufr* or *Kafir*. These pejorative terms, in a way, were objectionable to Hindus and indirectly it helped to polarize the two communities. Thus, the *Wa'az* became a regular feature of Mappila social life during the middle of 20th century and created a new awareness of Islamic identity among them, as the reformers advised them to revive the true spirit of Islam by changing their life style.

Polemical Debates

Another impact of the reformist movement in Malabar was the *Vadapradivadam* (polemical debates) between reformists (*Mujahids*) and traditionalists (*Sunnis*). This was an entirely new pattern of religious activity in rural Malabar, though the debates between Makti and Christian

[131] M. Abdul Samad, *op. cit.,* p.102.

missionaries were held in North Malabar in 19th century. We come across umpteen such debates between *Mujahids* and *Sunnis* in different parts of Malabar, like Sulthan Bathery, Kodiyathur, Panoor, Kottappuram etc. By 1930's, the priests of Malabar had joined either of these two factions.[132] These polemical debates, called '*Vadaprathivadam*' in Malayalam, were really open public meetings held to debate controversial theological questions. Such debate became a common occurance in Malabar during 1930's and 1940's. These *Samvadams* debated a variety of questions concerning the interpretation of various doctrinal issues, over which the rival groups differed. The prominent issue that excited such debates in Malabar was related to intercessionary prayers or *Tawassul Isthigaza*. It will be of interest to examine one such famous debate held at Nadapuram in Kozhikode Taluk in 1933, which was the first of its kind in Malabar. The venue of the debate was *Pulikoolwayal* in Nadapuram. Even prior to the debate both *Sunnis* and *Mujahids* had indulged in a notice war against each other.[133] Kanniyath Ahmed Musaliyar led the side of *Sunnis* and Kattilasseri Mohemad Moulavi, well versed in logic, led the *Mujahid* group.[134] The orthodox section visited the Menakoth *Maqam* for their success in the debate. The whole meeting was controlled by District Police Superindent Kalimulla, as such debates usually ended up in clashes. Both sides were seated in opposite sides and the first question, raised by the *Sunni Musaliyar* was whether the *Auliyas* (saints) possess miracle-making powers (*Karamath*) after their death. The *Mujahid* Moulavi replied that such powers would cease after death. Immediately, there came the second question, where is the *dalil (*evidence)? The crowd, the sympathizers of *Sunni* fold, without waiting for an answer, began to roar that the *Mujahids* were defeated in the debate. The result was pandemonium and

[132] K. Moidu Moulavi, *op.cit*, p.71.

[133] *Ibid.*, p.71.

[134] The priests of *Sunni* fold were known as *Musaliyars* and of *Mujahids* as *Moulavis*.

the meeting was dissolved. The issue of the debate, 'whether one can invoke the blessings of dead saints was never settled.[135] Though the Sunnis claimed that the Mujahids were defeated in the debate, the educated Muslims of Malabar realized that the debate was deliberately obstructed by the *Sunnis* and that the formulations of the *Mujahid* scholars were not baseless.

Another *samvadam* was held at Punur in Calicut district in the late 1930's. Both parties assembled in opposite buildings and the crowd in the middle on the road. As in Nadapuram, the bone of contention at Punur was related to *Tawassul Isthigasa* or intercessionary prayer with the intention of seeking the blessings and succour of dead saints. The *Mujahids* argued that such practices were *shirk* and *Quran* and prophet had denounced it in hard words. When the Mujahids asked, whether there was any proof in *Quran* permitting *Isthigaza* (mediation between God and man), the *Sunnis* took almost four hours to answer the same and in the midnight hour they came with a reply- 'Since no evidence to prove that it is prohibited, it could be inferred that it is permitted'.[136] With no concrete solution to the problem, finally the debate was dissolved. To attend this programme, Muslims from all parts of Malabar had flocked at Punur

In 1942, another *samvadam* was held at Kodiyathur between Paravanna Moideenkutty Musaliyar (*Sunni*) and M.C.C Abdurahiman (*Mujahid*). The topic of debate was 'number of *rakath*' (additional worship units) in *Tarawih Namaz* (night *namaz* during *ramzan*).[137] Another debate was held at Sulthan Batheri between K. Umar Moulavi and E.K. Aboobacker *Musaliyar* about the legitimacy of collective prayer after *Namaz*. Like any other *Samvadam*, it also turned violent. *Samvadam* was also held at

[135] K. Moidu Moulavi, *op. cit.*, p.71.

[136] K. Umar Moulavi, *op.cit.*, p.78.

[137] *Ibid.*, p.78. *Raka'th* means additional worship units; The *Sunnis* were following 20 *raka'th* while *Mujahids* claimed that only 8 will suffice.

Valambur in Malappuram district in 1945 between K. Muhammed Moulavi (Mujahid) and Alavikutty Musliyar (Sunni). The issue of debate was whether it is *bidath* (innovation) to use the sword at the time of ascending the *mimbar* (pulpit) during Friday congregation.[138]

Such debates were also held between *Mujahids* and *Ahmadiyas*. In 1933, a polemical debate was organized at Calicut in which H.A. Abdulla Sahib of Ahmadiyas and K.M. Moulavi, M.C.C Abdurahiman etc of the *KJU* took part. As usual, both sides stood with their arguments firmly, the debate was concluded without reaching at any consensus.[139]These type of debates were also held between *Mujahids* and *Jamathe Islami*, which came late in the picture. In the early 50's such debates between *Jamathe Islamis* and *Mujahids* were held at different centres like Chennamangulur, Kodiyathur etc.[140]

Huge participation of Muslims in these debates reflected the growing interest of illiterate public in religious affairs and provided opportunities for communication with other Muslims. Normally, these debate proceedings continued for hours till dawn, but without any decision or conclusion. After each such debate, both parties would claim that their respective leaders could assert their views successfully and scored victories over their rival groups. Most of these polemical debates ended inconclusively without any decision or consensus. But the interest they aroused in religious discussion among the masses was enormous. Also, the preachers used such occasion to appeal to the masses to fashion their lives in accordance with the principle of Islam. Another interesting point is that, though these meetings were concerned with Islam, often the local police officials' presence was essential, as such meeting threatened to disrupt public peace. Feelings ran high on such occasions and

[138] *Ibid.*, p.123.

[139] Parappil Koya, *op. cit.*, p.298.

[140] K. Moidu Moulavi, *op. cit.*, p. 148.

the rival parties were so determined to win the debate that when reason failed a resort to violence was always on the cards. As Usha Sanyal observed in another context, 'the debates being social events often attended by a large public audiences were characterised by elements of competitive showmanship and theatre'.[141]

We have got a particular genre of literature in Arabi-Malayalam which deal with the details of such famous debates. These accounts constitute an important material for analysing the nature of controversy between the two factions of Islam in Malabar. *Raddul Wahabiya*,[142] is a *Mappila* song composed by a Sunni priest about Punur debate.[143] Innumerable notices justifying the stand of rival groups were also published.[144] This literature provide a clue to the nature of issues, which were discussed in the debates. Other issues discussed in debates were *talkin* (catechism recited at the grave) *tahlil* (mortuary recitation) *Ijthihad* (independent reasoning) *Niyyath* (the statement of intent before worship), *Qunuth* (the insertion of special prayers in the morning namaz), *Tarawih* (the number of additional worship units in special *namaz* during *Ramzan*), the position of hand during *namaz*, how much of head must be wetted in the ablution prior to *namaz* and medium of *khutuba* (Friday Sermon). Most of these issues could never be resolved because they were questions of *Ijtihad* (independent reasoning) and of the opinions of the theological scholars. But it served a purpose. As Barbara D. Metcalf observed, 'as each competitor left the debate convinced that his side had won; that his view was morally 'right' and the rival opinion correspondingly

[141] Usha Sanyal, *Devotional Islam and Politics in British India: Ahmad Raza Khan and his movement, 1870-1920*, OUP, Delhi, 1996, p.95.

[142] *Wahabi* was a derogatory term invented by British Imperialists and Turks but profusely used and popularized by the orthodox *Sunnis* in Malabar.

[143] K. Umar Moulavi, *op. cit.*, p.79.

[144] For eg: *'Ozhinjumariyatharu*?' a pamphlet by *SKJ Ulema* dated. 28th April,1945 , Valanchery. In reply to it *KJU* published '*Samasthakkarude Ahwanathinte Ullukalli'*. dated. 24th ,May,1945 which was written by MCC Abdurahiman.

'wrong', all participants derived psychological satisfaction from the exchange'.[145]

Thus the emergence of reformist movement in Malabar led to the formation of a public sphere of religious discourse. Through these debates and discussion, the participants of both sects constructed discursive linkages to the texts and ideas held to be part of universal tradition of Islam. Thus, Talal Azad's conception of Islam as 'a discursive tradition that includes and relates itself to the founding texts of *Quran* and *Hadith'* seems to be relevant in this context.[146] It was the theological discourse that construes diverse speech events as Islamic by linking them to broader Muslim traditions'.[147] In short, the primary concern of all the contenders was to bring the message of Islam to the masses and to counter what they considered misrepresentation of the tenets of Islam.

Reform in the domain of Education

A major thrust of the reform movement was the re-organization of religious education in Malabar. The reformist from the time of Chalilakath Kunhahamad Haji onwards, realized that until and unless the future generation was not given proper religious training in proper way, the movement that they had initiated would peter out. Reformist denounced *Othupalli* system as a useless way of learning ancient scriptures by rote and considered it as the basic cause of Muslim backwardness. All that the students learnt was from oral dictation of *Mulla*.

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[145] Barbara D., Metcalf, *Islamic Revival in British India: Deoband, 1860-1900*, Princeton, University Press, 1982, pp.215-16.

[146] Talal Azad, "The Idea of an Anthropology of Islam", George Town University Centre for Contemporary Arab Studies. *Occasional papers series*, Washington, 1986, p.14.

[147] Talal Azad, "A Theological Conception of Religion: Reflections on Geerts", *Man* (N.5) 18, 1983, p.243.

It was in this backdrop, the reformist tried to modernize the system of religious instruction. With this intention, *Aikyasangam* and *KJU* established a number of *Madrasas* throughout Malabar, following the model and syllabus propounded by Chalilakath. The *Sangam* had a plan to build a centre of higher learning to produce religious "pundits" capable of preaching their ideology at Alway but could not be materialised. The *Noorul Islam Madrasa* was established at Tirurangadi under *Issathul Islam Association* in 1937.[148] It was K.M. Moulavi and M.K. Haji who worked hard behind this institution and it was the fourth among the Madrasas established in Malabar as per the scheme of Chalilakath. Later this *Madrasa* became the head quarters of reform movement in Malabar. In 1943, under the same management, an orphanage was opened with the assistance of Jamith Dawath Tablighe-Islami (JDT). Another reputed institution started by the reformist was *Madeenathul Uloom* Arabic College at Pulikkal in 1947.[149] It was managed by *Kawakibunnayyira Association* of Pulikkal and M.C.C. Abdurahiman was the founder-principal of the college.[150] Those who complete *Afzalul Ulema* course (degree course) from Madinathul Uloom were given the title '*Madani*'. A major chunk of the leaders of Mujahid Movement after 1950 were the alummi of this college. After independence, several such colleges were started in different centres of Malabar under the auspices of Kerala Nadvartul Mujahideen.

In the year 1934, Darul Uloom Association had taken over the control of *Darul Uloom Madrasa* of Vazhakkad and the system introduced by Chalilakath during the first decade of 20th century was revived. In 1944, *Darul Uloom Madrasa* was converted in to *Darul Uloom Arabic College* with

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[148] Umari, "Parethente Sthapanangal" (Mal.) *K.M. Moulavi Smaraka Grantham*, Tirurangadi, nd, p.125.

[149] Ali Abdul Razak, "MCC Hassan Moulavi", *MCC Smaraka Grantham*, Parappangadi, 1964, p.58.

[150] The College was affiliated to Madras University in 1948.

MCC Abdurahiman as principal.[151] Later in 1946, M.C.C. resigned, due to difference of opinion with the management and the college itself was closed down. In 1949, the college was opened with K.P. Mohiyudin Moulavi, the leader of SKJU, who revived the age old *Mudaris* system[152].

All these efforts were in tune with the resolution passed at the Kerala educational conference held at Tellichery on May 1926 under the auspices of *Aikya sangam*. The resolution envisaged a crash programme for reforming the *Dars* (religious instruction) and for instituting a new syllabus for religious education, on the model of Vellore *Baqiyathusalhin*.[153]

The *Madrasas* turned to be centres of secondary socialisation of Muslim children and at this phase of secondary socialization, religious exclusiveness came in to play. Hence, *Madrasas* contributed their share in the development of exclusiveness among *Mappilas* .

Secular Education

The reformists also took up issues of socio-economic aspects of Muslims. Apart from religious education, they stood for the progress of Muslims in secular education. They raised many issues related to Muslim education in Malabar. As per the decision of 11th conference of *KJU* held at Pulikkal, in 1934, a deputation submitted a memorandum to the Deputy Director of education with the following submissions.

1) To attract Muslim to schools, arrangements may be made for religious education in schools.

2) To appoint Muslim religious instructors in Mappila schools.

[151] Dr. A.B. Moideenkutty Moulavi, "Chalilakathum Vazhakkad Durul Uloomum", *Prabhodhanam* special issue, April 1998, pp.64-67.

[152] *Ibid*, p.67.

[153] K.P.Abdurahiman, "Keralathile Islahi Samghadana", *Prabhodanam*, special issue, 1988, pp.120-124.

3) To appoint Arabic Teacher in Schools.

4) To provide fee concession to Muslim students.

5) To appoint Muslim members in Board of Education.

6) To start more High schools and Training schools for Muslims.[154]

On August 23rd, 1931 *Kerala Muslim conference*, passed a resolution emphasising the need for the formation of a Muslim educational Board to negotiate with Government educational committee.[155] The 4th conference of *Aikya Sangam* held on 18th May 1926, passed two resolutions concerning the Muslim education. While one resolution asked the government to appoint Muslim religious instructors in schools, the other emphasised the need for the education of Muslim women.[156] In the 3rd conference of the *Sangam* held at Calicut on 1st June 1925, Mohamad Shamnad, chairman of the conference pleaded for sending wards to the English schools. He made it clear that without modern education the community cannot progress in trade and commerce.[157] The second conference, held at Aluwa in 1924, passed a resolution requesting the government to set up communal schools for *Mappilas*, as the common schools would be hindrance to Muslim girls to study.[158] All these speeches and resolutions prove that the reformists were particular about the educational uplift of the community.

Though the *Sangam* ceased functioning in 1934, its assets were transferred to Farook College in 1950 as *Waqf*, on the condition that it should be utilized for teaching Arabic, Urdu and Islamic History and meeting the expenses of Muslim students. Thus, *Aikya Sangam* could become the

[154] *Al-Murshid*, (A.M), Vol. I, No:2 March 1935.

[155] *Mathrubhumi* 23rd August, 1931.

[156] *Mathrbubhumi*, 18th May 1926.

[157] *Mathrbubhumi*, 2nd June 1925.

[158] *Mathrubhumi*, 29th May 1924.

backbone of the first Muslim college, which was infact, one of the objectives envisaged by its founding fathers.[159]

Reformist and the Issue of Usury

Economic issues related to the community were also taken up by the reformists. It was the pathetic economic condition, followed by the Malabar Rebellion, which compelled the reformists to think about the economic betterment of the community. Other communities of Kerala had established their own banks during the early decades of the 20th century itself. For instance, C. Krishnan founded the Calicut Bank in 1909, with the intention of financing a wide range of activities from loans to professionals and merchants and loans for setting up teashops for *Thiyyas*.[160] Similar communitarian banks had been established by Christians in Travancore. *Mappilas* were depending on these banks for loans and they had to pay huge amount as interests. It was in this background that the reformist leaders like K.M. Seethi Sahib and K.M. Moulavi thought of setting up a Muslim bank at Mathilakam. K.M. Moulavi published a pamphlet titled *'Risalathul fil Banki'* in 1929.[161] In this tract, K.M. Moulavi says, 'Usury has been threatening the community. The amount paid by Muslims as usury ultimately reaches the hands of Christians and non-Muslims, who use it for demoralizing Muslims'.[162] He says further, 'on the basis of *Quran*, *Hadith*, and the scriptures of theological *Imams*, we feel that a Muslim bank can be set up. Those who take loans from it can voluntarily contribute an extra amount, besides the principal amount. The amount thus contributed by the loanee could not be considered usury It will be *Hilathu*

[159] M. Abdul Samad, *op.cit*., p.98.

[160] Dilip M. Menon, "Becoming Hindu & Muslim: Identity and Conflict in Malabar, 1900-1936", working paper No:225. C.D.S., TVM, p.7.

[161] K.M. Moulavi, *Risalathul Fil Banki*, (A.M) Eryad, 1929. pp.33-34.

[162] *Ibid*.

riba'.[163]Actually, Moulavi wrote this tract on the basis of an article by an Arabic scholar, Rashid Rila, in an Egyptan journal, *Majallathul Manar*.[164]

What we see here is pragmatism triumphing over obscurantism. It was an attempt to adopt the idioms of modernity without disavowing the basic grammer of Islamic learning. The book explained away the Islamic prohibition of interest as a product of certain Islamic circumstances that were no longer applicable. Addressing the issue like usury in this fashion, was indicative of the broadening perimetres of liberal attitude of these reformist scholars.

But, unfortunately, there were howls of protest against the book, not only from the side of traditionalists, but even from amongst the reformists themselves. Mohammed Abdulrahiman Sahib, E. Moidu Moulavi and even M.C.C. Abdurahiman wrote umpteen articles against the establishment of Muslim bank and accused the *Sangam* that they had made usury *halal* (permissibile). Till this day, the major weapon in the armoury of orthodox *Sunnis* against the *Mujahids*, is this tract *Risalath ul fil Banki*.

A heated debate started between *Aikyam*, the journal of *Sangam* and *Al-Ameen*, the earlier supporting and the latter opposing the theory of *Hilathu Riba*.[165] Even, M.C.C. Abdurahiman, the son of Chalilakath and active leader of *Aikya Sangam*, wrote against it in *Al-Ameen*.

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[163] *Ibid.*, pp. 33-34.

According to K.M. Moulavi, 'Maintaining such institutions (banks) without interest is impossible and at the same time, any kind of interest is prohibited by Islam. Hence at this crisis, the learned *Ulema* and devoted nobles must sit together and find out a solution to save the community from the clutches of money lenders as also from poverty caused due to payment of heavy interest. The logic of *Hilathuriba* is this preference of lesser evil in an 'either' or 'situation'.

[164] K.K. Kareem, Note No: 62, p.186.

[165] *Ibid.*, p.185.

In an article '*Quran* and Usury' in *Mitavadi* (issue: 6, 1931) K.M. Seethi replied to the critics that 'what *Quran* prohibited was the excessive usury prevalent in Arabia. I only subscribed to the opinion of established Islamic scholars that since *Quran* has not prohibited bank interest, it is acceptable in the modern environment. I do believe that none of the principle of *Quran,* will stand aginst the development of the community[166].

As put in by E. Moidu Moulavi, 'that short treatise (*Risalathul fil Banki*) and the article written by K.M. Seethi Sahib in *'Aikyam',* supporting the bank and his speeches justifying the bank created much confusion and hallabaloo among the Muslims'.[167] Mohammad Abdurahiman, through his *Al-ameen,* wrote profusely against the bank and this discouraged many Muslims from taking share in the bank. When Manapatt Kunhi Mohammad and K.M. Seethi came to Calicut to subscribe shareholders for the bank, their request was turned down by the higher-ups on the pretext that Islam has unequivocally proscribed interest.[168] Finally, the reformists were forced to drop the idea of the bank and the event led to the beginning of the disintegration of the *Aikya Sangam* itself.

Marumakkathayam **Reform**

The efforts to redefine the Mappila's sense of identity in a more religious format, was also reflected in the anti-*Marumakkathayam*

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[166] Vakkom Moulavi Foundation, *Deepika Otravakyathil* (Mal), TVM, 1992, p.269. It is to be noted that as early as 1919, a reformist scholar in Bengal had written a tract *Sud o Riba,* legitimizing bank interest. See Durjathi Prasad, *Bengal Muslims in Search of Social Identity*, University Press, Delhi, 1998, p. 59.

[167] E. Moidu Moulavi, *Ente Kottukaran Muhammad Abdurahiman Sahib* (Mal), Calicut, 1964, p. 199.

[168] In the second conference of the *Sangam* held in 1924, Abdurahiman Sahib had presented a resolution before the conference requesting the *Sangam* leaders to support the Indian National Congress, but was rejected. Hence, he was disinterested in *Sangam* and utilised every opportunity to criticise the sangam leaders and the decision to start a bank provided Sahib, an ample opportunity to do the same.

propaganda. By the second decade of twentieth century itself, efforts in this direction had begun in North Malabar, where the system prevailed predominently. In the last decade of nineteenth century, Makti Tangal had conducted many *wa'az* programmes in Kannur and Edakkad, drawing attention of *Mappilas* towards the unIslamic content of the system. Following this, in 1915, public meetings were held in Chirakkal Taluk and else where in North Malabar drawing crowds up to 3000 people, in which the local *Qazis* called upon the *Mappilas* to give up the matrileneal system of inheritance.[169] At some of the meetings the roused priests declared, 'If anyone were to say that he does not want that his self acquired property should on his death devolve according to Mohammedan law, he would turn a *Kafir*.'[170] When the Thahsildar, as per request of District authorities, made an enquiry, it was found that majority of the *Mappilas* favoured the dissolution of the system.[171] This growing concern of Northern *Mappilas* shows that the sermons of Makti had its impact upon the *Mappilas*. Later, the *Mappila* residents of Cannanore submitted a petition to the Governor of Madras stating that 'Marumakkathayam law of inheritance was opposed to the spirit and teachings of Islam and that they were forced to follow it owing to long usage.'[172]

In 1930, E.K. Moulavi, a prominent leader of *Aikya Sangam*, unequivocally stated that the system contradicted the basic tone of Quran. He wrote, 'The system is forbidden in Islam and it is an accretion from Hinduism. It is prevalent in North Malabar and certain parts of Travancore. It undermines a chapter in *Quran* and ruins the unity and fraternity of

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[169]Dilip M. Menon, *op. cit.*, p.11.

[170] *Ibid.*, p.11.

[171] Report of P.A. Ammoo, the Tahsildar of Chirakkal 29th Jan. 1915 and Deputy, Tahsildar of Quilandy, 1st Feb. 1915. DR. Public 497/published 9th March 1915, Arakkal Records, K.R.A.

[172] *Ibid.*

Islam .....The community leaders and religious scholars, should attempt to eradicate it'.[173] No wonder, when Mappila Marumakkathayam Bill was introduced in Madras Legislative Assembly in 1937, by Khan Bahadur Shamnad, the Select Committee collected the opinions of various Muslim organizations in Malabar about the Bill.[174] It is interesting to note that almost all the opinions received, barring one or two, objected to the system from the point of view of Islamic *Shariath*. The *Maunathul Islam Sabha*, when the Bill was sent to them for opinion, held a meeting on 18th April 1938, expressed its opinion in the following words.

'It is an undeniable fact that the *Marumakkathayam* system of inheritance is opposed to principles of Islam. Unfortunately the *Mappilas* of North Malabar and South Canara are following this system. Khan Bahadur Shamnad has to be congradulated on his efforts to modify this un-Islamic system even on a small scale and to make it confirm to the laws of Islamic *Shariat* (Mohammedan law)'.[175]

E. Moidu Moulavi, Sub editor, *Al-Ameen* made the following remarks:

'Islam does not allow *Marumakhathayam* which is the cause of many domestic troubles in Mappila *Tarawads*. The Mappila youths of South Canara and North Malabar have been raising a hue and cry against the system and have for the past many years been demanding the introduction of *Makkathayam* system.....If Shamnad Sahib has really moved the Bill with a view to root out the un-Islamic system I would ask him why he has given the Bill an un-Islamic name'.[176]

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[173] E.K. Moulavi, "Kerala Muslims and Anti-Islamic rituals" (Mal.) in *Sahrudayopaharam* (ed). E.M. Habeeb Muhammad, Edava, 1930, pp.155-164.

[174]L.A. Bill No:8 of 1937, Madras Govt. Press. 1938 Arakkal Records, Sl.No. 8119. K.R.A.

[175]Opinions received by Select Committee an Mappila Marumakkathayam Bill of Shamnad Sahib, MLA. LA. Bill No.8 of 1937, Madras Govt. Press. 1938, Arakkal Records No:8119, K.R.A, p.67.

[176] *Ibid.*, p.67.

Similar is the tone of the opinion expressed by Muslim Association of Paravanna in South Malabar. Regarding the Bill the Association members opined that 'the system which is found in some places of Malabar is quite anti-Islamic. A Bill bringing the *Mappilas* following Marumakkathayam within the boundary of Islam is urgent and necessary. Therefore Mr. Shamnard's Bill is to be changed totally and a Bill in the aforeside manner should be introduced.[177] *Salahul Islam Sangam* of Calicut opined that 'the Bill in no way accelerate the introduction of Islamic *Makhathayam* system in the near future.[178]

What is of interest in this context is that while Marumakkathayam communities like Nairs stood for its dissolution in the background of the pressure of modernity and the structural changes brought about by colonial government, the *Mappila* opposition to the system was anchored on scriptural Islam. Thus, every institution and custom practiced by Muslims were juxtaposed with scriptural Islam and if some contradictions were detected, such practices were anathemised.

Reformists and the Translation of *Quran*

Another area where reformist made their mark was the rendering of *Quran* in vernacular language. In sharp contrast to the traditionalists, they emphasised the importance of rendering scriptures in to the vernacular or *tafsir* (commentary). Although *tafsir* literally means interpretation of *Quran*, it includes translation also. 'Because the inimitability of *Quran* belies the idea of translation, all rendering of its words in to other tongue was generally considered to be interpretation'.[179] The traditional *Ulemas* had a strong reluctance to translate God's words in to an ungodly language like Malayalam.

[177] *Ibid.*, p.75.

[178] *Ibid.*, p.77.

[179] John R. Brown, *Muslims through Discourse: Religion and Ritual in Gayo Society*, Princeton University Press, Princeton 1993, p.64.

But this hesitation to translate or interpret was not unique to Malabar Muslims, but through out the Arabic speaking world. The *Sunni Musaliyars* believed that it was a capital offence on the part of a Muslim either to translate or to read such translations.'[180] In 1931, a reformist leader lamented, that, 'It is a pity that even educated Muslim are under the impression that *Quran* is a *mantra* with which sins of the dead could be salvaged, if recited at his *Qabar* or that it could be used to annihilate the enemies or to win over friends... Translation of *Quran* is the only way to purge out such embedded darkeness.'[181]

In 1930, *KJU* had decided to bring out the Malayalam translation of *Quran*. With this intention, Muslim Literary Society was established at Calicut. The first portion of *Quran* (5 chapters) was translated with commentaries by P.K. Moosa Moulavi, K.M. Moulavi, M.C.C. Abdurahiman and P. Muhiyudin and published it from Calicut.[182] The second part was published by Tellichery Muslim Literary Society, but the remaining portions could not be brought out.

Mohammed Abdurahiman Sahib had realized that translation of *Quran* was essential to bring about a renaissance within the community. He chalked out a wide programme for the translation, with the assistance of religious scholars of the time. He contacted the Nizam of Hyderabad, the wealthiest man in India then, and the Nizam promised to support this venture. But the orthodox sections in Malabar through letters and telegram prevailed upon Nizam and the miserly Nizam took this as an excuse and withdrew from his offer.[183] Sahib entrusted P.K. Moosa Moulavi and P. Mohamad Moideen with

[180] K. Moidu Moulavi, *op.cit.*, 75.

[181] V. Kasim Pilla, *Deepika*, Issue:1 Vol:1 1931.

[182] K.K.M Kareem, Note no. 62, *op.cit*., p.189.

[183] M. Rashid, *Muhammed Abdurahiman* (Mal), IPH, Calicut, 1994, p.74.

the task of translation. But due to the paucity of fund, only the first few chapters were published.

In 1946, the Muslim Communists of South Malabar area also tried to interpret *Quran* in tune with the ideology of Communism. One Moyin Moulavi from Kondotty, on the basis of *Quranic* verse *'Araithalladi*' argued that these anti-communists were misinterpreting the religion. A communist Muslim from Angadi Mugar interpreted certain *Hadiths* from *Sahih Muslim* compilation, to justify communism and published it from Ponnani.[184] It was in this context, C.N. Ahmad Moulavi published *'Islamite Dhanavitharana Padhathi'* (the wealth distribution system in Islam), countering the views of Muslim communists.[185]

Though such isolated attempts were made in rendering *Quran* in to Malayalam right from Mayinkutty Ilaya in 1861, the first full fledged Malayalam translation came out only in 1961, by C.N. Ahmad Moulavi, exactly after a lapse of a century of the first attempt.[186] Through *'Ansari'*, a journal started by him in 1949 from Karuvarakundu, he published the chapters of *Quran* in Malayalam. From 1951 to 1963, he was exclusively involved in translation work. His translation had tremendous impact on both Muslim and non-muslims alike.[187]

It is interesting to note that the traditionalists, who had strongly objected to the translation of *Quran*, came out with their own version of *Quran* translation in 1970's, which shows that reformist initiative in this

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[184] K. Moidu Moulavi, *op. cit.*, p.123.

[185] Shihabudhin Arambram, "C.N. Ahmad Moulavi", *Prabodhanam*, special issue, 1998, p. 97.

[186] M.N. Kasassay, "Kerala Charithravum C.N. Ahmad Moulaviyum", (Mal), *Mathrubhumi*, Ramzan Supplement, 2005, pp.61-64.

[187] It was on the basis of this translation that K.C. Raghavan Nair composed his *'Amrutha Vani*' (*Quran* in Malayalam verse), IPH, Calicut, 1997.

direction made tremendous impact in the Muslim society of Malabar.[188] These were the people who manhandled K. Ummar Moulavi at Nadapuram in the 1940's, when he tried to sell the *Quran* translation published by Calicut Islamic Literary Society.[189] At Palakkad, similar untoward incident occurred, when Umar Moulavi tried to sell the copies of Quran translation.[190] Thus, *Aikya Sangam* eventually became a source of inspiration to its detractors in this matter. *Tafsir* (commentaries) became a symbol of Reformist struggle. They rightly perceived the significance of vernacular rendering of scriptures in the overall struggle for religious enlightenment.

Women and Islam

The position and role of women was another major area of discussion initiated by the Reformists. The reformist preachers always stressed the idea of gender equality in Islam. They emphasised that in Islamic *Shariat*, women enjoyed rights to property and inheritance. The attempt of Makti Thangal in this domain has already been dealt with.

By about 1920 itself, books on women issues in Islam began to be published. The first one ofcourse was the translation of Shaik Munir Husain Qidwai's urdu work 'women under Islam' by Mssr's.K. Pareethu Pillai and M. Ahmad Kannu,[191] which was published with the title '*Islam Mathavum Sthreekalum*' (Islam and Women) in 1920. In the preface of the work Vakkom Moulavi wrote, 'it is pertinent here to admit that it was the pathetic condition of Muslim women that provided a chance for western and other

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[188] The first attempt in this regard among *Sunnis* was the translation of *Quran* by K.V. Muhammad Musliyar. With its publication, the opposition of *Sunnis* to translation of the scriptures ceased to exist.

[189] K. Moidu Maoulavi, *op. cit.*, p. 75.

[190] K. Umar Moulavi, *op. cit.*, p.112.

[191] Vakkom Moulavi Foundation, *Vakkom Moulavi Prabandagal Smaranakal* (Mal.), Trivandrum, 1982, p.93.

scholars to criticize the religion of Islam.'[192] The reformists realised that the reform and management of women was central to the religious reform of Muslims. Women's ignorance of religion was a problem for society as a whole, for they infect their children with a contagion of indiscipline and ignorance. Hence they need to be managed through proper instruction in Islam. Further, the Christian missionaries and other non-Muslim communities criticized Islam for the low status accorded to women and for lack of education among Muslim women. As K.M Moulavi observed, 'the main impediment before the Islamic missionary workers, when they try to win over the lower caste Hindus to the fold of Islam, is the misconception, current among the general public about Islamic conception of women.[193] He pointed further that the position of women in Islam was theoretically higher than their current status. The cause of this discrepancy was adherence to false customs. It was to wipe out that misconception, K.M. Moulavi wrote the treatise *Islamum Sthreekalum* (Islam and Women) in 1936.[194] In the first part of it, K.M. Moulavi proved, on the basis of scriptures, that both men and women were having soul and having equal rights and obligation in belief and rituals.[195] In the second part, quoting *Hadiths*, he made it clear that women could participate in all collective prayers in the mosque along with men. He added that, during the time of prophet, women used to take part even in battles. Citing the example of Ayisha, he held that women used to take part in battles during the time of prohet.[196] The third part of it dealt with the right of women to education, both religious and secular. In the 4th section he dealt with 'Islam and Purdha' in which he made it clear that women were asked only to cover their body except fore arms and face. Even without covering

[192] *Ibid.*, p.93.

[193] K.M. Moulavi, *Islam and Women*, (Mal) Ishaath Committee, Aleppey, 1936, p.I.

[194] *Ibid.*

[195] *Ibid.*, p.5.

[196] *Ibid.*, p.7.

their face, they could go out and engage in all activities. He concludes, 'irrespective of gender distinction, Islam permits Muslims to do any profession but it prevents and abhores begging...but Islam does not provide unlimited and indecent freedom to women, as the women of the western countries...'.[197] Thus, Moulavi exposed the hollowness of the long held patriarchical belief that keeping women in ignorance and seculsition was part of their religion.

Due to the initiative of the reformists, a renewed interest could be seen in the Muslim public sphere, regarding the rights and obligations of women as laid down in Islam. In the days of the prophet, women had the right to divorce their husbands, by forgoing *Mahr*, but it was never allowed in Malabar. Similarly, the female attendance of congregational prayers in mosque was another practice that had fallen in disuse in Malabar. All these rights conceded in Islam to women, but not socially in vogue in Malabar, were thoroughly discussed in the 1940's and 1950's.

Orthodox Reaction and Formation of *Samastha Kerala Jamiyathul Ulema*

While the reformists under *Aikya Sangam* and *KJU* had been making steady progress, there had been a simultaneous growth of orthodoxy in Malabar. The traditionalist opposition grew in intensity when their religious leaders, *Thangals* and *Musaliyars*, came under sharp criticism from the reformists scholars. Organized efforts were made to counter all the criticisms of the reformists' which brought into focus the basic opposition between scriptural Islam and Malabar Islam. Perhaps it was the uncompromising stand of reformists against the popular beliefs and practices of Muslims, which invited vehement opposition from the traditionalist *Ulema*. Since this cut the very basis of their economic existence, they were in the forefront of counter attacks against the reformists.

[197] *Ibid.*, p.23.

At the inaugural meeting of *Kerala Jamiyathul Ulema*, which was held during the second annual conference of *Aikya Sangam*, all the *Ulemas* of all shades of Malabar took part as it was chaired by Abdul Jabar Hazrath, the *guru* of all the then leading *Ulemas* of Kerala. But during the 3rd Annual conference held at Calicut in 1925, certain traditional *Ulemas* raised some doubts and K.M. Moulavi, the leader of *KJU* answered such questions. Satisfied with this answer, Pangil Musaliyar, who later became the president of orthodox *SKJU*, said that *Aikya Sangam* was based on *Ahlussunnathwal Jamath* and prayed for its existence till the doomsday.[198] But the same Musaliyar, along with Varakkal Mulla Koya Thangal and others, met at Kuttichira Juma Masjid and formed a parallel organisation called *Kerala Jamiyathul Ulema* in 1925. On 26th June, 1926, a convention of the orthodox *Ulema* was held at Calicut Town Hall and the organization was renamed as *Samastha Kerala Jamiyathul Ulema*, with Varakkal Mulla Koya as president and P.V. Mohammed Musaliyar as secretary.[199] The organisation was registered on 14th November 1934 with 40 member committee (*Mushavara*). It is pertinent to note that 80% of the *Mushavara* members belonged to South Malabar and none from outside Malabar.[200] Unlike *KJU*, which had in it working committee, members from all part of Malabar, Cochin and Travancore, *SKJU* was basically a Malabar based organization. The following were the aims as stated in the constitution of the *SKJU* drafted in 1934.

1) To propagate Islamic principles in accordance with the strictures of *Ahlusunnath wal Jamath*.[201]

2) To oppose those who stand against these strictures.

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198 P.A. Sayed Mohamed (ed.), *Kerala Muslim Directory*, Cochin, 1960, p. 473.

199 *Samastha 60th Anniversary Sourvenir*, Calicut, 1985, p.27.

200 *Ibid.*, p. 12.

201 Those who adheres to the traditions of Prophet and his righteous followers. In this sense all groups except *Shias* are *Sunnis*.

3) To protect the communitarian and religious rights of Mappila Muslims.

4) To promote both religious and secular education (which are not against religion).

5) To save the community from disunity, blind belief, immorality and anarchy.[202]

Among these, the second and fifth clauses were aimed at *Aikya Sangam* and the desciples of the *Tarikas* of Korur, Chottur and other faked *sheiks* and in the 1940's the *Jamathe Islami*.[203] But their enemy number one remained to be the reformists whom they termed as *'Wahabis'*. As per the constitution of *Samastha*, anybody who has studied *'Alfiyah*', *'Fathul Muin*' and *'Jalalaini*', under a leading Ulema, could become member of *Samastha*. But the interesting aspect of its terms of membership was that only the *Ulemas* who could cooperate with the British government were eligible for membership.[204] This shows that connivance of the British also was a factor behind its formation. The 15th resolution passed at the 6th Annual conference of *Samatha* at Feroke on 5th March 1933, makes this political stand of *Samastha* clear. The resolution says, "This meeting reaffirms our earlier decision that the main aim of the *Samastha* was the revitalisation of the principles and practices of *Ahlussunnath wal Jamath* and that those *Musaliyars* who become members of *SKJU,* ought to be non-congress and pro-govt'.[205]. The British might have played their role as the *Aikya Sangam*

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[202] *Samastha 60th Anniversary Souvenir*, *op. cit.,* p. 28.

[203] *Ibid.*, p.28.

[204] *Samatha Kerala Jamyanthul Ulema* Memorandum, as quoted in *Sunni Yuvajana Sangam Souvenir*, 1989, p.120.

[205]*Samstha Resolution of 6th conference* (Feroke) as quoted in P.K. Kutty, "Samastha Kerala Jamiyathul Ulema" (Mal), in *Prabhodanam* special issue, *op. cit.,* pp.131-135.

leaders like K.M. Moulavi, E. Moidu Moulavi and Mohammed Abdurahiman were staunch opponents of the British Rule.

But the real cause behind the polarization of the traditional *Ulema* under the new organization was that the reformist propaganda against the popular Islam threatened their status and even livelihood itself. Majority of the traditional *Mullas* were strongly in favour of the various institutions which were embedded in Malabar Muslim life, like tomb worship, mortuary rituals, *Maulud*, intercessionary prayers etc. These were profitable source of income for rural *mullas* and their abolition would have affected them adversely. They derived their income for subsistence from such religious rites and social functions they officiated. Besides, their role as rural doctor-cum-exorcist also earned them much of their income. Unlike the reformist scholars, the rural priests were not merely preachers but functionaries, closely involved with the life and aspiration of rural *Mappilas* . The social base of the reformist scholars, most of them from middle class background was also a factor behind their failure in the rural Malabar. Hence it was difficult for them to break the hold of these *Mullas* over the masses. The rural *Mappilas* had to depend upon the *mullas* even for a small thing like the ritual slaughter of chicken.[206] Bulk of these rural *mulla* classes remained opposed to the reformists and supported the traditional system with its peculiar blend of Islam and local cults. Unlike the chaste Malayalam spoken by the reformists, the traditional mullas spoke a pidgin Malayalam, which the Mappila masses could easily grasp. In short, due to these factors, the *SKJU*, within a decade itself, could keep the Muslim masses under their control.

Like its counterpart, *SKJU* held their annual conference at different centres of Malabar (never picking up a venue outside Malabar until 1945) like Tanur (1927 February Ist) Mollur in Walluvanad (December 2nd 1927)

[206]It was a common practice in Malabar even during 1970's, that only *Mullas* (mosque functionaries) could slaughter the chicken.

Chenguzhi (1929 January 3) Mannarghat (1930 March 17) Vallianchery (1931 March 5) Feroke (1933) Karyavattom (1945) Meenchantha (1947) Valanchery (1950) Badagara (1951) Tanur (1954-2015 anniversary).[207] Some of these conferences were memorable in terms of certain important resolutions which triggered off religious controversies in Malabar. At the 4th conference held at Mannarghat on 17th March 1930 *Samastha* passed the resolution to boycott non-sunni sects like *Wahabis, Qadiyanis* and the *Tarikas* of Chottur and Kondotty Tangals.[208] Another resolution of the same convention banned the education of Muslim women.[209]

The 6th conference held at Feroke on 5th March 1933 was historic in terms of certain controversial resolutions it passed. One such resolution advised the Malabar Muslims to disassociate from the national movement, at a time when it had achieved considerable momentum in Malabar, after the traumatic experiences of rebellion. The resolution says 'since it is against the religion to oppose the government and to disobey its civil laws, it is not fair on the part of genuine Muslims to cooperate with the Congress party'.[210] It was the British connivance that had been at work behind this resolution. Even prior to the formation of *Samastha*, the British were able to win over a section of *Ulemas* of Malabar to their side, as was evident from the *fatwa* known as '*Mahikual Kalafath Ala Ismil Khilafath'* (The truth about the Rebellion in the name of Khilafath) by Mammed Kutty Musliyar of Ponnani, issued in 1921.[211] Another resolution, which had its repercussion in Mappila's religious life, was passed in the 17th conference held at Meenchantha on 17th March 1947. This resolution, which is popularly known as *'Meenchantha premeyam*'

[207]*Samastha 60th Anniversary Souvenir,* 1985- p.28. Also see *Prabodhanam* special issue, 1998, p. 132.

[208] *Prabodhanam*, 1998, p. 132.

[209] *Al-bhayan*, (Arabi- Malayalam) Book I Issue 5.

[210] *Prabodhanam*, *op cit.,* p. 132.

[211] See chapter 'Khilafath and Pan-Islamism as Symbols of Solidarity'.

(Meenchantha Resolution) in subsequent discourses, emphatically legitimised all the components of popular Islam in Malabar; which the reformists were trying to exorcise. The resolution was introduced by Shihabudin Ahmad Shaliyathi and supported by P. Kammu Musliar. It reads, 'This conference resolves that they, who consider the customs and practices, which the Muslims of Kerala have been observing for centuries and which have been ratified by the *Ulemas* of *Ahlusunnath wal Jamath*, are *Shirk* or prohibited in Islam, are not *Sunnis* and not fit for either *imamath* or *Khatib*.[212] These customs include, prayer to dead *Auliyas* as *Tawassul*, recitation of *Mouluds*, *Talqin*, visit and prayer at tombs, belief in charms and aumulets, membership in *Qadiri* or *Rifai Tarikas*, and recitation of *fatiha* or *Malas* like *'Manqus*', *'Muhiyudhin*', *'Rifai*' etc.[213] The same conference reiterated its earlier resolution passed in 6th conference, to boycott the *Wahabis* (reformists). Now, Jamathe Islami was also included in the list of groups to be disassociated with.[214]

Thus, despite the reformist denunciation of the practices of popular Islam, the traditional *Ulema* under *Samastha* stood firmly in favour of the continuation of these institutions and were entirely averse to the idea of their abolition. They exploited the sentiments of ordinary *Mappilas* and succeeded in retaining their support for most of these institutions. It is pertinent to note that these *Sunni Ulemas* were not opposed to all that the reformists stood for. They shared with the reformists the concern over the celebration of *Muharam* in North Malabar, as well as certain practices associated with *nerchas*. For eg the *Samastha* resolution, passed in the 19th annual conference held at Badagara in 1951, advised the Muslims to purge out all the un-Islamic rituals

[212] *Imamath* means leading the *namaz* and *Khatib* means one who delivers *Khutuba*.

[213] *17th Conference Report of Samastha Kerala Jamiyyalul Ulema,* 1947,Calicut, pp.10-11.

[214] *Fatwa* No:2, Shihabuddin Memorial Publishing Bureau, Chaliyam, 1947, pp.13-14.

and to observe only those rituals which converged with *Sunnath*, during the *nerchas*.[215] The reformists and the *Sunnis* were unanimous in their opposition to the ideals of Mirza and to brand the *Ahmadiyas*, who had organized their *Jamaths* in certain parts of Malabar in the early decades of 20th century, as heretics. Both groups issued *Fatwas* and pamphlets challenging the argument of *Quadiyanis*. *Samastha* also stood firmly against the *Tarikas* called Chottur and Kurur *Sheiks* but supported the *Tarikas* of *Qadiri*, *Chishti*, *Rifai* and *Shaduli*. It could be seen that the primary opposition to reformist propaganda was directed against the reformist's attempt to undermine some institutions, from which they derived their livelihood. We have already examined in the first chapter how the *Mullas* derived money from mortuary rites like *Telkin*, *Tahlil* and *Othikkal* and also from *Moulud*, *Ratib* etc. Another source of income was from charms and amulets, popular remedies in which rural *Mappilas* had implicit faith.[216] In the 3rd Annual conference of *Aikya Sangam* held at Calicut, a pamphlet *'Al-Hidaya'* was released, which unequivocally declared that tomb worship and cults like *nerchas*, *Kodikuthu* etc were un Islamic. But the *Musaliyars*, who survived on these tomb cults, realized the danger of such ideas percolated in the society and they came out with a parallel organisation.[217] Through *Samavadams* (polemical debates) with reformists and religious tracts, the *Sunnis* could win over to their side the illiterate masses of Malabar. The reformists succeeded only in converting only a fraction of the Mappila population, mainly in the coastal towns, to their point of view. Thus, the practices condemned as anti-Islamic by the reformists a century before could be seen persisting in Malabar Muslim society as late as the last quarter of 20th century.

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[215] *Samastha 60th Conference Souvenir*, 1985, *op cit.*, p. 54.

[216] For details see Husain Randathani, *Social and Cultural life of Mappila Muslims of Malabar, 1800-1921*, unpublished Ph.D. Thesis submitted to Calicut University, 1997.

[217] N.K. Ahmad Moulavi, *Aikya Sangavum Kerala Muslingalum* (Mal), Yuvatha Books, Calicut, 1997, p.38.

At the same time, the *Sunnis* had to swallow many of their earlier *fatwas* related to certain issues like secular education, *Quran* translation and *Madrasa* system. Regarding the *Quran* translation, Pangil Ahmed Kutty Musaliyar, the *Sunni* leader wrote in *Al-Bayan*, the mouth piece of *Samastha*, that the attempt to translate the holy *Quran* with the business intention or to fill the belly or to sell it to any *'Chathan, Pothan*, or *Kiran*' (Tom, dick and Harry) who take it to latrin or toddy shop and thereby undermines its sanctity and sacredness, is a capital offence'. [218] He wrote this at time when Calicut Muslim Literature Society brought out the first part of *Quran* into Malayalam in the 1930's. But in 1970's, the *Sunnis* brought out their own version of *Quran* Translation in Malayalam written by K.V. Muhammed Musliyar. Similarly the same group which equated *Madrasa* with hell, started an Educational Board in 1951 and got thousands of *Madrasas* registered under the Board.[219] They who despised Malayalam and English as the languages of hell and prevented Muslim massess from studying them, started journals in Malayalam, established schools and colleges (even for women) in many parts of Malabar after 1950's.[220]

[218] Pangil Ahmedkutty Musaliyar in *Al-Bayan*, as quoted in *Shabab* special issue, *op cit.*, p.134.

[219] In 1985, there were around 5200 Madras affiliated to Samastha Educational Board and 40,000 teachers working at these Madrasas ,*Samastha 60th Conference Souvenir* 1985,, p.29.

[220] Within a period of 65 years after its birth, it had to witness three major splits. The first occured in 1966 when a section of the *Samastha* leaders split away from it and formed *Akhila Kerala Jaiyyathul Ulema* due to difference of opinion regarding Samastha's approach to *Thablige Jamath*. Another group emerged within *Samasth* towards the same period under K.K. Sadakathulla and they formed a new organisation called *Samastha Jaiyyathul Ulema*. The cause of the split this time was regarding the issue of use of loudspeakers for *Jumua Kutuba*. The final and major split occused in 1989 when A.P. Aboobacker Musaliyar was parted from it and formed a splinter group with the same name. The new organization was the result of feud between E.K.Aboobacker Musaliyar and A.P. Aboobakker Musaliyar regarding the sharing of dias with *Wahabis and Moududis* at the time of Shariat dispute connected with Sha Bano Case; Besides, the undue subservience shown by the *Sunni* leaders to the Muslim League also added additional flavour to the schism. The new group argued that any cooperation with these groups are against the spirit

Jamaethe Islami

Jama'the Islami was a sect founded by Abul A'la Moududi in 1941. By about 1930's itself, the ideals of Moududi were familiar to Malabar Muslims through their journal published from Hyderabad called *Turjumanul Qurani*. V.P. Mohammadali Moulavi of Edayur (Malappuram) was the founder of *Jamathe Islami* in Kerala. The earliest proponents of this sect in Malabar were the reformist scholars themselves including K.M. Moulavi and V.P. Mohamed Ali. K.M. Moulavi even had translated Moududi's book and published it in *Al-Murshid*, the organ of the Reformists *Ulemas* [221] In 1946, Mohammed Ali along with Janab Issudhin Sahib, formed an organization called *'Jamaiyathul Mustarshidin,'* at Valancheri with a forty member committee.[222] It was later converted in to the first unit of *Jamaethe Islami* in Malabar. Within a short period, a number of units of the organisation were set up in different parts of Malabar like Kuttiadi, Chennamangallur, Santhapuram, Kannur, Kozhikode etc. To form a state level committee, the adherents of this sect met at Calicut in August 1948 which took certain significant decisions, like establishment of central Head quarters, publication of an official mouth piece called *Prabhodanam* and formation of a central committee called '*Shura*'.[223] As the *Jamaath* also stood firmly against innovative practices, it was the workers of the reformist *KJU,* who were attracted to the ideology of Moududi and there had been cooperation between

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of 'Meenchanda premeyam.' Despite these splits the Sunnis could garner the support of the majority of *Mappilas* in Malabar.

[221] *Al-Murshid*, November - January, 1936-37.

[222] K. Moidu Moulavi, *Ormakkurippukal, op. cit.,* p.124 and O. Abdurahiman "Jama ethe Islami in Kerala", *Prabodhanam* special issue, 1992 p.241 and Prof. K.A. Sidiq Hasan "Jamathe Islami Keralathil" *Prabodhanam* special 1998, pp.137-144.

[223] O. Abdurahman, "Jamaethe Islami in Kerala" (Mal), *Prabodhanam* special issue, 1992, p.241.

the leadership of both groups. For instance, in the first annual conference of *Jamaiyuthul Mustharshideen* at Valanchery held in 1947, the *KJU* leaders like K. Ummer Moulavi, A. Alavi Moulavi Shaik Mohammed Moulavi, Parappur Abdurahman Moulavi etc took part.[224] In certain cases, the units of *KJU*, were converted in to units of *Jamath*. In 1950's, to stem the rising tide of communist ideology among Malabar Muslims, leaders of both *Jamath* and *KJU* collectively set up an offensive missionary organization and organized a campaign called 'Familiarize Islam'.[225] They also issued a number of tracts explaining the Islamic ideology, especially about *Zakath* and Socialist aspects of Islamic ideology. It was a time when Muslim communists brought out some tracts interpreting *Quran* and *Hadith* within a communist perspective.[226] It was in this context that K.C. Abdulla Moulavi published *Islamum socialisavum (Islam and socialism*) which countered many of the arguments of these Muslim communists.[227] But this honeymoon between the *KJU* and *Jamath* did not last long. In early 1950's itself, K.M. Moulavi and six others of *KJU*, issued a combined *fatwa* against *Jamathe Islami*.[228]

The early leaders of the movement were Haji V.P. Mohammedali (popularly known as Haji Sahib among *Jamath* circles) K.C. Abdulla Moulavi and V.K.M. Issudin Moulavi. While the *Jamath* agrees with almost all the arguments of *Mujahids* related to *Touhid, bidath* and authority of *Quran*, and *Hadith* etc, they differ with them in one respect, *Taghoot*, any form of government, including democracy, Islamic or non-Islamic, which govern people without heeding the commandment of God, is *Taghoot* and hence a Muslim cannot cooperate with government or participate in any kind of

[224] K.A. Sidiq Hasan, "Jamathe Islami in Kerala", *Prabhodanam* special issue 1998, pp.137-144.

[225] *Ibid.*, p.138.

[226] K. Moidu Moulavi, *op. cit.*, p.123.

[227] M. Abdul Samad, *op cit.*, p.122.

[228] K. Moidue Moulavi, *op. cit.*, p.125.

Governmental activity and institutions. No wonder, the *Jamath* took a firm decision to boycott elections and to reject Government appointments. When the first election was held to the Parliament in 1951, the *Jamath* exhorted its members to abstain from electoral activities.[229] This stand of *Jamath* was not acceptable either to *Sunnis* or the *Mujahids* in Kerala and both became the staunch critics of *Jamathe Islami* from 1950's onwards.

Through their tracts and public lectures, the *Jamath* could mobilize supporters in certain pockets of Malabar. Like other Muslim organisations, *Jamath* also organized annual conventions at its major strongholds like Valanchery (1948), Kuttiadi (1950) Mulliar Kurussy (1952) Santhpuram near Perinthalmanna (1952) Edayur near Valanchery (1953) Malappuram (1955) Alwaye (1957) and Calicut (1960)[230] This shows that *Jamath* like the *SKJU* was basically a Malabar phenomenon at least in the early decades of its foundation. In 1945 itself, a publishing company called Islamic Publishing Company, was set up at Edayur in Valanchery and the first book it published was the translation of Moududi's famous work, *The religion of Islam* in to Malayalam; which was the manifesto of *Indian Jamathe Islami*. An interesting aspect of the *Jamath* literature was the standard Malayalam in which these were written at a time when both *Sunnis* and *Mujahids* were clinging to the age old polyglot called Arabi-Malayalam. A journal called *Probhodanam* was started from August 1949 onwards, under the editorship of Haji Sahib and this journal took the ideology of *Jamath* to the length and breadth of Kerala. *Jamaath* also brought out its own translation of *Tarjumanul Quran*, the commentary of *Quran* by Abul A'ala Moududi. Following the footsteps of *Mujahids, Jamath* also started their Arabic college

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[229] Moulana Abul Laith, "Indian Muslims and Election" (Mal), *Probhodanam*, July 1951.

It was only in 1977, due to bitter experience of Jamath workers during Emergency that they decided to cast those votes in the election.

[230] K.A.S. Sidhique Hasan, *Probhodanam*, special issue, 1998, *op.cit*., p.146.

at Kasargode called 'Aliya College', to provide training to the scholars of *Jamath* orientation. Later they started colleges synthesizing religious and secular studies at Chennumangallur, Santhapuram, Tirurkad etc.

While the *Jamath* was thus gaining ground in Malabar, both *Sunnis* and *Mujahids* turned against them and many polemical debates were held between *Mujahids* and *Jamath* and between *Sunnis* and *Jamaths*. These debates also stirred the religious life of Malabar Muslims in 1950's and 1960's. The main bone of contention between *Jamath* and others was the issue of *Taguth*. Both *Sunnis* and *Mujahids* held a diametrically opposite view to that of *Jamath* regarding politics. Both *Mujahid* and *Sunni* leaders were active in political parties right from their very inception. In the initial years, the *Mujahids* were anti-British and the *Sunnis* Pro-British. In the 30's and 40's and after independence, the *Sunni* leaders were active in Congress politics and the *Mujahids* in Muslim League. The ideological war started between them and *Jamath*, when the latter declared that a Muslim could not involve in politics, other than trying to establish an Islamic state.[231]

Conclusion

What was the impact of the activities of these three different organisations on the religious landscape of *Mappilas* of Malabar?

The reformists as well as the counter-reformists brought about a new awareness among the ordinary Muslims and as an inevitable result, helped to transform a people in to a community. All these organizations in their own way contributed to the growth of a community consciousness among the *Mappilas* of Malabar. Despite the existance of internal difference, solidarity of some kind or the other could be achieved by the mobilization of the masses

[231] It is interesting to note that Jamath was the only Muslim group in Kerala which keptaway from liberation struggle against the communist government in 1959. It was in this background, *KJU* issued a *fatwa* against *Jamathe Islami*, *Probhodanam* special, Calicut, 1998, *op.cit.*, p.142.

under different banners. Through their intense propaganda work, these sects created a new interest in Islam and Islamic way of life among their lay followers. Due to their hectic organizational work, these organizations could put an end to the isolation of rural *Mappilas* and widened the socio political contacts of the community. With a competitive spirit, they started new educational and welfare institutions, published umpteen religious tracts, organised polemical debates and *wa'az* gatherings and thus brought significant change in the world view or 'common sense' of common *Mappilas* in Malabar. Islam in Malabar by about the mid of 20th Century, entered a new phase marked by intense debate and discussions among rival groups which helped to create a new awareness of doctrinal matters among all sections of the community. Confrontation and debates were the hallmark of the years between 1922 and 1950, the formative period for developing a scripture-based conception of religion in Malabar. By engaging in theological discourse, commentaries and exegesis, these rival groups linked social events to authoritative Islamic texts.

These organizations also helped the rural *Mappilas* to achieve horizontal solidarity within the community. For the first time, the rural *Mappilas* began to attach much more significance to their 'Muslim identity' as opposed to their local or national identity, which subsequently helped to achieve a measure of social cohesion, in a diversified and even culturally polarized community. The emphasis on Islamic identity led to a contemptuous rejection of every thing associated with popular Islam like *Marumakkathayam*, mortuary services, *Kathukuthu* and even *nerchas*. Again the idea of an Islamic Unity, based on equality of believers, began to gain ground and stigmatization of *Puslams* (muslim fishermen) began to disappear.

The reformers like Makti convinced the *Mappilas* about the futility of *Jihad* and preached instead a 'return to pure faith' as the right path to Islamic

glory. People now began to take increasing interest in mosques and *Jumua* prayers. In short, the combined effect of extensive publications, preaching tours in towns and villages, sermons divered at mosques and oral debates together created a self consciousness about religion which was new in 20th century Malabar.

Thus, the religious reform efforts in Malabar Muslim society contributed in their own way to strengthening of their identity, for generally these reforms were directed against un-Islamic practices of the Muslims which were mostly cultural baggages from the past. The sole purpose of the reformist was to render the lives of the Muslims in Malabar more in conformity with scriptural or normative Islam, rather than introduce extra-Islamic principles to regulate their lives.

Chapter IV

PRINT AND THE IMAGINED COMMUNITY OF MAPPILAS

CHAPTER IV

PRINT AND THE IMAGINED COMMUNITY OF MAPPILAS

Historians have frequently noted the importance of print technology in furthering community formations.[1] Following Benedict Anderson's assertion about nations being imagined communities, one may argue that what is true about a nation is also true of other forms of communities and identities.[2] Anderson's espousal of the centrality of print in the formation of nationalism has generated renewed concern with the role of press in fashioning public discourse in colonial India.[3] Hence, in contrast to Anderson's focus on the newspapers and novels in the formation of national identity, the historical and cultural context of colonial Malabar calls for a perusal of the press and literature in illuminating the dynamics of identity construction of Mappilas.

Print brought about a revolution in the transmission of knowledge. It transformed the oral transmission in which knowledge was passed in the middle ages. 'It was only in 19th century, 400 years after it started setting established in Christendom, that it was established in the Islamic world.[4] The orthodox *Ulema*, ever wary of the possibility of religious innovation (*bidath*), would have been deeply concerned about the introduction of printing.

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[1] See Francis Robinson, "Islam and Impact of Print in South Asia"in his *Islam and Muslim History in South Asia*, OUP, Delhi, 2000. See also J.B.P. Moore, *Muslim Identity, Print Culture and Dravidian Factor in Tamil Nadu*, Orient Longman, Delhi, 2004.

[2] Bendict Anderson, *Imagined Communities*: *Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism,* Verso, London, 1991.

[3] Aysha Jalal, *Self and Sovereignty: Individual and Community in South Asian Islam Since 1850,* OUP, Delhi, 2001, p.49.

[4] Francis Robinson, *op. cit.*, p.67.

Muslims came to adopt printing when they felt that Islam itself was at stake and print was a necessary weapon in defence of the faith.[5]

It was the Christian missionaries who introduced printing press in India during the Portuguese period, the first being set up at Goa by Jesuit Missionaries. As early as 1727, the Christian missionaries had printed books on Islam and the first book on Islam was published by a missionary in Tamil, *Islamanavanchvadi* (Book of Islamism).[6] In the first half of 19th century, Gundert established the Basel Mission Press at Tellichery, from where he published the early missionary journals in Malayalam, *Rajyasamacharam* (1847 AD), *Paschimodayam* (1847 AD) and *Jnananikshepam* (1848 A.D).[7] These missionary presses were intended for the promotion of Christianity and therefore the Muslims of Malabar could not depend upon them to get their religious works printed. Hence they used to get their works printed from Bombay where Arabic litho presses had already been established. *Manasikul Malabari* (Haj guide) written by Padoor Koyakutty Thangal was printed at Bombay in H.E 1278 (1862/3AD).[8] *Thiyyannabi*, written by Ahmad Koya of Calicut was printed at Bombay Mirgani Press in H.E-1305.[9] (1887/8 AD)

The first printing press (Arabi-Malayalam) was established in 1867 AD at Tellichery. One Tikukil Kunhahamad had worked in the Basel Mission Press and later, along with his father Koyali Haji, set up a Muslim litho press at Neyyam Vettil house in Tellichery.[10] Those who learnt the technical side of

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[5] *Ibid.*, p.74.

[6] JBP Moore, *op. cit.*, p.79.

[7] K.P. Kunhimoosa, "Achukudangalude Ittillam" in *Chandrika*, Calicut, dated 9th July1995.

[8] C.N. Ahmad Moulavi and K.K.M. Abdul Kareem,(eds) *Mahathaya Maappila Saahitya Paaramparyam* (Mal), (hereinafter *MMSP*), Al Huda Book Stall, Kozhikode, 1978 p.303.

[9] *Ibid.*, p.45.

[10] O. Abu, *Arabi-Malayala Sahitya Charithram*, Kottayam, 1971, p.126.

printing from this press, established Arabic litho presses at Tellicherry and other centres like Ponnani, Tirurangadi, Valapattanam, Kasargod etc.[11] Very often, the printers themselves were the publishers. Hence, though the authors' name was not mentioned, the names of publisher, press and date of printing were emphatically mentioned in early Arabi-Malayalam works.[12] During the last quarter of 20th century, publishing became a lucrative business and many stepped in to this field by obtaining the 'right of issue' from the authors. The Mappilas leapt at the opportunities provided by lithographic press and everything was published large scale, from *Malapattus* to *Moulids*, from works on *Tasawuf* (Mysticism) to commentaries on *Hadiths*. Realizing the business potential, the publishers collected the old manuscripts of various ballads, *Moulids*, Sufi works, commentaries of *hadith* etc., from the priests, families of earlier scholars and got them published. It is interesting to note that prior to the 20th century, the publishers were unable to introduce new subjects for its discourse. Almost all works composed before the introduction of press were put to print during the last quarter of 19th century. Thus, the knowledge of Arabi-Malayalam manuscripts, normally the preserve of a select few, was now available to anybody at a nominal price. As Tithi Bhattacharya observed, 'the specificity of printed book is always mitigated by its abstract receptivity. Once a book is printed no one can predict who will read it and how. Thus, as a technological form, print calls for an anonymous audience'.[13] What had previously been the monopoly of the learned and holy men, because the books (written by scribes) were rare and costly, was now available to anybody who could read Arabic script. As Nazir Husain, an Urdu scholar of 19th century put in, 'God has been gracious in providing books. Books which one could not see in dreams or concieve of in imagination, are

[11] For the list of Muslim litho presses in Malabar, see the Appendix IV.

[12] O. Abu, *op. cit.*, p.126.

[13] Tithi Bhattacharya, *The Sentinels of Culture: Class, Education and Colonial Intellectuals in Bengal*, OUP, Delhi, 2005, p.110.

now available for couries'.[14] Thus, printing made a tremendous impact in the dissemination of Islamic knowledge in Malabar.

Once the printing technology became familiar to Mappilas, lithographic presses were set up at different Muslim centres of Malabar. From Tellicherry, the location of print now turned to South Malabar also. At Ponnani, Aniyapurath Mammu established a litho press while Karakkaad Saeed of Tellicherry established one at Valakkulam.[15] At Tirurangadi the first litho press was established in H.E 1304 (1886/87 AD) by Chalilakath Ahmad with three shareholders from Tellichery. Later, Ahmed himself took up the ownership and renamed it as *Amirul Islam* Press.[16] Subsequently, litho presses were established at other centres like Parappanangadi, Chaliyam, Kondotty, Tirur, Vengara, Kodungallur etc.[17] But Tellichery remained as the headquarter of Islamic printing and it had around twleve litho presses publishing Islamic books. After the entry of print, a new generation of poets and writers also sprang up. Thus, the efflorescence of Mappila literature could be linked directly to the technology of print.

A survey of the entire gamut of printed works – Arabi-Malayalam poetry, missionary tracts, journals, books and pamphlets – of Mappilas is necessary to understand the Mappilas as a community. The survey of the print-discourses help us to comprehend the religious leanings, hopes, worries and joys in short, the whole mentalities of the Mappilas. Any 'gaze' at the community, neglecting this print culture of Mappilas, would provide only a

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[14] As quoted in Barbara D. Metcalf, *Islamic Revival in British India: Deoband, 1860-1900*, OUP, Delhi, 1982, p.205.

[15] K.P. Kunhi Moosa, "Achadisalakal Sthapichavar, Aksharangale Snehichavar", in *Tellichery Times*, Tellichery, 2002.

[16] Abu Rashida, "Chalilakath Family" (Mal.) in *C.H. Ibrahim Hajee Souvenir* Tirurangadi, 2001. During 1921 rebellion, the rebels burnt the press and later it was restarted with the support of the British by C.H. Ibrahim kutty.

[17] Judicial Department. Govt. of Madras, R2/M-10 dated., 10th Octo. 1910, KRA.

turncated view. Hence, a humble attempt to peel out the Mappila 'common sense' as reflected in print form, is attempted in the following pages.

Arabi-Malayalam Literature

Though the Mappila literary tradition could be traced back to early 17th century, when *Muhiyudhinmala* was composed, much of these earlier works were printed and published only in late 19th century. During the pre-print phase, umpteen works were composed either in Arabic or in Arabi-Malayalam. There were many professional scribes who used to copy these works.[18] It was in the pre-print phase that Mayinkutty Ilaya, a member of Arakkal family of Kannur, translated Quran in eight volumes, in 1868 AD and managed to get 100 copies of this voluminous work written by scribes and distributed to various mosques of Malabar.[19] Being a member of royal family, it was affordable for him to spend more than one lakh for preparing 100 manuscript copies of an 8-volume work during the middle of 19th century.[20] Though scribes were there, memory and orality were the medium through which the earlier works withstood time. Written copies were used only as an aid to memory and oral transmission. In the absence of print-media, the only means of preserving knowledge was by memorizing it. There were many in Malabar who could memorize the entire Quran and they were called *Hafil*'.

May be because of this oral transmission of texts, the date and author of earlier Mappila poems were inserted inside the poem itself. For eg, the date and authorship of *Muhiyudhin Mala* could be known from the content of the poem itself.[21] In *Rifai Mala* also the author mentions the date of

[18] *MMSP*, *op. cit.*, p.225. Many Mappilas were having the surname *Khatib* in the early decades of 20th century.

[19] *Ibid.*, p.53.

[20] C.K. Kareem (ed.), *Kerala Muslim Charithram Shtithivivarakanakku Directory* (Mal), Vol. 1, Charithram Publications, Cochin, 1991 (herein after *KMD*) p. 669.

[21] *Khazi Mohemad athennu perullovar*

composition within the text itself, but the name of author is absent.[22] It shows that the direct association of the work with the author, was not a strong priority before print. But even after the emergence of print, it was not the author but the publishers and date of publication (not composition), which were mentioned in these works, as most of these works were composed before print and had no indication of either the date or the authorship. The earliest works, which were put to print in Malabar, were the *Malapattus* and *Madhupattus* (eulogies), which were more popular than the *Quran* among Mappilas. The publishers were bound by the taste of their readers, long trained to enjoy such songs, which assured them rapid sales. Hence, the early phase of print culture in Malabar, saw the mushrooming of works in Mappila poetry. It is to be noted that, it was print, which saved hundreds of Arabi-Malayalam works, known for literary merit from literary extinction. Thus, in the case of Arabi-Malayalam literature, 'print far from widening the gap between literary culture and oral tradition, actually bridged it and brought them together in the form of a printed folklore'.[23] Folklore in print, occupied a prominent place in Mappila literary culture in late 19th and early 20th century. As observed by Burnell, in 1873, "the Mappilas are by no means destitute of literature. They have a few treatises on their ceremonial law.... and several remarkable songs, religious and historical. All these are vastly superior to the miserable strings of conciets, which pass for poetry in South India and are

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Kozhikotte thura thannil pirannovar.

[By examining all these texts, this was composed by Kazi Mohemad of Calicut Port]. See O. Abu, *op.cit.,* p. 71

[22] . *Kollam Thollayirathambethezhamantil*

Korthen immala njan nottambathettil

[This was composed in Kollam Era 987 (1813 AD) in 158 rhymes]. See O.Abu, *op. cit.*, p.71.

[23] Stuart Blackburn, *Print, Folklore and Nationalism in Colonial South India*, Permanent Black, Delhi, 2003, p.3.

remarkable for a manly tune of thought, which must have come from Arabia".[24]

Arabi-Malayalam

From the beginning of 17th century, a new type of poetical composition developed in Malabar in a pidgin called Arabi-Malayalam. Though Mappilas's mother tongue was Malayalam, it was generally felt to be an un-Islamic language and hence unsuitable as a medium for Islamic propaganda. Hence, recourse to a curious hybrid called Arabi-Malayalam or Mappila Malayalam, which made indiscriminate use of Arabic, Tamil, Canarese, Sanskrit, Urdu etc. It was Malayalam rendered in Arabic script. We come across such practices in Kannada, Tamil and even in Punjab. As A.C Burnell put in, 'it is not known who introduced the Arabic character and adapted it to the Dravidian languages. But, its use extends over the whole of Tamil country and since the last few years, it has been the favourite character of all Mohammadans in Southern India'.[25]

Arabic, being the language of *Quran*, gained popularity wherever Islam had gained a foothold including Malabar. Knowledge of Arabic was always considered to be essential to knowledge of Islam itself as Muslims recited their daily prayers in Arabic and read Quran. Since the Mappilas wanted both Arabic and their mother tongue, they retained Malayalam for written discourse, but rendered it in the Arabic script. 'The translation of any language into Arabic script not only facilitated the Arabic vocabulary but fostered a psychological bond between the non-Arab and Arab Muslims'.[26] In

[24] A.C. Burnell, *Specimens of South Indian Dialects*, No.2, 1873, as quoted in C.K. Kareem (ed.), *O. Abu Smaraka Grantham*, Tellicherry, 1982, p.163.

[25] A.C. Burnell, as quoted in Report on Census of Madras Presidency, 1871, Appendix, Vol.I Madras, 1874, p.173.

[26] Richard M.Eaton, *The Rise of Islam and Bengal Frontier: 1204-1760*, OUP, Delhi, 1994, p.293.

Arabi-Malayalam, the Mappilas never used expressions commonly associated with Hindu deities in discussing matters related to Islam. For instance, for *Daivom* (God) they used *Allah* and for *Pravachakan* (prophet) they used only *Rasul*. Hence, these Arabi-Malayalam works were completely unintelligible and even inaccessible to non-Muslims. The retention of Arabic script and extensive use of Arabic terms, not only distinguished them from non-Muslims but also provided a distinct identity in Malabar's religious landscape. Mappilas always expressed their deep impulses and thoughts in this medium which they reverently called *Quran* script. Hence, they identified passionately with the symbol, Arabi-Malayalam script. It was as part of their cultural self defence that the Mappilas opted for this curious blend of languages. This was the case with Tamil Muslims who had their own mixture called *'Tulukka Tamizhu'*.[27]

Early Works in Arabi-Malayalam

Around 6000 works have been composed in Arabi-Malayalam dialect. Out of this a 1000 might have been put to print.[28] The concern of authors expressed in this literature, spanned a wide range of issues but majority of which was religious in nature. The most popular theme, whether in poetry or prose, was Islam itself.[29]

[27] JBP Moore, *op. cit.*, p.37.

[28] KKM Kareem, "Arabi-Malayala Sahityam", *Prabhodanam*, 1998, pp.79-83.

[29] Around 136 Mappila poets have been identified by KKM Abdul Kareem in his *MMSP* and most of them deal with Islamic theme.

Malapattus

The earliest printed works in Arabi- Malayalam belong to the genre called *Malapattus, which* signified a Mappila literary style. These were otherwise known as *Nerchapattus*. These were also known as *Sabeenapattukal* as it was sung in the night.[30] All these *Malapattus* were eulogies of Islamic divinities and were appended with intercessionary prayers called '*Iravu*' and certain *malas* like *Nafeesath mala* have got two *Iravus*. It was believed that collective recital of such works would bring about miracles in life. These *Malas* were recited in times of trouble as these poems address not the problems of the other world but of this world itself. An 'easy delivery' is a common prayer found in the *Iravus* attached with most of the *malas* which also shows that a major chunk of readership belonged to women. Take the three popular *malas, Badar Mala, Nafeesath Mala* and *Manjukulam Mala*, in all these, we come across reference to the miraculous power of the respective divinities for an 'easy delivery'.[31]

Contextually, it is to be noted that, when the British rulers denied natural justice to Mappilas in 19th century, they were alienated from social life and were forced to rely upon the supernatural forces for relief and this was provided by the *Malas*. May be because of this, *Malapattus* rivalled all other genres of Mappila literature in terms of popularity. Also, it was these *Malapattus* that brought Mappilas into the world of literature. Umpteen such songs were published in Malabar during the period 1875-1950, many of which were composed much earlier and several editions of these were published. This situation underlines the proverbial saying that 'print did not produce new books, only more old books'. What we witness here is a

[30] In Persian language, *sabina* means 'those used in night'.

[31] *Manjakulam Mala*, p.94, *Badar Mala*, p.55 and *Nafeesath Mala*, p.84 in *Moulid Malayalam*, Ashrafi Book Centre, Tirurangadi, 2000.

'paradox of a modern technology in the service of pre-modern traditions.[32] Though some of these poems were produced much before the introduction of print, they continued to enjoy uninterrupted popularity till the middle of 20th century, when they had much increased readership. For instnace, *Muhiyudhin mala* was composed in 1607 AD and began to have printed version only in 1870', hundreds of editions of it were brought out with in a period of 80 years.

Prominent among these *malas,* in terms of popularity, were *Mohiyudhin Mala, Rifai Mala, Nafeesath Mala* and *Manjakulam Mala*.[33] Among these, the most popular was *Muhiyudhin Mala, which* deals with the life and miracles of a *Sufi Shaik* of Bagdad, Muhiyudhin Abdul Kader Jilani who lived in 11th century AD.[34] It was composed in 1607 A.D by Qazi Mohemad of Calicut and was considered to be the earliest Arabi-Malayalam work. Hundreds of impressions of this were brought out in Malabar from various litho presses, which show the popularity of the same. In the backdrop of the fact that *Qadiriya Tarika* was the most formidable *Sufi* order in Malabar, the popularity of this was quite natural. Every Muslim house in Malabar kept a copy of it as an object of veneration. It was even mandatory on the part of Muslim bride to study it by heart. Throughout the work we come across references to the miracles performed by the *Shaik.* He was depicted as observing fast for one month immediately after birth as he was born in the first day of Ramzan, the month of fasting for Muslims. He was also imbued with the power to see the heart of his *murids* (disciples) as transparent as an object inside the glass bottle.[35] All the later *Malapattus* were modelled after *Muhiyudin Mala* and hence it remained as the core text from where the later poets made their derivative discourses.

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[32] Stuart Blackburn, *op. cit.*, p.1.

[33] K.V. Mohemad Musaliyar, *Muhiyudhin Mala Vykhyanam*, Quilandy, 1986, p.1.

[34] *Ibid.*

[35] *Ibid.*

Rifai Mala, the second in popularity, deals with another *Sufi Shaik* for whom a number of disciples were there in Malabar. The poem contains similar descriptions about the miracles of Rifai Shaik. *Nafeesath mala* deals with the miracles of a Sufi Saint, Nafessathul Misriya, the grand daughter of the orthodox Caliph Ali, who lived in 8th Century AD in Egypt.[36] This *mala* was specifically recited by women of Malabar for a smooth delivery. *Mampuram Mala* deals with the life and miracle of Sayid Alavi Thangal, a *Qadiriyya Sufi pir*, who lived in Tirurangadi, during the first half of 19th century. Several such *malas* were composed in Malabar by various poets.[37] Most of these *Malas* were of anonymous authorship, but published in umpteen editions. It was composed in an age of Bhakti movement in Malabar that swept across until the 3rd decade of 20th century, when the cult was bemoaned by reformists. It was through these *malapattus* that the problem of how to translate the highly sophisticated tradition of Islamic mysticism, in terms meaningful to illiterate Mappilas, was resolved. For, 'poetry was practically the only vehicle for influencing the illiterate masses, who have had an incredibly good memory for verse'.[38]

Mystical Poems

Another genre of Mappila literature was the philosophical works, which normally could not stir the imagination of common folk. *Kappapattu* of Kunjayan Musaliyar of 18th century, is foremost among them. As the title itself denotes, the song equates human life with a ship. A.C. Burnell writes, 'this song is one much in favour and deservable so. It is an allegory of the fate of the body, which is compared to a ship, the ribs to the framework, and the

[36] *Hidayathul Muhmineen*, Book.2, Issue 2, December, 1951, Calicut, pp.2-3.

[37] For details on *Malas*, see O. Abu, *Arabi-Malayala Sahitya Charitram*, Kottayam, 1971, pp.121-122. See Appendix V.

[38] Annemarie Schimmel as quoted in Richard M. Eaton, *Sufis of Bijapur: S*ocial *Roles of Sufis in Medieval India*, Routledge, London, 1978, p.141.

spine to the keel. It describes the voyage of life and dangers the body meets from rocks and shoals of temptations by *Satan*, its wreck or safe conclusion of voyage.[39] Kunjayan Musaliyar, who was a *Khalifa* of *Qadiriya Tarika* in Malabar, lavishly deployed metaphors pertaining to sea and sea voyage. This song was so popular that all Arabi-Malayalam poetry after the composition of this poem came to be known as *Sabina pattus*, *sabina* being the Arabic term for ship.[40] The poem reminded that both *Ulemas* and *Qasis* would have to suffer on the day of judgement for not leading the community through the right path.[41] In short, the poem tries to instill in the minds of the believers a kind of immutable belief in God and inspires them to lead a moral life.

Safala Mala of Kulangara Veetil Moidu Musaliyar (died. 1920) popularly known as *Shujai*, deals with Islamic mysticism from the genesis to the death of prophet Mohamed. It is a didactic Mahakavya in Arabic-Malayalam, which invites man, who is lured by worldly pleasures, to the path of spirituality.[42] Another work of this group is *Naseehath Mala* composed by Kunhikoya of Tirur. This work reminds the people of the nothingness of material life and the permanence of life after death.

War Songs or *Padapattus*

War songs constitute a major category of Mappila ballads. About a hundred *padapattus* were composed in Malabar and most of these were composed during the later half of 19th century. Almost all battles fought by prophet and orthodox caliphs during the formative phase of Islam, have been

[39] A.C. Burnell, *Specimens of South Indian Dialects* as quoted in K.K.M. Kareem *Kappapattum Nulmadhum: Oru padanam*(Mal.), Tirur, 1983, p.28.

[40] K.K.M Kareem, *Kappapattum Nul Madhum: Oru Padanam* (Mal), Tirur, 1983, p.29.

[41] Balakrishnan Vallikunnu, *Mappila Samskarathinte Kaanapurangal* (Mal), Capital Publishers, Kozhikode, 2000, p.46.

[42] C.K. Kareem, (ed), *op. cit.*, p.671.

dealt with in these songs.[43] Among them, the most popular were *Badar padapattu, Uhd padapattu, Makkam fath, Futuhsham, Hunain padapattu, Khandak* and *Khaibar padapattu*. These were the histories of Islamic battles in verses. These songs which were sung at social gatherings continuously reminded the Mappilas of the sacrifice made by the *Shahids* (martyrs) for the cause of Islam. Among the battles, the *Badr* battle was a perennial source of inspiration to scores of *Mappila* poets and around 18 poems were written in Malabar about *Badr* war.[44] This war has got a special sanctity in the minds of *Mappilas* in general. In times of trials and tribulations, it provided relief and mental courage to them. The holy warriors of Badr were believed to possess eternal life. This must be the reason that by 1896 itself, the *Badar patapattu* of Moyinkutty Vydiar had already gone three editions of 1000 copies each.[45] The miraculous power of this *padapattu* could be seen from the fact that 'a blood stained copy of *Badr patapattu* was found on the body of a 'fanatic' in Manjeri temple, where the Moplas found dead in the battle against British troops in 1896, with a talisman scrawled in ink which would add up 15 in any direction.[46] Since the battle of *Badr* took place in the month of *Ramzan*, *Mappila* rebels in 19th century usually selected this month for the pitched battle with enemies and for becoming *Shahids*.[47] All these show that the Mopla poets like Vydyar, through these war poems, were attempting to

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[43] Similar war songs were popular in Arabi-Tamil called *Padappor Charitam* during 19th Century AD. See JBP Moore, *op. cit.,* p.32.

[44] See Appendix VI.

[45] F.Fawcett, Letter No.1567. Judicial 30th September, 1896, p.99, Madras, TNA. The first edition of *Badar padappattu* came out only in 1888.

[46] *Ibid.,* p.99.

[47] The Police authorities in Malabar always took precautionary measures during the month of *Ramzan*. A news report of *Kerala Sanchari* Support this concern of authorities. It says 'The *Ramzan* festival was over without any disturbance in Ernad and Walluvanad Taluks. Many were afraid that there would be an outbreak in those Taluks this year also *Kerala Sanchari*, Calicut, 10th March 1897, MNNPR, TNA.

synthesize the Islamic social psyche with the throbbings of contemporary historical situation in Malabar.

Through the narration of important chapters in early Islam, Vydiar and other poets provided a new life to the dead consciousness of *Mappila* community and inculcated a spirit of pride and valour among the Mappilas. For, Vydyar in his *Malappuram padapattu* says, 'nothing is more pleasing to God than sacrificing one's body and soul in defence of God and none are more honoured than these *Shahids*.[48] Again in *Badr Padapattu* he says, 'The prophet swore to army that such happiness would be theirs [in paradise] if they died fighting bravely. Hearing this, Umar, who was eating dates, cast the dates away, saying that he wished to waste no time in eating dates and rushed like a lion, killed many and died fighting.[49] In short, all war songs reminded Mappilas about the bliss that awaited martyrs, who died in the fight against infidels.

Other war songs of Vydyar were *Salasil Kissapattu*, *Elippada* (an imaginary war) and *Saliqath Kissapattu*.[50] Chettuvai Parikutty (1848-1886) has written a famous war song called *Futuh Sham* in 1887, which deals with Syrian victory of pious caliphs, Umar and Abobacker.[51] The dramatic description of the sorrow of Umaiban, the wife of martyr Ibn Saeed, whose married life lasted only for a month, touches the hearts of its readers. This was the favourite song of the story-tellers (Kissapattu artists) of Malabar.[52]

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[48] F. Fawcett, "War Songs of Mappilas of Malabar", *Indian Antiquary*, Vol. XXX, Nov. 1901, p.506.

[49] *Ibid.*, p.508.

[50] As *Saliqath Qissa* deals with an imaginary war between Prophet and the Queen of Saliqath, Thattangara Kuttiamu Musliyar issued a *fatwa* against this song. See Balakrishnan Vallikkunnu, "Mappilapattile Kalapamudra", *Chandrika*, Calicut, 5th August 2001.

[51] C.K. Abdul Kader, *Chettuvai Pareekutty* (biography), Calicut, 1960. pp. 85,100.

[52] *MMSP*, *op. cit.*, p.373.

Hunaipadapattu of Maliyekkal Kunhahamed Sahib (d.1905) written in 1879 deals with Hunain War between Caliph Ali and Dabul Himar. *Vyasana Mala* of Kunhutty Musaliyar (d.1951) deals with the battles of Caliph Ali. *Muhthath pada* by Vallanchira Moideen Haji of Manjeri, *Khandak pada* and *Futuh Tayif* by Kadampiyath Kunhiseethi koya in 1889, *Makkam Fath* by Tannur Munhiyudhin Mulla etc. are other works in this genre.[53] In short, there were around 100 poems, which belong to this category of war songs.

Within the war songs, there was a separate category, which extolled the heroic exploits of not the Islamic war heroes but of martyrs of Malabar who died in the battles against the indigenous and European enemies. *Malappuram padapattu, Mannarghat Padapattu, Manjeri padapattu Kaprattu Krishna Panikkar pattu, Cherur padapattu, Cherur Chinthu*, *Muttiara Shahadakkal* etc. were the popular *padapattus* of Malabar. Almost all these were composed in a period of continuous hostility between Mappilas and the English in 19th century. No wonder, these war songs were identified by the British authorities as the inspiration behind many of the rural revolts of Malabar in 19th century. As F.Fawcett, the British Police Superintendent in Malabar opined, 'these poems must be read if the Mappilas are to be understood'.[54] He further states, 'How much stronger force on life and the Government and use of life there is in songs, which stir the heart of a people to the core.. No people of Madras presidency sings songs of this kind as do the Mappilas.... You cannot read the songs I am sending you without feeling the terrible strength of the spirit which animates them'.[55] Hence, all these above mentioned war songs were prohibited and the copies were seized and burnt.[56]

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[53] *Ibid.,* pp.395-398.

[54] F. Fawcett's letter, No.1567, Note no: 45, p.100.

[55] *Ibid.,* p.97.

[56] *MMSP*, *op. cit.,* p.71.

Among the war songs of second type, the prominent one was *Malappuram padapattu* of Moyinkutty Vydyar, composed in 1886.[57] The poem deals with the story of the 44 *Shahids* who died in the Malappuram revolt between the retainers of Paranambi and Mappilas in 1728 AD.[58] Another *padapattu* of this type was *Cherur padapattu*, composed jointly by Cherur Mammadkutty and Muhiyudhin, which deals with the Cherur riot of 1843, in which seven Mappilas died. Within a short period after the occurence of the revolt, this poem became very popular in Malabar and was instrumental in the percolation of anti-British sentiments in Malabar. Hence the government banned it and the *Malhar ul Muhimmath* press (where it was printed in 1844) at Tirurangadi was seized by the Government.[59] Khayyath of Parappanangadi also wrote a poem dealing with the same incident called *Cherur Chinthu*, *which* was banned by the Government.[60] Still another poem on the same incident was *Kapratt Krishna Panikkar Pattu*. About this A.C. Burnell says, 'As far as the literary merit is concerned, the best is *Kapratt Krishna Panikkar Pattu*. The poem on this event (Cherur riot 1843) was written by a 'Mopla of Mannarghat'.[61] All the copies of this song were seized and burnt by the British and the only remaining copy of it was collected by Burnell.

The British officials in Malabar had taken keen interest in this kind of war songs, as they were in search of a cause for the frequent *Mappila* outbreaks of 19th century.[62] They could detect the inflammatory potential of

[57] The first impression of this came out in 1886 from Malharul Uloom Press, Tellichery, *MMSP*, p.357.

[58] For details of this poem, see 'Works on History' in this chapter.

[59] *MMSP*, *op. cit.*, p. 387.

[60] *Ibid.*, p.391.

[61] A.C. Burnell, *Specimens of South Indian Dialects*, No.2, 1873 as cited in C.K. Kareem (ed.), *O. Abu Smaraka Grantham* (Mal.), Tellichery, 1982.

[62] See F.Fawcett, "War Songs of Mappilas of Malabar". *Indian Antiquary*, Vol.30, Nov-Dec. 1901. Also see F.Fawcett, letters, No. 1567, Judicial, 30th Sept. 1896,

such songs and their opinions prevailed upon the government to proscribe such songs. In short, these songs provided *Mappila* the fuel to fight against their oppressors, both lord and the state and thereby it created a sense of 'us' against 'them'. Even when the copies of *Cherur padapattu* were confiscated and burnt by British, the poem was transmitted orally and memory of the heroic fight was kept alive in Malabar. Thus, these war songs were crucial in the formation of an identity among Mappilas.

Hagiographic works

Mappila Hagiographic works were called *Madhupattus* or *Kissapattus* which eulogize prophet Mohamed and other historical personalities of Islamic history.[63] While *Madhus* (eulogies) were exclusively eulogies of prophets, the *malas* eulogized both *Shahids* and *Sufi Shaiks*. While *Malas* were recited for satiating worldly desires, the *Madhus* represented the selfless urge for union with the prophet. Hence when there existed divergence between seeker and sought in *Malas*, in *Madhus*, both converged.[64] The most prominent figures eulogized through *Madhu pattu* or *Kissapattu* were prophet Mohamed, prophets like Adam, Yusuf, Ibrahim, Prophet's wives, the pious Caliphs and Caliph Ali's sons - Hasan and Husain.

The most prominent Madhu is *Nool Madhu* of Kunjayan Musliyar written in 1737 AD. It extols the virtue of prophet Mohamed in 666 verses and comes second in popularity to *Muhiyudhin mala*.[65] It has been equated with *Krishnagatha* of Cherusseri that narrates the story of Krishna and both were the reflection of a common cultural stream of 18th century Kerala.

Extra-Ethnic works

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pp.98-100.

[63] See Appendix VII.

[64] Balakrishnan Vallikkunnu, *op. cit.,* pp.24-25.

[65] C.K. Kareem, *op. cit.,* p.349.

This genre of works was not exactly Islamic but were adaptations from Persian or Arabic works and they include stories, novels, dramas, books on maxims etc. Generally the stories are set in Islamic countries. There were a few works, which were translations from Sanskrit literature. But the bulk of them were from Persian, Arabic or Hindusthani, which the Mappilas considered, quite erroneously as being connected with Islam. *Badrul Munir Husanul Jamal*, the favourite poem composed by Moinkutty Vaidyar is a classic example of this genre. It is an adaptation from a Persian work 'Nazr-i-Benazir' by Qaja Muinudhin Sha. More than translating Perso-Islamic romantic literature in to Arabi-Malayalam, Vydyar attempted to adapt the whole range of Perso-Islamic Civilization to the Malabar cultural universe. Indigenous metaphors like 'cassia flower', 'plantain tree', 'coral reef', *puliyangam* (duel with Tiger) abound in *Badrul Munir*.[66] As F. Fawcett observed, 'the poem [*Badrul Munir Husanul Jamal*] seems to offer but an instance of how old stories are used and passed on, just as Boccacio and Shakespeare handled older materials and moulded it into what they have left us'.[67] Thus the authors of this literature presented Islamic imagery and ideas in terms readily familiar to rural Mappilas and they could identify the exogenous with indigenous or Perso-Islamic with that of Malabar. The fact that 175 reprints of *Badarul Munir* were brought out in Malabar, either in Arabi-Malayalam or Malayalam shows the popularity of the song.[68]

The influence of traditions connected with Persia and *Shism* was very strong in Mappila literature. *Jinpada, Balqiz kissa, Hasan Kissa, Saqoompada, Kilathi mala, Pakshipattu, Kuppipattu, Saliqath pada, Salasil pada* etc .are examples where *Shia* influence could be detected. 'During the pre-reformist phase in Malabar, the authors were not worried about the theme

[66] Balakrishnan Vallikunnu, *op. cit.*, p.91.

[67] F.Fawcett, "A Popular Mopla Song", *Indian Antiquary*, March 1899, p.65.

[68] C.K. Kareem, *op. cit.*, p.672.

or content of such works but later these works were shunned as anti-Islamic. The idea of Islam as a closed system, as observed by Eaton, with definite and rigid boundaries was largely a product of 20th century reform movements.[69]

The early novels printed in Malabar were translations from Persian. *Chahar Darvesh* the Persian work of Amir Khusrau was translated by Muhiyudhin of Tellichery and published in 1886 in four volumes by K. Hasan. Though the work was not basically connected with Islam or Islamic History, the author claimed that 'the reading of this work would cure of diseases by the grace of God'.[70] It shows that any book, if presented with a claim of healing power, could be sold out. Another work of this genre is the translation of *Alif laila*, the celebrated 'Arabian Nights'. This was translated jointly by Kunhimoosa and Kuhayan T.C and published in 8 volumes in 1900 AD.[71] Other famous Persian works like *Amir Hamza, Khamar Zaman, and Nurjahan* were translated in to Arabi-Malayalam by Nalakath Kunhimoidinkutty (d.1920) of Ponnani.[72] Most of these were classical tales of Persia, characters having no connection with Malabar. This pre-occupation reflected their tendency to look for inspiration outside Malabar and identify with a trans-Indian tradition.

Didactic Novels in Arabi-Malayalam

Novels were also published in Arabi-Malayalam with the intention to reform the religious life of the community. The earliest novels written in Malabar were *Khilr Nabiye Kanda Nafeesa* (Nafeesa who saw prophet Khilr) and *Hiyalilakath Zainaba* written by K.K.Jamaludhin Moulavi (1909-1965) of Nadapuram in early 1920's. Criticism of social evils figured in both these

[69] Richard M. Eaton, Note. no. 26, p.271.

[70] *MMSP*, *op. cit.*, p.438.

[71] *Ibid.*, p.439.

[72] C.K. Kareem, *op. cit.*, p.365.

novels. Both were puritanic in nature and echoed reformist ideology and the message projected was quite straightforward. The first novel *Nafeeza* revolves around the protogonist Abdurahiman Moulavi who questions the un-Islamic practices like tomb-worship, *Moulud* etc and finally he is being ousted from home by his father.[73] In *Hiyalilakath Zainaba*, written in 1929, the author introduces a Muslim lady Zainaba with reformist zeal. She engages in debate with a traditional *Sunni Musaliyar* on contentious issues like *Ratib*, mortuary rites, intecessionary prayers etc. and defeats the *Musaliyar* in the debate.[74] Both works had tremendous effect on the Mappilas as both question the very foundation of the age-old belief system of *Mappilas.*

Secular Works

Another branch of knowledge to which Mappilas contributed much was medicine and astronomy.[75] The translations of *Ashtangahridaya* and *Amarakoshapadartham* were available in Arabi-Malayalam. All such works were composed by the professional physicians among Mappilas. Astronomy was another area to which *Mappila* contributed much as they had to use it on many an occasion like fixing the day of *Id*, *Ramzan*, timings of *Namaz* etc.

Prose Works

One of the far-reaching effects of print was the more or less simultaneous invention of modern prose. Translation from Arabic, Persian or Urdu constituted the main chunk of prose writing in Arabi-Malayalam literature. Hence, in Arabi-Malayalam, the very word *Tharjuma* (translation)

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[73] K.K. Jamaludhin Moulavi, *Khilr Nabiye Kande Nafeesa* (A.M) ,(first impression 1928), Reprint, Yuvatha, Calicut, 1997, preface. Also see *MMSP*, *op. cit.,* pp.563-64.

[74] K.K. Jamaludhin Moulavi, *Hiyalilakath Zainaba* (A.M) (first impression, 1929) ReprintYuvatha, Calicut, 1997.

[75] See Appendix. No VIII.

carries an altogether different meaning as a byword for prose.[76] The earliest prose works belong to the genre of didactic works like *Vellāti Ma'sāla, Nurul Iman* and *Nurul Islam*. Following the model of these works, many prose works prescribing the religious codes of daily life were composed and published in Malabar.[77] All the textbooks of *Madrasas* were printed in Arabic-Malayalam script, which Mappilas reverently called 'Quran Script'.

Debates reflected in Print media

Print provided an additional fillip to the ongoing debates that ravaged the Mappila religious landscape during the latter half of 19th century. The most prominent among them was known as *Kondotty-Ponnani Kaitharkam*.[78] This feud played a crucial role in the efflorescence of Arabi-Malayalam literature in Malayalam. The earliest in this genre is the elaborate work written by Puthiyakath Bava Musaliyar of Ponnani.[79] The work, addressed to the disciples of Kondotty Thangal, exhorts them to keep away from the wrong path. It is a collection of *fatwas* substantiating the fact that the rituals connected with Kondotty *Tarika* are anti-Islamic and opposed to the principle of *Touhid*, the unity of God. Countering this work of Ponnani faction, Musaliyarakath Ahmad Musaliyar of Kondotty wrote *Al-Busthan* justifying the Kondotty *Tarika*.[80] In reply to this, Puthanveetil Ahmad Musaliyar of Ponnani faction wrote a counter tract *Hayathudhin Wa Mamathul Muanidhin* in 1899 and it was published by Karakkal Saeed Ali.[81] It was approved by the leading *qazis* of Malabar and it was after the publication of this book, certain

[76] M.N. Karassery, "Arabi-Malayalam", in *Kerala Muslims: A Historical Perspective, (*ed), Asgar Ali Engineer, Ajanta Publishers, Delhi, 1995, pp.168-173.

[77] See Appendix IX.

[78] It was a religious feud between the *Tarika* of Kondotty Tangal and the orthodox school represented by Ponnani theologians.

[79] The copy of this is kept in Rousathil Uloom College Library at Feroke.

[80] *MMSP, op. cit.,* p.321.

[81] *Ibid.,* p.322.

customs like *Muharam* celebration and the prostration by disciples before *Thangal*., were abolished at Kondotty *Takia*. Another work of this nature was *Risalath fi Nakshabandi* by Tanur Abdurahiman Sheik (d. 1904) criticizing the *Tarika* of *Nakshabandi*.

Reformist versus Traditionalists

Following Eisenstein's observation that print contributed heavily for the Protestant Reformation in Europe,[82] it could be argued that it was print which facilitated the reform movement within Malabar Islam. With the emergence of the reformist group from 1920's, a kind of 'tract war' began to sweep Malabar. As we have seen in chapter III, the polemical debates were the order of the day in 1930's and 40's and these debates were carried on mainly through the print media in the forms of bills and tracts. As put in by K. Umar Moulavi, a reformist leader, 'this (issuing of bills and tracts) is the earliest and cheapest means to educate people about the true positions related to theological issues and to expose the hollowness of the opponents of Islam. My critics always called me 'notice Moulavi'.[83] Print culture helped to consolidate and diffuse more widely the reforming spirit in Malabar society which naturally collided with the interest of Orthodox *Ulema*. 'Ironically', as suggested by Robinson, 'while print enabled the Ulema to extend their influence in public affairs, it also seriously damaged the roots of their authority, as their monopoly over the transmission of knowledge was broken.[84] A series of tracts, both in prose and poetry, legitimizing their respective positions were composed by both reformists and traditionalists. The earliest in this genre is *Al-Irshadathul Jifriya fi Radi ala Lalath* by Sheik

[82] Elizabath Eisenstein, *The Printing Press as an Agent of Change*, Cambridge University Press, 1979, Vol.I, p.33.

[83] K.Umar Moulavi, *Ormayude Theerath* (Mal), Cochin, 2000, p.71.

[84] Francis Robinson, (ed.), *op. cit.*, p. 80.

Jifri of Calicut (1726-1808) criticizing the views of Abdul Wahab of Najd, the founder of *Wahabi* Movement.[85]

Regarding the direction of Mosque, a serious debate had occurred in Malabar in the first decade of 20th century, which was also reflected in literature. Chalilakath wrote a pamphlet *Tuhfathul Ahbab* (AM) which was published by Sulaiman Musliyar. Again, when an open debate between two groups of scholars about the direction of mosque occurred at Pulikkal in 1910, the whole story of the debate was incorporated in a pamphlet which was published in 1910 by P.N. Ahmad Moulavi with the title *Ishtihar*.[86]

Even prior to the emergence of the Reform Movement in the 1920's, Karimpanakkal Kunhipokker Musliyar (d. 1936) had written *Irshadul Amma* in 1891, opposing the mortuary rituals of Mappilas to which a critique was composed by Chappangadi Hasan Musliyar.[87] He also wrote *Imamath Bidathil Jahiliya*, criticizing the beliefs, which were against the principle of *Touhid*.[88] Similarly M. Kunhava Vydyar of Ponnani (d.1950) wrote *Bidathmala* criticizing the innovative rituals of Malabar Muslims.[89]

Regarding the dispute over the placement of hands criss crossed at the time of *namaz*, the Sunnis rebuked the reformist through a pamphlet *Kai Kettalinte Chattam* (The rule of placing the hands) that was countered by the reformist leader M.C.C Abdurahiman in his *Chattathinoru Chottu*.[90] Sadakathulla Moulavi wrote a counter critique to this called *Chottinoru Thattu*. While the reformists pray with their palms crossed over the chest, the

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[85] P.P Mammad Koya Parappil (herein after Parappil Koya), *Kozhikotte Muslingalude Charithram* (Mal), Focus Publication, Calicut, 1994, p.93.

[86] P.N. Ahmud Moulavi, *Ishtihar*, Amirul Islam Press, Tirurangadi, 1910.

[87] *MMSP*, *op. cit.*, p. 502.

[88] *Ibid.*, p.502.

[89] *Ibid.*, p.509.

[90] K. Moidu Moulavi, *Ormakurippukal* (Mal), PH, Calicut, 1992, p.61.

traditionalists held them crossed below the navel. The point here is that even a trivial issue like this was hotly debated and much paper was wasted for the same. It also shows that many levels of intra community conflict marked Muslim thought and influenced their attitude.

When Issudhin Moulavi wrote a pamphlet *Muslianmarude Pallakkadi* (A blow to *Musaliyar's* belly) ridiculing *moulud* and *ratib*, *which* were a source of income to traditional *Musaliyars*, Pangil Ahmedkutty Musaliyar provided the tit for tat through his *Randakshara Moulavimarude Mandakkadi*[91]. Against *Athouhid* of P. Abdul Qudir Moulavi exposing the innovative rituals of Sunni folk.. P. Moosa Moulavi wrote *Al-Qaulussadid fi Radi Athouhid* which tried to legitimize the *Tawassul Isthigaza* or intercessionary prayers, practiced by traditional *Ulema.*[92] To this K.M. Moulavi wrote a counter-critique titled *Fathul khavi fi Radi alal Furthavi* (AM), reiterating the formulations of Abdul Kader Moulavi of Kannur in his '*Athouhid*'.[93] *Athouhid* was instrumental in disseminating the reformist ideology in Malabar. Vakkom Abdulkader Moulavi's *Saussabah* was a reply to the *Sunni Musaliyars*, when they depicted him as enemy of Islam through their *fatwas*.[94]

In 1925, Abdullakutty Musaliyar of Ponnani wrote '*Ehlan*', despising *Aikya Sagam* and its journal *Al-Irshad* and branding the Sangam as *Wahabis*. Against this book, the secretary of *Aikya Sangam* wrote a letter in *Mathrubumi,* severely criticizing the Musaliyars of Ponnani, whom he

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[91] *Samastha 60th Annual Souvenir*, 1985, p.86. Most of the reformist moulavis were known by their initials like K.M. Moulavi, E.K. Moulavi etc. and the traditional *Ulema* rebuked them as *Randakshara Moulavi*.

[92] KKM Kareem, *K.M.Moulavi Sahib* (Mal), Al-Kathib Publications, Tirurangadi, 1985, p.191.

[93] *Ibid*.

[94]E.K. Moulavi, "V.A Kader Moulavi" in *Vakkom Moulavi Prabandangal Smaranakal*, VM Foundation, Trivandrum, 1982, p.179-182.

considered as the real culprits in innovating the un-Islamic rituals in Malabar.[95] Besides '*Athouhid*', Abdulkader Moulavi wrote two other works, *Siyarathul Khubur* and *Khatamunnubuva*.[96] While the former exposed the hollowness of tomb worship, the latter exposed the claim of Mirza Gulam's prophethood. His last work, *Pravachaka Samaptiyum Mirza Khadiyaniyum* (The end of Prophethood and Mirza Qadiyan) was also an attack against *Ahmadiyas.*[97]

When Ibn Husan, a Qadiyani scholar from Kannur wrote *Tuhfathul Malabar* (AM), Maulana Chalilakath wrote *Qadiyani Khandanam* during the first decade of 20th century.[98] *Radul Wahabiya* of Karipanakkal Muhiyudhin Kutty (Tellicherry Mahikkal Garaib Press, 1927), *Hujjath ul Kaviyathul Wahabi Radd* (song), *Hidayathul Muslimeen Wahabi Radd* (prose), *Sulalathussalam Wahabiradd* (song), *Suwalun wa jawabun* by Abdullkutty Musaliyar (Malharul Muhimmath, Tirurangadi, 1926) *Waliya Radul Wahibiya* (prose), *Wahabi kissa* (prose), *Kadiyan sual Jawab* (published by Haji UM Abdulla, Ponnani), *Qadiyante Radd Tharjama* (UM Abdulla and Sons Ponnani) etc., are works of polemical nature, published in Malabar, in the context of intra-community ideological war through the print-media.[99]

K.M. Moulavi's *Al Wilayathu Wal Karamathu*, (Tirurangadi, 1948) exposes the orthodox claims about the miracles of saints and other holy men.[100] It was a reply to the *Sunnis* regarding their allegation that *Mujahids* did not recognize the miracles of prophets and *walis*. Another book of K.M.

[95] *Mathrubhumi*, 15th May, 1925.

[96] *Yuvakesari*, Issue.9, 1946.

[97] *Ibid.*

[98] K.K.M Kareem, Note no: 92, pp.36-37.

[99] See for details K.O. Samsudhin, *Mappila Malayalam* (Mal), Trivandrum, 1978, pp.106-136.

[100] K.K.M Kareem, Note no: 92, p.187. Also see *Islamic Seminar Review*, Ernakulam, 1965, p.250.

Moulavi, *Al hidaya lla Mahqil Bidi Wa dwalala* (AM), enlightened the Muslims to keep away from the innovative practices like *nercha, kodikuthu* and mortuary practices. Against this, Chundangayil Moideenkutty Musaliyar wrote a critique *Radul Wahabiya*, which was again contested by K.M. Moulavi by another work, *Tanbiul Muslimun*.[101]

The *Satya Vivechanam* published by P.T Mohamadali (Janmabhoomi Press, Calicut), deals with the judicial proceedings of the Muthanur Palli case of 1954.[102] Throughout the deliberations of the case, major issues of contention between the two factions, were severely debated in the court and thus it forms an important source book to study the Sunni-Mujahid debate in Malabar.[103] In 1949 the *Servants of Islam Society* of Calicut wrote *Shia Kunjungalude Ilakiyattam*, criticizing the Sunni leader Pathi Abdul Qadar Musaliyar and in retort, N. Ahmad Haji (d.1977) wrote *Hidayathul Muhminin*.[104]

Popular poets also were involved in this polemical debate through print. In 1932 Kadampott Alavikutty wrote a poem *Parishkara mala* attacking the reformists and *Aikya Sangam*, to which Pulikottil Hydru (1879-1975) in a poetic style of his own replied with his *Parishkara Ghandanakavyam* in the same year.[105] Hydru extols the *Aikya Sangam* in the following words.

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[101] *Ibid*., p.182.

[102] This was a horrible incident that occured in Muthanur, a village near Manjeri in Ernad Taluk, which shows the intensity of the rift between *Mujahids* and *Sunnis*. When a Moulavi, who had affinity towards reformist died, his body was denied burial by the *Mahallu* committee and his body remained unburied for one week. Later the *Sunnis* filed a case but the *Mujahids* won the case.

[103] P.T. Muhammadali in this book *Sathyavivechanam* narrates the whole arguments and counter arguments of both parties in court.

[104] *Samastha 60th Anniversary Souvenir*, p. 100.

[105] *MMSP*, *op. cit.*, p. 532-35.

Aikya Sangam is shining like the sun

It is the light of Muslims

As per the advice of semi-literate *Alims*

The ignorant idiots worship at tombs

Islam cannot be established thus [106]

Mundampra Unni Mammad (1868-1930) of Areekode wrote *Kodikettamala* dealing with an incident that occured at Areacode in 1917. It was a poem that exposed the anti-Islamic rituals connected with Kondotty *nercha varavu*.[107] Nallalam Beeran, another popular poet of Malabar, wrote a poem debasing the reformist group, specifically of Isudin Moulavi in the following words: 'Friends, an organization called *Thimiya Sangam* has emerged in Malayalam, which turns upside down the religion of Islam. Pretending to be a scholar, *a dajjal* (Anti-Christ) among them, reached Calicut and began preaching among people.[108] In reply to this, Pulikottil wrote a poem in which he used unparliamentary words.[109]

Another poet, N. Kunhikammu master (d.1958) of Kondotty wrote two poems about *Aikya Sangam* and their ideology, *Aikya Bhushanam* and

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[106] Pulikottil Hydru, "Duruchuramala", *Pulikkottil Krithikal* (Mal) (ed.), M.N. Karasseri, Wandoor, 1979, p.191.

Kathiram Thilankum Nalla Aikyasamajam
Karinnu Islammorilulla Sirajam
Kathakettavar Khabaril Karammal Pooja
Kazhikkunnathum Muri Alimingale kaula
Islam matham athukondu Sthapikkoola

[107] A.P. Ahmad, "Areekodinte Dhesiyakavi", *Prayanam* Souvenir, YMA, Areacode, nd, pp.25-29.

[108] *MMSP*, *op. cit.*, p.534.

[109] *Ibid.*, p.535.

Khurafath Mala.[110] Kannan Pareekutty, (d.1958) wrote *Kodikuthumala,* despising the rituals like *Kodikuthu* and *nercha* ceremonies.[111] Besides the above-mentioned poems of Pulikottil Hydru, many of his poems like *Kaliyugam*, *Kathukuthumala*, *Sthreemardimala*, *Maranmarude Thakaru* etc. were aimed at reforming the Muslim community, to make them keep pace with the changing world.[112] His poems laid bare all customs and usages which were against the Islamic belief and the progress of the community.

Print, because of its inherent capacity to stock and diffuse information, had given an extra vigour to these debates and preserved them for the future generation.

Works on History

History or the past was used by Mappila writers as a resource for constructing, mobilizing and consolidating their community identity. Just as the modern nation states used the past to legitimize and valorize its project, so too, Mappila community used the past as a legitimizing discourse. Islam, being a historical relgion, Muslims generally gave greater significance to *Tarikh* (History) and it was a part of their syllabi in *Madrassa*. So just like their counterparts in other parts of the world, Mappilas also evolved their own genre of historical literature. To them, history was a great reminder of the knowledge of past experience, which should keep them steadfast in their faith.

Very often, Mappila scholars wrote history in the form of poetry, which were often dramatic, rich in colour and taste, alive with feelings as was natural to the genre of poetry in which they were written. To quote David

[110] *Ibid.*, p.535.

[111] *Ibid.*, p.532.

[112] M.N. Karasseri, (ed.), *op. cit.* , Preface XVI.

Schulman, 'History is written in the dominant literary genre of a particular community located in space at a given moment in time... Each community writes history in the mode that is dominant in its own literary practice.[113] It was difficult to extricate Malabar Mappilas from their literary mode and to make them write history in prose in a period when their dominant mode of expression was poetry. This conscious recasting of poetry for communitarian purpose had an electrifying effect on the Mappila psyches, be it literate or illiterate.

Tuhfathul Mujahideen of Zaik Zainudhin and *Fathul Mubeen* of *Qazi* Mohamed of Calicut were the earliest historical works in verse written in Malabar. These two were works written during the Portuguese period and hence reflect the tension and tribulations of the community due to the hostility of the Portuguese. *Thuhfath* is the earliest historical treatise written in Kerala. Though written with a specific purpose of inciting the fellow Muslims to fight against the Portuguese, Zainuddhin provides a graphic picture about the evolution of the community up to the Portuguese period. Copies of this tract in Arabic were sent to all leading mosques of Kerala during 17th century and this work was instrumental in creating an anti-Christian (*Nasar*) consciousness among Mappilas. *Fathul Mubeen*, written by Qasi Mohamed, the celebrated author of *Muhiyudhin Mala*, deals with the history of the battle between Portuguese and the Muslim-Nair combined forces in 17th century.[114] Along with this, a detailed history of the origin and spread of Mappila community have been provided in it. In the preface to the work, *Qasi* Mohamed says, 'It is to invite the attention of other Muslim rulers of the world that I write this work. Let this news (about the battle) spread to different directions of the world, particularly Syria and Iraq. Then they would

[113] N. Rao, D.Schulman and S.Subramanyam (eds.), *Texture of Time: Writing History in South India 1600-1800*, Permanent Black, Delhi, 2001, pp.5-6.

[114] *MMSP*, *op. cit.*, p.151.

come to know about 'Zamorin and his fight against Portuguese'.[115] As the intention was clear, he wrote it in Arabic in the mode of poetry, the dominent mode of expression during the period. Since both *Tuhfath* and *Fathul Mubin* were written in Arabic, they could not influence the rural *Mappilas* to whom Arabic remained an unintelligible language. It was in 20th century that these works were translated into Malayalam and there by reached a wider audience. In 1935, K. Moosakutty Moulavi of Tirurangadi translated *Tuhfath* in to Malayalam and serialized it in *Al-Murshid*, a Journal (AM) published from Tirurangadi by K.M. Moulavi.[116] Similarly, *Fatuhul Mubin* was also translated and put to print during the first half of 20th century. Both these Mnemo-historic works dealing with earlier instances of resistance to the Portuguese were used later to construct a Mappila identity.

Malappuram padapattu of Moyinkutty Vaidyar written in 1885 is a classic example for Mnemo-history. The first half of the poem is devoted to the narration of the introduction and growth of Islam up to the period of Malappuram battle in 1728 AD. An elaborate narration of the evolution of the community; prophet's mission in Arabia, Perumal's conversion and his meeting with Malik ibn Dinar and his mission in Kerala, Zamorin's tolerance, agrarian background of Malappuram and the tenant-lord conflict, etc.[117] are described in extenso. 'This narration of the historical evolution of the community in a work that deals with an incident in 18th century Malabar was not accidental but intentional. It was like building a *padippura* (gate house) bigger than the house itself'.[118] 'It many not be considered as history by the conventionally oriented observers of modern period probably because, it is

[115] *Ibid., op. cit.,* p.156.

[116] K.K.M. Kareem, Note no: 92, p.174.

[117] K.K.M Kareem, *Malappuram Khissapattu: Vyakhyanam* (Mal) - Islamiya Book Stall, Alway-d.n.

[118] Balakrishnan Vallikunnu, *op. cit.*, p.144.

not dull enough to count as historical narrative'. Ofcourse history and non-history are interwoven in such poems.

Keralacharithram pattu (Song of Kerala History) of Pulikottil Hydru (1879-1975), is another work in poetry that exclusively deals with the history of Muslims in Kerala from its genesis.[119] It is the longest poem written by him. The poet narrates the early history of Mappilas, the secular nature of Zamorin and the Portuguese encounter with Mappilas. Zainudhin's *Tuhfathul Mujahidin*, Firishta's *History*, Akbar Sha Khan's *Ayine Haqiq* (an history text in Urdu), Ibrahimkutty Moulavi's *Kushful Asrar*, Shamsalla Qadiri's *Ancient Malabar* (Urdu) and *Keralolpathi* are the sources which poet depended on in composing this poem.[120] By quoting these sources he was trying to legitimise the authenticity of the narrative. He makes repeated references to the tolerant outlook of Zamorins and the cruelty of the Portuguese. Being written in poetic mode, this was well received by the community.

Mappilas were not averse to the mode of prose in the realm of history. The works of Shujai Moidu Musaliyar (d. 1920) deserve special mention in this regard. His voluminous work *Failul Fayyal* (1887) in Arabic-Malayalam, covers the history of Islam from the genesis to Abbasiya Caliph Nazir.[121] His work *Fathul Fatah* (3 Vols), the last volume of which was completed in 1909 is another work on history. *Kasfuthathar fi Akbari Malaibar* composed by Ibrahim Moulavi, in two volumes, is another work in Arabi-Malayalam dealing with the history of Malabar.[122]

Ibrahim Moulavi of Pulikkal (d.1951) wrote *Malabar Charithram* (AM) in 1929.[123] Earlier, Mohamed Ibn Umar Ba Alavi had written a text in

[119] M.N. Karasseri, (ed), *op. cit.*, pp.141-172.

[120] *Ibid.*, pp.169-171.

[121] *MMSP*, *op. cit.*, p.401.

[122] O.Abu, *op. cit.*, p.130.

[123] *MMSP*, *op. cit.*, p. 526.

Arabic on the history of Mappilas which claimed that Islam reached Kerala during the time of prophet itself'.[124] Another work in Arabic was Kazi Abubacker Kunhi's *Sharah Vithriya*, a comprehensive history text which sheds light into the ancient history of Kerala Muslims.[125] An Arabic work on Mappilas was written by Hazrath Mohamed Ibn Malik, an Islamic missionary who had worked in Malabar Coast and later this was translated by Husain Mullakoya Thangal, the Qazi of Calicut in 1890, for Gopalan Nair, who published it in Malayalam with title *Malayalathile Mappilamar*.[126] *Rihalathul Muluk*, is another work on Malabar Muslims written by a Sufi saint of Kerala.[127]

Vallanchira Khunhamad (1842-1906) of Manjeri wrote *'Akbarul Hind'* narrating the history of Hyder Ali and Tipu Sulthan and their heroic fight against the British. Initially the publishers were reluctant to publish it, fearing that it would invite the wrath of the British authorities.[128] Parol Husain Moulavi's (d. 1954) *Tipu Sulthan* (AM) also depicts the history of Tipu Sulthan. [129] In the backdrop of the anti-British stance of the Mappilas, such works on Muslim rulers who engaged in fierce resistance against the British, might have fuelled the Mappila's fight against oppressors and facilitated the formation of an identity among Mappilas.

Thus, history as a mode of organizing community-memory was not unknown to Malabar Muslims. 'Indeed for the three groups of semitic origin in Kerala, (the Jews, Syrian Christians and the Mappilas) as also for the *Nambudiris* or *Thiyyas*, there was a rich and complex tradition of Mnemo-

[124] *MMSP*, *op. cit.*, p. 169.

[125] *Ibid.*, 158.

[126] Parappil Koya, *op. cit.*, p.113.

[127] *MMSP*, *op. cit.*, p. 129.

[128] *Ibid.*, p. 484.

[129] *Ibid.*, p. 560.

history that they had evolved, to organize their collective memory', says G.Arunima.[130] In both modes, poetry as well as prose, the Mappila scholars tried to narrate their own perception of their past. Thus, the history of Mappilas was intrinsically tied up with the history of remembering.

Print and Anti-Christian Discourse

The fear among Muslims in the context of Christian missionary propaganda provided inspiration for the growth and development of Muslim press in Malabar and Travancore. Interestingly enough, the Muslims were forced to switch over from Arabi-Malayalam to Malayalam in the context of this debate with Christians. The 'defenders of Islam' wrote their tracts in chaste Malayalam as against Arabi-Malayalam script, which was illegible either to Christians or to the general public. Besides, by 20th century, the *Mappila* attitude that Malayalam was the language of Hindus also began to be softened. This switch over from Arabi-Malayalam to Malayalam in its pure form, gradually led to its acceptance even by the orthodox Muslim *Ulema.* The new generation of educated Muslims discarded Arabi-Malayalam and began to produce their works in Malayalam.

In response to the propaganda of Christian missionaries, a host of tracts were published in Malayalam during the last decades of 19th century. The uneasiness felt at the propaganda of missionaries was reflected in the pages of these religious tracts, as well as Muslim journals of the period between 1890-1930. This uneasiness felt by educated Muslims, as pointed out by Rafiudhin Ahmad in Bengal's context, about missionary activities seemed more a reaction to the nature of the latter's propaganda than to any large scale conversion.[131] Christian missionaries in north Malabar, like Herman Gundert

[130] G. Arunima, "Print, Language, Public Sphere in Colonial Keralam", *IESHR*, 43,1 Sage, Delhi., 2006, pp.63-75.

[131] Rafiudhin Ahmad, *The Bengal Muslims: 1871-1906: A quest for Identity,* OUP, Delhi, 1996, p.97.

and Samuel Ambatt, depicted Muslims and their divinities in derogatory terms.[132] They profusely used imagery like 'Devil Muhamad' in their missionary tracts.[133] Such writings of missionaries provoked furious rebuttals from the Muslim press, embittering the dialogue between Christian crusaders and the Muslims. The debate of the 'defenders of Islam' in Malabar like Makti Thangal with Christian missionaries, imparted an acerbic tone to the Muslim press in Kerala during the first decades of 20th century. The increasing apprehension of Muslims was reflected in their writings, which evolved in to propaganda in self-defense.

It was Makti Thangal (1874-1912), a native of Ponnani, who started the ideological crusade against Christian missionaries in Kerala.[134] In *Iman Salamath* (Protection of Faith), Makti appealed to Muslims to set aside a portion of their earning for the protection and propagation of religion.[135] The principal means, through which he tried to counteract the growing influence of Christian missionaries, was the publication of religious tracts. The following are the main tracts he published -*Kadora kudaram* (1884), *Satyadarsini* (1891), *Parkalitha Porkalam* (1891), *Kristiya Mooda Proudi Darpanam* (1900).[136] All these were in a sense counter-tracts to Christian pamphlets like *Vishuda Venmazhu* (Vidwankutty) *Kadorahani* (Varapuzha mission), *Vijnanolmulaveumazhu*, *Vijnanadarpanam* (Paduva 1894), *Abdul*

[132] See Chapter III.

[133] M.R. Raghava Varier, *Amma Vazhi Keralam* (Mal), Trichur 2006, p.149.

[134] See Chapter III. It was almost during this period, in Bengal, Munshi Meherulla (1861-1907) began his anti-Christian missionary activities. Mehrulla's first treatise *Hollowness of Teachings of Christianity* in Bengali and Makti's *Kadora Koodaram* came out in 1886 itself.

[135] K.K.M. Kareem, *Sayyid Sanahulla Makti Tangal* (Biography-Mal) (hereinafter *SSMT*) KIM, Tirur, 1981, p.24.

[136]KKM Kareem (Compiler), *Makti Thangalude Sampoornakrithikal*, 1981, (herein after *MTSK*), KIM Tirur, pp.987-1047, Makti's other works include: *Thandan Kandamala, Thandante Kondata Chenda, Christeeya Vayadappu, Makti Samvada Jayam, Dampacharavichari, Islam valu Dhaiva valu, Palilla payasam, Moodahankaram Mahandhakaram*, etc.

Qader Mudalaliyum Munsifum (Kottayam, 1895) etc. All the tracts of Makti were written in highly sanskritised Malayalam, not only for reaching out to the general public but also to prove that Muslims were not lagging in their command over Malayalam language. To use Amilcar Cabral's terminology, Makti was using this chaste Malayalam as a 'weapon of the weak'. Makti also turned against Hinduism, when he published a tract called *Satyadarshini* in 1901, which was a critique of Hinduism and its, polytheistic practices.[137] A separate journal, *Ahamodayam* was started to expose the hollowness of Hinduism.

After Makti, the task was undertaken by his disciples all over Kerala. Chekku Molla of Kondotty, a disciple of Makti, who engaged in polemical debates with Christians, wrote *Islam Christhava Samvadam*.[138] A.K. Ali Mohamed Sha, another disciple, wrote *Satyaviswasa Sakshyam* in 1937. About his guru, he wrote, 'Through the umpteen works that extol the virtue of Islam and through organizing sermons, Makti Thangal enlightened *Mappilas* about the greatness and glory of Islam.[139] When Father Mannassery came out with his *Satyamataneshanam* which despised prophet as a womanizer and a bandit, C.K. Bava Sahib, editor of *Muhamadali* (1920-21) countered it through his book, *Satyamatasaram*. *Ishaath*, a Muslim missionary journal, published a series of articles in 1934 against the book of Manassery.[140] Later Father Manassery through an article in '*Ishaath*' titled *Samudaya Samakhan* repented to Muslim community for offending their sentiments.[141]

B. Mahinkutty's *Valal Prachericha Matham Ethu*? (which is the religion that was spread by sword?), published in 1936, is an attempt to counter the missionary allegation that Islam was a religion spread by sword.

[137] K.K.M. Kareem, *MTSK*, p.237.

[138] K.K.M. Kareem, *SSMT*, *op. cit.*, p.95.

[139] Ali Mohamed Sahib, *Satya Sakshyam* (Mal.), Kodungallur, 1937, p.118.

[140] *Ishaath*, Vol.2, No.3, 1934 (Kottayam).

[141] *Ishaath*, Vol.2, No.5, 1934 (Kottayam).

The book raised a serious complaint that the prescribed textbooks of schools were indirect means to spread Christianity.[142] A.M. Abdul Kader of Eriyad (d.1962) wrote three works in this genre - *Apposthalanmarude Aswasapradan*, *Vedopedesam* and *Christhu Daivamalla*.[143] Abdurahiman Musaliyar's *Raddunnasara* (AM) and Puthanveetil Ahmad Musaliyar's *Hayathudhin* (A.M) were polemical works against Christianity.[144]

Towards the middle of 20th century, some Islamic missionary tracts turned their focus towards Hinduism also, especially in the context of missionary work of Arya Samaj in Kerala. As early as 1924, *Aikya Sangam* had taken a decision to establish a missionary organization to counter the Arya Samaj.[145] Moulana Muhamadali Memorial Library, Cochin published *Samathvam Evide*? (Where is equality) which laid bare the ideology of Arya Samaj.[146] It equated Arya Samaj with a dam, which tries to arrest the flow of scheduled castes to other religions. Supporting the views of B.A Sukumaran, the *Izhava* leader, that Islam was the only assylum to the lower castes of Malabar, the book exhorted the *daliths* to keep away from Arya Samaj and embrace the democratic religion of Islam.[147] Similarly C.V. Abdurahiman Hydros (1885-1947) of Cochin, a disciple of Makti, wrote three works with the intention of attracting *daliths* to Islam. They were *Islamum Ayithocharanavum* (Islam and untouchability), *Islamum Harijanodharanavum* (Islam and Harijan Uplift) and *Islamika Sahodaryam* (Islamic Brotherhood) and all these works tried to uphold the universal

[142] *Mathrubhumi*, Book review, March 7, 1936.

[143] C.K. Kareem, (ed.), *KMD, op. cit.*,p.7.

[144] O. Abu, *Arabi-Malayala Sahitya Charithram* (Mal.), NBS, Kottayam, 1971. p.135.

[145] *Mathrubhumi* 29, May 1924.

[146] Moulana Mohamadali Library, *Samathvam Evide*? (Mal.), Kamal Book Depot, Cochin, 1936.

[147] *Ibid.*, p.15.

brotherhood of Islam and the democratic space within it.[148] All these works were published from Malabar Islam Book Depot, which he himself set up at Cochin in 1913, with a missionary intention.

K.H. Sulaiman wrote *Swantanta Samudayavum Muslingalum* (Muslims and the independent community) in 1935 as a reply to E. Madhavan's *Swatantra Samudayam* (Independent community). Madhavan, in his work, had advised *Ezhavas* to free themselves from the fold of Hinduism and form an independent community. [149] He had also criticized Muslims for their opposition to Sarada Bill (fixing the age of marriage) and their objection to eating pork.[150] Sulaiman, in his book, countered all the allegations of Madhavan, on the basis of 'Scientific truth'.[151] B. Mahinkutty's *Islamum Athakritharum* (Islam and Untouchables) published by *Ishaath* society, Alleppey in 1936, is another attempt to prove the egalitarian face of Islam.

The above survey shows that many tracts were published during the first half of 20th century, running down Christianity and Hinduism and replying to Christian tracts against Islam in the same vein. The increasing apprehension of Muslims was reflected in these writings, which evolved in to a sort of propaganda in self-defense. This missionary literature of Muslims helped to restore confidence in their faith in Islam and arouse a consciousness in them of the superiority of Islamic culture.

Muslim Literature during the Reform phase

[148] *MMSP*, *op. cit.*, p. 443.

[149] K.H. Sulaiman, *Swantantra Samudayavum Muslingalum* (Mal.), Sarasan Publicity Bureau, Cochin, 1935.

[150] This book was proscribed by Travancore and Cochin govts.

[151] An example of the authors 'Scientific truth' would be contextual. According to him Islam prohibited pork eating on a scientific basis. The pig when involved in mating with one invites other partners for the same. In the character formation the food that is eaten is important and hence a pork eater will turn to be as immoral as pigs in sexual relations (K.H. Sulaiman, *op. cit.*,p.24).

We also come across umpteen prose works in Malayalam, which shed light on the different aspects of Islamic life. An analysis of all these works would be out of the scope of this study.[152] These works reflect the concern of Muslim literati in Malabar in the context of onslaught of modernity. For instance, when socialist ideology began to exercise its influence in the public sphere of Malabar, Muslim scholars tried to depict Islam as the best socialist ideology. In 1938, C.N. Ahmad Moulavi wrote *'Islamile Danavitharana Paddathi* (The distribution of wealth in Islam) which tried to counter the arguments of socialist writers against Islam and other religions.[153] A Malik Muhamad's *Islamum Sthithisamathavum* (Islam and Socialism) published in 1936, was another venture in this respect and this was written to prevent Muslims from drifting towards communist movement, which was making inroads in Malabar in 1930's. [154]

Another attempt of the Muslim literati was to depict Islam as the best option in the modern context. For instance, A. Ammu of Calicut, in his *Pravachakanum Adunikathavum* (Prophet and Modernity) published in 1931, examines the life and message of prophet Mohamed in the backdrop of modernity and proves that the message of Islam is the most relevant ideology in the modern world.[155] This work also signifies the command that Muslim writers achieved over Malayalam language as it profusely used sanskritised Malayalam.[156] 'Gender justice' was another issue taken up by the literati during this period. T.K. Mohamed's *Islamile Sthrikal* (Women in Islam)

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[152] A list of such works has been given in Appendix.XI.

[153] Shihabudhin, "C.N. Ahmad Moulavi" (Mal.), in *Prabhodanam*, Special Issue, 1998, Calicut, pp.96-97.

[154] A. Malik Mohamed, *Islam and Socialism* (Mal.), Manomohanam Press, Kollam, 1936.

[155] A. Ammu, *Nabiyum Adunikathavum* (Prophet and Modernity) (Mal), Madrasathul Muhamediya Sahitya Samiti, Calicut, 1931.

[156] *Deepika*, Vol.1, Issue 10, 1932.

published in 1932, deals with the Islamic concept of women.[157] K.M. Moulavi's *Islamum Sthreekalum* (Islam and Women) is another venture in this regard. Similarly, *Sahrudopaharam* published by E.M. Habeeb Mohamed in 1930, is a collection of essays by Muslim scholars on various subjects related to Muslims in Kerala.[158] These essays give us a picture about the concerns and aspirations of educated Muslims in 1920's and 1930's. It is to be noted that although most of these Malayalam works were printed outside Malabar, majority of the authors and readers were from Malabar and hence these works had great impact in shaping the mentality of the Muslims of Malabar.

Muslim Journals and Community consciousness

An assessment of the vernacular press has to be part of an enquiry in to the construction of separate identity. The expanding print and publication market served as the main fount of the communitarian discourse. The dissemination of this discourse was facilitated by an exponential growth of print market, particularly after the relaxation of government control. In 1835, Charls Metcalf abolished restrictions on printing, especially native printing. Vernacular press is an excellent source from where to begin exploring the early narrative on Muslim identity. As Aysha Jalal points out 'Gyanerdra Pandey's single minded determination to portray 'communalism' as a 'construction' of colonial discourse entails missing out much of the context and texture of communitarian narrative of the period.[159] Hence, an analysis of the vernacular press in the first half of 20th century, enables us to perceive its vital contribution in the construction of a narrative of identity.

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[157] T.K. Mohamed Veliyamkode, *Islamile Sthrikal* (Women in Islam), National Book Depot, Ponnani, 1932.

[158] E.M. Habib Mohamed Edava, (ed.), *Sahrudopaharam* (Mal.), T.V. Press, Quilon, 1930.

[159] Aysha Jalal, *op. cit.*, p.52.

The Muslims of Kerala were aware of the importance of print media in the development of a community. In an appeal by the editor of *Kerala Chandrika*, a Muslim weekly started in 1919, this urgency was echoed. He says, "In the present context, journals are the light houses of any community or nation. It is the citadel that protects the community. In the absence of journals for Muslims, it will steep in darkness. Nobody will listen to such community and will be trampled by other communities, who are involved in a rat race for development. It is only after the publication of *Kerala Chandrika* that Government and other communities became aware of the civic rights of the Muslims".[160] A.M. Abdul Kader, the editor of *Muslim* monthly also airs the same view in an article in *Mathrubhumi* titled 'Mappilas of Malayalam'. He says, 'On a war footing, efforts have to be made to create real consciousness about religion through books, magazines, dailies and pamphlets'.[161] Syed Bava Sahib also enlightened the Muslims about the urgency of appropriating the print media. He says, 'Had the Muslim press been popular in Kerala, the community would not have been so steeped in ignorance and poverty .... The progress and reform of the community depends on the quality and quantity of print media owned by a community. The development of the community is directly proportional to the popularity of press among its members. While an increased number of people belonging to Nair, Christian and Ezhava communities feel that it is a disgrace not to subscribe a newspaper which work for the welfare of their respective communities, the Muslims are ignorant about such a development per se ..... Hence, the wealthy section of the community have to share a part of their wealth to resolve this lacuna within the community.[162]

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[160] *Mathrubhumi,* 12th July, 1923.

[161] *Mathrubhumi,* August 7, 1923.

[162] Syed M. Bava Sahib, "Muslims and Journalism" in *Sahrutdayopaharan* (ed.), E.M. Habeeb Mohammad, TV. Press, Quilon, 1934, pp. 33-50.

The above concern of the Muslim literati in the early decades of 20th century shows that the Muslims also became aware of the potential of print media, in the over all development of the community.

It was the anti-Islam propaganda of Christian missionaries and the Islamic revivalist movement that provided the initial pull for the development of Muslim journalism in Malabar. There were many short-lived Muslim journals in Arabi-Malayalam and Malayalam. The first Muslim journal in Malayalam was *Kerala Deepakom* published by Kadar Haji of Kochi, in 1878.[163] The chaste Malayalam in which it was written was the language of better-educated urban middle class and hence had a restricted clientele. Thus, owing to the indifference of Muslims towards reading a Malayalam journal, it had a premature death. Kadars Haji also published a second journal *Satyaprakasam* in 1899. It was natural that these journals had a very little popularity among the rural Muslim masses, to whom the language of 'Malayalam' itself was a 'forbidden one'.

C. Saidalikutty, the Pioneer of Muslim Jouranlism in Malabar

The doyen of Muslim journalism in Malabar was C. Saidali Kutty Master of Tirur in Malabar. Born in 1856 at Tirur, he served as a school Inspector in Malabar.[164] He was a multi faceted personality but it was in the domain of journalism that he is remembered for. He registered a *Salahul Iqwan* company at Tirur with six directors. In 1899, he started the '*Salahul Iqwan*' a monthly from Tirur and it lasted for about eight years.[165] In an editorial of the same in 1903, Saidali Kutty wrote 'our *Salahul Iqwan* was started in H.E. 1317 (1899). Now we are entering the 4th year. The

[163] C.H. Mohammed Koya, "Kerala Muslims and Journalistic Activities" in P.A. Syed Mohammed (ed.), *Kerala Muslim Directory*, Kerala Publication, Cochin, 1960, pp. 459-467.

[164] *MMSP*, *op. cit.*, p. 406.

[165] *Ibid*., p.407.

difficulties in the past three years were beyond our limit and God alone knows about the trails and tribulations. During the first year, 177 issues were brought out and those issues touched up on all knowledge that a man should know. Besides this, a brief description of the attributes (*Sifath*) of Allah was also given in those issues'.[166] The paper dealt with all the developments in the Muslim world, including the reforms within Turkey.[167] The translation of *Aliflaila* was published serially in *Salahul Iqwan*.

After the demise of *Salahul Iqwan* in 1909, he started another journal *Rafiqul Islam* (AM) which lasted for two years. [168] Makti Thangal, Chalilakath Abdulla Moulavi, Madampi Alavi Musliyar, V.M. Moulavi Kokkur were the main scholars who wrote scholarly articles in this journal.[169] A study of the back volumes of this journal shows that the reverberations within Malabar Islam were amply reflected in its pages. For instance, in one of the issues, the journal provides a clue to the polemical debates that ravaged Malabar. The editor says, "As far as the Malabar Muslims are concerned, they are not yet free from the heat and dust of debates... the rift between the clappers (*Kaimuttukar*) and non-clappers (*Kaimuttillathavar*) of Calicut Town which had begun generations before, still continues. The debate around *Wahadathul Wajud* in Balapattanam is almost settled. The Ahmadiyas of Kannur have spread to Calicut also. The *La-majud* debate of Taliparamba has spread to Cochin and Travancre areas. The *Qibla* dispute in Tirurangadi has reached to all parts of Malabar. It is requested that all these rival groups may settle their points in the light of scriptures and avoid any breach of peace and tranquillity of the country".[170]

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[166] *Salahul Iqwan*, Issue 1, Book 4, 1903.

[167] *MMSP, op. cit.*, p. 408.

[168] *Ibid.*, p, 408.

[169] *Ibid.*

[170] *Rafiqual Islam*, Vol.2. Issue 4, 1910 as reproduced in *MMSP*, *op. cit.*, p.408-409.

C. Saidali Kutty Master himself wrote many articles, most of which were translation from Arabic and English journals like *Al Muayyid, Review of Religions, Health Magazine*, etc.[171] Most of the developments in Islamic world were covered in it and thereby kept the Muslims of Malabar in touch with the latest developments around the world. Even articles dealing with the necessity of breast feeding (translation of an article from Indian Ladies Magazine) coud be seen in *Salahul Iqwan*.[172] It was through '*Salahul Iqwan*' that Saidalikutty manufactured the consent among the *Mappila* for liturgical change of *Khutaba* (Friday Sermon) into regional language.[173] Saidalikutty published a series of articles, explaining the urgency of rendering *Khutuba* in regional language, as Arabic was Greek to majority of Mappilas. He used to report in *Salahul Iqwan*, a regular news item, regarding the popular enthusiasm in various *mahals* where the sermon had been delivered in Malayalam.[174]

Saidalikutty published a series of lead articles in *Salahul Iqwan* proving that earth is round in shape, which was appreciated by the educated section and condemned by the orthodox *Ulema* of Malabar.[175] It was to counter the argument of Nuhukannu Musaliyar in his *Fathunnur* (AM) that Saidalikutty published three articles regarding the shape of earth.[176] He wrote two regular columns, one titled *Muslims and new education* and the other

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[171] *MMSP*, *op. cit.,* p. 65.

[172] *Salahul Iqwan*, 1st October, 1901.

[173] *Salahul Iqwan*, Book.2, Issue 7, December 1900. This has been discussed in Chapter III.

[174] See various issues of *Salahul Iqwan* of 1900- 1901, pp.64-65, [Book 2, Issue 7, 1900 Dec.7. Vol. 3, Issue 7-1901 and Vol. 3, Issue 14, 1901] as reproduced in *MMSP*..

[175] Abu Majida, "Kerala Muslimukalum Pathrapravathanavum", *Prabhodanam* special issue, 1998, pp.105-113.

[176] K.K.M Kareem, Note no. 28, p.80.

Muslims and Science in *Salahul Iqwan* and later these two collections were published in book form.[177]

Makti Thangal wrote two articles in *Salahul Iqwan* exhorting the Muslims to get rid of the system of Matriliny, which he believed was against the tenets of Islam.[178] Both these journals were in Arabi-Malayalam and hence it could make inroads among the rural *Mappilas* of Malabar. While *Salahul Iqwan* lasted for eight years from 1899 to 1906, the *Rafiqul Islam* lived for five years from 1906 to 1910. Having got wide range of circulation among Muslim public and the *Ulema* in particular, both could bring about a qualitative change within the Muslim community of Malabar. Both published valuable articles, contributed by the Muslim intellectuals of the day like Hamadani Thangal, Makti Thangal and Vakkom Moulavi and gave a new thrust to the movement of revivalism that set in motion in Malabar. As Makti Thangal wrote in *Salahul Iqwan*, *"b*y reading my books, the enlightened Muslims as well as Hindus are defeating the Christians in debates. It is a matter of joy to Muslims and sorrow to Christians that much knowledge about Islam, hitherto unknown, have become familiar in Kerala and thereby the light of Islam glows in this land".[179] In a letter in Salahul Iqwan, Makti lamented, 'If anybody reads my articles and books, faith will sprout in him and the faith of the ambivalent will be fixed ... But this kind of joy or enthusiasm (in defeating the Christians) cannot be seen among the Malayalam Muslims, because their wisdom is still enveloped by clouds'.[180]

Missionary Journals of Makti Thangal

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[177] *MMSP*, *op.cit.,* p.411.

[178] *Salahul Iqwan,* Vol.4, Issue 9, 18th November,1902 and *Salahul Iqwan,* Vol.4, Issue 10, 1st January, 1903.

[179] *Salahul Iqwan*, Vol.5, Issue 8, 21st July, 1903.

[180] *Salahul Iqwan*, Vol. 5, Issue 4, 1st May 1903.

It was Makti Thangal (1847-1912), the 'defender of Islam', who profusely used the print media in his effort to counter Christian allegations against Islam. Besides writing in other journals like *Salahul Iqwan*, he himself started journals at different parts of Kerala. In 1890, he had started Mohamadiya press at Cochin. But even prior to that in 1888, he started a weekly *Satyaprakasam* with Kadars Haji as sub editor, which lasted only for nine months.[181] In 1894, he started a fortnightly, namely *Tuhfuth Akiyar Hidayathul Ashrar,* which fought relentlessly against Muslims orthodoxy.[182]

Makti's next venture in this domain was *paropakari*, a fortnightly from Calicut, which lasted for three years. It was through *paropakari* that he used to provide 'tit for tat' to Christian missionaries. He dared to start '*Paropakari*' in Malayalam, when majority of Muslims were unable to read Malayalam. It was the Hindus who helped him to publish this magazine.[183] After the demise of *Satyaprakasam*, which Makti started from Travancore, he shifted his venue to Calicut.[184] In *Makti Manaklesam*, his autobiographical account, he says 'Due to *Paropakari*, I was forced to dispose of my house and I have been wandering like a cat with its babies, without food and help. My own brotheren are afraid of giving me a rented house'.[185]

He planned to start a new journal called *'Nityajeevan'* and he appealed the Muslims of Malabar to help him financially in this regard. In *Salahul Iqwan* he wrote, 'Due to the allegations and verbal assaults of Christians, the sorrows of Muslims are increasing. Islam is in trouble due to the inability to give defensive reply to them..... . In the absence of proper financial assistance, I am unable to print and publish them (the replies to the allegations). Once

[181] KKM Kareem, *SSMT*, *op. cit.*, p.18.

[182] *Ibid.*, p. 20.

[183] Makti Thangal, *Makti Manaklesam*, in *MTSK*, p.1035-36.

[184] Parappil Koya, *op. cit.*, p.249.

[185] KKM Kareem, , *MTSK*, *op. cit.*, pp.1033-35.

these replies are published, the Christians will perish and Islam will succeed.....[186] In 1909, he started *Turkey Samacharam* which used to publish articles on Osmania Caliphs and their socio-economic progress, but it could not survive beyond six months.[187] The sudden demise of all the journals started by Makti Thangal due to lack of public support, speaks about the general condition of Muslims in literacy during the dawn of 20th century.

Nationalist Journals

Calicut, the capital of Malabar District of Madras presidency, was also the cultural capital of Malabar Muslims. Many Muslim magazines and journals were published from Calicut during the first half of 20th century. In 1922, the first Muslim newspaper in British Malabar was started and this was published every Wednesday. Karaparambu Imbi Mohamed, a progressive nationalist Muslim of Calicut, was the editor.[188] The paper, which mainly covered war news, lasted only for one year.

Hidayath started in November 1922 from Calicut, was another journal of nationalistic moorings, with K. Ahmad as the editor.[189] Later, when the press was disposed of by the owner, he was forced to stop publishing and a 'Hidayath protection sangam' was orgaized by the editor for raising fund for setting up a press for *Hidayath* and it was revived in 1924. But it could not survive after 1926, but within this short span of life, *Hidayath* stood for Hindu-Muslim Unity in Malabar.

***Al-Ameen* and the Mappilas**

[186] *Salahul Iqwan*, Vol. 3, Issue 18, 1902.

[187] KKM. Kareem, *SSMT*, *op. cit.*, p.23.

[188] Parappil Koya, *op. cit.*, p. 249.

[189] *Ibid.*, p. 249.

Among the Muslim journals of Calicut, the most lasting impact was made by *Al-Ameen*, the monthpiece of the 'nationalist' Muslims of Malabar. The soul of this journal was Mohamad Abdurahiman, the veteran leader of the congress party in Malabar. It was started on 12th October 1924 (on a *Miladunnabi* day) as a trimonthly but became a daily on 4th August, 1930.[190] During the post Rebellion period, the loyalist newspapers published cooked up reports about the rebellion, with deliberate intention of wrecking the national movement. As Vidwan T.K. Raman Menon, the sub editor of *Al-Ameen* observed, 'During that period, except *Mathrubhumi*, all Malayalam papers (*Keralapatrika, Manorama, Kerala Sanchari* and *Mitavadi*) and all English papers (*West Coast Reformer, West-Coast spectator* and *Champion*) did not dare to publish articles in favour of national movement or against the government. It was at this juncture that the second nationalist paper, *Al-Ameen* began to be published from Calicut.[191] Even the nationalist paper *Mathrubhumi* took a partisan stand in covering the rebellion.[192] Thus, an effective media to counter such a move and to present a matter of fact picture of the rebellion before the general public necessitated the establishment of a national newspaper in Malayalam.[193] It was in this backdrop that Abdurahiman Sahib decided to start *Al-Ameen*. But along with this, he had some other objectives like the reform and regeneration of Muslim community and to inculcate national consciousness among Muslims.

It is difficult to summarise all the subjects covered by a newspaper like *Al-Ameen*, which survived for one and half decades. To what extent this

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[190] S.K. Pottekkat et al., *Mohamed Abdurahiman: A Political Biography* (Mal), Calicut, 1978, p. 139.

[191] *Ibid.*, p. 146.

[192] See Chapter, 'Representation of the Rebellion and its Aftermath'.

[193] Mohamed Poozhikuthu, *Muhamed Abdurahiman pursuits and perspectives of nationalist Muslim*, an un-published Ph.D thesis submitted to University of Calicut, 2005, p.186.

nationalist newspaper of the Muslims of Malabar helped to bring about an identity among the Malabar Muslims, is the pertinent question here. *Al-Ameen* was never hesitant to use Islamic idioms for nationalist cause. The paper profusely quoted from *Quran* and *Hadith*, even when dealing with the most secular subjects. In an article in *Al-Ameen* of 6th July 1930 captioned *Jihadul Akbar*, with regard to Civil Disobedience Movement, the writer observes:

'If love of one's country is a part of his faith, if Islam is a religion that extols the message of freedom, it is the duty of true Muslim to sacrifice everything for the freedom and salvation of mother country and renounce life in the path of God....The great *nabi* [prophet], the *Khalifas* and *Imams* employed their valuable lives to win freedom from Unrighteousness and injustice. The flag of Islam bears the sign of establishment of freedom. The holy Qura shows the way to the ladder of freedom ...If there are any among Muslims who deride this passive resistance, they are guilty of having contravened the order of Islam. They are rats that nibble and eat up the great message of great *nabi* ... The great *nabi* himself has said that air, water and salt should not be taxed ...Muslim who die in the war of salt law breaking will certainly deserve compensation from God and will be blessed..... May this war of salt Satyagraha, the war of freedom, this *Jihadul Akbar* be victorious.[194]

In connection with boycott of foreign cloths, *Al-Ameen* wrote, 'If Kerala welcomes foreign cloth chucked out from other province, it reflects everlasting dishonour on the people and will be an unpardonable sin that we commit against our woeful motherland and that this action calculated to help

[194] *Al-Ameen*, 6th July 1930, MNNPR, July-Aug, 1930, p. 1069, TNA.

foreign capitalism, which has sucked India to dry skeleton, will not be approved even by *Allah*'.[195]

Regarding the same issue, Al-Ameen exhorted the Muslims of Kerala to engage themselves in manufacture of Swadeshi cloth and thus help the material uplift of them, not to disgrace their holy religion by bringing foreign cloth during *Ramzan* month and to prove to the world by helping the Swadeshi movement that Muslims of Kerala are not behind others in patriotism.[196]

Al-Ameen took up all the issues concerned with the Mappilas of Malabar like repeal of Mopla Outrages Act, Restoration of Mamburam Tangals, fight against Anadaman scheme, education of the Muslims etc. *Al-Ameen* deplored that the government of India did not provide the same concessions to *Haj* pilgrims as they give to Christian and Hindu pilgrims in respect of railway fare during Christimas time and important Hindu festivals and prayed that concession be extended to *Haj* pilgrims also.[197] *Al-Ameen* of 29th September, 1925, in a leading article, condemning the Andaman scheme, observed that 'it was in the interest of Islam that Mappilas were being sent to Andamans. The arguments were on the lines already reported from time to time. It was also stated that the supply of cheap labour to develop islands was one of the motives for launching the scheme while the interior motive of government was to prevent once for all the return of Mappila convicts to Malabar and to destroy the 'turbulent race' in Andamans'.[198] The paper concluded that the scheme should be opposed by means of vigorous propaganda and public meetings. The propaganda work was taken up by *Al-Ameen* for years.

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[195] *Al-Ameen*, 21st Nov. 1930, MNNPR, Nov-Dec, 1930, p. 1779, TNA.

[196] *Al-Ameen*, 8th Jan. 1931, MNNPR, Jan-March, 1931, p.82.

[197] *Al-Ameen*, dated 5th Jan. 1933.

[198] *Al-Ameen*, dated 29 Sept. 1925, MNNPR, Sept. Oct. 1925.

Another issue, which Al-Ameen continuously raised, was the release of Mappila prisoners. Regarding this, in a long leading article *Al-Ameen* comments:

"At the time of riots, our Ma-Bap Government considered it to be an offence for a person to be born as Mappila at places where the riots occurred. At that time everybody raised a hue and cry to beat and kill the Mappilas. But the mentality of people at large has now given up the hard view that Mappila is still a Mappila.... Can anybody deny that they are political prisoners according to their status in life? What do all these proclaim except the weakness of Muslim community?[199] The paper therefore calls upon the community and its leaders to bestir themselves to bring about the release of Mappila prisoners.

About the Mopla Outrages Act, *Al-Ameen* made an ardent appeal to the leaders of Mappila community, deploring their lethargy and urging them to take united action to repeal of Mopla Outrages Act. It observed, 'There is no doubt whatever that if this lawless law continues to have a place in the statute book, it will be a source of unceasing danger to the Muslim community. Let the section authorising the inhuman burning of dead body and procedure followed in some cases of killing Mappilas and burning them with dogs, redound for ever to the credit of glorious British administration.[200] The article pointed out that it was the most opportune moment for the Mappilas leaders to agitate intensely and to create public opinion in this direction.[201]

In another lead article, *Al-Ameen* reminded the Muslims of the sufferings of *Mappila* in the Rebellion of 1921 thus :

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[199] *Al-Ameen*, 4th Jan. 1931, MNNPR, p.104.

[200] *Al-Ameen*, 9th March 1931, MNNPR, p.381.

[201] *Ibid*.

'The grief which our poor brothers and sisters had to suffer is indescribable. How many of them became the targets for shots of British soldiers and how many of them received on themselves their sharp byonets, suffocated in the wagon and not having a drop of water to quench their thirst, how many died biting each other and drinking each other's blood in fierceness of that thirst. It is difficult to describe in what various ways poor Muslim women and children were maltreated'.[202]

Even when criticizing the government against the Vernacular Press Act *Al-Ameen* used a religious tone. The paper says 'Prophet *Nabi* has said' – speak the truth eventhough it may cause you trouble – It looks as if it will not be possible at present especially in Malabar to conduct a paper in accordance with prophet's holy word ...*Al-Ameen* has been living till now bearing the gravity of these words of *Rasul* [Prophet] well in mind. But it seems some people are attempting to make *Ameen* live like a 'deaf devil'.[203]

Another issue, which *Al-Ameen* consistently raised, was Muslim Education. Umpteen articles in this regard were published in it through out its career. In 1925 itself Al-Ameen wrote – 'it cannot but be said that the indifference shown by people, the leading men and the Government in the matter of Muslim education in Malabar has now become notorious. The government themselves have often said that constant recurrences of riots in Malabar is due to want of education. How far have government tried to remove ignorance, which they themselves say that is the cause of roits'.[204]

In the editorial titled 'Two words to Muslims' Al-Ameen examines the causes of the decline of Muslims in Malabar:

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[202] *Al-Ameen*, 22 April 1931, p. 592, TNA

[203] *Al-Ameen*, 29th July 1930, p. 1193, TNA.

[204] *Al-Ameen*, 29th Jan 1925, MNNPR, 1925, p. 495, TNA.

'What will be the mentality of those who think about the condition of 15 lakhs of Muslims of Kerala? Anybody's heart will be torn to see the plight of Kerala Muslims who neither know nor try to know the cause of this downfall. The cause of this downfall is nothing but that we have lost that power which caused progress in the past. The more we neglected the teachings of the prophet, the more we began to decline. We lost our pride and glory. No education, no wealth and, above all, we lack a community structure to live like a community. The moment the beauty of Islam ceased to throb our hearts, the beginning of our decline also set in. We began to forgo the traditions of prophet and *Bidaths* [innovations] began to creep in to our religion. The only way out now is to practice the tenets of our religion in our daily life ...The Muslims should be ready to desist, if needed ready to fight, the designs of the enemies to destroy our community. It is a period when rampant competition is going on between different communities and in this scramble, if they want success the Muslims have to make others understand that no one can rival them in terms of solidarity and material well being.[205]

These types of communiterian appeals were incessantly made through the pages of *Al-Ameen* for about 15 years and being the most popular daily among Mappilas of Malabar, these appeals had its impact. As pointed out by K. Umar Moulavi, 'those who had written about Sahib and his *Al-Ameen* mentioned about his patriotism and service to National Movement alone. Very little was written about the yeoman service of his paper in the efforts to reform the Muslims of Kerala. *Al-Ameen* fought in emphatic voice to purge out the blind beliefs and rituals embedded in Muslim society.[206]

In an lead article by M.S. titled 'Islamic Unity', *Al-Ameen* reminds the *Muslims* that they were the descendants of the pious ones, as well as great

[205] *Al-Ameen*, Editorial, 28th August, 1928.

[206] K. Umar Moulavi, *op. cit.*, p. 86.

warriors and rulers. 'In order to regain that community known for its bravery and strength, Are you not able to unite against your enemies? ..... Did you forget the basic tenets of Islam that all Muslims are brothers'?[207] On another occasion, P.A. Sainudhin Sahib in an article captioned 'To Kerala Muslims' wrote, "suffer; the prophet is merciful to them that they are stead fast in suffering'. This is here worthy of remembrance. Do not holy verses quoted above tell us that such troubles are signs of success? Fear and timidity are not the qualities of Muslims. ...And the history of Islam teaches us that by suffering, sacrifice and non-violence the Muslim community and religion and country have derived great benefit. The service of community and service of the country are indispensible duty of ours. It is deplorable that Kerala Muslims are backward in these matters'.[208] Such religious idioms were consistently used by *Al-Ameen* to bring Mappilas to the path of nationalist politics.

In charting out the path to Muslim incorporation in to the mainstream Indian nationalism, Abdurahiman Sahib and his mouthpiece used copious quotation from *Quran* and *Hadith* to prove that the followers of prophet could not live under a government which impeded their religious freedom. He was in a way aping the examples set by Moulana Abdul Kalam Azad. Thus, religion as the basis of participation in Nationalist Movement found voice in most of the articles of *Al-Ameen* which we have examined already. This profuse use of Islamic symbolism indirectly helped to strengthen the community identity of Muslims of Malabar. What *Al-Ameen* did was to advance its nationalist purpose through communitarian mobilization. Every year, *Al-Ameen* used to publish special issues in connection with *Milad-unnabi* (prophet's birthday), loaded with articles of interest to Muslims. It was the most popular daily in Malabar and as such the British authorities

[207] *Al-Ameen*, 28th August, 1928.

[208] *Al-Ameen*, 9th December 1930, MNNPR, p.1828.

banned its publication twice. For, the chief secretary of Madras wrote in 1933, 'Mohammed Abdurahiman, the editor of *Al-Ameen*, a west coast journal is apparently out to make trouble among Mappilas'.[209] As E.M.S. Namboodiripad opined, 'both *Al-Ameen* and *Aikyam* did similar work in social sphere – educational uplift of common Muslims by eradicating blind beliefs. They did for Kerala Muslims what Sir Syed Ahmad Khan did for Indian Muslims. Had this work been done a generation before, the 1921 Rebellion could have been avoided or atleast the intensity and ferocity could have been reduced ...Both these journals got wide support among the Moplas. It was this generation of Muslims which flourished under the shadow of these journals, who later became the workers of nationalist Muslim organization as well as Muslim League'.[210]

Reformist Journals

Even prior to the birth of *Aikya Sangam*, many Muslim journals in Travancore and Cochin began to disseminate the reformist ideas among the Muslims. *Malabar Islam,* a weekly started in 1909 from Cochin with P. Abdu Muhamad Haji as the editor, was a reformist journal which had subscribers in Malabar. The journal, which functioned well for one decade, did great service in spreading the message of the Khilafath movement as well as the reformist ideology among Muslims. During the same period, Vakkom Abdul Kader Moulavi started a journal *Muslim* in 1906 from Vakkom with the intention of reforming the community and it lasted for about five years.[211] A printed appeal made by Shaik Hamadani Thangal, the most respected theologian of the age, to support both *Malabar Islam* and *Muslim* financially,

[209] FNR, dated Feb. 1933, No: p. 4-3. Public (General), T.N.A.

[210] EMS Namboodiripad, *Keralam Malayalikalude Mathrubhumi* (Mal), in P. Govida Pillai (ed) *Collected Works of EMS Namboodiripad,* Vol. 9 (1948), Chintha Publishers, Trivandrum, 2000, p. 331.

[211] M. Abdu Samad, "Muslim Reformist Journals in Kerala", *Journal of Kerala Studies*, Vol.XVII, Parts 1-4, Trivandrum, 1990, pp. 131-137.

was widely circulated in Malabar but the response was very meagre.[212] The '*Muslim*' monthly spear headed the Muslim renaissance movement in Kerala. Though it was published from Travancore, it could bring about a revolution within the community of Muslims all over Kerala. The editorial of the first issue of *Musilm* says, 'Each and every community has started to strive for its welfare and therefore, the Muslims also must have a journal of this sort, to educate them about their problems and to bring about necessary reforms'.[213] 'Enlighten the community through education' was the slogan of this monthly and it continuously urged the authorities about various needs of the community in educational sphere. It also took up women's issues and several articles by prominent women of the age were published in it, emphasising the significance of women's education.

It was in *Muslim Vruthantham*, a fortnightly from Aleppy during 1917-8, under the editorship A.M. Abdul Kader Moulavi, that the celebrated polemical debate between K.M. Seethi Sahib (the reformist) and the editor was serialized.[214] This debate, which continued for several issues of this journal, helped to create a new awareness about true religious tenets of Islam among the Muslims. Under the banner of *Aikya Sangam*, a Malayalam journal *Muslim Aikyam* was published from Eriyad in 1923 with Manappat Kunhimohamed Musaliyar as editor.[215] Since it was in Malayalam, it failed to attract readers and had a premature death. In the same year, *Aikya Sangam* came out with its scond journal, *Al Irshad* in Arabic-Malayalam, with E.K. Moulavi as editor.[216] It was printed at Muhiyudhin litho press, Eriyad and lasted for about 18 months only, but within such a short period, it could

[212] Abdu Majida, *op.cit.*, p. 109.

[213] *The Muslim*, January 1906.

[214] Abu Majida, *op. cit.*, p. 109.

[215] M. Abdu Sammad, *op. cit.*, p.134.

[216] *Al-Irshad* (monthly), Vol. 1, No:1, 1st 1923.

spread the message of reformist ideology in Malabar. It was through this journal that many *fatwas* of K.M. Moulavi, related to religious issues reached the general public. *Al-Irshad* relentlessly fought against the un-Islamic practices like *Kodikuthu nercha, Ratib* etc., with the firm conviction that these were against the spirit of Islam. This naturally invited the wrath of the conservative wing and they resorted to an anti-*Al-Irshad* propaganda depicting the journal as 'anti-Islamic' and hence, it was stopped publishing after a span of 18 months. In 1925 *Aikya Sangam* started another journal from Eriyad itself called *Al-Islah* (AM) with E. Moidu Moulavi as the editor. Though 23 issues alone were brought out, the journal published many scholarly articles on Islam and current developments in Islamic world and the *Fatwas* of K.M. Moulavi. Though short lived, both the journals exerted a tremendous impact upon the Muslims of Malabar. 'The question and answer' column handled by K.M. Moulavi (1886-1964) was the most notable item in the *Al-Islah*. Behind the growth of reformist ideology in Kerala, both these journals were instrumental.

Another journalistic venture of the reformists was the publication of *Al-Murshid*, a journal in Arabi-Malayalam from Tirurangadi in 1935.[217] It was through this journal of *KJU*, that the leading Muslim writers like T.K. Mohammad, E.K. Moulavi, MCC Abdurahiman, M.C.C. Hassan Moulavi, P.V. Mohammad Moulavi, C.N. Ahmed Moulavi, P. Mohammed Salih Moulavi (Valapattanam) and Saeed Moulavi (Wandoor) emerged in Malabar. Leading scholars of reformist group were the columnists of *Al-Murshid*. For eg; M.C.C. Abdurahiman dealt with the translation of *Al-Bukhari*, the *Hadith* collection; M.C.C. Ahamad engaged the columns, ‘Awwalul Muslimum’ and ‘Atharaveeh’. K.M. Moulavi's column ‘why did the Muslims decline?’ was a

[217] Abu Majida, *op.cit.,* p.106.

translation of Shakib Arislan's Arabic work '*Lima Tahkarul Muslim*' [218] K.M. Moulavi wrote a regular column on *'Haj*' and *'Namoz*'.

In its July issue of 1938, *Al-Murshid* published an article titled *Pattiniyum, Pariharavum* (Poverty and Remedy), which tried to lay bare the arguments of the socialists about social progress and to prove that Islam was the only remedy to the problem of poverty. It says, "India is filled with the poor ... The socialists who have sprang up in our country now hold the view that the destruction of capitalism is the remedy to poverty. We can't understand this logic that the demise of capitalism will resolve poverty. Islam has put forward a definite programme to resolve this problem. It is *Zakath*'.[219]

Other important regular columns in *Al-Murshid* were 'Quran and non-Muslims and 'Qutuba Reform' by U.N. Moulavi. These columns triggered of a controversy in Malabar and were countered in the publications of the orthodox Ulemas in Malabar. Another contentious column by C.A.Muhamad Moulavi in *Al-Murshid* was *Ihyaussunnah*, which exposed the innvoations in *Ibadaths* (religious rituals).[220] Similarly, the translation of *Tuhfathul Mujahideen* of Sheik Zainudhin by K. Moosakutty Moulavi was published through *Al-Murshid*. M.C.C. Abdurahiman wrote 'Khatimunabiyun' in *Al-Murshid* exposing the hollowness of the arguments of Ahmadiyas.[221] Thus *Al-Murshid* functioned well for four years (1935-1939) and later in 1949 its publication was renewed with K.M. Moulavi as editor but only to live for one year. It was during its second tenure that A.K. Abdul Latheef Moulavi, K.K. Jamaludeen Moulavi and K. Ummar Moulavi came to limelight as columnists within the theological sphere of Malabar. A series of *Fatwas* of K.M. Moulavi related to *Tawassul Isthigaza* quoting *Ibaraths* (evidences) from

[218] *Ibid*., p. 173.

[219] *Al-Murshid*, July 1938.

[220] *Al-Murshid*, July 1938.

[221] K.K.M Kareem, Note no: 92, *op.cit.*, p. 175.

Quran and *Hadith* in *Al Murshid* (Book No.2 to Book No.9) threatened the very foundation of the Muslim orthodoxy in Malabar.[222]

'*Al-Itihad*', started in 1954 under the editorship of E.K. Moulavi from Tirurangadi, in Arabi-Malayalam, was another journal of the reformists group in Malabar. It survived for about three years and the most significant column was the 'History of Islahi movement in Kerala' by the editor himself, which analysed the history of reform movement in Kerala from 1922 to that of 12th Annual conference of *Aikya Sangam* in Kannur in 1934.

Journals for the cause of women

In 1925, P.K. Moosakutty Sahib started a journal for women *Muslim Mahila* from Cochin. This journal contained valuable articles related to the position of Muslim women in Kerala. In an article in '*Muslim Mahila*' titled 'our women' K. Mohamed writes, 'the condition of Muslim women is deplorable. They get neither religious education nor temporal education. Cooking and gossip are their pastimes. Though they can read Quran, they don't know anything about the belief system and the ritual aspect of Islam. So they are unable to educate their children properly. Thus lack of education among women is the prominent cause of the decline of the community'.[223]

In 1946, another Muslim women's magaizne called *Muslim Vanitha* was started by a Muslim woman, Haleema Beevi of Tiruvalla[224] and this journal was a catalyst in enlightening the Muslim women in Kerala. It published many articles quoting verses from *Quran* and *Hadith* arguing for the freedom of women. In 1947, she began to edit *'Bharatha Chandrika*' which was a mouthpiece of Muslim League in South Kerala.

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[222] *Ibid.*, p. 193.

[223] *Muslim Mahila*, January 1927, Cochin, p.4.

[224] P.M. Sadik Moulavi, (ed.), "Kerala Muslimgalude Sahithya Shramam", *Al-Farook*, Issue 9, 15th September 1957.

In 1929, K.C. Komukutty Moulavi, the nationalist Muslim leader started a Muslim women's journal *Nisaul Islam* from Calicut. It lasted for about two years.[225] It did yeoman service in the realm of reform and uplift of women within the Muslim community. The column of K.C. Komukutty Moulavi regarding the commentary on *Surath ul Aswar* of Quran in the journal captivated the attention of Muslim scholars.[226] He also translated and published the historical narrative of Moulana Abdul Haleem through the issues of *Nisaul Islam*.

Journals of the Traditional Ulemas

When the reformist *Mujahids* were making steady progress in print areas, the traditionalist Sunnis also stepped in to this domain. The founder of *Samastha Kerala Jamiyyathul Ulema*, A.P. Ahmad Musliyar started a Journal from Calicut named *Al-Bayan*.[227] This official organ of the *SKJU* could not survive long and it ceased to exist after five issues. From 1950 onwards, it was published from Parapangadi and lasted for about ten years. Moulavi Abdul Bari, Paravanna Moideen kutty Musliyar, Kaderi Mohammed Moulavi etc were prominent editors of *Al-Bayan*. *Al-Bayan* always tried to counter the arguments of the reformists and it utilized every opportunity to score over the reformists. In an article aimed at the reformists, *Al-Bayan* says:

'The *Wahabis* (reformists) are the organization of those who blackened the beautiful face of Islam by composing a dirty book *'Risalathul fil Banki*' and started a Muslim bank, undermining the injections of *Quran* and *Hadith* about interest. Everybody knows that *'Al-Ithihad*' is an organ, which strives hard to propagate the message of *Wahabis*'.[228] This was the tone and tenure of

[225] Ravindran Elamkode (ed.),*K.C. Komukutty Smaranika* (Mal),Calicut, 1998, p. 11.

[226] *Ibid*.,

[227] Abu Majida, *op. cit.*, p.107.

[228] *Al-Bayan* (AM), Issue 5, February, 1955.

Al-Bayan. In 1950's there was a heated debate between *Al-Bayan* and *Al-Ithihad* on various religious issues. *'Hidayathul Muhmineen*' was another monthly started by traditional Sunni Ulemas in 1950 from Calicut. In the editorial of the first issue, the agenda of the journal was clearly stated thus:

'All who adhere to *Ahlusunnathwal Jamath* agree that something is to be done to check the activities of those who propagate among ordinary people that the rituals and *Tawafsul Isthigaza,* which Muslims have been practising for about 1300 years, are anti-Islamic. It is with that purpose that this magazine has been started'.[229] In the same issue, K.M. Mohammad Koya's article 'Why did the Muslim community decline?,' tells that the reformists and their study classes, sermons and educational institutions are the real cause behind the decline'.[230] It concludes that the *Mujahids* are responsible for the conversion of Unnian to Hinduism.[231] In the November issue of 1951, *Hidayathul Muslimeen* contained an article titled 'From Socialism to Atheism' which examined the dangers of communism.[232] Another journal of Sunnis was 'Al-burhan' (A.M) started in 1960 by K.V. Mohammed Musliyar from Parappangadi, which lasted for only one year. In 1926 itself, P. Hussain Moulavi, the founder secretary of *SKJU* had started *Malabari* from Calicut to give vent the views of his organization. Later he shifted it to Tanur where it become a daily but could not survive long. During the last phase of his life, he became a supporter of Mujahid Movement and revived the *'Malabari'* in 1953 from A.R. Nagar.[233]

Other Muslim Journals

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[229] *Hydayathul Muslimin* (A.M), Book 1-Issue 1st October 1950.

[230] *Hidayathul Muslimin* (AM), Book 1 -Issue 1st October 1950, p.11.

[231] Unnian, a member of Kilimannil family of Malappuram, who converted to Hinduism in 1948, was killed by the Mappilas.

[232] *Hidayathul Muslimin* (AM), Book 1- Issue 1 Nov. 1951.

[233] Abu-Majida, *op.cit.*, *Prabhodanam* p.110.

In 1925 K. Mohammed of Chennamangalur started *Yuvalokam* from Calicut and in 1926 this was taken up by K.C. Komukutty Moulavi and it survived for about nine years. Prominent writers of this weekly were Vakkom Kader Moulavi, E.K. Moulavi, K. Muhamadali, K.M. Seethi Sahib, A. Mohamed Kannu etc.[234] The journal was committed to Nationalism and Islamic renaissance. Many articles from Arabic and Urdu journals were published in it.

In 1930, Imbichi Mohamed started a monthly from Calicut called *Muslim Shakari*, which could not survive long. In the same name a monthly was started by P.M. Ismail from Kodungallur also. O. Mahinali, the leader of Malabar Muslim League, started two journals from Tellichery *Yuvajanamitram* in 1929 and '*Yuvakesari*' in 1934, but both of them had a premature death. In 1945, he started 'Mujahid' to propagate the message of Muslim League but due to lack of support, he withdrew his journal. *'Bharata Chandrika*' from Tiruvalla during 1945-48 was another journal, which supported the cause of Muslim League.

With missionary intention, P.M. Abdul Kader Moulavi started *Ishath,* a monthly from Alleppey in 1930. It had subscribers in Malasia and Ceylone and was managed by Kerala Muslim Ishaath Sangam, an organisation formed for religious propagation. Another journal started in 1924 with a missionary zeal was *Shamsul Islam* from Karunagapalli with Badarudhin as editor.[235] This monthly, which lasted for about seven years, was popular in Cochin and Malabar. It was in this journal that the articles of Moulana Moudidi were first published in Malayalam.[236]

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[234] Ravindran Elamkode, *op.cit.,* p.11.

[235] *Prabodhanam,* special issue, p.110.

[236] Abu-Majida, *op.cit.*, p.111.

'Mappila Review' was another journal started in 1940 from Calicut by K. Mohamed Sahib, the DEO of Malabar during the British period. It published articles on religion, history socio-cultural issues, science and short stories. An attractive column in this journal was the letters of K. Mohamed from England, the first Malabar Muslim to study in England. Felicitating the magazine, Uloor S. Parameswar Iyer, prominent poet of Malayalam wrote, 'I am happy that it is with the intention of educating the Malayalis about the real message of Islam and thereby to develop friendship and mutual understanding between different communities that you have started this journal'.[237] Until 1946, the journal functioned well creating a literary proclivity among the Mappilas of Malabar.

In 1942, *'Mithram'* with N. Bappu as editor was started from Malappuram but could not last beyond two years. In 1943, K. Aboobacker published *Pourashakti*, a daily from Calicut with the financial assistance of Koyappathodi family of Vazhakkad and continued up to 1948.

Chandrika, a weekly from Tellichery started on 24th March 1932, was another notable journal of the Malabar Muslims. C.P. Mammukeyi, M.P. Moosa Sahib, A.K. Kunhi Mayin Sahib, K.M. Seethi, Abdul Sathar Sait were stalwarts behind the journal.[238] In 1945, it was shifted to Calicut and began to be published as a daily. It was the official organ of Muslim League in Malabar and played a crucial role in educating the Mappilas of Malabar in political sphere and drawing them towards a communitarian political philosophy in Malabar.

About the role of *Chandrika*, P.M. Sadik Moulavi, the editor of *Al-Farook* wrote in 1957 that, 'it is the mouthpiece of Muslim community. There may be differences of opinion; still, it is of the community. Nobody will

[237] *Mappila Review*, Book 1, Issue 1, May 1941.

[238]

desert his own children on account of handicaps. So one has to forgive and bear the pitfalls of *Chandrika'*.[239] A *Jamathe Islami* sympathiser like Sadik Moulavi had realized the importance of the existence of a communitarian daily and until 1980's it remained as the only Muslim daily in Kerala.

Besides these journals, umpteen Muslim publications were there which could not survive for even one year and some of them died with a single issue itself.[240]

Conclusion

It would be pertinent here to outline some of the broad conclusions, which follow from the above exhaustive survey of print culture of Mappilas of Malabar. As pointed out by Francis Robinson, print irreversibly undermined the authority of rural *ulemas* who were traditionally the sole custodians of Islamic knowledge and its transmission through *dars* and religious sermons. Now any Ahmad, Mohmud or Muhamed could claim to speak increasingly for Islam.[241] Even the layman got access to the scriptural world of Islam. Printing destroyed localized understanding and reception of texts and created broad audience. Though this democratisation of theology was disliked by traditionalists, they too fully realized the importance of print media to defend their views. Thus, print media became an arena where various groups, the traditional Sunnis, the reformist *Mujahids, Jamathe Islami, Ahmadiyas* and various subsects clashed, in order to advance their interests. This resulted in the percolation of religious ideas and awareness among the common folk. Much of the polemical debates that took place between these rival groups were facilitated by the print media and these controversies had serious implications for the Muslim identity in Malabar.

[239] *Al-Farook*, 15th September 1957, pp.3-5.

[240] A detailed list of the Muslim journals have been given in the Appendix X.

[241] Francis Robinson, "Technology and Religious Change: Islam and the Impact of Print", *Modern Asian Studies*, 1993, 27, 1, p.245.

Though debates and controversies had always existed within Malabar Islam even prior to print technology, print accelerated the process of Islamisation in Malabar. Thus, though print is considered to be a product of modernity, it can be at the service of everything that is not modern. As Eisenstein opined, 'the impact of printing on western scriptural faiths points in two quite opposite directions, towards 'Erasmian' trends and ultimately higher criticism and modernism and towards more rigid orthodoxy culminating in literal fundamentalism and Bible Belts'.[242]

Print also contributed to the strengthening of exclusiveness of the Muslims in Malabar. The large production of literary works grounded in Islam provided them a separate identity. In other words it strengthened the frontiers separating them from others. The anti-Muslim missionary propaganda, the fear of degeneration in Muslim society, all resulted in an increased awareness of the Muslims of their identity and led them to defend it from threat. A tendency noticeable in Muslim writings was to glorify the Islamic achievements in the past and inviting fellow Muslims to rise and prosper on that line. Advice on how to be a proper Muslim in every way was the favorite topic of the articles published in Muslim journals.

The biographical notes in these journals about great personalities of Islam were an attempt to present the past as an ideal to create an emotional hankering in readers for bygone days. A new focus on the person of prophet could also be noticed. The writers looked back to remote past to the primal sanctity and glory of early Muslim life, in order to purify the Muslims of their un-Islamic customs and practices. They held the view that unless Muslim religious ideas of the day could be freed from superstitious accretions, Mappila community would not progress. With this in view, at times, certain

[242] Elizabeth L. Eisenstein, *The printing press as an Agent of change: Communication and Cultural Transformations in Early Modern Europe*, Vol.I, Cambridge, 1979, pp.366-67.

writers, ignoring the rigid observance to the fundamentals of Islam, prescribed some adjustment and accommodation with contemporary demands. Scholars now searched with increasing vigour into the resources of both Islamic tradition as well as western civilization, to find answers to contemporary challenges. *Risalathun-fil- Banki* of K.M. Moulavi legitimizing modern banking system was an attempt in this regard.[243] The print also created a Muslim public sphere in favour of the improved condition of Muslim women. Issues like polygamy, divorce, law of inheritance, *kathukuthu* (ear piercing), dowry etc were taken up by Muslim literati during the period.

Another area, where a rational trend could be identified in print media, was the non-religious approach to education. Besides an increased interest in general education, there were efforts to introduce secular subjects and non-Islamic languages in *Madrasas*, in the belief that a combination of both modes of education would enlighten Muslim mind to accept change for betterment of society. Right from Makti Tangal's period, we come across exhortations in print media to empower the community through education, both secular and religious. The Malayalam generally spoken by Mappilas itself underwent drastic changes. It is in *Jamathe Islami* literature we come across chaste Malayalam for the first time and through this literature new terminologies like 'Islamic movement', 'Islamic revolution', 'Islam brotherhood', 'Islam and political philosophy' etc emerged in the religious discourse of Malabar Islam and Muslim literati began to ponder over these new terms.[244] Thus print, 'as an innovative technology became an agent of change'[245] in Malabar Muslim Society.

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[243] See, K.M. Moulavi, *Risalathun-fil-Banki* (AM), Muhiyudhin Press, Eriyad, 1929.

[244] K. Moidu Moulavi, *op. cit.*, 146.

[245] Robert Danton, *The Forebidden Best sellers of Pre-Revolutionary France*, Harpercollins, London, 1997, pp. XVI-XXIII.

To sum up, print contributed to a range of major developments in Malabar Islam, the emergence of scriptural Islam as against syncretic Islam, the strengthening of pan-Islamic layer in the Muslim sense of identity, the levelling of an assault on the *Ulema* as the sole interpreters of Islam, the opening of the way towards a new understanding of Islam such as those of reformists and traditionalists. In short, print media revolutionized religious understanding among the Muslims of Malabar and contributed much for forging community solidarity among them.

Chapter V

KHILAFATH AND PAN-ISLAMISM AS SYMBOLS OF SOLIDARITY

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Pan-Islamism in India was fuelled by Indian nationalism. Nationalism was responsible for transforming religious identities in India and it was the nationalist transformation of local and regional Muslim identities in to all India Muslim identities that made Pan-Islam possible. As put in by Gyanendra Pande, 'Nationalism was nothing more than communalism driven in to secular channels. Both were part of the same discourse.[1] The manner in which the Indians National Congress, the chief agent of Indian nationalism, addressed Muslims and their response to it, determined the construction of Muslim identity all over India. An examination of Khilafath movement in Malabar would reveal that the Muslims of Malabar began to identify themselves as part of National Muslim community only by the dawn of 20th century. As Kenneth Mc Pherson put in, 'Khilafath movement sharpened a sense of Muslimness among Tamil Muslims and a perception of themselves as a regional minority group, subsumed their previous tendency to think themselves as members of a village or district quasi-caste.'[2] This observation about Tamil Muslim also suits to Malabar Muslims. It was in the 1920's that the Malabar Muslims were incorporated within a pan-Indian Muslim constituency through the Khilafath movement. In generating this pan-islamic consciousness, the print media had played its role and it was in the context of Khilafath movement that many Muslim journals like *Kerala Chandrika* (Kollam), *Khilafath Patrika*, *Malabar Islam* (Cochin), *Muslim* (Alleppey),

[1] Gyanendra Pande, *Construction of Communalism in Colonial North India*, OUP, Delhi, 1996, p.235.

[2] Kennet Mc Pherson, "The social background of politics of Muslim of Tamil Nadu: 1901-1937", *Indian Economic and Social History Review*, Vol.6, No.4, 1969,pp.381-402.

Muslim Sahakari etc. sprang up in Kerala.[3] The enormous interest in pan-Islamic affairs led to a similar increase in the circulation of Muslim journals particularly when the Islamic world outside suffered crises like the Graco-Turkish war of 1897, the Balkan war of 1911-13 and the last phase of Ottoman caliphate from 1918-1924.

To attribute pan-Islamic consciousness in Malabar to Khilafath, however, does not mean that such a consciousness did not exist prior to that in Malabar. Pan-Islamism was a reaction against European aggression on the territorial integrity of Turkish Khilafath. The Khilafath, long held by Turkish Sulthan, was considered by Sunni Muslims all over the world, as a sacred institution and any challenge to it was viewed by Muslims with serious concern. Though the Turkish Khilafath had no contact with Malabar Muslims in any meaningful way, their concern was quite symbolic. In 19th century, Bibi of Arakkal, the only Muslim ruling dynasty in Malabar, had sent a letter to Caliph of Turkey. This letter of Arakkal Bibi requesting the assistance of Ottomon caliph in its days of distress, compel us to believe that there had been diplomatic relation between the Bibi and Ottoman Emperor even before 1792 when Arakkal lost the political power to the British. The Ottoman Emperor sent a reply to this letter dated. HE 1194 *Shawal*, (1780/81) with an injuction , 'You shall never fail to protect Mohammedans either by word or deed as far as possible.'[4]

Muslims of Malabar had always been fascinated by the region in which Islam had originated. The Muslim holy places in west Asia had been familiar to them through the Arabi-Malayalam literature. The histories, traditions and mythologies of the Arabian heartlands, so remote in time and space, had

[3] K.K.M. Kareem, *K.M. Moulavi Sahib* (Biography), (Mal) ,Al-katib Publishers, Tirurangadi, 1985, p.88.
[4] K.K.N. Kurup, "A Letter from the Ottoman Emperor to Bibi of Arakkal", *Journal of Kerala Studies*, Vol.1, July 1973. S. No.1, pp.105-109.

constantly excited their imagination.[5] The Arabi-Malayalam literature, with its Middle Eastern borrowings, during the 19th century, had forged emotional links between Malabar Muslims and the Islamic lands and the *Haj* pilgrimage to Mecca had strengthened these links.

A major channel through which the *Mappilas* kept in touch with Islamic heartland was *Haj* pilgrimage. With the introduction of steam ship navigation in 19th century, the number of pilgrims to Mecca rose up. As. H.H. Risley wrote in 1891, 'Even the distant Mecca has been brought by means of Mesrs Cook's steamers and return tickets within the reach of faithful in India'.[6] His reference about 'the influence of Muhammedan missionaries and return pilgrims (from Mecca) made itself felt in a quite but steady revival of Orthodox usage in Eastern Bengal',[7] is also relevant in the case of Malabar.

The annual pilgrimage to Mecca was of course the most important avenue for the exchange of ideas between Muslims of different parts of the world.[8] Through this *Haj*, the *Ulemas* of Malabar, were aware of the intellectual currents of the other parts of the Muslim world and were influenced by them. They were acquainted with reformist ideas of Arabian *Wahabi* Movement. Jamaladhin Afgani (1838-97) the Iranian scholar, had travelled around the Muslim world (visiting India in 1850's) exhorting the Muslims of all nationalities to unite under Turkish Sultan in order to free themselves of Western colonial rule. Many of the *Ulemas* of Malabar were influenced by him.

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[5] See Chapter, 'Print and the Imagined Community of Mappilas'.

[6] H.H. Risely, *Tribes and Castes of Bengal* (Reprint), Calcutta, Firma Mukhopadhyaya, 1981, p. xxx.

[7] *Ibid.*

[8] See C. Snouck Hurgronje, '*Mekka in later part of 19th century: Daily life, Customs and Learning. The Muslims of East Indian Archipelago*, Tr. J.H. Monahan, Reprint, Leiden: E.J. Brill. 1970..

Mampuram Syed Fazal, who was deported from Malabar to Arabia by the British in 1852, during his stay at Mecca, associated himself with *wahabi* movement.[9] He was staunch anti-British and his book *'Udathul Umara*' and Sayid Alavi Tangal's *Saiful Bathar* were popular in Malabar. *Udathul Umara*, appended with *Saiful bathar* was published from Isthambul in 1273 (1857 AD). Mamburam Tangal sent the copy of *Saiful Bathar* to all Muslim *Mahals* secretly but the British confiscated and banned this collection of *fatwas*. It is a collection of answers to eight questions related to the relation of a Muslim to a non-Muslim ruler. It exhorts Muslims to fight against the Christians (British) in India.

The letter from Vice counsel at Jedda to the Political Agent of Aden dated 31st October 1856, shows that Fadl Tangal continued to exercise hegemonic influence upon the *Mappilas* of Malabar even after his deportation. The letter says:

'The influence of this man (Fadl Tangal) among his co-religionists, especially the pilgrims from Malabar Coast and Hadramouth, can scarcely be credited. These classes are the most fanatical of Mohamedan and I am convinced that his power for good or evil is rather increased than curtailed by his residence here especially when it is borne in mind that we have at least 2000 pilgrims annually arriving from Malabar coast, all of whom consider it incumbent on them to pay their respect to the Syed and receive his benediction; that the most unbounded confidence is placed in his words, that therefore any desire manifested by him would be almost certain to be carried out if possible on their return to their country'.[10]

Another letter from the Magistrate of Malabar to Chief Secretary of Madras in 1856 writes about Fadl Thangal that 'the fanatical and reckless

[9] Dr. C.K. Kareem, *Kerala Muslim Charithram, Shithi Vivarakanakku Directory* (Mal), Vol. I, Cochin, 1997, p.560.
[10] Correspondence on Mopla Outrages in Malabar (CMO), 1855, p.391, TNA.

doctrine of this high priest and his influence over the Moplas of his own and other schools of this district nearly threw Malabar in to a state of anarchy. And it was inculcated that to die in mortal combat with an infidel government [British] ensured a passage to paradise and entitled him to the rewards of *shahids*. If this doctrine was not actually inculcated, the belief was never discountenanced by this *Wahabee-souled* man'[11] This letter also testified to Fadl Thangal's association with *Wahabi* Movement. These colonial narratives show that both Alavi Thangal and Fazal Thangal were influenced by Pan-Islamic sentiments of their counterparts in Arabia and had sowed its seeds within the length and breadth of Malabar. The Khilafath, which shook Malabar in early 20's, had its roots in the teachings of Mampuram Tangals (both Alavi Thangal and Fadl Thangal). The fact that the *Mappilas* had owed allegiance to the religious priests of Mecca was further evidenced by the reference in a letter of chief secretary of Madras to Govt. of India. The letter says, 'They [Mappilas] have always looked exclusively to Mecca as their religious centre and that the most promising means of convincing them that forcible conversion is illegal and an insult to Islamic religion ... would be a *fatwa* from the *Ulemas* of Mecca enclosed by King Husain'.[12]

It is a fact that Malabar Muslim masses knew very little about the evolution of Khilafath as the very institution of Khilafath was not relevant to their life. However, through the preaching of these religious priests, who kept constant contact with Islamic countries, and through the Arabi-Malayalam literature, the imaginary portraits of *khalifas* and their benevolence were imprinted in their minds.

By the beginning of 20th century, this dormant emotion became powerful when the Muslim press in Kerala took up the matter of Khilafath

[11] Letter dtd. 18th Nov, 1856, *CMO*, 1855, p.387.
[12] Letter from Chief Secretary of Govt. of Madras to Sec. Govt. of India, dtd 1st February 1922, Political, Home Dept., National Archives, Delhi.

and projected the Ottoman Sulthan as the *khalifa* and the Ottoman Empire as the symbol of Islamic State. Hence, any news concerning the Turkish Empire was deserving of mention in Muslim journals through their news and editorial columns. The Muslim newspapers and journals evinced interest in the cause of events in Muslim countries of Middle East. In 1909, Makti Thangal started *Turkeysamacharam*, an evening newspaper from Cochin, which published articles dealing with religious, social and political reforms brought about by Ottoman caliphs in Turkish Empire. *Malabar Islam*, started in 1910 by Abdul Hamid Haji from Cochin, exclusively dealt with Khilafath Affairs. C. Saidalikutty Master (1856-1919) of Tirur published a series of articles related to the reform of Turkey Sulthan in his *Salahul Iqwan*, a journal in Arabi – Malayalam, during the period of 1899-1907.

It may be noted here that up to the beginning of 20th century, the interests of Muslim literati on Turkey and Khilafath and other Muslim countries did not conflict with their loyalty to their British rulers at home. But as imperialist pressure upon the Ottoman Empire and other Muslim lands increased, the situation changed. The British ultimatum to Turkey in 1906 following Turko - Egyptian boundary dispute, and the signing of Anglo-Russian Convention in 1907 were matters of grave concern to Muslim literati in Kerala. To make matters worse, the sudden thrust of Italy upon Libya, a province of Ottoman Empire, in 1911 created ferment in the Muslim mind. Meetings condemning the Italian aggression were held in Calicut and other towns of Malabar in 1912 : Referring to this Muslim concern, *West Coast Spectator* wrote:

"We are afraid that a certain section of Muslim community is creating an unnecessary fuss about Turkish war. This section seems to think that Turkey deserves their allegiance much more than any power, we do not say, Great Britain. When speaking about Turkey and war, they adopt a spirit and

attitude certainly not advisable. In this town [Calicut] there are not wanting people to incite the religious passions of illiterate militant Moplas. Our office is daily besieged by mussalman anxious to hear the latest war news. The other day a Mopla has been asking us whether there are any Italian or Bulgarians in Calicut city, so that they may be taught a lesson; yet another calmly told us that a *Jihad* was expected sooner or later and then they would all march on to Isthambul killing *kaffirs* on the way . . . They expect Britain to step in and stop war'.[13] This shows that Khilafath had become an issue in Malabar prior to the outbreak of World War I itself.

The outbreak of 1st world war and the involvement of Turkey in the war against Great Britain created a situation fraught with difficulties for *Mappilas* of Malabar. As the Muslim press reported regularly on developments of the war, the Muslim leaders grew more strident in denouncing British policy in the Balkans. An important outcome of this war period was the rapid growth of a radical Muslim press in Malayalam. The Muslim papers gave extensive coverage to the news on Turkey and reported in minute details about the progress of war and the alleged atrocities perpetrated by the 'infidel Christians' on the Muslim counter parts. Thus the Khilafath movement was of fundamental importance in generating and increasing a pan-Islamic consciousness in Malabar, which was amply reflected in Muslim press. Muslim press made its presence increasingly felt by way of an increased output in Islamic tracts, pamphlets and periodicals. Mappila feelings with regard to Turkey can be easily gauged by their discourse in print, both in prose and poetry about Turkish affairs. In 1914, Malabar Islam reports, 'At Chirayinkizhu, hearing the speeches of Vakkom Abdul Quader and G.P. *Nayar* about the plight of Muslims due to war in Turkey, the Muslim ladies donated their ear rings to the Turkish relief fund

[13]*West Coast Spectator,* 9th Nov. 1912, Calicut, Extracts from Report on English and Vernacular Newspaper. 1912. No.19, p.226-487. T.N.A. Madras.

with the pledge that they would keep their ears ornament free till death as a mark of sympathy with the toiling Muslims in Turkey.[14] This shows that even the ladies were being moved by the developments in Turkey. They wrote books when Turkey won the Balkan war, about the Turkish involvement in Ist World War and later lamented the pitiable condition of Turky in Asia Minor.

When moves were afoot to abolish the Caliphate, they participated extremely in agitations that were launched by Congress and Khilafath committee in 1920's for the maintenance of caliphate. To the Muslims, the Khilafath as temporal and spiritual institution was the very essence of their faith.[15] Hence the movement for its defense received spontaneous and wide spread support from the Mappilas. They considered it a religious duty to fight in defense of Khilafath 'till the last Muslim is done away with'[16]

The Khilafath message reached the villages through the pamphlets issued by central Khilafath committee and the *Muthafiqa fatwa* signed and issued by 500 religious leaders. The resolution passed in the Khilafath conference at Karachi was translated in to Malayalam and circulated in the district.[17] As the official letter put in, 'there seems to be no doubt that continual provocative speeches on Khilafath question, combined with the resolution of recent All India Khilafath Conference of Karachi, have produced an impression on the mind of *Mappilas* that the end of British Raj is at hand'.[18] Many pamphlets in Urdu reached Malabar like *Nusrathul Islam*, *Taramai khilafath* and *Dard-i-Khilafath* and all these were proscribed under

[14] *Malabar Islam*, 1914, as cited in P.A. Sayed Mohamed, *Kerala Muslim Charithram* (Mal.), Trichur, 1969, p.218.
[15] Gain Minault, *The Khilafath Movement: Religious Symbolism and Political mobilization in India*, 1982, Delhi, pp.4-7.
[16] *Khilafath patrika*, 15 Makaram 1096. Pub. Dept. (Govt.) G.O No.454, 20 July, 1921.
[17] Moozhikunnath Brahmadattan Namboodiripad, *Khilafath Smarangal*, Calicut. 1965. p.13.
[18] Demi-official letter from N.E Marjoribank to H.D Craik No. 3730-1-Public, St. George dtd, 20th August 1921. Poll-Horme, National Archives, Delhi.

the Press Act.[19] *Muhimmathul Mu'mineen* (urdu) written by Moulana Abdul Kalam Azad, was translated in to Malayalam by Aminummantekath Pareekutty Musaliyar, Secretary of Tanur Khilafath Committee. Profusely quoting Quran and *Hadith*, the book tried to prove that British were the enemies of Islam and a Muslim, who cooperated with them, was a *fasik*.[20] It also asserted that the Ottoman Khilafath was a continuation of pious caliphate and those who opposed the Ottoman Khilafath were the enemies of Islam.[21]The book had gone to the extent of saying that 'no *kaffir* may be permitted to remain in Hedjaz or *Jazirathul Arab* and the prophet in his w*aziyath* [will], have ordered to oust the *Kaffirs* from such places.[22]

Print played a crucial role in strengthening the Islamic identity of Malabar Muslims during this period, when they began to feel that their future as Muslims was related to what was happening in Turkey rather than in their own territory. This mood is amply reflected in the secret report of British official in Malabar. It says:

"There are undoubted signs of agitation over Khilafath and holy places question among the Muslims of west coast. They are exercised over the fate of Turkey and even Afghanistan and though they are poorly educated the average man argues on these points with the consistency of a political agitator. There are clear signs of pan-Islamic ideas among the masses, traceable to Gandhi's campaign of passive resistance to the common cause of

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[19] D.R. Files, 1921-1930, Public 5003/1921, dtd. 30th April 1921, Go. No. 196 (2) 7349/1921, SI. No. 48, Sl. No. 55, KRA.

[20] Aminummantekath Pareekutty Musaliyar, *Muhimmathul Muimineen* (A.M), Tirurangadi, 1921, pp.1-31.

[21] *Ibid.*
This argument of Khilafat leaders has been exposed by Hamza Alavi in a recent article and argue that Turkish Khilafath had no connection with pious caliphate. See Hamza Alavi, "Ironies of History: Contraditions of Khilafath Movement", in Mushirul Hasan (ed.), *Islam, Communities and the Nation: Muslims Identies in South Asia and Beyond*, Manohar, Delhi, 1998, pp.25-57.

[22] Aminummantekath Pareekutty, *op. cit.*, p.31.

Indian extremists and the pro-Turk intrigues. Some of the people claim Gandhi as a follower of Islam, as his actions are in keeping with its teachings. Generally speaking, the Mappila is in sympathy with the Sulthan of Turkey and the *Amirs* of Afghans.'[23] This report also speaks about the rumours current in Malabar in 1919, one was about the conference held in Palestine in which Arabs, Jews and Christians took part, where it was decided that Palestine should go to Jews. Another rumour was that Ayasophia mosque in Constantinople would be converted into a Christian church.[24] Such rumours, or 'lies of the bazaar,' had the magnetic power to mobilize rural *Mappilas* for the cause of Caliphate. *'West coast spectator*' warned the government about the imminent danger in Malabar thus : 'They [the magistrate and police] can do no better than rigorously exclude from the Taluks [Ernad and Walluwanad] peripatetic and emotional lectures whose one idea is to inflame the Mopla mind. To make matters more interesting, they have imported a red-hot *Khilafat walla* from Travancore who is not unknown to Manjeri police.'[25] This warning about the 'deliberate steps being taken to give effect to Khilafath Resolution passed at the District conference shows the smouldering discontent among the *Mappilas* for the cause of Khilafath in Malabar. The All India Khilafath conference at Karachi has produced an impression in the minds of *Mappilas* that the end of British Raj was at hand. 'As a result of Khilafath propaganda, the *Mappilas* were better organized than they used to be and also better informed as to the strength of their position and difficulty of taking military action against them'.[26]

Khilafath committees were formed through out Malabar, the first being the Khilafat committee of Calicut formed in July 1920 with Hydros

[23] USSF File No.299, Bundle No. 534 (Confidential), Special Branch CID dated. 5th June 1919. FMF, Secret File Vol.II, TNA.
[24] *Ibid*.
[25] *West Coast Spectator*, dtd. 11 May 1920, No.657/C/Seret File. 235/3. TNA. Moulavi P.M. Abdul Kadar is the *Khilafath walla* mentioned here.
[26] Fortnightly Report, 20 Aug. 1921. No.37301 - Public, TNA.

Kunhikoya Tangal as the president and this was followed by another at Kondotty.[27] On 18th August, 1920, at Calicut Beach, Gandhiji and Moulana Shoukathali addressed a massive meeting of 20,000 people and an amount of Rs. 2500 was collected from the audience towards the Khilafath fund.[28] The *Mappilas* were moved by the following appeal of Shoukath Ali in this meeting: "If you are strong and capable, then it is your bounden duty so long as you Musalman breathe, to fight the unjust King, the unjust government that proved to be an enemy to your faith and to your God. If you are weak, then it is incumbent for you to go, migrate to another country.'[29] This religious tone of the speech did make an impact upon the Muslim mind and reminded of their Muslimness. No wonder, the Muslims of Calicut dedicated their *Zakath*, *Id* festivals and *Miladunnabi* (Prophet's birthday) to Turkey.[30] Funds were collected during *Bakrid* for the Muslim brethren in Smarna in Turkish Empire which was sieged by the Greek. The tone and tenure of the appeal by E. Moidu Moulavi, the secretary of the *Kerala Ulema Conference* to the muslims of Kerala was highly inflammatory and roused the religious feelings of the Mappilas. In it, he said:

"All are aware of the fact that our rulers, the British and their allies fought unjustly and unlawfully against the Sulthan of Turkey, our *Kalifa* who had been for the past several centuries protecting our sacred religion as well as holy places like Mecca, Madina, Baithul Muqadis, Bagdad, Karbala Najf etc. sanctified by our religion, wrested those places from His Majesty and divided them amongst themselves and their allies. They have done all these with the wicked intention of wiping out from the face of the world the religion of Islam which stands in opposition to Christianity. We ofcourse consider our

[27] K. Madhavan Nair, *Malabar Kalapam*, Calicut, 1971, p.63.
[28] P.P. Mammad Koya Parappil, *Kozhikote Muslimgalude Charithram* (Mal), Focus Publication, Calicut, 1994 (hereinafter Parappil Koya), p.147.
[29] K. Madhavan Nair, , *op.cit*., p.64. Also see, Madras Police Report 28 Aug. 1920. FMF No.22(A), Vol.II, pp.63-4. TNA.
[30] Parappil Koya, *op.cit*., p.149.

religion to be dearer than our lives. Is it possible for any Muslim that has the best '*Iman*' (faith) in him to help in any way a Government that tries to steal in and cunningly pull our hearts after having charmed us by means of smiles and sweet words? I believe that every Muslim having the least Islamic virtue in him will answer this question in the negative'.[31]

Not content with this, he gives a heart-melting picture about the pathetic situation of the Muslim brothers in Smarna of Asia minor. He appealed his fellow Muslims to send a portion of the compulsory *Zakath* of *Ramzan* to the Smarna Fund.[32] It is to be noted that 41 leading Muslim intellectuals of Malabar had signed this resolution, most of whom were *Qazis* of various *Juma masjids*.

The Muslim journals mobilized the *Mappilas* to the *khilafath* struggle using a similar language. In the course of an article under the heading 'British Government and Indian Muslims', the *Khilafath patrika* in its first issue made the following appeal to the Muslims:

"A government that unhesitatingly trifles with their conscience and throw overboard their own solemn promises and assurances, who put dust in our eyes and made us tools with which to destroy our own religion and religious head. Is it with such government that we should cooperate? If even a drop of sacred blood of those veteran ancestors who sacrificed their lives and worked unselfishly for the establishment of Islam, is running in your veins, how can you co-operate with the government, which is now proved beyond doubt to be the bitterest enemy of Islam.'[33]

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[31] Resolution of *Kerala Ulema Sangam* (*KUS*) Conference at Ottappalam. dated. 25.5.1921. West Coast Press, Calicut; Also see Pub. Dept. G.O. No.491. 3 Aug. 1921. See Appendix XI.

[32] Resolution of *KUS*, *op.cit*., p.4.

[33] *Khilafath Patrika*, 29th Dec. 1920, Extracts from Reports on English and Vernacular Newspaper, 1921, p.269, FMF 35. TNA.

'Kerala Chandrika' another Muslim journal from Quilon went a step further in despising the British Government. In an article captioned 'The Proffered Heaven of *Dajjal*', the writer Ahmad Kannu, described the present states of Muslims in India as more dangerous than the decayed days of *Dajjal* (Anti-Christ) about which Muhamadans pray that their lives may be taken before those days come. *Dajjal*'s heaven is the gateway to hell'.[34] The writer bitterly complained that 'Muslims of Malabar and Travancore particularly, are blind to their duty, nay, more, they are co-operating with the enemies of Islam.' He concluded the write up saying that the leaders, who miss this opportunity of waking up sleeping Muslims, are enemies of God.[35]

'Malabar Islam' another pro-Khilafath journal from Cochin, urged the *Mappilas* that 'the unarmed Indian Muslims are unable to wage *jihad* but that this particularly is the time for waging a true *jihad* ie a spiritual warfare with spiritual weapon, as that referred to by Moulana Mohammedali, as having the power to upset minutes of a government 6000 miles away'.[36] Similarly Kerala *Chandrika,* in a lead article, advocated a complete boycott of Christians by Hindus and Muslims of Kerala. 'The Christian Cobra with hood extended has got ready to sting and kill and destroy Hindus and Muslims and their religions.[37] In another article, under the heading 'Muhamedans and Khilafath,' the same journal used metaphor from Indian epics like *'Rakhasa Mareejan*' to describe the brutality of the British.[38] The *'Muslim*', from Aleppey and *'Malabar Islam*' from Cochin, published articles exposing the futility of 'Paris farce'.[39]

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[34] *Kerala Chandrika*, 7th Feb. 1921, Quilon, MNNPR. 1921. TNA.
[35] *Ibid*.
[36] *Malabar Islam*, Cochin, 8th April 1921, MNNPR 1921 - Apr – June, p.530. TNA.
[37] *Kerala Chandrika*, Quilon, April 11, 1921, MNNPR Aug-June, 1921, p.543, TNA.
[38] *Kerala Chandrika*, Quilon, 25 April, 1921 - MNNPR, 1921, p.557.
[39] *Muslim*, 10th April 1922 and *Malabar Islam*, 7th April. 1922. MNNPR. 1922, p.417-418.

Through this kind of write-ups, the Muslim press played its parts in triggering off pan-Islamic sentiments among Mappilas. They portrayed the British as enemies of Islam who wished to destroy Muslim power. Christianity and Europe were depicted as enemies of Islam and *Mappilas* were repeatedly urged to fight back against the European aggression. This was the over whelming tone in all Muslim newspapers and periodicals of the time.

This is not to argue that Malabar Muslim reaction towards *khilafath* issue was monolithic. As Aysha Jalal commented, Muslims reacted according to their location in colonial system.[40] Those with a collaborative network of British Government, tried justifying their loyalist stance by pointing out that the British were not directly waging war against Turkey. As early as 1914, the loyalist Muslims of Calicut met at Himayath Sabha Hall and took a decision to send a Telegram to Turkish Sulthan urging him not to act against the British and requested all Muslim mosque committees to organize special prayers for the victory of Britain.[41] During the Khilafath movement, the British were able to placate some *Ulemas* and Muslim elites to their side and a few *fatwas* were issued by this loyalist *Ulemas* in 1921 opposing the Khilafath movement.

A loyalist group of *Ulemas* under the Chairmanship of Thattangara Kuttiamu musaliyar met at Pathar in Ponnani on 22nd September, 1921 and published a tract in Arabi-Malayalam captioned *Mahaqul Khalafath Ala Ismil Khilfath* (The truth about the Rebellion in the name of Khilafath).[42] Kunhanbava Musaliyar, Mammud kutty Musaliyar (the publisher) Abdullakutty musaliyar were the prominent signatories of this tract which

[40] Aysha Jalal, *Self and Sovereignty: Individual and Community in South Asian Islam Since 1850*, OUP, Delhi, p.19.
[41] Notice dtd. Ist September 1914 as reproduced in Parappil Koya, *op.cit*., p.150.
[42] *Malayala Manorama*, 24 Sept. 1921.

emphasised the fact that the duty of a Muslim was to obey the government in authority.[43] The tract unequivocally stated that, "though the British has been ruling India for two centuries, it has not caused any trouble to Muslims, nor it has prevented *Kaffirs* from embracing our religion and if any *Kaffir* objects to such conversion, the government takes action favourable to Muslims in such cases. Hence this 'non-cooperation' is a capital sin and is as obnoxious a sin as murder by poison or *sihr* (witchcraft).'[44] In fact this was masterminded by the British authorities and hence it triggered off a debate within the community. Aminumantekathu Parekutty Musliyar was the first to come out with sharp charges against this tract. In a notice dated. 16th July 1921, he said,... 'I am always prepared to prove at any place and in the presence of any person by the unanimous documentary verdicts of *Ulemas* based upon Quran and prophet's traditions that those who would speak as stated in the above notice, those who would pass resolution on the above lines, and those who would agree with these resolutions are traitors to our religion and have rendered themselves *kaffirs* (infidels).[45] He concludes, 'Most *musaliyars* mentioned in the notice are well-known by certain documents, to be enemies to Khilafath movement and as such they are counter parties to all Muslim Khilafathers. Thus no resolution passed exclusively by the Musaliyars mentioned in the notice can be binding on any Muslim.'[46] E. Moideen Moulavi and K.M. Moulavi together wrote a critique to this Pro-British tract, titled *'Dawathul Haq*', both in Malayalam and Arabi-Malayalam. Moidu Maoulavi and Assankoya, the local khilfath secretary of Calicut, were arrested on this account.[47] *Malabar Islam* opined that 'the pamphlet was likely to cause

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[43] Mammad Kutty Musaliyar, *Mahaqul Khilafath Ala Ismil Khilafath* (A.M) Ponnani, 1921.
[44] *Ibid*., p.5.
[45] G.O. No.514, dated, 15th October, 1921. Public Department T.N.A.
[46] *Ibid*., p.2.
[47] G.O.No. 699, dtd. 13th Octo. 1921, Public Dept. *FMF*. 87. TNA. Also see K.K.M Kareem, Note no. 3, p. 88.

irritation to the peaceful moplas of Malabar and reminded the authorities that their first duty was to find out such impudent fellows and cage them'.[48]

Another pro-British *fatwa* was issued by K.M. Abdulla Kutty Musaliyar captioned '*Nadil Massomi ila Ma'nal khilafat Kama Hiyal-al-Mashuri*" (A call to those who wish to know the meaning of Khilafath) which stated that 'the Khilafath that existed in Turkey was only kingship and the destruction of such a Khilafath would not cause any harm to the Muslims of the world'.[49] But these pro-British *fatwas* could not make any impact on *Mappilas* and they stood firmly with the Khilafath movement.

What is interesting in all these discourse, whether pro or anti-Khilafath, the referent is Islam and the textual authorities of Islam, *Quran* and *Hadith*. Both narratives used copious quotation from *Quran* and *Hadith* to prove or disprove each other's stands and the religious identity of the *Mappilas* was solidified. Again, for majority of Mappilas, it was the empathy with the trials and tribulations of their co-religionists in West Asia which turned to a salient facet in the articulation of their communitarian identity. The pan-Islamic zeal was not confined within literature alone. Practical demonstration of this feeling was manifested in different ways in Malabar. There is no wonder that throughout the Khilafath movement, *Mappilas* were using Turkey caps and after the dissolution of Khilafath in 1924 by Kemal Pasha, this practice ceased to exist in Malabar.[50] The uniform of volunteer core was Turkey cap with crescent and khaki shirts and full trousers. Khilafath committee accepted a white flag with Quranic inscriptions.[51] Similarly special prayers were conducted at mosques in Malabar. Religious

[48] *Malabar Islam*, 25th Feb. 1921. Cochin, Extracts from Reports. 1921, p.320. *FMF*. 35. TNA and MNNPR. 1921 - Jan. - March, p.300. TNA.
[49] K.M. Abdulla Kutty Musaliyar, *Nadil Masoomila Ma'anal Khilafath Kama Hiyal al-Mashuri* (AM), Madras, 1921, pp.1-6. TNA - Also see *Malayala Manorama*, 24 Sept. 1921.
[50] K. Moidu Moulavi, *Oormakuripukal* (Mal), IPH, Calicut, 1992, p.45.
[51] K. Koyatti Moulavi, *1921-le Mappila Lahala*, Tirurangady,1931, p.6, 7.

preachers often used their Friday sermons in mosque to propagate the ideal of pan-Islamism. Leaflets were circulated requesting help for their co-religionists in west Asia. In one such notice, the Khilafath secretary explains about the sufferings of Muslims in Smarna and complaints that 'amidst these sufferings of co-religionists, the *Mappilas* were living in luxury.'[52] Another notice issued by P. Moideen Koya, state secretary of Khilafath dated 22nd February1923 reminded the *Mappilas* about their duty to help the Angora soldiers who fight for protecting Islam. It also exhorted Muslims to pray for Kemal pasha and his associates during the Friday congregation.[53] In another request by P. Husain, Joint Secretary of State Khilafath Committee, he appealed to *Mappilas* to contribute to the Ankora 'aeroplane fund' liberally. The appeal is made to all Muslims 'whether they are liberal or extremists, ignoring their ideological differences.'[54]

Another notice by P. Husain for the District Khilafath committee informed Muslims about succession of Abdul Majid Khan as the new *khalifa* of Turkey and requested the *Qasis* of the locality to use his name in the Friday sermon. On 4th Oct. 1922, a meeting of *Muslim Podujana Sabha* was held at Calicut Beach, presided over by Qazi Attakoya Thangal, which decided to celebrate the victory of Turkey over Greeks and to inform Gazi Abdul Majid Khan, the new caliph of Turkey, of their happiness in this regard.[55] *Malayala Manorama* reported, "In Malabar, the Muslims are in a jovial mood because of the victory of Turkey in Asia minor. Besides special prayers in mosques, ornamental lamps were lit in all shops in Calicut city'.[56] On 24th November 1922, another meeting of Muslims held at Himayatul Islam Sabha Hall,

[52] Notice by M.K. Moidu, District Khilafat Committe, Calicut, 1921 as reproduced in Parappil Koya, *op.cit.*, p.336.
[53] P. Moideen Koya, *Khilafath request*, Mathrubhumi Press, Calicut, dtd. 22nd Feb.1923 as reproduced in Parappil Koya, *op.cit.*, p.346.
[54] P. Husain, "A request to Kerala Muslims" (Mal.) *Hidayath* 23rd Dec., 1922. See also *Probhodanam* Special Issue. 1998, Calicut, p.45.
[55] Parappil Koya, *op. cit.*, p.150.
[56] *Malayalam Manorama*, 23rd September, 1922, NMML, Delhi.

Calicut, under Muthukoya Thangal and decided to raise fund for helping the wounded soldiers in Turkey in their fight against Balkan force.[57]

Thus, the Khilafath movement offered an opportunity for different Muslim groups to come together and promote a sense of togetherness. Generally, the movement fostered aggressive sectarian passion and inculcated a disregard for law and order, especially in matters that had a religious connotation. As the police official wrote, 'meeting in connection with Khilafath movement are being held every few days through the district. At the last few meetings, there have been some rather violent speeches.'[58] This was especially true in the case of Ernad and Walluvanad Taluks. As pointed out by K.N. Panikkar, 'although the Congress leaders sought to emphasise the importance of non-violent non-cooperation and Hindu-Muslim unity, there was an undercurrent of militancy in Khilafath movement from its very inception'.[59] While the Congress leaders viewed Khilafath movement as part of their broader struggle against colonial rule, to the Muslim religious leaders, who played crucial role in mobilizing the *Mappilas* and their followers in the rural parts of South Malabar, it was basically a religious issue. The vast popular base of the Khilafath movement of course had its economic roots. A large section of *Mappilas* who were active in Khilafath movement was drawn from the peasants to whom Tenancy agitation, which coalesced with Khilafath movement, had a great appeal. Thus, 'the Khilafath propaganda and Tenancy agitation coalesced being conducted from the same platform and to the same audience.[60] Still, the sense of solidarity the *Mappilas* showed during the period, drew its inspiration from religious symbols. The Muslim participation in non-cooperation movement was chiefly because of Khilafath issue. It was due to this religious dimension that Khilafath meetings in South

[57] Parappil Koya, *op. cit.*, p.151.
[58] Letter of District Supt. of Police, South Malabar dtd. 6th Nov. 1920, FMF.82 TNA.
[59] K.N. Panikkar, *Against Lord and State: Religion and Peasant Uprising in Malabar, 1836-1921*, OUP, Delhi, 1992, p.127.
[60] *Ibid*., p.135.

Malabar were attended by *Mappilas* in thousands. For instance, a Khilafath meeting at Kalpakanchery in Walluvanad Taluk was attended by 20,000 people.[61] When Khilafath movement ended, the Mappilas, particularly in South Malabar, left the Congress in large numbers.

The Khilafath movement which had been inspring Mappila agitation lost its momentum when Turkey under Kemal Pasha secured favourable terms under the Treaty of Lausanne of June 1923. The abolition of Khilafath by Kemal Pasha and seizure of Mecca by *Wahabis*, undermined the *Mappilas* faith in Pan-Islamic ideal and the community steeped in to political inertia. The Government secretary observed that 'the *Mappilas* do not yet seem to have realized the significance of the abolition and will probably await a pronouncement on the subject from Yakub Hasan, who is due to visit the District conference on 23rd March 1924.[62] But once they realized the fact that the movement had petered out, the community leadership came to the conclusion that 'Khilafath movement failed in Malabar due to the lack of an effective leadership and organization according to the Islamic injunctions'.[63] Hence, 'following the British betrayal of caliphate, there had been efforts within Mappila religious establishments to redefine their sense of identity in a more religious format.[64] The formation of *Kerala Muslim Aikya Sangam* in 1922 was an attempt in this regard. This *Sangam*, which brought about a religious reformation in Malabar Islam was the brain child of the Khilafath leaders like K.M. Moulavi, Moidu Moulavi etc. As Moidu Moulavi observed, "the rebellion also made the religious leadership realize that only through going back to *Quran* and *Sunnath*, the community could save itself from the present debacle'.[65]

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[61] K. Madhavan Nair, *op.cit*., p.81.
[62] *FNR*, 17th March 1924, No.2796-1 Public, TNA.
[63] K. Moidu Moulavi, *op.cit*., p.67.
[64] Dilip M. Menon, "Becoming Hindu and Muslim: Identity and Conflict in Malabar, 1900-1936", Working paper No.255. CDS, Trivandrum, 1994, p. 11.
[65] K. Moidu Moulavi, *op. cit.*, p.67.

But the sense of community-identity that emerged with Khilafath movement, later led to the development of communitarian politics in Malabar in 1930's and 1940's. The Khilafath could become a rallying point for a divided and disorganized community only by transforming specific concern about the fate of Ottoman Turkey in to a general feeling that the government was trampling on religious freedom of Muslims. As Hamza Alavi pointed out, 'it was Khilafath movement, not Muslim League that introduced religious ideology in the politics of Indian Muslims'.[66] It is to be noted that the Khilafath leaders like Moidu Moulavi and K.M. Moulavi were instrumental in the formation of *Kerala Muslim Aikya Sangam*, the first of its kind in Kerala, in 1922.[67]

What purpose the Khilafath movement served in Malabar as far as the community identity is concerned? In their eagerness to show that they are creating Hindu Muslim unity, the Khilafath and Nationalist leaders gave meaning to categories, which had until then little relevance in Malabar. Though there had been tension between Muslim peasants and upper class Hindus on agrarian front, monolithic categories like 'Hindu' or 'Muslim' had not become so marked during the 19th century. In other words the Nationalist intervention in Malabar, as in India, helped to create All India Hindu and Muslim Entete. In an area where these communities co-existed for centuries, the intervention of All India Political players helped to foster the communitarian identities. The letter of provincial Khilafat committee secretary to the president of central Khilafath committee in Bombay says, 'for the honour of Islam, thousands of lives were sacrificed and many have gone to jails leaving behind widows, orphans at the mercy of police, military and *Hindus*'[68] In the perception of the Khilafath secretary, those who died in the rebellion died not for Swaraj, nor for Tenancy but for the 'honour of Islam'.

[66] Hamza Alavi, *op. cit.,* pp.25-57.
[67] see Chapter III.
[68] FNR, dated. 18th July 1922, No.442-1, Public, TNA.

In these kinds of discourses, 'Islam' and 'Hindu' categories came in to the forefront.

It cannot be argued that Pan-Islamic concern died out in Malabar with the abolition of Caliphate by Kemal Pasha in 1924. Even after that, the pan-Islamic sentiments reverberated in the Muslim press. In 1924, *'Al-Ameen*' in a lead article titled 'king of Hedjas wrote :

'After the great war, evil seeds from west got in to those sacred lands (*Jazirathul Arab*) and with that the goddess of peace left them. With the submission of Sherif Husain, the King of Hedjas to the blandishment of English and his reduction to a mere puppet dancing to their wire pulling, great harm was done to the liberty of Arabian countries'.[69] The paper goes on to relate how with the abdication of Husain, 'a power that has been like an axe aimed at the neck of Islamic unity and self-respect has been removed and how this is a matter of joy'.

In another article, *Al-Ameen* condemns the French intervention in Syria in 1925. It reminds the *Mappilas* that 'It is extremely necessary for us to share the sorrows of our brethren [in Syria] and to do everything to remove the causes. Therefore we request that the Muslims of Kerala also should immediately convene meetings and telegraph this request to League [League of Nations] to withdraw French rule from Syria.[70] On 15th November 1925, *Al-Ameen* wrote that, 'let France Understand that the whole Muslim world have shown their hatred and anger at the atrocities and that all Muslims are agitated'.[71] In 1931, *Al-Ameen* published an article concerning the supply of arms to the Jews in Palestine. It observed that 'if Britain does not give up her present evil policy and treat Arabs and Jews impartially, there is no doubt that the state of affairs in Palestine will become very terrible'. [72]

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[69] *Al Ameen*, 19th Octo. 1924, MNNPR, 1924, p.1924, TNA.
[70] *Al Ameen*, 8th Nov. 1925, MNNPR, 1925, p.1486, TNA.
[71] *Al-Ameen*, 15th November 1925, MNNPR 1925, 1488, TNA.
[72] *Al Ameen*, 29th Octo. 1931, MNNPR, 1931, p.1474.

In 1929, Palestine issue was taken up by *Aikyam*, another Muslim journal from Ernakulam, but at the same time, bemoaned the torpidity of Malabar Muslims. *Aikyam* says: 'Formerly any wave of disturbance in the farthest corner of Muslim world used to reach Malabar also. Religious and social alertness, which they had, has disappeared now. The Palestine sore which eats at the heart of Muslim world has not created any agitation among the Muslims of Kerala yet. . . Will not the Islamic blood of Kerala Muslims, which has become cold, warm up at least now? What a pity they have not even a nominal religious love and brotherly feeling. How indifferently the Muslim treated the request for help, which Gen: Nadir Khan Made? It is not creditable for them to be open to the charge that they even hate pan-Islamism'.[73]

All these discourses of Muslim press convince that the pan-islamic sentiments continued to agitate the mind of *Mappilas* throughout the colonial period.

Another channel, through which these sentiments were reflected was the resolutions of Muslim organizations, in Malabar. Throughout Malabar various Muslim organizations, in their annual meetings, passed resolutions related to developments in the Muslim world. For example, 'Valapattanam National Muslim students' organization in its annual meeting, condemned the French and Spanish Governments for their oppression of Moroccan Muslims and offered special prayers for the victory of the fighting soldiers in Morocco.[74] Similarly, the first annual conference of Kerala Muslim Conference, held on August 23, 1931 at Tellicherry, passed a resolution appealing the *Mappilas* to help the Muslims affected by the Burmese Rebellion and to boycott the Italian goods.[75] Again the working committee of *Kerala Muslim Majilis* held at Tellichery on 21st November 1933 declared

[73] *Aikyam*, 3rd Oct. 1929, MNNPR, 1929, TNA.
[74] *Mathrubhumi,* 14th July,1925.
[75] *Mathrubhumi*, 25th Aug., 1931.

their solidarity with Palestinian Muslims in their time of sorrow. In the same meeting, another resolution appealed to the British government to prevail upon the French government, to allow the chief of Reif Khazi Abdul Karim to live in a country of his choice.[76] *Kerala Jamiyathul Ulema* in its 13th Annual Conference, held at Tirurangadi on 21st August 1927, passed a resolution condemning the division of Palestine.[77] The *Id* meeting, held at Calicut on 1927 under the Chairmanship of Mohammad Abdurahiman condemned the British colonial intervention in Palestine.[78] The Muslim League meeting held at Calicut beach on 16th December 1937 also aired their ire against British policy in Palestine.[79] The working committee meeting of Muslim League held at Tellicherry on 20th December 1937 in its resolution stated, 'This conference considers that both Balfan decision, which handed over Baithul Maqadis to Jews and the Royal commission recommendation to partition Palestine, are great injustice to Islam as well as the Arabs of Palestine.'[80] In an article titled 'Palestine Rebellion,' K.C. Komukutty Moulavi, the veteran congress leader reminded the Muslim League to exhibit their solidarity with Palestine Muslims, not through words, but through genuine action.'[81]

In the 1940's, when Britain and western forces were actively trying to establish a Jewish state in Palestine, driving out the Muslims, K. Umar Moulavi, who was the qasi of jumua mosque of Calicut (*Pattala Palli*), in his Friday sermon, exhorted the Muslims to join *jihad* along with Palestine Muslims and collected the names of those who were ready to be *mujahids*.[82]

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[76] *Mathrubhumi,* 24th Nov., 1933.
[77] *Mathrubhumi* , 26th Aug., 1937.
[78] *Mathrubhumi,* 8th Dec., 1937.
[79] *Mathrubhumi,* 18th Dec., 1937.
[80] *Mathrubhumi,* 22nd Dec., 1937.
[81] *Mathrubhumi,* 23rd June, 1938.
[82] K. Umar Moulavi, *Ormakulude Thirath*, Cochin, 2002, p.85.

The above examples show that even after the collapse khilafath movement in 1924, pan-Islamic sentiments continued to linger among *Mappilas* of Malabar.

Interestingly enough, it was not the leaders of Muslim League, but the nationalist Muslim leaders who were much concerned about pan-islamic issues in Malabar, perhaps because of the loyalist predilection of the League leadership. Pan-Islamic rhetoric was rampant in the discourses of *Al-Ameen* and Congress leaders just to provide an additional fillip to the ongoing struggle against colonialism, whereas the Muslim League leadership found it difficult to raise pan-Islamic slogans, fearing the wrath of the British authorities. As pointed out in an earlier chapter, Mohammad Abdurahiman used religious terminology like *Jihadul Akbar*, to rouse the Muslims for the cause of the Nation. He did not find pan-Islamic sentiment of Malabar Muslims incompatible with patriotism or nationalism. Thus, a number of Mappila intellectuals were swayed by pan-Islamic emotions and in their writings, the culture, society and politics of Islamic countries like Turkey, Egypt, Syria, Afghanistan, Palestine, Iran etc. were given prominence. The Muslim press during the 1920's, 1930's focused on how Islam was construed as a threat by European powers by conjuring up the ghost of pan-Islamism. Thus, the Malabar Muslim's involvement in anti-colonial politics was manured by Pan-Islamism.

What impact this Pan-islamic sentiments made on the Mappilas, is the crucial question. Before 19th century, *Mappilas* did not understand themselves as part of larger North Indian Muslim identity, nor of trans-national Islamic *Ummath* (Community). But, after the Khilafath movement, they began to see themselves as part of a national Muslim community and in turn, the North Indian Muslims groups began to extend their help to the suffering *Mappilas*, particularly during the post-rebellion period. Malabar Muslim was submerged with larger Indian Muslim political formation,

through the Khilafath movement. It weaned away the *Mappilas* from their regional and local ties to adopt monolithic pan-Islamic identities. This was also the case with the Muslims of Bengal and Tamil Nadu, who like *Mappilas* had a strong affinity to their regional languages and cultures.[83]

The Pan-Islamic ideology also enabled the Malabar Muslims to ignore internal differences and come together as a cultural whole. Before 19th century, they did not understand themselves as a solidarity - Malabar Muslims in conflict with their non-Muslim neighbours. Khilafath provided a new symbol to forge a new solidarity among the Muslims of Malabar.

[83] See, Mohammad Sha, "The Bengal Muslims and the World of Islam: Pan-Islamic Trends in colonial Bengal as reflected in the Press" in Rafindhin Ahmed (ed.), *Understanding the Bengal Muslims: Interpretive Essays*, OUP, Delhi, 2001.
Abu Yusuf Alam, *Khilafath Movement and the Muslims of Bengal*, M.Phil, dissertation, JNU, Delhi, 1979, NMML, New Delhi.
S.M. Abdul Kader Fakhri, *Caste, Ethnicity and Nation in the Politics of Muslims of Tamil Nadu: 1930-67*, unpublished Ph.D. Thesis, submitted to University of Cambridge, 1998.

Chapter VI

REPRESENTATION OF THE REBELLION AND IT'S AFTERMATH

CHAPTER VI

REPRESENTATION OF THE REBELLION AND ITS AFTERMATH

Malabar in 1921 turned politically vibrant (violent too) with a triangular anti-colonial initiative – the Khilafath, the Tenancy and Non-Co-operation. The convergence of the three movements resulted in the cataclysmic event called Malabar Rebellion. The details of the rebellion are too well known to require to any further elaboration here as this chapter only focus on its narrative construction and its impact on the wider society of Malabar.

Almost all scholarly works on the Rebellion examine both the economic and religious aspects of the Rebellion and the only difference between different perceptions is one of weightage.[1] The clash of economic interest between predominantly Muslim peasantry and their oppressors, the high caste landlords, was a regular feature of Malabar social life right from the beginning of 19th century.[2] Hence, when, in 1921, the clash of economic interest between Muslim peasantry and Hindu feudal lords burst into open conflict, the grievances of the peasantry acquired a religious dimension. Ironically, a class war against economic oppression took the form of a religio-communal conflict. Besides this, the Rebellion acquired a communal colour because of the leadership of *Thangals* and *Musaliyar*. Thus, the combination of religious appeals with economic grievances created a politically volatile

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[1] K.N. Panikkar, *Against Lord and State: Religion and Peasant Uprising in Malabar, 1836-1921*, OUP, 1992.

Stephen Dale, *Islamic Society on South Asian Frontier: The Mappilas of Malabar, 1498-1928*, OUP, Delhi, 1980.

M. Gangadhara Menon, *Mappila Rebellion, 1921-22*, Allahabad, 1989.

[2] See K.N. Panikkar, "Peasant revolts in Malabar, in 19th & 20th centuries" in A.R. Desai (ed.), *Peasant Struggle in India*, OUP, Delhi, 1989.

situation, highly susceptible to communalist propaganda. Hence, though the Rebellion itself was not intrinsically communal, the way it was covered by the print-media, particularly the English and vernacular press, did create communal cleavage within Malabar society.

The Rebellion caused an acrid narrative war of words within the print media, not only in Malabar but throughout the nation. The print media constructed their own version of narratives to explain the Rebellion in terms favourable to their own interests and depicted their own constituency as victimized. During the period between 1921-23, both vernacular and English press that had no access to what was happening in Malabar, regularly published reports on the Rebellion wholly depending upon the colonial official reports. Generally, the Malayalam papers contained reports of Moplah outbreaks, 'the sources of information being for the most part the press communiqué issued by government and other reports published by English newspapers.[3] This being the case, most of the reports of vernacular papers, barring a few nationalist as well as pro-Khilafath muslim papers, presented a one sided picture of the Rebellion.[4] 'Among the newspapers, only *Malabar Islam*, *Swaraj* and *Muslim* tried to present an objective picture of the revolt. *Keralapatrika* (Calicut) published consternating reports about the rebellion with the support of British'.[5] *Malayala Manorama, Nazrani Deepika, Yogakshemam* used the most objectionable language in their reports about the Rebellion. Pro-British and Pro-Hindu papers wrote melodramatic stories of the craftiness and cunningness of Mappilas. Some of the write-ups taunted the Hindus for their slavish mentality. Hence, these vernacular papers had played their role in disrupting the inter-communitarian balance in Malabar with their flagrant writings on the Rebellion. Even the British

[3] *FNR*, 3rd Sept. 1921, No.36.1921 Home (general), p.243. TNA.

[4] *Mathrubumi* was started in 1923 and *Al-Ameen* in 1924.

[5] K.K.M. Kareem, *1921-le Kalapavum Ali Musliyarum*, Tirurangadi, 1982, p.62.

authorities were conscious of the fact that the vernacular press had a role in worsening the communal situation in Malabar. It was in this backdrop that Ellis, the Malabar Collector, convened a meeting of the editors of newspapers of Calicut in June 1922 to discuss the ways by which communal amity could be restored in Malabar.[6]

The following analysis of the press reports of the Rebellion would help to know how differently it was reported by the vernacular press and would provide a clue to the increased communitarian consciousness in Malabar in the post-Rebellion phase.

Yogakshemam, the official organ of *Yogakshemasabha* published a series of articles related to the Rebellion. In its editorial captioned *Malabarile Chelakalapam, Yogaksehamam* came to the conclusion that 'the rioters consisted of three distinct set of people, one set that wanted to fight the government, another set that was out to loot while a third set were religious fanatics who wished to convert as many as possible. The bulk of the rioters belonged to the second set'.[7] The paper was surprised that Hindu population of the disturbed areas could not offer any united resistance to Mappila rioters and called upon them to organise themselves for defense.[8] It is interesting to note that this editorial traced the rebellion back to the time of Tipu Sulthan in 18th century and hence the title *Chelakalapam*.[9] Another editorial of the same paper comments, 'Everybody is busy in searching the cause of the revolt.

[6] *Malayala Manorama*, 8th June, 1922. NMML, Delhi. This meeting was attended by editors of *Keralapatrika, Mitavadi, Reformer, Kerala Sanchari, Malabar Journal* and *Margadarsi* while those of *Manorama* and *Spectator* boycotted it.

[7] *Yogakshemam*, 2nd Sept. 1921, NMML, Delhi. See also FNR dated 10th Sept. 1921, No.37, 1921, Home (General), p.289. TNA.

[8] *Yogakshemam*, 2nd September 1921, NMML, Delhi.

[9] The revolt of the upper caste Hindus against Tipu's injuction to cover the upper part of female body was known in popular parlance as *Chelakalapam*.

There is no need to tell that Moplas need no cause for revolt'.[10] It is interesting to note the convergence of this causation with that of Hitchcock, who commented that 'the saddest part of the whole affair was its want of reason'.[11] We come across several instances of such convergence between vernacular press reports and colonial official narratives. M.P. Thuppan Nambudiri, in his article, '*Malabar Lahala*' in *Yogaksehmam*, alludes, 'from Tipu's invasion onwards, their [Mappila's] desire was to convert the whole Malayalis into Islam. It was the British which prevented them from materializing that and we owe a great deal to British for the same . . . . No more self rule is needed in Malabar. We have had enough of the taste of Mappila swaraj and their Khilafath'.[12]

Nazrani Deepika from Mannanam, a pro-British Christian paper, also published biased reports on the Rebellion. *Deepika* reported that *Mappilas* under the veneer of non-co-operation, took the opportunity to loot and convert Hindus to their religion. To prove the vandalism of Mappila rebels, the paper reported that *Mappilas* entered the Trikandiyur temple and placed a copy of *Quran* inside the *Srikovil* (sanctum sanctorum).[13] Congratulating Mr. Thomas for suppressing the rebellion, *Deepika* in its editorial commented, 'Thus even the Malabar *Mappilas* have received an experience of Swaraj and the flavour of Hindu-Muslim unity and a sense of the might of British government. May the British flag now continue to fly in all glory'.[14] In the wake of its loyalist leanings, such comments were quite expected from *Nazrani Deepika*.

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[10] *Yogakshemam*, 9th Sept. 1921, NMML, New Delhi.

[11] R.H. Hitchcock, *A History of Malabar Rebellion, 1921* (Reprint), Delhi, 1983.

[12] *Yogakshemam*, 2nd October 1921 as reproduced in *Malayala Manorama*, 6th October 1921, NMML, Delhi.

[13] *Nazrani Deepika*, 2 September 1921, NMML, Delhi.

[14] *Nazrani Deepika*, 9th September 1921, NMML, Delhi. Also see FNR, 10th Sept. 1921, Home (General), p.352, TNA.

Violently abusive language was used by '*Malabari*', the South Malabar correspondent of *Malayala Manorama*, in covering the rebellion. He wrote, 'It will be interesting to the readers to know that our Vasudeva Varmamaharaja [Kunhamad Haji, the leader of the rebellion] who is Collector, Colonel and Governor [of Khilafath Raj] is infact a cart-puller . . . . It is heard that wife of Seethi Koya Thangal [another rebel leader] has eloped with someone and out of grief he is hiding in the forest'.[15] On another occasion, in a satirical way, he comments, 'The Mopla Rebellion has brought name and fame to our district. Is it not a great honour to us that discussions about our district take place in our parliament'.[16] A still more abusive language was used by the Malabar correspondent of this paper, when it wrote: 'Among this family of demons, the prominent ones – *Sumali* [Chemprasseri Thangal] and *Malyavan* [Seethi Koya Thangal] have been caught by the police. Only *Mali* [Kunhahammad Haji] who has done much *Kurumalis* [mischiefs] remains to be caught hold of . . . . These *Thangals* were mere *Thongans* [Impotents] and Moplas attribute *Thungatha* [fame] to them due to their fanatical spirit . . . . Among these wretched demons, Chempraseri ranks first for mutilating the Hindus alive'.[17] The demonisation of the leaders of the Rebellion in this fashion is formulaic and follows a pattern as per Brahminical tradition. The leaders were represented as being like the demons of ancient myth who engaged in endless battles against the forces of good. What matters in these perspectives is their 'otherness'. Even Ali Musaliyar, a sober and pious leader, was depicted in this vein by *Kerala Patrika*. The paper wrote, 'This Musaliyar spoke that if one kills a Hindu, he can marry a *houri* [celestial beauty] in heaven'.[18] This representation of Ali Musaliyar, the Khilafath

[15] *Malayala Manorama*, 19th November 1921, NMML, Delhi.

[16] *Malayala Manorama*, 8th December 1921, NMML, Delhi.

[17] *Malayala Manorama*, 29th December, 1921, NMML, Delhi.

[18] *Kerala Patrika*, 5th September 1921. Also see K.K.M. Kareem, Note no. 5, p.63.

leader was in contradiction to the actual character of the musaliyar as testified by all the leading authorities on the subject.

Concluding his long article titled '*Jonakappada*' in *Malayala Manorama*, Moorkoth Kumaran made an observation regarding the measures for prevention of such outbreaks in future. He observed, 'In this background two remedies are possible – crush the fanaticism of *Mappilas* or make Hindus equally fanatic.[19] While compulsory primary education through common school could wipe out Mappila fanaticism, the latter could be achieved only through the unity of Hindus. He adds, 'And in the meantime the Hindus must have fanatism. There should be unity among them. They have to be vigilant and purge out the Mopla phobia . . .. Do you think that so long as Hindus live in unity and harmony, the Moplas will dare to rebel or try to convert Hindus? Caste distinction alone is the cause of this disunity'.[20] Following the pattern of colonial narratives, *Malayala Manorama*, in another article traced the cause of the rebellion to the inherent character of Mappilas. The article says, 'These Mappilas, who are of Arab descent, are notorious for their bigotry and blood thirstiness'.[21] On another occasion *Malayala Manorama* opined that 'fanaticism and hot-temperance were prevalent among *Mappilas* of other parts of Kerala but only when they got the support of South Malabar *Mappilas*, they showed the courage to make furcas'.[22]

Generally, the English papers were pro-Government and as such they presented their most venomous accounts about the rebellion. For instance, the *West Coast Reformer*, an English paper from Calicut, published a lead article regarding the rebellion. On 9th October 1921, the paper wrote:

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[19] *Malayala Manorama*, 17th September 1921, NMML, Delhi.

[20] *Malayala Manorama*, 17th September 1921, NMML, Delhi.

[21] *Malayala Manorama*, 20 September 1921, NMML, Delhi.

[22] *Malayala Manorama*, 18 September 1921, NMML, Delhi.

"More than six weeks have passed by since the declaration by Mopla fanatics of Malabar of *Jihad* in the name of Khilafath. Ali-Musaliyar, the first Sulthan appointed in Tirurangadi mosque has surrendered . . . and stands in the dock with his lean hungry look facing his trial for the greatest offence . . .. The robber chieftain Variankunnath Kunhahamed Hajee, is still at large perpetrating the cruelest deeds of savagery on the Hindu population. The criminal impudence and effrontery with which this uncrowned king of Nilambur imposes his will upon the trembling Hindus, reminds one of the marauding chieftains of the Robber hordes of Spanish Sierras … Beheading, the common game of oriental despots, is freely visited by this freebooter on Hindus of uncompromising faith without least compuction . . . . The interior of Ernad and Walluvanad taluks are still shivering with dread for this inhuman wretch and his compeer Chembrasseri Thangal".[23]

Unlike the vernacular press, this paper profusely used metaphors from European history to depict the demonic character of the leaders of the Rebellion. This kind of reports only helped to heighten the 'muslim phobia' in the minds of Hindus and to sharpen the difference between the two communities.

While the pro-government or anti-nationalist newspaper represented the Rebellion in this negative tone, the nationalist vernacular papers did not lag behind in this venture. *Mathrubhumi*, the official organ of the nationalist movement in Malabar, in its own way, though not intentionally communal, contributed to create division within its readership. A perusal of the editorials and lead articles that appeared in *Mathrubhumi* would be of interest in this context. Though *Mathrubhumi* was started only in 1923, two years after the Rebellion, umpteen articles and editorials dealing with Rebellion appeared in it during 1923 and 1924. In the year of its inception itself, K. Madhavan Nair,

[23] *West Coast Reformer*, 9 October 1921; Also see FNR ending 15th October 1921, No.42, 1921 Home (General), p.400. TNA.

the editor and the Congress leader, wrote a series of articles examining the cause and course of the Rebellion. In one such article which elaborately deals with the fanaticism of Mappilas, he says: 'The Mopla right from his childhood hears the songs that extols the martyrs died for the cause of religion and it generates wild desires in him. Or else, he hears about the case of apostasy and believes that he, who does not prevent such disgrace to religion, is outside its fold. In this matter, though Islam forbids forcible conversion, he follows the footsteps of Tipu Sulthan, not that of Prophet Mohamed and kills the Hindus indiscriminately'.[24] In another article of the same series Madhavan Nair wrote, 'If *Nairs*, *Thiyyas* and *Cherumas* were united, they could have resisted the Mappila rebels. But due to age-old oppression of *Nairs* by *Nambudiris*, of *Thiyyas* by *Nairs* and of *Cherumas* by *Thiyyas*, the lower orders of Hinduism felt happy over the difficulties caused by the Rebellion to the higher castes'.[25] Again, the editorial of *Mathrubhumi* of May 26, 1923 said, 'If the Hindus had the same reverence to their temples as the Muslims had to their mosques, this much of temples would not have been destroyed in the Rebellion zone. It would have been a matter of pride to Hindu community, if a single Hindu was hurt in the attempt to defend the sanctity of his temple'.[26] The editorial hoped that if the Hindu conference convened by Dr. Moonje, the Hindu Mahasabha leader, at Calicut, paved the way for the awakening of Hindus, it would be a blessing as far as Hindus were concerned.[27] At the same time *Mathrubhumi* in its editorial, countering the allegation of *The Muslim*, a Muslim journal, reiterated its secular stand and stated that 'if a letter is not published in the paper, it is being considered as debasement of a community. We used to get articles written by *Nairs*,

[24] K. Madhavan Nair, "Hindu-Muslim Relations" in *Mathrubhumi*, 24th May, 1923.

[25] *Mathrubhumi*, 1st May, 1923.

[26] *Mathrubhumi*, 26th May, 1923.

[27] *Ibid.*

Nambudiris, Nambisans and *Mappilas.* It is not by considering the caste or creed of the writer, that articles are published in *Mathrubhumi'*.[28]

The articles and editorials of *Mathrubhumi* triggered off a controversy among the leaders of the Congress party and a group under Mohamed Abdurahiman and Moidu Moulavi wrote a series of articles in *Al-Ameen*, another nationalist paper from Calicut, attacking the anti-Muslim tone of such articles.[29] As Vidwan T.K. Raman Menon, who had served as sub-editor in *Al-Ameen*, observed, 'The relation between *Mathrubhumi* and *Al-Ameen* was not smooth. Overtly or covertly, *Al-Ameen* indulged in countering the editorials and misinterpreting the ideals of *Mathrubhumi*. I could not see any reciprocity or unity existing between these two nationalist dailies during that period'.[30] It was due to this controversy that Madhavan Nair abruptly stopped publishing the remaining parts of the articles. Later, these articles were collected and published in a book form titled *Malabar Kalapam* in 1971 by his wife Kalyani Amma. About this book, Moidu Moulavi remarked that 'it only helped to strengthen the anti-Muslim sentiments among Hindus and it was a fierce arrow aimed at the Mappila community ... Any Hindu who read this work with an objective mind would turn to be a staunch enemy of Mappilas'.[31] Madhavan Nair in his book, traced the root of the rebellion back to Tipu, who not only caused many a hardship to Hindus of Malabar but became the *guru* (preceptor) of later Mappila revolts.[32] The tone and tenure of

[28] *Mathrubhumi*, 25th March, 1924.

[29] E. Moidu Moulavi, *Charithrachinthakal* (Mal.), Calicut, 1981, p.45.

[30] S.K. Pottekkat *et al.* (ed.), *Mohammad Abdurahiman* (Mal.), Memorial Committee, Calicut, 1978, pp.145-146.

[31] E. Moidu Moulavi, *op. cit*., pp.46-47.

[32] K. Madhavan Nair, *Mappila Kalapam* (Mal.), Mathrubhumi Publishers, Calicut, 1971, p.15.

the articles as well as the book was anti-Muslim as he was depending upon the perspectives of colonial narratives of 19th century Mappila uprisings.[33]

As we have analysed elsewhere in this study, Abdurahiman Sahib and his *Al-Ameen* always used metaphors and idioms of Islam in their discourses. Hence, the cold war between *Mathrubhumi* and *Al-Ameen* in 1930's had its communitarian dimension also. It was in the background of this cold war that Mathrubhumi was forced to make its stand clear. In its editorial of 18th January 1935, titled *Mathrubhumikku Mathamilla* ('Mathrubhumi has no religion') the paper stated, 'To *Mathrubhumi* both Hinduism and Islam are alike . . . we don't consider it a sin either embracing or deserting a particular religion. *Al-Ameen* has to understand that Mr. Kelappan is not an Arya Samajist.'[34] To put it in nutshell, both *Mathrubhumi* and *Al-Ameen*, the two nationalist papers from Calicut, contributed their own share in strengthening the Hindu and Muslim community identities in Malabar. A prominent section of Hindus considered *Al-Ameen*, not as a Congress organ but as a Muslim paper.[35] On the other hand, barring a few, Muslims in general considered *Mathrubhumi* as a Hindu paper. What one could see here is communiterianism in the guise of nationalism.

The Muslim papers on the other hand, most being pro-Khilafatist, presented their own biased accounts about the rebellion, which in its turn helped to foster Muslim community identity and at times communal frenzy itself. *Kerala Chandrika*, a pro-Khilafat muslim journal wrote:

"The government have been trying to disprove the tenets of their religion and injuring their leaders and the inglorious collector of Malabar with a military force entered the holy mosques and stirred the ire of the

[33] E. Moidu Moulavi, *op. cit*., p.48.

[34] *Mathrubhumi*, 18th January 1935.

[35] S.K. Pottekkat *et al.*, *op. cit*., p.146.

community. If, while the revered Malappuram Thangal, one of the heads of their religion was praying in the mosque that the holy temple of God should be surrendered by military, which Mohammedan could keep still?[36] The *Muslim* (dated 28th September 1922) and *Kerala Chandrika* (dated 2nd October 1922) published an article 'Condition of Muslim Women in Malabar' which narrated exaggerated stories about the atrocities committed by Hindus on Mappila women.[37] *Muslim Sahakari*, another muslim journal also believed that 'there was truth in the allegation of Hindu atrocities on helpless Mappila women in the area'.[38] *Kerala Chandrika* in an article to stir up the wealthy muslims to a sense of their duty towards afflicted muslims in Malabar said, 'At night some police officers and their attendants come riding on the white horse [Fully drunk-Tr] and begin to outrage the chastity of helpless muslim women! Who is there to attend to the wretchedness of these poor people?[39] A note in the same paper in 1921 opined that the reports about Mopla's looting Hindu houses, was altogether unfounded, that absolute falsehood against the Muslims were published in English-owned papers.[40]

Such stories, right or wrong, created sympathy among their co-religionists in other parts of the country. Thus, muslim papers constructed their own community as being aggrieved and endangered, the other community as being predatory. As reports of aggression and victimization were remembered and embellished, violence became an instrument for marking and consolidating group identities.

National Coverage of the Rebellion

[36] *Kerala Chandrika*, 29th August 1921. Also see Fortnightly Report, No.36, 1921, Home (General), p.244. TNA.

[37] *Kerala Chandrika*, 2nd October 1922. Also see *Muslim* dated 28th September 1922 in MNNPR, 1922, TNA.

[38] *Muslim Sahakari*, Calicut, 5th October 1922, MNNPR, 1922, TNA.

[39] *Kerala Chandrika*, 24th July 1922, MNNPR, 1922, TNA.

[40] *F.N.R.* No. 36, 1921, Home Administration, p.245, TNA.

The Rebellion also got national coverage with the intervention of Arya Samaj press. As Charu Gupta observed, 'The Mopla Rebellion gave urgency to Hindu organization and an opportunity to argue for consolidation. In the United Province, a large number of tracts emerged giving vivid description of forcible conversion, rape and abduction of Hindu women by Moplas'.[41] The news reporters from North India reached Malabar and began to send biased reports to their respective papers, exaggering the cruelty of the Mopla rebels towards the Hindus.[42] Referring to the plight of Hindus in Malabar during the Rebellion, Dr. Moonje in his article in *Indian Social Reformer* (Bombay) wrote, 'With us [Hindus] it is a serious problem of scientific investigation into our sociology to find out the causes of such helplessness and unpreparedness of Hindus to defend their homes and women folk . . . Division and hatred have made us cowardly and slavish'.[43] This kind of astute comments was calculated to create more excitements in the minds of Hindus. Through this kind of coverage in Hindi press, the reverberations of the Rebellion reached the nook and corner of India, far beyond the epicenter and excited the minds of Hindus. Thus, the Mappila Rebellion pushed relations between two communities into an all time low, illustrating how stray developments in the localities could rip the patchwork quilt of Hindu-Muslim understanding at all India level.[44]

A series of tracts were published by Arya Samajists which abound in obscene and abusive statements calculated to create more excitements in the minds of Hindus. One of this, *Phajite Ka Gol Guppa* (The cause of quarrel)

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[41] Charu Gupta, *Sexuality, Obscurity, Community: Women Muslims and Hindu Public in Colonial India*, Permanent Black, Delhi, 2001, p.226.

[42] Moozhikunnath Brahmadathan Namboodiripad, *Khilafath Smaranakal* (Mal.), Calicut, 1965, p.69.

[43] *The Indian Social Reformer*, Bombay, 26th March 1922, NMML, Delhi.

[44] Aysha Jalal, *Self and Sovereignty: Individual and Community in South Asian Islam since 1850*, OUP, Delhi, 2001, p.231.

by Master Gupta Jhalu of Lucknow taunted Hindus 'who watched as silent spectators while their Hindu brethren in Malabar were persecuted by Mappilas'.[45] Jhalu said, 'At a time when India is moving towards freedom, she was shocked by the cruelty of *Mappilas* and the weeping of Malabar Hindus'.[46] He added that 'The only remedy to prevent the Muslims from such rapacious acts and make them patriotic is the unity of Hindus. Until and unless the unity of the chief caste of India [Hindus] is not strong enough, the Muslims will continue their rebellions'.[47] Similarly, a series of tracts were written by Bishan Sharma titled *Malabar Ka Drishya* [The scene from Malabar], which includes (a) *Drin Sankalp Vir* (b) *Satyavati Vimala Ki Pukar* (c) *Bhole Swami ka Dusht Nankar*.[48] All these were published from Meerut in 1923. Another popular tract in Hindi was Satyavrat Sharma's *Malabar Aur Arya Samaj* which described about a Hindu woman of Malabar, who had been forcibly converted to Islam, 'tore apart her Mopla clothes and adorned the Hindu clothes when Arya Samaj reached there'.[49] Through this kind of chauvinistic print discourse on an event that took place in a remote pocket of the nation, an entire community of Muslims was tarred as 'fanatic'. It also bundled Muslims in to an undifferentiated and essentialized category defined by the criterion of religion alone. More over, representation of violence itself became a symbol, which helped to freeze the popular constructions of identity.

Conversely, such writings provoked furious rebuttals from the Urdu press, which absorbed the external construction of their identity and lent substance to the idea of Muslim as a community with common interests. It is

[45] Master Gupta Jhalu, *Phajite Ka Gol Gappa* (Hindi), pp.30, Lucknow, 1922 (microfilm) Proscribed Literature, NMML, Delhi.

[46] *Ibid*., p.2.

[47] *Ibid*., p.13.

[48] Charu Gupta, *op. cit*., p.226.

[49] Satya Vrat Sharma (Publisher), *Malabar Aur Arya Samaj* (Hindi) Agra, 1923.

a fact that self hood is also shaped by ways in which others view 'Us'. Urdu journals joined the fray in publishing consternating reports about atrocities of Hindus in Malabar. As *Malayala Manorma* observed, 'it is to be regretted that Muslim papers in Bombay and Punjab are publishing reports about the vandalism of Hinduism in Malabar. They report that, in the absence of male *Mappilas* in South Malabar, the Hindus are consternating the Mopla orphans and raping their mothers".[50] It was in the wake of these reports that *Jamyithe Da'wathe Tabiliqe Islami* of Pune reached Malabar and started their rehabilitation work among Mappilas.

Rebellion as reflected in Nationalist and literary discourse

It is interesting to note that the colonial stereotypes on *Mappilas* found a place in indigenous narratives on the Rebellion, including the nationalist discourses. The colonial government's role in constructing community identity is familiar. As observed by Mushirul Hasan, 'much less known is how nationalist images and stereotypes were just as important as the colonial framework that was evolved to define and categorize Muslims'.[51] Images constructed by the colonialists surfaced with notable frequency in nationalist writings on the Rebellion.

Even the most secular nationalist leaders could not avoid a community based outlook. 'It might sound paradoxical, even objectionable to some, but it was true all the same that Mahatma Gandhi, who was the most ardent champion of Hindu-Muslim Unity, often took a communitarian view'.[52] For, regarding the Malabar Rebellion Gandhiji wrote, ‘A verbal disapproval by Mussalmans of Mopla madness is no test of Mussalman friendship. The

[50] *Malayala Manorama,* 7th October 1922, NMML Delhi.

[51] Mushirul Hasan, '*Legacy of a Divided Nation: India's Muslims Since Independence* (OUP Delhi 1997) p.26.

[52] K.N. Panikkar *'Communal Threat, Secular Challenge'*, Earthworm, Madras 1997, p. 27.

Mussalman must naturally feel the shame and humiliation of Mopla conduct about the forcible conversion and looting and they must work away so silently and effectively that such things might become impossible even on the part of the most fanatical among them'.[53] As K.N. Panikkar delineated, by suggesting this course of conduct, Gandhiji did draw a communal line It was for Muslims to feel ashamed and humiliated for what *Mappilas* had done and it was for them to ensure that Mappila fanaticism would not erupt again. In other words, Muslims as a community was responsible for the violence committed by *Mappilas* because they professed the same religion'.[54] On another occasion Gandhiji wrote, 'They [Mappilas] are of fiery temperament and are said to be easily excitable. They are enraged and resort to violence in a matter of seconds. They have been responsible for many murders..... It is not yet clear what led this present outburst'.[55] In this kind of narratives Gandhiji, like colonial officials H.V. Connolly and T.L. Strange, frames 1921 Rebellion as another event in a series and 'Muslimness' seems to be sufficient explanation for their action.[56] Still on another context Gandhiji stated that 'Moplas were never particularly friendly to the Malabar Hindus. They had looted them before. Their notions of Islam were of a very crude type'.[57] Similarly, Gandhiji wrote to the editor of *Vishala Keralam* (Madras), "How to reach the Moplas as also the class of Hindus whom you would want to reach through your news paper, is more than I can say, but I know that Hindus should cease to be cowardly. The Moplas should cease to be cruel. In other words each party should become truly religious".[58] Using these utterances of Gandhiji,

[53] Mahatama Gandhi, *Collected Works*, Vol.21, Ahamedabad, 1966, p.321.

[54] K.N. Panikkar, note n.52, p.27.

[55] M.K. Gandhi, *op.cit* pp. 47-8.

[56] M.T. Ansari, "Re-figuring the Fanatic: Malabar 1836-1922" in *Subaltern Studies XII* (ed) Shail Mayaram et al., Permanent Black, Delhi, 2005, pp. 36-78.

[57] M.K. Gandhi *op. cit*, p.356.

[58] M.K. Gandhi, *Collected Works*, Vol. 23, Ahmedabad, 1966, pp. 81-82. Also see, *Gandhiji's Selected Letters* (Mal.) Mathrubhumi Publication, Calicut.

Bhagavan Josh, has recounted how nationalist leaders like Gandhi took recourse to essentiallised and mythical images of emasculated Hindus to induce nationalist fervour.[59] In all such pronouncements, Gandhiji was merely reproducing the same old colonial stereotypes about Mappilas. Thus somewhat surprisingly, the nationalist accounts of 1921 rebellion shares much common ground with the colonialists. If a man of Gandhiji's calibre could not avoid such a reading, then there is no ground for wonder for a more sectarian attitude in the case of local congress leaders like K. Madhavan Nair, K. Kelappan, Mohamad Abdurahiman and E. Moidu Moulavi etc.[60] Though the nationalist writings focused the role of British in the strife between the communities, it had to negotiate the difficult terrain of the other among 'us'.[61] The fanatic Mappila' also has after lives in nationalist discourse, diverse as they are, in which the insurgent Mappila seems to be produced as a not-yet, not full fledged citizen-subject.[62] This kind of nationalist othering also contributed their share to furthering communitarian identities. Such communitarian perspective plagued the Indian National Congress through out the period of freedom struggle in Malabar. Bemoaning the rising tendency among congress leaders for this kind of communal view point, *Mathrubumi* in its editorial titled, 'communalism in the garb of Nationalism' wrote, "However, certain Muslim congress men held an exclusive meeting under the banner of Kerala Muslim National party to discuss the matter [secret circular

[59] See Ajan Ghosh "Assertive Religious Identities", *EPW*, March 27, 2004 pp. 1385-1388. Another example of Gandhi's communitarian approach could be drawn from the fact that he rebuked George Joseph, a Syrian Christian when he attempted to take over the command of Vaikom Satyagraha in 1936 and specified that the Satyagraha was a Hindu 'affair'. (see Dilip. M. Menon, "Becoming 'Hindu' and 'Muslim': Identity and Conflict in Malabar, 1900-1936", Working Paper No. 255, CDS, Trivandrum, 1994, p.15).

[60] For more details, see chapter 'Towards a Political Identity'.

[61] Gyanendra Pandey, "The Prose of Otherness" in David Arnold and David Hardiman (eds.), *Subaltern Studies VIII*, Delhi, OUP, 1994, p.199.

[62] M.T. Ansari, *op.cit* p.64.

issue]. To hold a communal meeting to discuss a common issue may be due to the fact that Mr. Abdurahiman is a Muslim. What will be the future of congress, if a communal group is formed within it... The Hindus, Muslims and the Christians within the congress have to be ready to address common issues without communal biases.[63]

If we now turn to some works of Malayalam literature, which of course had a nationalist tinge, the same communitarian bias could be detected. The Rebellion was a favorite theme of many literary works of post-rebellion period. A typical example is '*Duravastha*', written in 1923 by Kumaran Asan, the national poet of Kerala. The poem begins thus :

> Amidst the farm, forest and habitations
>
> of Kerala District
>
> Eranad is the area
>
> reddened with the blood of Hindus
>
> Shed by the cruel Muhammedans.[64]

This is followed by a description of the cruelties of 'Muhamadan demons' inflicted upon the innocent Hindus. After this heart throbbing description, the poet asks:

> 'What acts of Thuggery they commit not!
>
> The ruthless roughs
>
> Oh! Forbid sights that singe the eye
>
> What men are these?

[63] *Mathrubhumi*, 8th April 1939.

[64] Kumaran Asan, *Duravastha* (Mal.) Reprint, World Books, Pala, 2004, p. 10.

Not bound to their mother's love

Nor to their sisters'

So Godless in their thought'.[65]

To describe the demonic character of Mappilas, terms like 'Cruel Muhamedans' 'Cruel demons' 'Cobras' etc. were profusely used in this text. As the poet condemned the caste Hindus along with Mappilas, one cannot brand the poet as' communal'. This representation of *Mappilas* by a poet from South Kerala was due to the internalization of the information provided by the Southern newspapers like *Malayalam Manorama*, which published consternating reports about the Rebellion. This has been testified to by EMS Namboodiripad in his critique of the poem *Duravastha.*[66] This also shows how the covering of the rebellion in print media was damaging to the image of Mappilas. However, the poem triggered off a controversy and Muslim journals from all corners condemned the work. In all parts of Kerala, Muslims convened protest meetings and passed resolutions condemning the work as anti-Muslim. At Trivandrum, a meeting of Muslim literati was held under the chairmanship of Vakkom Abdul Kader Moulavi to discuss the issue. Later, Asan himself came with a note of repentance and assured the Muslims literati that the controversial portions would be removed in the next impression.[67]

Another poem, which was written in *Thullal* style, dealing with the Rebellion was *Ernad Kalapam* written by an anonymous author in 1922.[68] The poem, which begins with hailing King George, contains exaggerated

[65] *Ibidi.*, p.32.

[66] See E.M.S. Nampoodiripad, *Vayanayude Azhangalil*, Chintha Publication, Trivandrum, 1997, p. 208. Also See his *'Asanum Malayala Sahityavum'*, Trivandrum, 1981.

[67] P.A. Syed Mohamad *Kerala Muslim Charithram* (Mal.), Trichur, 1969, p. 247.

[68] Anonymous, *Ernad Kalapam* (Mal.) Bharata Vilasam Press. Trichur, 1922, p.856

accounts of the atrocities of Mappilas. About the forcible conversion the poem says.

Chanting *Kalima* and shedding *Kurduma*

Learning the verses of *Quran*

Observing *Namaz* and conducting rituals

Doing the obligatory circumcision

Nairs and *Thiyyas* got converted forcibly

About 4000 is their number

Unwillingly succumbed to this conversion

What made them do this?

Is sheer fear of death?[69]

This is followed by the description of the vandalism of *Mappilas* upon the innocent Hindus like 'piercing the womb of pregnant ladies with daggers sparing not even the fetus'.[70] This diatribe is also used against Gandhiji who is depicted as 'lunatic' and *Naradan* as he was the person whom the poet considered as the instigator of the Mappilas. Further the poem makes scathing criticism against the upper caste Hindus for practicing untouchability and thereby averting the Hindu unity in Malabar. The poem also speaks in laudatory terms about the service of Rishiram, the leader of Arya Samaj.[71]

Even in a text that deals with the history of Sanskrit literature in Kerala, this negative representation could be discerned. For eg, Vadakkumkur Raja Raja Varma, in his celebrated book on Sanskrit literature, says, 'There is no limit to the destruction of temples caused by the invasion of Tippu Sulthan as well as the riots of *Mappilas* in Malabar. It was a pastime of

[69] *Ibid*. p.19.

[70] *Ibid*. p. 21.

[71] *Ibid*. p. 44.

Tipu and his followers [Mappilas] to set fire to temples, destroy the idols and even slaughter of cows within the *Sanctum Sanctorum* of temples. Even now the temples of Malabar have not overcome from the decay caused by the invasion of this neo-Ravana [Tipu].[72] The symbolic value of temple desecration was far greater than the material loss experienced and this rhetoric of temple desecration was one way through which a Hindu identity was consolidated.

Another poem, though not directly dealing with the Rebellion, but containing this negative representation of Muslims, was *Katteliyude Kathu* (The letter of Mountain Rat) written in 1924 by Vallathol Narayana Menon, another notable national poet of Kerala.[73] The poem deals with a letter sent by Shivaji (who was called Mountain rat by his enemies) to Jaya Simhan, a Hindu ruler who allied with Aurangazeb in the battle against Shivaji. The poet says

I As this barren shaven head
Unfit for the throne of India
We may fight after
Throwing out our common enemy.

II Or, if you prefer to serve
This *Mlecha* from outside [Aurangazeb]
And fight with your native brethren

[72] Vadakkumkur Raja Raja Varma, *The History of Sanskrit Literature in Kerala* (Mal.) 2 Vol. (First impression 1947) Reprint, S.S. University Kalady, 1997, pp.369-370.

[73] K.P. Sankaran (ed.), *Sahithya Manjeri: Vallathol Sampporna Krithikal* (Mal.), DC Books, Kottyam 2004, pp. 268-271.

You are welcome![74]

It is not intended here to question the secular or nationalist credentials of Vallathol, the poet, but in the post-rebellion period when social life in Kerala was ruined by mutual suspicion and mistrust, this poem written in 1924, served only to alienate the Muslim community. The depiction of Muslim behaviour in the poem is formulaic and follows a pattern expected of *mlechas* as per Brahminical tradition.

The above-mentioned poetic descriptions may have been exaggerated but were not altogether untrue. But such representations constantly reminded the 'Hindus' that Muslim *mlechas* had oppressed 'us' abducted 'our' women, destroyed 'our' temples, polluted 'our' sacred spaces etc and helped to foster communitarian identity not only among 'us' (Hindus) but also among the 'other' (Muslims). It helped to whip up communal passions in Malabar and helped to the slow but steady crystallization of Hindu and Muslim identity in Malabar.

Conclusion

Thus, the above survey of the print discourse show that it was not the Rebellion as such but the coverage of it in print media which had done incalculable harm to relations between Hindus and Muslims and which had led to the solidification of communitarian identities, both Hindu and Muslim, not only in Malabar but even at the national level. What these newspaper reports succeeded in doing was to help freeze popular perceptions of Hindu and Muslim identities by portraying the animosities between the two as an historical inevitability. Both types of local press (Hindu and Muslim) constructed facts, about who was the aggressor, the number of casualties, the number of temples destroyed, the number of people converted, number of

[74] *Ibid.*

women molested etc. These 'facts' provided by print media were made believable through repetition in party propaganda, rumours, official reports etc. Through this wide coverage, news of the Rebellion reached and affected the relatively harmonious segment of population in Malabar in a negative manner. Thus, print sharpened the existing cleavages and threw up new kinds of social tensions in Malabar. Secondly, Exclusiveness and identity cannot develop in a vacuum but derive inspiration from the perception of others. Even a negative identification could be a powerful unifying force for a divided community. Both types of chauvinistic reports about rebellion had its impact on the rise of an exclusive Muslim and Hindu identity in Malabar. Fear of 'others' tended to kindle a communitarian spirit among both Hindus and Muslims. In other words Representation of violence itself became a symbol which helped to freeze popular constructions of identity. As reports of aggression and victimization were remembered and embellished, Rebellion became an instrument for marking and consolidating group identity. As Stuart Hall opined, 'identities are constructed within, not outside, discourse, we need to understand them as produced in specific historical and institutional sites within specific discursive formations and practices by specific enunciative strategies'.[75] Such identities were often heightened by perception of a threat from a group external to it.

Hindu Mahasabha, Arya Samaj and the making of a Hindu Community

In the immediate wake of the suppression of Malabar Rebellion, the compagin to unify Hindus gained a new urgency and turned more aggressive in Malabar. A direct result of the Malabar Rebellion was entry of Hindu organizations of North India like Hindu Maha Sabha and Arya Samaj in to the social space of Malabar and their attempt to forge a Hindu community identity here. We have already examined how the Hindi newspapers and

[75] Stuart Hall, introduction in Stuart Hall and Paul Du Gay (eds.), *Questions of Cultural Identity*, Sage, Delhi, 1996, p.4.

tracts covered the rebellion, elsewhere in this chapter. Stories of violence and forcible conversion and temple desecration badly frightened the Hindu population, not only of Malabar but the whole of India. It was in this backdrop that all India players like Hindu Maha sabha and Arya Samaj etc extended their activities to Malabar and an increasingly Hindu style of politics began to develop in Malabar. Before 1920, there had been very little sense of being Hindu in Malabar particularly among the lower castes. It was not a community, which really existed here, even in the early decades of 20th century. The Hindu community, as Romila Thapar, rightly remarked, is an imagined community.[76] In 1918, K.M. Panikkar had remarked, 'of the religious practices of the region that any resemblance to a body of religion even as amorphous as Hinduism was remote'.[77]

The Malabar Rebellion came as a shot in the arm for Arya Samaj and their *shudi* campaign, lying dormant for almost a decade, was now resumed in the North, this time on a war footing. In August 1922, Arya Samaj met at Allahabad and *Baratiya Hindu Sudhi Sabha* was formed under Swami Shradhanand.[78] Grossly exaggerating the news about forcible conversion during the Rebellion, Arya Samaj rushed teams of *Shudi* activists to Malabar to bring converts back to Hinduism. As editorial of *Yogakeshamam* described, 'it was the terrifying news about the Rebellion that attracted them [Arya Samaj] to Kerala. They attempt to draw the attention of the people of both this land [Malabar] and outside through print media to the pathetic plight of Hindus here'.[79]

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[76] Romila Thapar, *Interpreting Early India*, New Delhi, 1992, pp. 60-80.

[77] K.M. Panikkar, "Religion and Magic among Nair", *Man*, 62, 1918, p. 104.

[78] Yoginder Sikand "Arya Sudhi and Muslm Tabliq: Muslim Reaction to Arya Samaj's Proslytisation 1923-30" in *Religious Conversion in India: Modes, Motivation and Meaning* (eds), Rowena Robinson and S. Clarke, OUP, Delhi, 2004, pp. 98-118.

[79] *Yogakshemam*, 14th October, 1922.

V. Gopla Menon, an active congress leader during the Rebellion, in his speech at Lucknow Congress meeting said that the account about conversion was an exaggerated one and opined that Hindus themselves in the grab of Muslims, converted others that thousands embraced Islam voluntarily and only a very small section had bee converted forcibly.[80] Despite all such facts, '*Shudi*' emerged as a symbol around which the Arya Samajist started rousing Hindu public opinion and mobilizing the Hindu masses.

Pandit Rishi Ram of Arya Samaj from Punjab reached Calicut in December1921 and contributed an amount of Rs. 1000 to the Relief Fund constituted by the Arya Samaj.[81] Rehabilitation of the refuges of the Rebellion was the immediate task undertaken by the Samaj. It opened relief camps at Kallai, Mayyanad, Nilampur, Thuvvur, Tirurangadi, Neeralamukku and Calicut, where the refugees were provided food, cloth and shelter. Along with the relief work, the Samaj undertook their main work, *Shudhi* (purification) programme to bring back those Hindus converted to Islam in Malabar.

Three persons were appointed in Malabar to collect details of those who were forcibly converted during the Rebellion.[82] During the period between 20th March and 10th April 1922, Kushal Chand (editor of *Arya Gazette*) and Venkatachalam Ayyar reconverted hundreds of people in Malabar to Hinduism. Regarding the early phase of his work in Malabar, Rishi Ram wrote, 'From our experience and familiarity with the Hindus in Malabar for the last few months, we have realized that certain grave defects have ruined the Hindu community here. For Hinduism to prosper in Malabar, certain things have to be undertaken. Discussing these issues, we have published articles in the Samajam journal as well as pamphlets in vernacular

[80] *Indian Social Reformer,* Bombay, 30th December, 1922.

[81] *Malayala Manorama,* 10th December, 1921, NMML Delhi.

[82] *Malayala Manorama*, 30th May, 1992, NMML, Delhi.

and English'.[83] By September 1922, the Samaj reconverted 1886 out of 2500 Hindus (as per the estimate of the Samaj) converted by *Mappilas* during the Rebellion. It collected an amount of Rs. 44968 from well-wishers and the whole amount was spent in Malabar.[84]

During the course of the re-conversion work two facts struck the minds of the leaders of the Samaj. One was the resistance of caste Hindus against the re-conversion programme and the other was the reluctance of lower caste converts to Islam to come back to their earlier creed due to pollution practiced by caste Hindus.[85] The attempt to reconvert 400 Hindus, forcibly converted during rebellion, was objected by the caste elites and demanded Rs. 30 each from such converts.[86] It was these factors, which led Arya Samaj to fight against the evils like untouchability and inapproachability and other caste rules prevalent in Malabar for centuries.

As the ferocity of the Rebellion subsided, the Samaj turned to the task of reorganization of the Hindu community. As *Arya Keralam*, the official organ of the Arya Samaj in Malabar put in, 'the aim of the Samaj was to unite and wake up the Hindu community which had become scattered and moribund and to save it from internal rift'.[87] With this intention, the Samaj convened a meeting at Paral Hall in Calicut on 1st October 1922 under the chairmanship of Nilambur Raja.[88] In this meeting, Rishi Ram spoke on 'Hindus in Kerala' and reminded the Hindus that it was the caste rules and disunity among them, which was the root cause of the Rebellion. Therefore,

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[83] *Ibid*.

[84] Report of Arya Samaj for the period 1921-22 in *Yogakshemam*, 23rd December, 1922 NMML. Delhi.

[85] Kerala History Association, *History of Kerala* (Mal.) Vol II, Ernakulam, 1974 p.568.

[86] *Malayalam Manorama*, 1st July, 1992.

[87] *Arya Keralam*, editorial, as reproduced in *Mathrubhumi* 15th May 1923.

[88] *Malayala Manorma*, 3rd October, 1922.

the meeting chalked out a programme to strengthen the unity of Hindus. But such a programe was not easy, as the caste Hindus were not ready to forgo the age old customs. Still Arya Samaj went on with their agenda of uniting the Hindus of Malabar and every means were adopted for the realization of the same. The Samaj secretary conducted an Essay competition on 'The Defects of Hindu community of Kerala and the resultant troubles in temporal, spiritual and communal sphere'.[89] A screening committee consisted of three members – C. Krishnan (*Mitavadi*) Sankara Sastri (*Malabar Journal*) and T. Narayanan Nambiar - were constituted for this purpose. Even in the constitution of the screening committee – an *Ezhava*, a Tamil Brahmin and a Nair – the urge for uniting the Hindu community was visible.[90] Thus, the aim of Samaj was to integrate the scattered and static Hindu community and to save it from internal contradiction.[91]

The first attempt to eradicate pollution in Malabar was the re-conversion of *chela nairs* of North Malabar. They were a group of elite caste who were said to have embraced Islam during the time of Tipu Sulthan but retained the customs of Hinduism. Though they came back to the old faith after the annexation of Malabar by British in 1792, the high caste Hindus were reluctant to mingle with them. Arya Samaj, in co-operation with *Uthara Kerala Nair Samajam*, re-converted *chela nairs* to Hinduism. Under the auspices of Arya Samaj, a *Pandhibojanam* (interdining) was organized at Chovva near Kannur on 23rd January 1923.[92] Similar efforts were done in other parts of Kannur and after such efforts, *chela nairs* were assimilated to the fold of Hinduism. Arya Samaj also interfered in Tali Temple issue where

[89] *Malayala Manorama*, 12th October, 1992.

[90] In the essay competition, interestingly a Christian named P.G. Thomas got the first prize, *Mathrubhumi* 7th June 1923.

[91] Editorial, *Arya Keralam* (offical organ of Arya Samaj) as cited in *Mathrubhumi*, 15th May, 1923.

[92] Kerala History Association, *op.cit* p. 568-69.

low caste scavengers were banned from cleaning work in the temple premises. The Samaj workers persuaded the temple authorities and the issue was settled.[93] In the midst, Arya Samaj was continuing its relief and rehabilitation work among Hindus in different parts of Kerala whenever and wherever such works were required. During the period of distress like the flood in Malabar in 1924, the revolt at Kalpathi in 1925, the epidemic in Travancore etc. they did yeomen service to the suffering Hindus.

The Samaj was not only concerned with re-conversion, but also formal initiation of polluting castes to the fold of Hinduism and thereby brining purity to them in social and religious life. The latter of course was objectionable to high castes and it led to many untoward incidents in Malabar. The Samaj undertook a long campaign at Palghat against the restrictions on low castes to walk through the streets of Kalpathi *Agrahara*. When certain Ezhavas tried to break this rule, the Brahmins resisted and some of the Ezhava families of Palghat embraced Christianity. This was an eye opener to the Samaj workers and they decided to interfere in the issue. The Samaj opened its branch at Palghat in 1925 and started their propaganda work against this social evil. When the Samaj workers tried to enter the *agrahara* by force in November 1925, the Brahmins resisted and in the clash many were seriously injured.[94] The Brahmins said that they had no objection to Christians and Mohamedan converts from polluting classes entering *agrahara* because those were reorganized religions distinct from Hinduism.[95] To the Brahmin's mind these were mere devices for conferring the right of entry in to *agraharas* on classes, which were conscious of not having that right while they remained in

[93] *Ibid*. p. 570.

[94] P. Kesav Dev, *Ethirppu II* (Mal.) Kottayam 1960. pp.43-44. Also see FNR dated 17th November 1925. No: 5429-1- Home/Public TNA.

[95] Extracts from G.O.S. relating to communal Movement (1875-1947) pp.642-44 *FMF* 106 TNA

Hinduism as polluting castes or *Ezhavas*.[96] The Samaj now realized that bringing about the unity of Hindus in Malabar, was not an easy task. However, in the midst, the Samaj leaders could win over the Brahmins and the *agrahara* was opened to all castes.

The situation in Kalpathy was worsened when the Muslims missionaries also appeared on the scene. The Madras Missionary Society under Abdul Aziz Sahib came to Palghat to convert the *Ezhavas* to Islam. This missionary group, sent by the Muslim merchants of Madras started organizing *Wa'az* (religious sermon) in different parts of Palghat city.[97] Conversion and counter conversion became the order of the day in Palghat during this period.

As the District Magistrate observed, 'The situation in Palghat is complicated by a certain amount of hostility towards the Arya Samajists on the part of Mohamadans and Christian communities and there is reason to believe that Mohamdans are about to undertake an energetic counter conversion campaign. Revivalist movements in Malabar whether Arya Samajist or Mohamedans are naturally not very welcome to government. [98] Thus the already feeble thread of social harmony in Malabar was ruined through such activities.

Once normalcy was completely brought back in South Malabar, the Arya Samaj began to concentrate on converting the *Mappilas* themselves to the fold of Hinduism. Branches of Arya Samaj were now set up in the predominantly Mappila areas in South Malabar like Ponnani (1941), which had caused considerable resentment among the *Mappila*.[99] Ponnani, being the

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[96] *Ibid*.

[97] *Mathrubhumi*, 3rd December 1925.

[98] *FNR* dtd 17th November 1925, No. 5429-1-Home (Public) TNA. Also see *Quami Report* (Madras), 14th November 1925 MNNPR. 1925-October-December, 1925, p. 1476 and *Mathrubhumi* 3rd December 1925.

[99] *FNR*, for the second half of November 1941. D.O. No. p. 4-22. TNA p.118.

centre of the Muslim missionary organization, *Maunuthul Islam Sabha*, this was a calculated move on the part of samaj and they tried to convert some *Puslans* (fishermen) into Hinduism. As E.M.S Namboodiripad observed, 'Arya Samaj and other Hindu communal organizations who came to Malabar, initially concentrated on their attention to relief work among the Hindu refugees and later on re-conversion of Hindus converted by rebels but in the last phase started converting the Muslims themselves'.[100] Such efforts only led to the worsening of the communal situation in Malabar. The comment of Moozhikunath Brahmadathan Namboodiripad, the Congress leader of Malabar, seems to be relevant in this context. He says, 'the Hindu stance during the rebellion had already created resentment among the Mappilas. When, after the Rebellion, *Sudhi* was started, this resentment was doubled and this resulted in the transformation of the domain of Ali Musaliyar into a citadel of Muslim League'.[101]

Though Arya Samaj could not gain deep roots in Malabar, it served atleast one purpose. It helped to imagine a 'Hindu community' in Malabar cutting across the boundaries of different caste groups. This imaginings might have helped in its own way to the emergence of social struggles for Temple Entry in Malabar like Guruvayur Satyagraha. The sense of Hindu, which Arya Samaj inculcated among the lower castes, got official consent with the Temple Entry proclamation of 1936 by which they were recognised as Hindus.

Hindu Maha Sabha

Another All India player who made their intervention in Malabar in the wake of the Rebellion was All India Hindu Maha Sabha. In the backdrop of

[100] E.M.S. Namboodiripad, *Keralathile Desiya Prashnam* (Mal.), (The nationality question in Kerala), (Mal.), in P. Govinda Pillai (ed.), *Collected Works of EMS Namboothiripadu*, Vo. 11, Chintha Publishers, Trivandrum, 2000, p. 294.

[101] Moozhikunnath Brahmadathan Nambuidripad, *Khilafath Smaranakal* (Mal.), Calicut, 1965, pp.110.

consternating reports in Hindi newspapers, the Hindu Maha Sabha deputed Dr. B.S. Moonje in 1922 to prepare a report on the condition of converted Hindus and desecrated temples in Malabar. In August 1923 an elaborate report was submitted and this report got wide publicity among the Hindu organisations of India.[102] This report turned to be the Magna Carta for the Hindu organizations who strived for bringing an organic unity among the caste ridden society of Hindus.

At the outset of the Report itself, Moonje pointed out that 'as good eventually results even from evil, the Hindus have to be grateful even for this Mappila Rebellion, as perhaps no less a calamity would have thus opened their eyes and awakened them a spontaneous desire to relax their age old orthodoxy,[103] Regarding temple destruction, he remarked that 'hardly a few temples existed which had not been desecrated. He believed that 'Hindus in Malabar cannot hold their own against the Moplas unless they are reinforced and helped by Hindus from outside. If the Hindus do not pay immediate attention to this situation, before long the whole of this part of Malabar would completely be Mohammedanised like Kashmir, before our eyes".[104] This is followed by analysis of the sociological causes for the mildness and docility of Malabar Hindus and the domineering and ferocious spirit of Mappilas. 'The disintegrating and disheartening social customs and caste rules of Hindus regarding food, marriage etc breed docility of temper and softness of muscles against the all unifying and virile customs of Mohamadans breeding fanaticism and forcefulness of temper and wiriness of muscles', says Moonje.[105] In the following pages of the report, he tried to answer the moot question – what was that induced mildness and docility of temper in Hindus

[102] B.S. Moonje, "Forcible conversion in Malabar' B.S. Monje File No:12, NMML Delhi p.3.

[103] *Ibid*. p.3.

[104] *Ibid* p. 9.

[105] *Ibid* p.11.

and fanaticism and readiness to kill and to be killed as soon as one renounced Hinduism and became a convert to Islam? He assigned four causes for such a scenario:

i) Departure from Vedic ideal of culture

ii) National diet of Hindus – vegetarianism

iii) Early marriages combined with vegetarian diet sapped all manhood and energy from Hindu races

iv) Absence of a common meeting place like *masjid* for Mohamadans, cutting across caste barriers. [106]

This kind of a discourse imagined in to existence a 'Hindu community' in Malabar by designating a population that ranged so widely in belief, practice, identity and recognition. Such Reports enabled the 'Hindus' to ignore internal difference and come to together as a 'cultural whole' and part of a pan-Indian Hindu community.

In March 1922, Dr. Moonje and other Nagpur leaders of Hindu Maha Sabha made a formal appeal in all leading dailies for funds to conduct purificatory ceremonies in Malabar. In an appeal, Karakare. K.G, the Hindu Maha Sabha leader observed, 'Division and hatred have made us cowardly and slavish.... There is no unity of faith among Hindus... The Moplas in their fanaticism have converted hundreds of Hindus to their fold by force. But this is not a novel thing. The orthodox in their turn have played their opponent's game by driving such unfortunate victims from their fold to seek shelter at their oppressor's feet by their unsympathetic attitude'.[107] As per the report, an

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It is to be noted that many census analysts also have attributed the greater virility of Muslims to their dietary habits and in that sense, this is a derivative discourse.

[106] *Ibid*, pp.14-15.

[107] *Indian Social Reformer* (Bombay), 16th April, 1922.

All India Hindu Maha Sabha was held at Calicut and a Malabar Hindu Religious Relief Fund was instituted, not only for purificatory purpose but also for the general socio-religious re-organisation of Malabar Hindus. Such narratives had its impact and funds flowed to Malabar from various quarters of the country. The rebellion thus provided an opportunity to the Hindus of other parts of India to declare their solidarity with the Hindus of Malabar.

The Muslim Response

The Muslim response to *Shudhi* campaign took the form of *Tabliq* (propagation) which was said to be fundamental religious duty binding all Muslims. The *Tabliq* had played a central role as a symbolic tool in the process of amalgamating the Malabar Muslims to the pan Indian Muslim community. It was the *Jamithe Dawate Tablique Islami* of Pune which extended its support to the suffering *Mappilas* during the Rebellion. It was the petition of Mohamad Abdurahiman, the congress leader from Malabar which was published in *The Chronicle* (Bombay) depicting the sorrows and sufferings of Muslim women and destitute in the rebel zones of Malabar, that led to the entry of *JDT Islami* in to Malabar. Moulana Qasuri, a wealthy businessman of Punjab happened to see this petition in *Chronicle* and sent his two sons – Muhiyudhin Ahmad and Abdul Qader Qasuri to Malabar to organize the relief work in Malabar.[108] Thus a 13 member delegation of Poona JDT reached Calicut on 3rd April 1922 to organize relief work.[109] They started relief camps at six places in Malabar providing food, shelter and clothes to Mappila destitutes and rebuilt around 300 houses in Southern Malabar.

[108] P.P. Mammed Koya Parappil (hereinafter Parappil Koya), *Kozhikkotte Muslimgalude Charithram* (The History of Calicut Muslims), Focus Publications, Calicut, 1994, p. 189.

[109] *Malayala Manorama* , April, 6, 1722.

Just like the Hindu Organizations, JDT also published its formal appeals to Muslims in all leading Muslim journals to contribute for relief work in Malabar, of course with exaggerated accounts of the sufferings of Malabar Mappilas. The appeal says, 'the wretchedness there [Malabar] is increasing day by day at a terrible rate. There were only two figures to be seen in Malabar evincing enthusiasm and joy; one of *Kalan (*God of death) and the other, hard-hearted authorities. But the *Mappilas* are immersed in a sea of sorrow and present a true picture of helplessness and misery. One look at them will melt even a stone'.[110] The examples of sufferings cited in the appeal were, 'the corpse of a woman had to remain for many day uninterned in a village called Mampuram as there was not a single man (Mappila) in the village and Muslim women having to sell themselves and their character and Muslims their religion for a morsel of food'.[111] Such narratives constructed their own community as being aggrieved and endangered and the Hindus as being predatory. Muslims from all parts of India responded to such appeals and with the assistance of the community, JDT set up an orphanage at Calicut in 1922 which became a major Muslim institution in Malabar with the philanthropical support of the community. While the first president of JDT was Muhiyudin Ahmad Qasuri (1922-23), he was followed by Nazir Hussain Sahib (Madras) and Abdulrahiman Sait (Ooty) in the subsequent years, which shows the pan-Indian character of the institution. In the notice issued by JDT dated 18th July 1922 the agenda of the institution was made clear – 'JDT has studied the misery and tribulations of *Mappilas* after the rebellion. In both religious and secular education, *Mappilas* are lagging behind and hence detached from their brothers in other parts of India. All communities are engaged in the efforts for the eradication of ignorance. In this struggle for

[110] 'Appeal to Muslims' (Mal.) by secretary of JDT Islam, in *Kerala Chandrika*, 2nd October 1922 and *Muslim* (Aleppey) 28th September 1922 – *MNNPR*, 1922, p. 1271. TNA.

[111] *Ibid.*

domination, those keep aloof from such efforts, will be trampled by other communities. So each and every well-wisher of the community should strive for the educational uplift of *Mappilas* and thereby to enable them to keep pace with other communities'.[112] Solely depending upon the philanthropy of the well to do sections of the community, this orphanage before long turned to be a premier orphanage of Muslims of Malabar. It got contribution even from Bagdad *Jamiyyathul Islamia Sangam* through the District Collector.[113] Though it was a missionary organisation, JDT confined itself to rehabilitation work among the Mappilas.

Maunathul Islam Sabha, which was started in 1900 at Malappuram, was an organisation involved in missionary work in Malabar. The sabha was formed in a meeting held at Mapappuram under the chairmanship of Cheriya Maliyekkal Pookoya Thangal on 9th September 1900. It was attended by more than 800 Mappila dignitaries. It chalked out a programme to protect and further the divergent interests of the Muslims of Malabar and to help and initiate the new converts to Islam. The Sabha set up a residential seminary at Ponnani which provided religious instructions to the new converts. As per the annual report (1933) of the secretary of Maunath, an average of 600 converts was initiated to Islam through the *Sabha.*[114] Within a period of 34 years (1900-1934), 18000 new converts were initiated in to Islam through the *Sabha*.[115] In its 33rd Annual conference held in April 1934, at Ponnani, Attakoya Thangal appealed all the Muslims of Kerala to donate four *Annas* to the Sabha from each marriage ceremony of Muslims. It also decided to send a deputation to all Muslim countries for financial help.[116]

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[112] Notice issued by *JDT Islam Sabha* dated 18th, 1922 as reproduced in Parappil Koya, *op.cit* p. 191.

[113] *Mathrubhumi*, 14th August, 1930.

[114] *Mathrubhumi* 21st July, 1933.

[115] *Mathrubhumi* 29th April, 1934.

[116] *Ibid.*,

Another Muslim missionary organization formed in Malabar was *Nadvathu Thableeq Sabha*; a wing of *Kerala Jamiyathul Ulema*, in its 10th anniversary meeting held at Kasargod in 1934 had decided to form a missionary wing.[117] The *Sabha* was registered in March 1936 with K. Abdu as secretary and M.V. Muhamed Moulavi as president. 'Its aim was to propagate the true principles of Islam and to eradicate the misconceptions about the religion among the members of other communities by which thousands of people could be brought to Islam'.[118] It also decided to send missionaries especially to Travancore and to set up a training centre to train the preachers. As mentioned earlier, the Madras based Islamic Missionary Society undertook missionary works in Palghat during 1925-26 in Palghat.

Thus through *Shudi* and *Thabliq*, the race to convert and reconvert damaged the remaining threads of good will between Hindus and Muslims in Malabar. Efforts by Arya Samajist to start the *shudi* movement in Malabar encouraged Muslims to do the same hardening the divide. Through their *Sudhi* and *Tablig*, both factions created a consciousness of 'us' among Hindus and Muslims. They undertook a theoretical project to redefine their social existence through the strategy of exclusion and inclusion. As Craig Calhoun opined, 'No culture exist which does not distinguish between 'us' and 'other'.[119]

The Arya Samaj initiated the difficult task of integrating the divergent caste groups with their own inherited ideas, traditions and practices within the frame work of a single mega tradition called Hinduism. For the first time, people began to attach greater importance to their religious identity as opposed to caste, local or national identity. The main thrust of Arya Samaj was to establish a proper definition of a 'Hindu'. The result of all these was subtle development of an enhanced consciousness of an exclusive communal

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[117] *Ibid.*,

[118] *Mathrubhumi*, 9th April, 1936.

[119] Craig Calhoun (ed.), *Social Theory and Politics of Identity*, London: 1994, pp. 9-10.

solidarity based on religion. On the other hand, the Hindu revivalism and chauvinism had its impact on the rise of an exclusive Muslim identity. The narratives of these Hindu as well as Muslim organizations, which constituted a ‘prose of otherness’, clearly demarcated the boundaries of Hinduism and Islam. Both type of communal discourses led to the formation of identity consciousness.

Chapter VII

TOWARDS A POLITICAL IDENTITY

CHAPTER VII

TOWARDS A POLITICAL IDENTITY

An Islamic identity, which had emerged in Malabar by the efforts of the Reformist Muslim groups in the early decades of 20th century, transformed the social landscape of Malabar into a fertile ground for the development of a sectarian political consciousness in Malabar. Along with this, the Colonial Government's policy of recognizing religion as the unit for its political and administrative measures like separate electorate, special treatment of Mappila education etc. provided the necessary fuel for the growth of a community centred political perspective among Mappilas. Thus, by about the third decade of 20th century, religious identity became the rallying point for political organization and mobilization in Malabar, as elsewhere in India.

Comparing the Muslims of other parts of India, the *Mappilas* were late in accepting such a communitarian political ideology. During the Khilafath Movement, the Nationalist political leadership of Malabar, ofcourse, with the backing of the *Ulemas*, could effectively channelize this religious identity on the path of nationalist political ideology. 'The Muslims have got more justification to stand united behind Congress and Khilafath because one slogan given out by national leadership was a slogan dear to each religious Muslim i.e., not to touch the Turkey Khalifa'[1] says E.M.S Nambudiripad. But the traumatic experiences of the *Mappilas* during the last phase of the Khilafath Movement, prevailed upon them and they began to drift towards communitarian politics. As K.N. Panikkar pointed out, 'although the

[1] E.M.S Namboodiripad, *Preaching and Warning of 1921: The Lessons of Malabar Rebellion* (Mal.), Calicut, 1946. Extracts from Go. No. 1594, dated, 2nd July 1948. Public (Gl.B.1948) Department. p. 13.

Rebellion was not intrinsically communal, its consequences were decidedly so'.[2]

Several factors had contributed for this political transformation of *Mappilas.* The first was the almost complete loss of credibility and influence of the Congress. The *Mappilas* nursed a sense of betrayal as the Congress leaders had turned away from them at the time of their distress.[3] They were left alone when the police unleashed a reign of terror in South Malabar. "The *Mappilas* found that their Hindu brothers, both leaders and ordinary people, had abandoned them and gone away. The army began to hunt after them. Naturally the *Mappilas* got angry with them" says E.M.S Namboodiripad.[4] M.B. Namboodiripad also has pointed out the ambivalent attitude of the Congress towards the cruel suppression of the *Mappilas* by the Government. He says, "Congress took a policy of 'let them reap what they have sowed', ignoring the fact that the whole *Mappilas*, not merely the culprits, were bearing the brunt of police brutality. If congress had budged against this brutal suppression, the government would not have dared to unleash a reign of terror".[5] Further, he adds that the 'Congress party, which viewed the Amritsar killings as a dastardly event, considered 'Wagon Tragedy' as a minor event'.[6] As M.T. Ansari put in, 'the colonial government and Nationalist leaders worked hand in glove at different levels and in different ways to quell the rebellion.'[7] The Congress provided no legal or material help to the suffering Mappilas, majority of whom were not involved in the Rebellion.

[2] K.N. Panikkar, *Against Lord and State: Religion and Peasant Uprising in Malabar, 1836-1921*, OUP, Delhi, 1992, p.190.

[3] *Ibid.,* p.188.

[4] E.M.S Namboodiripad, o*p. cit.,* p.13.

[5] Moozhikunnath Brahmadathan Namboodiripad, *Khilafath Smaranakal* (Mal.), Calicut, 1965, p.84.

[6] *Ibid.,* p.85.

[7] M.T. Ansari, "Refiguring the Fanatic: Malabar 1836-1922" in *Subaltern Studies*, Vol.XII, (eds.) S. Mayaram et al., Permanent Black, Delhi, 2005, p.71.

The Congress leadership was eager to disassociate themselves from the Mappilas. Even a Congress leader like Moozhikunnath Nambudiripad, was forced to complaint that 'the inquiry conducted by T. Prakasam, on behalf of AICC, was aimed at absolving the Congress of its responsibility for the rebellion.[8] To make matters worse, the resolution of 36th annual conference of Congress held in December, 1921 at Allahabad, expressing regret at the violent incident of the rebellion and dissociating itself from the rebels, created an atmosphere which in due course alienated the *Mappilas* from the Congress.[9]

Another impact of the Rebellion was that *Mappilas* began to identify the Congress with Hindus. For creating this impression, the attitude and activities of the Congress leaders and workers must take some blame.[10] Elsewhere in this study, we have already examined how a leader like Mahatma Gandhi represented the violence of *Mappilas* during the Rebellion. The critique of Mappila violence and fanaticism by the Congress leadership, including the local leaders, had a religious connotation, which emphasized their own religious identity.[11] Along with this, the partisan nature of the Reconstruction and Relief work initiated by the Congress in the Post-Rebellion phase, further alienated the *Mappilas* from the Nationalist politics. The Congress workers, who undertook relief work, appeared to be more concerned with the relief and welfare of Hindus rather than the people as a

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[8] Moozhikunnath Brahmadathan. Namboodiripad, *op. cit.*, p.109.

[9] M. Gangadhara Menon, "Emergence of Muslim League in Kerala" in Asgar Ali Engineer (ed.), *Kerala Muslims: A Historical Perspective*, Ajanta, Delhi, 1995, p.213.

[10] K.N. Panikkar, *op. cit.*, p. 188.

[11] *Ibid.*

For a critical analysis of the discourses of Congress leaders of Malabar on Mappila violence see M.T Ansari. *In the Interstices of India*: *Islam and the process of Nation-Formation* (especially chapter 3rd) an unpublished Ph.D Thesis, CIEFL, Hyderabad, 2003.

whole. It was in this context, Mohamed Abdurahiman, a 'nationalist muslim' leader, was hard pressed to allege that, 'the Congress workers seem to particularize their relief activities to Hindus alone.[12] When the All India players like Hindu Mahasabha and Arya Samaj started their relief work for the Hindus, the JDT Islami of Pune and Khilafath Committee organized relief camps for the Hindus.[13] This relief works organized on communal lines helped to further the divide between the communities in Malabar.

The association of the Congress leaders in Malabar with Hindu communal organizations like Hindu Mahasabha further underlined Mappilas' apprehension about the Congress as a pro-Hindu Organization. Many Congress leaders had participated in the deliberations of Hindu Conference held at Tirunavaya in May 1929.[14] *Al-Ameen*, the 'nationalist muslim' paper in its editorial criticized Congress leaders for their association with such organizations. As K. Umar Moulavi observed, 'the attitude and the communitarian designs of K. Madhavan Nair and K.P. Kesava Menon were in convergence with the predilections of the elite national leadership of the Congress'.[15] M.P.S Menon, the son of veteran Congress leader M.P. Narayana Menon, also testified to this fact. He said that 'most Congress leaders from North and Madras preferred to stay at Kesava Menon's house, where *Mappilas* were not allowed to enter, than at M.P. Narayana Menon's house. For his close association with Mappilas, Narayana Menon was often scoffed at by other Congress leaders'.[16] Such attitudes of the Congress leaders further

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[12] Public Department (confidential) G.O. No.327 dtd. 2nd Nov. 1921, TNA.

[13] For more about this, see chapter VI.

[14] K. Gopalankutty, *National Movement in Malabar*, Unpublished Ph.D. Thesis, JNU, Delhi, 1986, pp.67-68.

[15] K. Umar Moulavi, *Ormakalude Thirathu* (Mal.), Cochin, 2000, p.91.

[16] M.P.S Menon, *Malabar Samaram: M.P. Narayana Menonum Sahapravarthakarum* (Mal.) MPN Menon Memorial Committee, Malappuram, 1992, pp.28,38,45.

alienated the community from the Congress.[17] Interestingly enough, not only the Hindu Congress leaders were branded as pro-Hindu but the nationalist Muslims like Mohamed Abdurahiman Sahib and Moidu Moulavi were scolded by *Mappilas* as traitors of the community for associating with Congress politics.

Further, some Congress leaders were tactless in their dealings with 'nationalist Muslims'. For instance, the controversy regarding the post of Chairman of Calicut Municipality in 1931 could have been avoided if the Congress leaders had shown a little more tact and understanding.[18] 'As Moidu Moulavi observed with regard to the issue, 'a Congress councilor alleged that Abdurahiman was a staunch communalist and if he was elected as President, the Municipal office would be filled with Mappilas'.[19] In the election to Malabar District Board, held in 1939, Mohamed Abdurahiman contested from the constituency of Wandoor *farqa* on Congress ticket. During the election campaign, the Chalappuram gang, a right wing within the Congress, distributed pamphlets in Hindu houses branding him as a Muslim fanatic.[20] Such incidents of course led to the derailment of Muslims from the track of nationalist politics in Malabar. Again, certain programmes of the Congress like that of Temple Entry Satyagraha excluded the participation of Muslims

[17] This is not to argue that Muslim leaders of the Congress were free from such bias. Nationalist Muslim leaders and *Al-Ameen* were branded as pro-Muslim and Anti-Hindu in a similar vein,

[18] K. Gopalankutty, *op. cit.*,p.110.

[19] S.K. Pottekkatt et al., *Mohamed Abdurahiman* (Mal.), Muhamad Abdu Rahman Sahib Memorial Committee, Calicut, 1978 (Reprint 1985), p.256.

[20] M. Abdul Rashid, *Mohamed Abdurahiman Sahib* (Mal.) IPH, Calicut, 1994, p.68.

During the election campaign, the Muslim orthodox section propagated that he was a reformist trying to alter the tenants of Islam. In 1937 Madras Legislative Assembly Election also the orthodox Pangil Musaliyar branded him as a 'Hindu'. During this election, Unnin, the nephew of his rival candidate distributed a pamphlet branding him as Hindu but the same man later embraced Hinduism and was killed by *Mappilas* in 1948.

and other non-Hindus. In short, the programmes and the policies of the Congress leadership also played their role in drifting the *Mappilas* away from nationalist politics.

In this backdrop, even after the return of normalcy in Malabar, the Congress was unable to initiate political activities in southern Malabar. The Mappila aloofness from Nationalist politics became visible during the Civil Disobedience Movement in Malabar. When K.P.C.C took the decision to launch the CDM campaign, there was great consternation among a significant minority within the Congress party. K. Madhavan Nair resigned from the Congress fearing another Mappila Rebellion. No wonder, the rebel zones in Malabar remained quiescent even at the height of Salt Satyagraha in 1932. Only one Mappila was with Kelappan's march on foot from Calicut to Payyannur, where the Salt Satyagraha was to be inaugurated. 'There were comic situations like when the procession on foot from Payyannur leading for the Satyagraha at Guruvayur, stopped short of the rebel area and marchers took a train from Feroke to Tirur because of the rumour that *Mappilas* would prevent them from moving to Ernad.[21]

All these suggest that for the Congress the Malabar was a lost terrain for ever. Though *Al-Ameen* and 'Nationalist Muslim' leaders took an all out efforts to regain the lost support for the Congress and nationalist politics in Malabar, they could not succeed in this venture. As the Government Secretary put in 1937, "the efforts of local Congress men to secure in Malabar the support of *Mappilas* were still meeting with little success. Leading *Mappilas* of Ernad have instituted an anti-Congress move and have issued a manifesto urging Muslims not to join the Congress. A Congress recruiting campaign by the Ernad Congress Secretary met with no success".[22] The

[21] E. Moidu Moulavi, *Moulaviyude Atmakatha* (Mal.), Kottayam, 1981, pp.155-57.

[22] *F.N.R* dated. 23rd July, 1937, pp.4-3 TNA.

antipathy of *Mappilas* towards the Congress leadership, is testified by the following report of the Government official in 1937. The *FNR* observed that 'the Congress drive to capture the adherence of Muslims continues to meet with little success... There have also been two recent occasions in Malabar District when Muslims at public meetings have shown considerable resentment at remarks made by Hindu speakers. In one place at Tellicherry, P. Krishna Pillai, a prominent Congress Socialist, in the course of his speech said that it was pity that Muslims in some places were not working with the Congress; he had to sit down after being warned by Muslims in the audience not to speak this vein. In another occasion at Ponnani, M.P. Damodaran, Congress MLA referred to the general poverty and said that it was driving Mappila women and children to the streets. The audience took objection to this reference to the Mappila women and Damodaran had to leave the meeting.[23] All these shows that the Muslims were agitated even at an innocent comment about their community by the Congress leaders. It also shows the growing sense of community identity among the Mappilas.

Another development of the thirties which fostered separate political identity was that the *Mappilas* began to share the growing feelings of Indian Muslims that Congress leadership was not sufficiently sympathetic to Muslim needs and desires and that a free and democratic India as envisaged would be detrimental to the interests of the community.[24] This drifting towards communal politics owed a great deal of debt to the designs of colonial government. By 1919 itself, the government had recognized the provision for separate electorate to local and provincial councils. This formation of separate electorate, with religion as reference point, began to influence the *Mappilas,* just like their brethren in North India. Even prior to the formation

[23] *F.N.R*, pp.4-11, dtd. 18th June, 1937, TNA.

[24] Roland E. Miller, *Mappila Muslims of Kerala*, Orient Longman, Delhi, 1976, p.160.

of Muslim League in Malabar, *Muslim Aikya Sangam*, in its 3rd annual conference held at Calicut on 4th June 1925, passed a resolution demanding separate electorate for District and Taluk Boards as was the case with Legislative Assembly.[25] By 1920's, itself we come across election appeals in Malayalam dailies requesting to caste votes on the basis of religion. For instance, Purakkatt Moosa, the candidate to Madras Legislative Assembly Election of 1923, made the following appeal to the Muslim voters of Malabar through *Mathrubhumi*:

'Since I have got good command over English and Hindusthani and a thorough knowledge in Islam and its tenets, I am able to object to any move on the part of government that may turn to be tantamount to the interest of Islam. Hence, I request the Muslims, who are serious about the well being of the Muslim community, to cast your vote in favour of me'.[26]

The *Jamiyyathul Iqwan Sangam* of Calicut and the first *Kerala Muslim Conference* held at Tellicherry (1931) passed similar resolutions demanding separate electorate for Muslims to local boards.[27] The *Calicut Muslim Majlis Committee*, through a memorandum, demanded that *Mappilas* should be given representation in Madras Legislative Assembly on the basis of their numerical strength.[28] As mentioned elsewhere in this study, even the pro-congress *Kerala Muslim Yuvajana Conference* held at Calicut on 14th May 1933, through a resolution appealed to set aside ten seats for *Mappilas* of Malabar out of 29 seats reserved for Muslims in Madras Legislative Assembly.[29] It was in this context that in its editorial captioned 'How to reach Hindu-Muslim Unity' *Mathrubumi* remarked, 'the last cause for rift between

[25] *Mathrubumi*, 6th June, 1925.

[26] *Mathrubumi*, 7th July, 1923.

[27] *Mathrubumi*, 26th May, and 25th August, 1931.

[28] *Mathrubumi*, 21st July, 1932.

[29] *Mathrubumi*, 16th May, 1933.

Hindus and Muslims was the communal representation. From Grama Panchayath to Central Legislative assembly and from village officer to the executive council member, the communal representation had become the order of the day'.[30] All these show that even prior to the emergence of Muslim League in Malabar, communitarian political demands began to be raised by various Muslims organizations. Thus, from 1920's onwards, religious identities instead of being submerged within national consciousness became the rallying point for political organization and mobilization.

Kerala Muslim Majlis

By 1930's, due to the efforts of *Aikya Sangam*, the first Muslim reformist organization, started in 1922, Malabar had become a fertile soil for the growth of a separatist political ideology. Through its annual conferences held at various Mappila centres during 1922-1934 period and reformist ideology, which it tried to disseminate among Mappilas, *Aikya Sangam* could forge a new kind of unity among the Mappilas. The leaders of *Aikya Sangam* like K.M. Seethi Sahib, K.M. Moulavi, Abdurahman Sahib, Moidu Moulavi etc were very active in the non-cooperation and Khilafath Movement. But by about early thirties *Aikya Sangam* had become weak due to the dissensions on the question of participation of Muslims in political activities. *Aikya Sangam* leaders like E. Moidu Moulavi and Abdurahiman Sahib saw no necessity of a political platform for the Muslims of Kerala other than Indian National Congress while Seethi Sahib; K.M. Moulavi etc contended that a separate political organization was necessary for Muslims.[31] In the 12th and last conference held at Kannur in 1934, the *Aikya Sangam* was formally dissolved and was merged with the *Kerala Muslim Majlis*, formed in 1931, as a frontal organization of *Aikya Sangam*. According to E.K. Moulavi, a leader of the

[30] *Mathrubumi*, 8th June, 1926.

[31] M. Abdul Azeez, *Rise of Muslims in Kerala Politics*, C.B.H. Trivandrum, 1997, p.24.

Sangam, 'as the aims and objectives of *Aikya Sangam* and Muslim *Majlis* were the same, the conference felt that there was no need for two separate organizations and passed a resolution to cease the activities of the *Sangam*.[32] Infact, the political polarization among the leadership of the *Sangam* was the real cause behind the dissolution of *Sangam*. While Abdurahiman Sahib and Moidu Moulavi stood for the amalgamation of the *Sangam* with Indian National Congress, Seethi Sahib and his associates wanted to keep away from the National Congress. It was this difference of opinion among the leadership that finally ended up in the dissolution of the *Sangam*. It was this difference with Seethi Sahib that prevailed upon Abdurahiman Sahib to publish a series of articles in *Al-Ameen* against *Risalathun fil Banki*, a tract of K.M. Moulavi regarding the Muslim bank. The dissolution of *Sangam* and its merger with *Majlis* was actually the victory of K.M. Seethi Sahib and his group who stood for a separate political organization for Muslims. As Moidu Moulavi observed, "the *Majlis* was formed by some moderates and pro-British leaders who could not agree with the policies of the Congress.[33]

At the All Kerala Muslim Conference held at Tellicherry on August 22, 1931, the decision to form a Muslim Organization was taken. The 2nd resolution of the conference was to organize *Muslim Majlis* for the political and economic progress of the community.[34] Supporting the resolution, K.M. Seethi Sahib remarked, 'A crowd without common fraternity and ideals cannot be called a community'. The term Mappila should be a synonym for 'dignity and pride'.... For the educational and economic progress of the community, a dynamic organization is necessary'.[35] Even at this conference,

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[32] E.K. Moulavi, "Kerala Muslim Aikya Sangavum Navothanavum" in P.A. Syed Mohamed (ed.), *Kerala Muslim Directory*, Cochin, 1960, p.477.

[33] E. Moidu Moulavi, *Ente Kootukaram Mohamed Abdurahiman Sahib* (Mal.) Calicut, 1964, p.190.

[34] *Mathrubumi*, 25th August, 1931.

[35] *Ibid*.

differences of opinion arose as regards to the political resolution introduced by Mohamed Abdurahiman. This massive conference of *Mappilas* with delegates elected from each *Mahal* committee and thereby representing 15 lakhs of Muslims, was convened with the specific purpose of discussing the methods for Muslim progress in Kerala. It was in this conference *Kerala Muslim Majlis* was formed. The main aims of the *Majlis* were

a. To work for the reform and progress of the community.

b. To secure political and educational concessions for the community from the government.

c. To work for the inclusion of provisions in the legislative reforms for the protection and freedom of the community.[36]

With these aims, a committee including 48 councilors was set up at Tellicherry with Jamal Mohamed as president and Haji Abdul Sathar Sait and K. Uppi Sahib as secretaries. A Muslim Educational Board was also set up with Mohamed Abdurahiman Sahib as convener. Besides the central committee, District and Taluk and even *Mahal*- wise committee were formed and a quarter *Anna* was fixed as membership fee. 'This was an organization which represent each and every one of 15 lakhs Muslims without discrimination between reformist or traditional or between rich or poor'.[37] But in reality, if one examines the class composition of the office bearers of this organization at district or taluk level, it was basically an organization of upper class Muslims of Malabar. Many *Khan Bahadurs* (the title conferred upon by the Government) could be seen in the list of its office bearers. Due to this class composition of the *Majlis*, in the very first conference itself, the political

[36] P.P. Mammad Koya Parappil, (hereinafter Parappil Koya), *Kozhikkotte Muslimgalude Charithram* (Mal.), Focus Publication, Calicut, 1994, p.152.

[37] Notice issued by *Kerala Muslim Majlis* as cited in Parappil Koya, *op.cit.*, p.152.

resolution introduced by Mohamed Abdurahman was objected by the elite leaders of the *Majlis*.

However, this conference and the formation of *Muslim Majlis* was hailed as a historic event by the Muslim journals of Kerala. *Deepika* wrote 'the conference held at Tellicherry on 23rd August, 1931 is a turning point in the history of the community. For a long period, Kerala Muslims have been living in lethargy, without an organization and unity. Though many organizations, representing the community exist, they are almost moribund due to the lack of proper manuring. Unity, organization, co-operation, self-sacrifice etc are the factors for the growth of a healthy organization of the community. It is by considering all these issues, that certain well-wishers of the community in Malabar have convened such a meeting. We realize that such a successful meeting, with representatives of all factions and localities is first of its kind in Kerala. One can hope that this self-realization of the community will lead it to a bright future'.[38]

During the second conference of *Kerala Muslim Majlis* held at Calicut in 1933, the young Turks of *Majlis* was forced to organize a young Muslim Conference with the blessings of Mohamed Abdurahiman, and braving the opposition of the *Majlis* leadership. In the second conference, the elite leadership, most of who were from North Malabar, also found it difficult to support the resolution opposing the *Marumakhathayam* system among Muslims.[39] Right from its inception, internal rift regarding political affiliation had been causing troubles and finally the proposal of K.M. Seethi Sahib was adopted by the *Majlis* and the Congress Muslims left the organization. The young members of the *Majlis* formed Calicut Young Muslim Association (CYMA) with the blessings of pro-Congress leaders of *Majlis*. From the very

[38] *Deepika*, Issue 9, 1931, in Vakkam Moulavi Foundation, *Deepika Ottavalyathil* (Mal.), Trivandrum, 1992, p.420.

[39] *Mathrubumi*, 14th May, 1933.

beginning, the *Majlis* showed its leaning towards the Muslim League. In the annual conference held on 25th May 1936 the *Majlis* resolved to accept the leadership of All India Muslim League. In the last conference of *Majlis* held on 1st May 1937 of Tellicherry, Ali Raj, the president, viewed with great concern the efforts to bring Muslims under the Congress.[40] At this conference, *Majlis* was merged with Muslim League.

It was during this period, election to central assembly was declared and in the election held on 10th November, 1934, Mohamed Abdurahiman, the Congress candidate was defeated by Abdul Sathar Sait, a sympathizer of Muslim League, from South Canara constituency. Since franchise in the election was restricted to those who paid minimum of Rs.50 as tax, this victory was those of the upper class Muslims and the Muslim bureaucrats. The total number of voters was 4000 only.[41] The election result was a clear indication of the tilting of elite Muslim mind towards Muslim League even at a time when Muslim League was not officially started in Malabar.

Formation of Muslim League

The Muslim club of Tellicherry, in which K.M. Seethi Sahib played a significant role, was influential in starting a journal called *Chandrika* from Tellicherry which later became the mouthpiece of Muslim League. By 1932 itself, Seethi Sahib had shifted his practice from Ernakulam to Tellicherry and within a short span of time; Seethi Sahib and his *Chandrika* could garner support for Muslim League among the Mappilas. In 1935, Abdul Sathar Sait, K.M. Seethi Sahib, A.K. Kunji Mayin Haji, B. Pocker Sahib etc met at Tellicherry and formed the first Muslim League unit in Malabar. In the same year, K.M. Moulavi formed a Muslim League unit at Tirurangadi with 10 members including Kolakkadan Koyamu Haji, Tottungal Valiya Mohamed

[40] M. Abdul Azeez, *op. cit.*, p.24.

[41] S.K. Pottekkatt et al., *op. cit.*, p.322.

etc. [42] In 1936, a meeting of League sympathizers was held at Calicut and formed a Muslim League Committee. Kadirikoya Haji, Hydros Vakil, B.V.Abdulla Koya, P.V Mohamed Moulavi (Pulikkal) etc. were the main leaders of Calicut committee. P.V. Mohamed Moulavi travelled through the length and breadth of Malabar to organize the unit committees for Muslim League. The District Muslim League Committee was constituted at a meeting held at Tellicherry on 20 December 1937 with Arakkal Ali Raja as President and Abdul Sathar Sait as General Secretary.[43] Uppi Sahib, K.M. Seethi Sahib, M.V Hydros, C.P. Mammukeyi were the other office bearers of the committee. In the same conference, the *Muslim Majlis*, first organization of Muslim League sympathizers, was merged with Muslim League. All these show that it was the stalwarts of *Aikya Sangam* and *Kerala Jamiyyathul Ulema* who were the founding fathers of Muslim League in Malabar. But still it could not get mass support in the South Malabar as testified by the Government Report in 1937: 'The situation among Malabar Muslims at present is that three parties or at least followers of three policies; those who have joined the Congress unconditionally, those who adhere to Jinnah and Muslim League and those who are anxious to stand apart from both parties as independent loyalists, the second is probably the strongest in North Malabar while the recent movement towards forming the third party, is so far confined to Ernad and Walluvanad in South Malabar'.[44]

During the late 1930's, both Congress and Muslims League engaged in a fierce battle for the hearts of Muslims of Malabar and in the final battle, the Muslim League could win the support of Malabar Muslims. However in the election held to the Provincial Legislative Assembly in February 1937, the Muslim League candidates from both the constituencies of Calicut and

[42] KKM. Abdul Kareem, *K.M. Moulavi Sahib* (Mal.), Tirurangadi, 1985, p.168.

[43] *Mathrubumi*, 22nd December, 1937.

[44] *FNR*, pp.4-14, dtd. 6 August 1937, TNA.

Kurumbranad (Adv. P.K. Hassankoya and B. Pokker Sahib) were defeated by their Congress opponents, P.I Kunhahamed Haji and Khan Bahadur Attakoya Thangal.[45] For the election campaign of Muslim League, Moulana Shoukathali came to Calicut and during his visit, he exhorted Muslims to strengthen Muslim League. In one such meeting he said, 'I am happy to see the descendants of Arabs in this beautiful land. Muslims should live in unity and Muslim League is an organization striving for the unification of Muslims'.[46] Moulana's visit had given an additional fillip to the activities of Muslim League in Malabar.

Before long, the Muslim league could get the support of masses. Actually, the interest of Muslim elite leadership was of little concern to the ordinary Muslims in the countryside. But now material concerns were no longer the sole determinant of the relationship between urban educated and the rural masses. The ideological propaganda had forged a new and strong links transcending the diversity of material interest. The league leadership now sought close ties with masses in the name of a shared faith. As Arakkal Ali Raja, the first president of Malabar District Muslim League said, in a meeting held on 16th December 1937 at Calicut, 'It is a religious duty for Muslims to be united. This unity under an organization is not intended to oppress anybody or to create tension in society. It is for protecting and propagating the faith of Islam'.[47] Similarly K.M. Moulavi, another leader of Muslim League, exhorted that all Muslims, forgetting the ideological differences, should rally behind the Muslim League'. [48] Muslim League leadership was now eager to promote Muslim solidarity and mobilize the masses in support of Muslim demands. They now recognized the importance

[45] Parappil Koya, *op. cit.*, p.154.

[46] *Mathrubumi*, 16th February, 1937.

[47] *Mathrubumi*, 18th December, 1937.

[48] KKM Kareem, *op. cit.*, p.170.

of political pressure in securing concessions and safeguards from the government. A glance through the resolutions of the first District Muslim League Council held at Tellicherry in December 1937 would reveal this concern of the Muslim league.[49] The following were the main resolutions.

a. The first resolution appealed the Madras Government and Malabar District Board not to stop the separate schools for Muslims, as it would retard the progress of Muslim education in Malabar.

b. A second resolution demanded separate electorate for Muslims in local boards as well as Municipalities and to bring about changes accordingly in Madras Local Board Acts and Madras District Municipalities Act.

c. Another resolution urged the government not to recognize the *Vande Madaram* as national anthem, as it contains defamatory reference about Muslims and their religious belief.[50]

The District council also resolved to chalk out a crash programme for the educational and economic uplift of the community, which includes:

a. To send each and every Muslim child to schools and to set up night schools for illiterate labourers and farmers for imparting both temporal and religious education.

b. To encourage reading habits among common people and to set up reading rooms and libraries for the same.

c. To collect the *Zakath* (religious tithes) from each *Mahal* and to distribute it to the deserving members of the community.

d. To enlighten people to set aside anti-Islamic rituals and extravagance connected with marriage.

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[49] Report of the Muslim League Council meeting 1937. Chandrika Press, Tellicherry 1937.

[50] *Ibid.*

e. To encourage small scale industries of each region and to work for sustaining such industries.

f. To foster unity and fraternity among Muslims by resolving the factional feuds and legal battles.

g. To strive for developing religiosity and punctuality in observance of religious rituals especially the Friday congregational prayers.

h. To set up gymnasiums for Muslims and to organize a volunteer core under each unit of Muslim League.[51]

Through such programmes, League could easily win over the support of Muslim masses. As K.M. Seethi Sahib claimed, 'within a period of seven months, 15000 people joined the Muslim League'.[52] Muslim League took up almost every issue concerning the community and by 1938, the membership of Muslim League rose up to 32,000 in Malabar.[53]

It is to be noted that Muslim League leadership always focused on the distinctiveness of Muslims and the cunningness of the majority community. For instance, Hamid Khan, the Muslim League leader, in a public meeting held at Kannur advised its members that, 'only through rallying under the banner of Muslim League that Muslims could save themselves from the persecution of majority community'.[54] Similarly, Fazalul Haq, the League leader from Bengal, at the District League meeting held at Calicut, made the following advice:

> 'Be a Muslim first and second. Those who claim that they are Indians first and Muslim second are not real Muslims.... Hindus

[51] *Ibid.*, pp.21-22.

[52] *Mathrubumi*, 22nd December, 1937.

[53] Presidential speech of Hamid Khan in Muslim League Meeting- *Mathrubumi*, 27th July, 1938.

[54] *Mathrubumi*, 27th July, 1938.

> and Muslims are poles apart. Why is that the killing of cows by Muslims objectionable to Hindus and Hindu's tom-toying before mosques, irritating to Muslims? It shows that both are different..... The salvation of South Indian Muslim lies in the hands of *Mappilas* and they will always get the support and assistance of Muslims of majority provinces'.[55]

A massive District Muslim League Conference attended by more than 10,000 members, was held at Calicut on 30th April 1940. This meeting accepted the Lahore Resolution of 'Two Nation Theory' of All India Muslim League. In the conference, Fazalul Haq, the premier of Bengal remarked that '*Mappilas* alone would be sufficient to resist the Hindu domination' and provoked the Congress workers.[56] Supporting the Lahore resolution, C.P. Mammukeyi said, 'we are a minority but Hindus should shed the notion that they can do anything on us. Let them not forget the lesson of the battle of *Badr*. They won't forget the example in which a handful of Muslims defeated a massive army of infidels. As long as Arab blood flows in our veins, their 'majority' is trivial to us'.[57] The following appeals were made at the same meeting to the All India Muslim League Committee.

a. Muslims should get proper representation in provincial governments.

b. Separate electorate for Muslims in local and municipal boards.

c. To form a committee of Muslim members of the legislative assembly to safeguard the religious, economic and educational interest of the community.

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[55] *Mathrubumi*, 30th April, 1940.

[56] *FNR* of May, 1940. p.32. TNA.

[57] *Mathrubumi*, 1st May 1, 1940.

d. If ¾ of the Muslim members in legislative bodies oppose, such matters should, be scrapped.[58]

Once the District Muslim League accepted the Lahore Resolution for separate nation, the scuffle between Muslim League and the Congress Muslims in Malabar reached its highest pitch. In 1944, the Nationalist Muslims had convened an All India Meeting at Delhi under the chairmanship of Alla Baksh, the Prime Minister of Sindh and decided to form an *All India Muslim Majlis*, a 'Nationalist Muslim' Forum to work among the Muslims against the Two Nation Theory. As per the decision of this meeting, in July 1944, the Malabar District *Muslim Majlis* was formed at Calicut with K.P. Nurudin as President and C.N. Imbichammu as secretary. Before long, local units of the *Majlis* were formed in almost all major centres of Malabar.[59] It is interesting to note that *Muslim Majlis*, though basically a forum of nationalist Muslims, throughout its career, made communitarian appeals to attract the Muslims towards its fold. In its first annual Conference held at Calicut on 20th May, 1945, Moulana Abdul Majid Kwaja, the president of *All India Muslim Majlis*, said, "the primary aim of *Majlis* is to propagate the real ideal of Islam among Muslims and to bind them closer to faith. The second is the achievement of India's freedom. My last request to you is to live, if needed die, as Muslims'.[60] The conference in its resolution regretted of Travancore Government's attitude of not giving proper representation to Muslims in Government services and urged Cochin government to reinstate the educational concessions to Muslim students. It also condemned the District Board's partisan attitude in not appointing Muslims in high posts even when Muslim candidates were applicants.[61] Such communitarian demands were

[58] *Ibid.*

[59] *Mathrubumi*, 20th April, 1945.

[60] *Mathrubumi*, 22nd May, 1945.

[61] *Mathrubumi*, 20th April, 1945.

profusely undertaken by *Muslim Majlis* to counter the League's allegation that they were the stooges of 'Hindu Congress Party'. Thus, as the government report mentioned, 'in Malabar feelings between the Muslim League and *Muslim Majlis* were bitter and there had been already some instances of unruly behaviour. Leaders of both parties had been warned by collector that violence would not be tolerated'.[62] The District Collector also reported that there was evidence in 'League's speeches of more truculent attitude towards the government to counter the congress leaders' allegation that Muslim League had done little for the cause of freedom.[63] The rivalry between Muslim League and *Majlis* gave rise to friction not only in political but also in social and religious matters in some areas of the District and a *Majlis* sympathizer was refused permission to offer prayer in a mosque.[64] K. Umar Moulavi, a sympathizer of League, had to resign the post of *Qazi* of the Pattalappalli of Calicut, due to differences of opinion with mosque committee, dominated by *Majlis* activists.[65] In 1940's even in *Qutuba*, Jinna was mentioned and P.V. Mohamed Moulavi, a staunch League supporter argued that one can pray for Jinna in *Qutuba*.[66] *Chandrika*, the official organ of Muslim League, used to add the honorific title 'Sri' or 'Mr' with names of *Majlis* leaders while the title *Janab* was used only with leaders of Muslim League.[67]

Allegations and counter allegations went on between League and *Majlis* supporters through print media. One such pamphlets titled, *If Swaraj*

[62] FNR, Do. No. pp.4-20. dtd. Nov. 1945, TNA.

[63] *Ibid.*

[64] *FNR*, Do. No. pp.4-24. dated. 11 Jan. 1945, TNA.

[65] K. Umar Moulavi, *op. cit.*, p.92.

[66] K. Moidu Moulavi, *Ormakurippukal*, IPH Calicut, 1992, p.101. It is to be noted that both the reformist and Sunni priests had no objection in accepting Jinna, an Ismaili Shia, as their *Imam* (leader).

[67] S.K. Pottekkat et al., *op.cit.*, p.596. This was an indirect way of excluding the nationalist Muslims from the Muslim community.

comes published by the Calicut Muslim League Committee in September 1945 alleged that K. Kelappan, the Congress leader has opined that once Swaraj is attained, both cow slaughter and religious propagation will be banned'.[68]

While the Muslim League consistently argued for separate school for Muslims and opposed the move of District Board to stop communal school in Malabar, the Muslim members of *KPCC* prevailed upon the Congress to pass a resolution for the continuation of communal school.[69] The *Majlis* also exposed the pro-rich attitude of the elite leadership of the Muslim League by showing its reluctance to support the Agrarian Protection Bill. The pro-British attitude of League was also exposed by showing its reluctance to take up the Mampuram Restoration Issue.[70]

But in this battle for hearts, the league won and by 1940's league became the ultimate political body of the Muslims of Malabar. They went on taking up communal demands. In 1941, on behalf of the Malabar League Committee, Abdurahiman Ali Raja submitted a memorandum to the chief secretary of Madras which says, 'By the working of the existing Madras Local Boards Act and the District Municipalities Act, the Muslim community and especially the *Mappilas* of Malabar have never had proper representation in local bodies in compliance with repeated representations made by the Muslim community in that behalf. From joint electorate, undesirable candidates, who could not by any stretch of imagination be considered to represent the wishes of Muslim voters have been returned and they most unjustly claim to be representatives of Muslim community. The bitter experience of the working of Malabar District Board bears out this fact. The so-called Muslim members of the Board who were returned on the Congress

[68] *Mathrubumi*, 12th September., 1945.

[69] *Mathrubumi*, 12th August, 1938. For more details see chapter 'Colonial Governmentality and the Making of a Community'.

[70] *Mathrubumi*, 3rd January, 1938.

ticket would not have succeeded to come to board but for the support of non-Muslim voters whose interest are in many respects in conflict with those of Muslim voters'.[71] In this way, the Memorandum requested the government to amend the Local Board and Municipalities Acts, so as to introduce separate electorate for Muslims.

The Malabar Muslim League Committee did not confine itself to the issues of Malabar Muslims but took up issues pertaining to their brethren in other parts of India. For instance, in a notice issued by the District Committee, attention was drawn to the plight of Muslims of Nellore in Andhra Pradesh, thus : 'You might be aware of the developments in Nellore where, in consequent of communal clash, the Hindu Mahasabha has been persecuting the Muslims and causing them troubles like dismissing the Muslim from Hindu establishments and banning the sale of goods to Muslims from Hindu shops, boycotting Muslim rickshaw pullers etc... Thus our brethren in Nellore are living in utter difficulties... When we were in distress due to flood and other calamities, it was the Muslim brethren from other parts of Madras province who helped us. Hence it is our bounden duty to help our brothers in Nellore at this time of distresses'.[72] The notice appealed to each local committee to send their contribution to the Nellore Relief Fund.

Kerala Jaiyathul Ulema always sympathized with Muslim League politics and provided active support to it. *KJU* was not confined to theological issues and came out openly with their political stand. In its Annual Conference held in March 1947, E.K. Moulavi moved a resolution stating that 'the *ulemas* of Kerala affirm their confidence in the leadership off Muhammedali Jinna and pray to God to provide him health and strength to

[71] Memorandum of District Muslim League Committee dtd. 4th March 1941. Arakkal Records, KRA.

[72] Notice issued by District Muslim League Committee. dtd. 17-11-1941, Arakkal Records, KRA.

lead the Muslims to the ultimate goal'.[73] Even prior to that, K.M. Moulavi had issued a *fatwa* stating that it was obligatory on the part of each Muslim to take membership in Muslim League.[74] While a major chunk of *KJU* leaders supported this *fatwa*, leaders like A. K. Abdul Lateef, Mohamed Abdurahiman, while agreeing with Moulavi in religious orientation, stood against the *fatwa* and remained with Congress. The support of the reformist leadership was instrumental in mobilizing the educated section of Muslims under the banner of League.

Thus, through such efforts, League could organize the masses, Islamize their outlook and attitudes and finally succeeded in mobilizing them for political purposes. Through such communitarian programmes, the message of separatist political ideology now quickly filtered down to the rural areas. In 1946 election to the Madras Legislative Assembly, the Muslim *Majlis* lost all the eight seats they contested to the Muslim League candidates and the only *Majlis* candidate who got his deposit was Avulakakka, who contested from Calicut constituency. This election once again proved the unquestionable support, the Muslim League had gained in Malabar.

It is to be remembered that the Muslim League leadership took special care to address the problems of Muslim women and a muslim woman member, T.C. Kunhachumma Sahiba from Tellicherry was nominated to All India Muslim League's Women's Council in 1938.[75]

The Malabar Muslim League also fully supported central league policies in relation to the partition proposal. The demand for separate

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[73] K. Umar Moulavi, *op. cit.*, p.91.

[74] The Minutes of Annual Conference 1947 as cited in P.P Abdul Gafoor Moulavi "KJU: Formation and Background" (Mal.) *Shabab*, Seminar Issue, 1997, Calicut, pp.129-144.

[75] K.P. Kunhimoosa, 'Charithathinte Thanka Thalukalil' (58) *League Times*, Calicut, Dec. 1980.

nationhood was considered as a necessary step towards pan-Islamic ideal. As K.M. Seethi Sahib remarked, 'the moment Pakisthan was given the country would enjoy peace and harmony'.[76] In 1946, when the Direct action day was observed by AIML, with the slogan 'Pakisthan or Khabaristhan,' the Muslim League supporters demonstrated their strength by observing the day in Malabar.[77]

It was in this background the Muslim League leaders proposed the establishment of 'Mappilasthan'. It submitted a proposal to the Pakisthan committee members urging that in future constitution, an independent Mappilasthan, comprising Ernad, Walluvanad and Lakdives should be formed. The committee felt that for the protection of the culture, religion and political rights of Muslims, this was a necessary step.[78] The proposal for a separate Muslim majority province in South Malabar was publicly put forward in the Madras Legislative Assembly in mid-June 1947. The fears of Indian Muslims in general and the Islamic political theory underlying Pakisthan movement, coalesced to stimulate the proposal.[79] When the Madras government proposed the division of the presidency in to four states on linguistic basis, the Muslim League put forward an amendment to this resolution, which called for the insertion of the word 'with provision for Mappilasthan'.

K.M. Seeth Sahib, the mover of the amendment explained the logic behind the proposal. He argued that '*Mappilas* are a large group of people with a culture and a history of their own, related to their Arab background and they are entirely different from other communities of Malabar. Besides, they

[76] *Debates of Madras Legislative Assembly, 1947* (Madras) Government press, 1947, pp. 793 ff.

[77] P.A Syed Mohamed, *Kerala Muslim Directory*, Cochin, 1960p.384.

[78] *Navakeralam*, 9th February, 1947, Also see *Malayala Rajyam*, 2nd June 1947.

[79] Roland E. Miller, *op.cit.*,, p.163.

are 'very very unfortunate and they struggled for independence along with their sister community, their compatriots were responsible for sending many of them to the gallows. Again, under the aegis of their sister community, they have not made an inch of progress in any walk of life. They were now as backward as they were 150 years ago. For all these reasons, the *Mappilas* should be given a separate state, where they could grow and develop in their own way and where they can have hope for future'.[80]

When the resolution calling for linguistic states was passed, without considering the amendment of Muslim League, the League members staged a walkout, with cries of 'Mappilasthan Zindabad'.[81] Finally India and Pakisthan were formed and the proposal died and *Mappilas* became a part of Indian nation. Ofcourse a few members of Malabar League like Abdul Sathar Sait went to Pakisthan and became the ambassador of Egypt. But the vast majority of *Mappilas* whose life was rooted in the soil of Kerala, did remain in Malabar.

At a public meeting held at Palghat on 22 December 1947, Seethi Sahib declared, ‘When the new constitution is formed, Muslim dominant places of Kerala may be grouped in to a single unit and be made a unit of Indian union.[82] Interestingly enough, CPI and EMS Namboodiripad supported this move of the Muslim League on the basis of the principle of the 'self determination of people'. In 1947, EMS wrote 'considering the religious, historical, cultural, economic and political importance and the uniqueness of the *Mappilas*, if they wish that a separate province is necessary to safeguard their interests, the communists are not against such a move.[83] K. Madhava Menon, an active spokesman of Aikya Kerala Movement said, 'if any part of

[80] *Debates of Madras Legislative Assembly*, 1947, V, pp 794 ff.

[81] *Ibid.*, p. 854.

[82] *Mathrubumi*, 31st December, 1947.

[83] *Desabhimani*, 28th October, 1947.

Kerala is to be declared as Moplasthan, I for one won't feel worried. The relation between us and Moplas are so cordial and I do not think our friends will treat us in bad way, even if we have a Mappilasthan.[84]

When the Madras Leaguers met Jinnah for the last time at Delhi in June 1947, he gave the Muslim league representation from Malabar no hope, dismissing their ideas as 'fantastic'. He is reported to have declared, 'it is all closed'. The Muslim League organized Mappilasthan day in Malabar on 23rd May 1947. This agitation was no doubt engineered as a counter to the demand for the division of Punjab and Bengal.[85]

The Muslim League made propaganda work among *Mappilas* through pamphlets for separate nation either in the form of Pakisthan or in the form of Mappilasthan. One of such booklets, titled *Moplasthan* printed in 1947 contained many objectionable references about Hindus. It says, 'History will tell us that it was the Muslims who taught the great grandmother of present day Hindu damsels, who go about dressed in latest fashion, flashing the eyes how to clothe themselves without exposing their nakedness... Tippu's troops, who came to conquer Kerala, on seeing the Hindu women with naked breast, fell easy victims to many voluptuous actions and this made the Sulthan issue orders that women should not appear in public without covering their breasts.[86] Another leaflet containing a song titled 'struggle song' by V. Kunhikoya of Kondotti exhorts, 'Even if Britain and Hindu Congress obstruct us we will never hesitate to shed our warm blood in our advance until the noble Pakisthan is secured. Individually taking this pledge, we will undergo

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[84] *Debates of Madras Legislative Assembly* 1947, (Madras 1947) V.p. 748.

[85] FNR, p. 301, 1945-47, dated. 24th June, 1947.

[86] *Moplasthan* (Mal.), Cochin Mail press, Ernakulam and published by Al- Jihad publishing House, Cochin. GO. No. Ms. No. 3422. Public (General) Dept. dated. 19th Nov. 1947. KRA. See Appendix XII.

wholesale sacrifices; we will demonstrate our smartness and our manliness until Muslim rule in India and until Pakisthan are carefully secured'.[87]

After the partition of the country, there prevailed an uncertainty regarding Muslim politics in Indian union and it was even suggested that thereafter Muslim League need not function as a political party.[88] Ismail Sahib and Seethi Sahib resisted the attempts to disband the Muslim League and in the conference held at Madras in March 1948, a programme was formulated to retain Muslim League with a new name, Indian Union Muslim League (IUML), which came in to existence as a full fledged party in 1951.[89] Earlier in December 1947, Mohamed Ismail Sahib had been chosen as president of the Indian Union Muslim League and the resolution to continue the organization stated that, 'the aim of IUML was to devote its attention principally to the religious cultural, educational and economic interests of the community'.[90] Despite these limited objectives, many left Muslim League and in Travancore and Cochin, the league committees were disbanded. In North India, the very name of league turned to be an anathema. But in Malabar, Muslim League remained a serious political factor. The *Mappilas* allegiance to League was demonstrated by the defeat of Congress Muslim candidate for the Ernad by election in 1948.

In Malabar a combined meeting of various Muslim political parties, held at Calicut and in that meeting, Moidu Moulavi and M.Adbuall kutty Moulavi argued for the dissolution of Muslim League. K.M. Moulavi and K.M. Seethi objected to this argument and stood firm with their conviction

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[87] V. Kunhikoya (Kondotty), *Struggle Song* (Mal.), Fathima press, Manjeri, 1947. Go. MS No. 1276. Public Dept. dated. 30th April, 1947, KRA. See Appendix XIII.

[88] T.M. Savankutty, *Seethi Sahib*, (Mal.), Government of Kerala, Cultural Publication, Trivandrum, 1992, p.76.

[89] *Ibid.*, p.76.

[90] Mohamed Raza Khan, *What Price Freedom*, Madras: By the Author, 1969, p.561.

that League was relevant in the contemporary context.[91] In protest, Moidu Moulavi and his associates boycotted, the meeting. K.M. Moulavi proposed the name of Bafaki Thangal as the president and K.M. Moulavi, as Vice-President of Malabar District Committee of Muslim League, which was unanimously accepted. This was a tactical move on the part of K.M. Moulavi, because the leadership of Bafakhi Thangal would naturally bring the traditionalist Sunni folk to the fold of Muslim League. Thus, Muslim League could get the support of both the traditionalist as well as the reformist sections of Mappilas. Led by its powerful state leader Bafaki Thangal, the party consolidated its hold on the *Mappilas* masses. In the 1952 election, five league candidates were elected to the provincial assembly from Malabar and B. Pocker Sahib was elected from Malappuram as the only League member to Indian parliament. The mass support that Muslim League continued to enjoy among *Mappilas* was demonstrated again and again in the successive elections in Malabar and later in United Kerala. It is to be noted that in other states of India, the Muslim League has dwindled considerably in the post-independence period. At present, Muslim League is an important factor in the coalition politics of Kerala. It was the community consciousness that developed among *Mappilas* in the early decades of 20th century, which led to the crystallization of this political identity, in the post-independence period, in the form of Muslim League.

Thus, the Muslim League, which actually had been formed in 1906, was officially organized in Malabar in 1937 only, but within a period of two decades, it got established firmly in Malabar, braving the hostile situations created in late 1940's like partition, Ramasimhan murder, Hyderabad action etc.[92] The growth of Muslim League in Malabar, ofcourse, owed a great deal

[91] KKM Kareem, *K. M. Moulavi Sahib* (Mal.), *op. cit.*, p.171.

[92] The Muslim League's involvement in Ramasimhan Murder case of 1947 and in Hyderabad Nizam's attempt to preserve his power was seriously debated in Malabar and Muslim League had to face stiff opposition from other parties. Ramasimhan

to British interests in helping to forge their separatist political identity as a counterpoise to nationalist challenges, led by the Congress. Thus, through the play of various factors and through a steady and slow process, *Mappilas*, who had not attached much significance to their distinct identity, were transformed first into a community, with an awareness of a common identity and then into a political community when it was mobilized for political action.

(Unnian who embraced Hinduism) and his relatives were murdered by *Mappilas* on 1st August, 1947 and it was alleged that Muslim League leaders took efforts in getting the culprits acquitted. See Dasarathi, *Malabarile Mappila Lahalakal* (Mal.), Calicut, 1992. Also see Roland E. Miller, *op. cit.*, p.229.

CONCLUSION

CONCLUSION

The foregoing analysis enables us to outline some of the broad conclusions regarding the community formation of *Mappilas* of Malabar.

As the introductory chapter shows, there is a general consensus among modern scholars that it is doubtful whether a Hindu or Muslim identity existed anywhere in India prior to 19th century in any meaningful sense. Most of the scholars of Modern India feel that pre-colonial Indian society was too fragmented by castes, sub castes and local loyalties to have larger alliance to emerge. The common thread that links these new studies is the perception that community identity is not fixed or given but a political construction. In other words, community identity was neither natural, nor intrinsic to Hindu Muslim relations, but rather it was a modern political construction, which took place during the colonial phase in India. Communities in pre-British India had only vague boundaries, which do not admit of discrete, either/or divisions.

A community is formed when a group of people share something in common which distinguishes them from members of other groups and the shared elements become the primary referent of identity. The origin of Mappila community could be traced back to 8th century AD or even earlier to the period of prophet Muhammed in 7th century AD. But we cannot assume that right from 8th century onwards, the *Mappilas* formed themselves into a well-knit community. As per the scheme of classification of *Keralolpathi,* an 18th Century *Brahaminical* work, *Mappilamar* (*Jonakar*) was one of the 72 *Kulams* (lineages) of pre-modern Kerala. Within such indigenous mode of enumeration and taxonomy, which were live up to 18th century, most of modern social identities were not obtained. Or, it cannot be assumed that they

were descriptive of religious communities. This compel us to argue that the *Mappilas* of Malabar was transformed from the status of a *Kulam* into the present form of a self-conscious and well-knit community, only towards the middle of 20th century. In other words, modern community of *Mappilas* of Malabar was a product of colonialism or specifically of colonial modernity. This community of *Mappilas* was an imagined entity and this imagination could not have been possible without the socio-territorial base of Malabar. Prior to 20th century, though the *Mappilas* shared a common religious ideology, it alone could not provide them a common identity. For instance, the ideal of '*Ummath*', the pan-Islamic community of Muslims around the globe, which lack territorial base, was not at all a meaningful community. Such symbolic community consciousness might have existed in the imagination of Muslims around the world, but could not be articulated in any meaningful way.

In a similar vein, a collectivity of people, who adhered to Islam, divorced from the realities of life and culture of Malabar, cannot be considered as a clearly de-marcated community. Though united by a set of common rituals, it could just be a brotherhood of believers, lacking a common identity because beyond the core of Islamic symbols, all other symbols were divisive and even in conflict with the core symbols. The caste like features, the status divisions, the practice of matriliney, the sale and consumption of liquor, belief in witchcraft, belief in divinities of unknown origin etc. which were part and parcel of Mappila life prior to 20th century, were in conflict with the scriptural Islam, they believed in. Hence, prior to 20th century, the *Mappilas* did not understand themselves as part of larger North Indian Muslim identity nor did they understand themselves as a solidarity- Malabar Muslims. A feeling of 'communitas' cutting across divergent forms of distinction, did not emerge among the *Mappilas* prior to 20th century. In other words, a self-conscious community of *Mappilas,* defining itself

primarily as Muslims emerged in Malabar only by the early decades of 20th century.

Various factors, both discursive and non-discursive, were at work behind the formation of such an identity. They include the colonial Governmentality and its classificatory strategies, colonial educational policy the propaganda of Islamic revivalist's and reformists, the technological developments like the introduction of Printing Press, the increased tension between 'Hindus' and 'Muslims' in the wake of Malabar Rebellion and the mediation of Nationalist and communal politics. All these factors, directly or indirectly contributed their own share in forging a separate identity for the Muslims of Malabar. Due to the play of these divergent forces, a collectivity of people called *Mappilas* achieved some kind of a seemingly enduring social identity, solidarity and boundedness by about the middle of 20th century.

The Islam practiced by *Mappilas* during the pre-reformist phase was not in conformity with the scriptural Islam and it could be described as popular Islam. *Mappilas* , during this phase, adopted many of the customary practices of their non-Muslim brethren in Malabar, sometimes even contradicting the social norms of Islam. Stratification in terms of wealth, descent, profession and even system of succession was rampant among *Mappilas* of Malabar during this phase. In short, prior to 20th century the masses of *Mappilas* were so fragmented from within by caste like features and so widely separated from their elite co-religionists that the notion of a community could hardly exist.

The technologies of power of the colonial state had a major role to play in shaping the community identity of the *Mappilas*. The colonial government, through its discursive and non-discursive mediation imagined in to existence a specific Mappila community in Malabar. Among the various strategies of colonial government, the census or enumerative strategy helped to ignite

communitarian identity among *Mappilas*. The census, rather than being a passive instrument of data-gathering, by its practical logic and form created a new sense of category identity as against the fuzzy and popular nature of *Mappilas* during the pre-census period. It induced the *Mappilas* to participate in public sphere in terms of collective identities defined by the colonial government. The census was instrumental in igniting community sentiments among the *Mappilas* and Muslims print began to demand special consideration for Muslims in various domains. Along with census, other colonial discourses like gazetteers, ethnographic surveys counter-insurgency reports, etc. perpetuated and conjured up stereotypical images about the *Mappilas* and this in turn got embedded and found a place in the indigenous discourses. Selfhood of *Mappilas* was also shaped by the ways in which others viewed them. The strategies of representation of the other (*Mappilas*) by the English also played a crucial role in the solidification of communitarian identity among the *Mappilas* . In short, the colonial government classified the indigenous people in to community categories and knowingly and unknowingly the subject people were also trapped in to that discursive framework. Similarly, the non-discursive mediation of the colonial government in the form of communal educational system and separate electorate for Muslims also led to the sharpening of communitarian identify among the *Mappilas* .

The reformist ideology which began to spread in Malabar in the closing decades of 19th century and the early decades of 20th century led to a gradual disappearance of many of the features of the popular Islam of 19th century Malabar and the slow but steady emergence of a scriptural Islam. The Reformist emphasis on differentiating Islam in Malabar from local cultural traditions, much of which came to be identified with Hinduism and Polytheism, was an important factor that brought about a separate identity to the *Mappilas* . By emphasizing personal adherence to the basic tenets of

Islam, the reformists were not merely attacking the foundation of conceptual system of rural Islam; they were also defining Islamic identity and shaping up the public standards of this identity formation. Due to the propaganda work of the Reformists, both through oral and print media, even the traditional *Sunni Ulemas*, who tried to resist the reformist onslaught, were forced to get rid of some of the age long customs and set their religious life according to the tenets of the scriptures. The traditionalist's apathy towards *Madrasa* systems, translation of *Quran*, adoption of print and even to secular education was given up and the stage was set for the emergence of a Muslim public sphere, where the Muslims, irrespective of doctrinal differences, could imagine a monolithic Muslim community in Malabar. Since the Muslim reformist movement was confined to their community alone, it turned to be a movement for the solidification of community identity. Thus, the victory of the Reformists was also a victory of an orthodox great tradition of Islam over a heterodox, heteroprax little traditions of Malabar Islam.

In contrast to Benedict Anderson's focus on print in the formation of National Identity, the print capitalism that emerged in Malabar by the end of 19th century also facilitated the community imaginings among *Mappilas* . Printing made possible the publication of cheap religious texts and books projecting the Islamic image of the community. As Francis Robinson observed in the national context, the Muslim print played a major role in fashioning Muslim identity in Malabar. The large production of literary works grounded in Islam provided the *Mappilas* a separate identity. Along with this, umpteen Muslim journals helped to project the Muslim cause and continually fed their readers with the developments in the Muslim world and there by created a Muslim public sphere in Malabar.

Similarly, the 1921 Rebellion and the Khilafath Movement precipitated this ongoing process of community formation of *Mappilas* . The Rebellion was a watershed in this process as the centuries old communal amity in

Malabar was destroyed, at least for a temporary period and this was the period in which communitarian identities, both Hindu and Muslim, began to emerge in Malabar. The representation of the Rebellion, both in vernacular press as well as the nationalist narratives, did serve to sharpen the community identities in Malabar. Very often the violence (Rebellion) itself became a symbol for communitarian mobilization. As reports of aggression and victimization were remembered and embellished, Rebellion became an instrument for marking and consolidating community identities. Both types of chauvinistic reports about the Rebellion had its impact on the rise of an exclusive Muslim and Hindu identity in Malabar. Again, it was the covering of the Rebellion by the print media, which led to the entry of all India players like Hindu Maha Sabha, Arya Samaj and JDT Islam in to the social landscape of Malabar and they helped to organise their respective communities in terms of religion. Similarly, the Khilafath Movement in Malabar, for the first time, linked Malabar *Mappilas* with their brethren in other parts of India and they began to be influenced by the reverberations in Islamic world outside. Prior to the Khilafat movement the *Mappilas* did not identify strongly with the Muslims in the rest of India. The pan-Islamic sentiment also had given an additional fillip to the emergence of a separate Muslim identity.

Thus, through the play of various factors and through a steady and slow process, *Mappilas* , who had not attached much significance to their distinct identity, were transformed in to a community with an awareness of a common identity and then in to a political community. This political identity of *Mappilas* was manifested in the form of a political solidarity called Muslim League. Though the Muslim league was formed in 1906, it was only in late 1930's that *Mappilas* drifted towards a separatist political ideology of Muslim League.

In short, a self-conscious community of *Mappilas* , defining itself primarily as Muslims emerged only in the first half of 20th century. Though

the members of the community never knew most of their fellow members, met them or even heard them, in the minds of each lived the image of their communion. A feeling of unity, cutting across all distinctions in terms of wealth, status, succession. lineage etc., developed during this period. It was the developments within the colonial context of Malabar; colonial govermentality and its various discursive practices, improved means of communication like printing press, modern education, Islamic reformist intervention and post-Rebellion tension between communities that facilitated the emergence of a concrete community identity among *Mappilas*. Thus the changing colonial context did provide the primary backdrop for the formation of a community identity among *Mappilas* of Malabar.

GLOSSARY

GLOSSARY

Ahl-Baith	:	Prophet's family
Aikyam	:	Unity
Akhiram	:	Life after death
Appam	:	Cake
Asmah	:	Witchcraft
Auliya	:	(Plural of Wali) saints
Badr	:	The first battle fought by prophet
Baraka	:	Blessings
Bida'ath	:	Innovation
Chandanakudam	:	Annual festival at tombs of saints
Chattikali	:	Roulette gambling
Daffu muttu	:	A mappila art form
Dajjal	:	Anti-Christ
Dalil	:	Proof
Dikr	:	Spiritual exercise, chanting of hymns
Dua	:	Prayer
Farz	:	Obligatory religious duty
Fatwa	:	Decision on question of Islamic law
Fiqh	:	Islamic law books
Hadith	:	Reports of deeds and statements of prophet Mohemad
Hafil	:	Those who studied Quran by heart
Haram	:	Forbidden
Homam	:	A form of exorcism
Ibadath	:	Worship and Service to God
Id	:	The Muslim Festival
Ijma	:	Consensus opinion
Ijtihad	:	Independent Reasoning
Ilm	:	Knowledge
Imam	:	Worship leaders
Imamath	:	Worship leadership
Iman	:	Faith
Islah	:	Reform

Isthigaza	:	Seeking the blessing of dead saints
Jamiyyath	:	Organization
Jaram	:	Tomb of saints
Jihad	:	Holy war
Jinn	:	Spirit
Kaitharkam	:	Dispute between two Sufi orders
Kaniyan	:	Astrologer
Kannnuku	:	Third day of death
Karamath	:	Miracle
Khatib	:	Preacher
Khutuba	:	Friday sermon
Kindan	:	Mappila dress
Kithab	:	Scripture
Kodikuthu	:	Flag hoisting
Kolkali	:	Mappila art form
Kombuvekkal	:	Treatment with horn
Koodaram	:	Malayalam term for Tazia of Moharam festival
Kuttari	:	Mappila dress
Kuttichathan	:	An evil spirit
Madhab	:	Legal school
Mahal	:	Unit of Muslim families centered on a local mosque
Mahar	:	Nuptial gift
Majlis	:	Assembly
Maktab	:	Islamic primary school
Malapattu	:	Eulogies of Islamic divinities: poetical literature of Mappilas
Maqam	:	Tomb of Saints
Markkakalyanam	:	Circumcision
Maulid	:	Prophet's birth day celebration
Mimbar	:	Pulpit
Moulavi	:	A title of respect for a Muslim religious teacher
Muharram	:	First month of Hijra during which Caliph Ali's sons martyrdom and the Shias observe penance
Mujaddid	:	Renovator
Mujahid	:	One who strives in the way of God. One who stands for reform of religion

Mujahids	:	Islamic reformists
Mujizath	:	Miracles
Mulla	:	Mosque functionary
Murid	:	Disciple of a Sufi saint
Murid	:	Disciple of a Sufi pir
Musaliyar	:	Religious scholar
Mushrik	:	Polytheist
Nadappu Maulud	:	Prior to ward of contagious disease
Nercha	:	Festival in honour of saint
Nishpakha	:	Non-partisan
Niyyath	:	Intent
Ossan	:	The Muslim barber: derived from the Arabic term 'Khatan', one who performs circumcision of boys
Othupalli	:	Primary schools for religious instructions
Pattu	:	Song
Pinjanmezhuthu	:	Writing on the plates
Pir	:	The leader of Sufi sect
Pula	:	Death pollution
Puslam	:	Neo-Muslims, New converts
Qadiriya	:	Sufi order of Abdul Qadir Jilani
Qasi	:	Religious official
Qaubar	:	Grave
Qimayath	:	The day of judgment
Qunuth	:	Special prayer at the morning namaz
Qutuba	:	Friday Sermon
Rak'a	:	Units of worship (namaz)
Ramzan	:	Month of fasting
Ratib	:	Devotional act performed be devotees singing in ecstasy
Riba	:	Usury
Risala	:	Treatise
Rouhani	:	Soul of the dead
Ru'h	:	Spirit
Salaf	:	Predecessors
Samastha	:	All, Entire
Sangam	:	Association
Sayyid	:	Descendent of Prophet

Shafii	:	Legal tradition of Imam Shafi (d.819 AD)
Shaithan	:	Devil
Sharia	:	Islamic law, lit: path
Shirk	:	Idolatry, Polytheism
Shuhadakkal	:	Martyrs
Sihr	:	Black magic
Sujud	:	Prostration
Sunnath	:	Way of prophet
Tafsir	:	Interpretation and commentary of Quran
Tahlil	:	Mortuary recitation
Taqlid	:	Unquestioning obedience to tradition
Taqwa	:	Conviction of belief
Tarawih	:	Special namaz during Ramzan
Tarika	:	The mystic path of a Sufi
Tarrjuma	:	Translation
Tasawwuf	:	Mysticism
Tawassul	:	Invoking the intercession of saints
Thangal	:	A honorific applied to the descendent of prophet
Tirandukuli	:	Bathing on the 7th day of puberty
Touhid	:	Oneness of God
Ulema	:	Religious teachers and scholars
Ummath	:	Community of Muslims
Varavu	:	Offertory procession
Waa'z	:	Religious sermon
Yamoth	:	Recitation of the tomb
Zakath	:	Religious tithes
Ziyarath	:	Visit of tomb

APPENDICES

APPENDIX I

CENSUS OF 1881

Nationality	Caste	Population Males/ Females Total
Hindus	Brahmin, Rajputs, Akamalayan, Ambalakaran, Ambattan, Balya, Besta, Devangalu, Idayan, Gowda, Linodhari, Kollan, Kammalan, Komutti, Kusavan, Kurumban, Maravan, Nayar, Palli, Parayan, Reddi, Shaman, Vadugan, Vaniyan, etc. and others (not stated)	(numbers)
Mohammedans	Arabs, Lubbai, Mappilas, Moghul, Pathan, Said, Shaikh, and others (not stated)	(numbers)
Christians & others	British born subjects, other British subjects, Europeans, Natives, and others (not stated)	(numbers)

APPENDIX II

APPENDIX III

APPENDIX - IV

LITHO PRESSES IN MALABAR

Malharul Uloom	-	Tellichery
Melekandi Koyali Haji	-	"
Neerattipeedika Kunhahamad Press	-	"
Matabathul Hamidiya Press	-	"
Theyyalakandy press	-	"
Manbahul Hidaya	-	Ponnani
Manbahul Uloom press	-	Vadakkemanna (Malappuram)
Arayalippurath Kunhahamad	-	Tellichery (Malharul Uloom)
Manbahul Ajaib press	-	Ponnai
Manbahul Hidaya	-	Chaliyam
Manbahul Uloom	-	Tirurangadi
C.H. Ahmad Press	-	Tirurangadi
Valappichikandi Moosa	-	Tellichery
Matlahul Uloom press	-	"
Manbaul Uloom press	-	Kondotty
Manbaul Hidaya press	-	Vengara
Maubaul Hidaya press	-	Ponnani
Malharul Muhimmath press	-	Tellichery
Malharul Muhimmath press	-	Tirurangadi (TCY Karakkad Saeed)
Sirajul Uloom press	-	Tellichery
Muhiyudhin press (Mala)	-	Kodungallur

Source:

(1) C.N. Ahmad Moulavi & KKM Kareem (eds), *Mahathaya Mappila Sahitya Paramparyam* (Mal), Calicut, 1978.

APPENDIX - V

MALAPATTUS

Ayubmala	-	Karumpan Veetil Muhamed Kutty
Baaz Mala	-	Abdul Azees, Ponnani
Badar Mala	-	Mampattu Kunhi Rayin
Badarudhi Mala	}	Imbichi Mohamed
Syed Alavi Mala		
Fazlu Mala	}	Puthanparambil Umar
Rikhab Mala		
Hamzath Mala	-	Kunhiseethikoya
Mampuram Mala	-	M. Marakarukutty
Manjakkulam Mala	-	"
Muhiyudhin Mala	-	Qasi Mohd. Of Calicut
Nafeesath Mala	-	"
Rifai Mala	-	Anonymous
Safala Mala	-	Shujayi Moidu Musaliyar (d.1920)
Samasampoornamala	-	Pallipattu Beeran Mussaliyar, Ponnani
Shaduli Mala	-	Payyampurath Abdullakutty Moulavi
Ummath Mala	}	Nalakath Kunhi Moideen, Ponnani
Ibrahim Mala		
Puthiya Muhiyudhin Mala		

Sources:

(1) C.N. Ahmad Moulavi & KKM Kareem (eds), *Mahathaya Mappila Sahitya Paramparyam* (Mal), Calicut, 1978.

(2) O. Abu. *Arabi-Malayala Sahitya Charithram* (Mal.) Kottayam, 1971, pp.120-122.

(3) Balakrishnan Vallikkunu and Umar Tharamel, *Mappilapattu: Padavum Padanavum*, DC Books, Kottayam, 2006.

APPENDIX - VI

POEMS COMPOSED ON BATTLE OF *BADAR*

Thannur Moideenkutty Molla	-	*Badar Oppana*
Kanjirala Kunhirayin	-	*Badar Mala*
Nalakath Marakkarkutty	-	*Badar Byth*
Abdul Azeez	-	*Badar Moulid*
K.C. Muhammad	-	*Badar Kessu*
Mavoorathodika Muhammad Moulavi	-	*Badarul Khubra Chinth*
Kammukutty Marakkar	-	*Badar Thirippukal*
Kodanchery Marakkar Musaliyar	-	*Badar Mala*
Pattikadu Ibrahim Moulavi	-	*Badar*
Chalilakath Ahammed Koya	-	*Badariyyathul Hamsiyya*
Vazhappullikkal Abdullakutty	-	*Badar Oppanapattu*
Tirurangadi Bappu Musaliyar	-	*Asbabu Badar*
Nallalam Beeran	-	*Badar Oppana*
K.C. Avaran	-	*Badar pattu*
Chakkiri Moideenkutty	-	*Badar Yudhakavyam*
Haji. M.M. Moulavi	-	*Badar*
Moiyinkutty Vaidyar, Kondotty	-	*Badar Padappattu*
Kaipattu Muhiyudhin Moulavi	-	*Akbarul Badr*

Source:

(1) Balakrishnan Vallikkunu, Mappila Samskaratinte Kanapurangal, Capital Publishers, Calicut, 2000.

(2) K.O. Shamsudhin, Mappila Malayalam, Trivandrum, 1978.

APPENDIX - VII

KISSPATTU AND *MADHUPATTU*

1) *Yousf Kissa*
2) *Yunus Kissa*
3) *Mulayam Kissa*
4) *Firaun Kissa*
5) *Ibrahim Kissa*
6) *Isanabi*
7) *Ibrahim Nabi*
8) *Abdurahiman-ibn-ouf*
9) *Ahmad Kabir Rifai*
10) *Malik-Ibn-Dinar*
11) *Ibrahim-Ibn-Adham*
12) *Tajul-umr*
13) *Adham Kissa*
14) *Abdulrahim Kissa*
15) *Ayyub nabi mala*
16) *Al-Khaf Kissa*
17) *Adam Nabi Kissa*
18) *Isanabi Kissa*
19) *Umar Kissa*
20) *Kissathu thahira*
21) *Kissathu Nafisath*
22) *Kadijathul Kibra*
23) *Thajir Umir Kissa*
24) *Nafeesath Kissa*
25) *Nuhu Nabi Kissa*
27) *Nulmadhu*
28) *Nulmala*
29) *Fatimabevi Wafath*
30) *Badar Kissa*
31) *Mariyambeevi Kissa*
32.) *Musanabi Kissa*
33) *Wafathunabi Kissa*
34) *Wafathu Fathima*
35) *Waliya Umar Kissa*
36) *Sidique Kissa*
37) Sulaiman Nabi Kissa
38) *Hamzath Kissa*
39) *Hijra Kissa*
40) *Rasul Wafath*

Sources:

(1) Balakrishnan Vallikkunu and Umar Tharamel, *Mappilapattu: Padavum Padanavum*, DC Books, Kottayam, 2006.

(2) C.N. Ahmad Moulavi & KKM Kareem (eds), *Mahathaya Mappila Sahitya Paramparyam* (Mal), Calicut, 1978.

(3) K.O. Samsudhin, *Mappila Malayalam*, Trivandrum, 1978.

APPENDIX - VIII

WORKS ON MEDICINE AND ASTRONOMY

Medicine

1	Kanganam Vettil Ahmed Musliyar	:	*Valiya Vaidya Sala*
			Paropakaram
			Ottamooli
		:	*Upaharam*
2	Karakkal Mammed	:	*Visha Vydhyan*
3	Mannumthodika Cheriya Kunhi Pokker (Areacode)	:	*Vasuri Chikithsa Kirthanam*
4	Kanjirala Kunhirayi	:	*Nasika Choorna Pattu*
5	Puthiya Valappil Kuhahammed Musliyar	:	*Thibbul Amradh*
		:	*Valiya Balachikitsa*
6	Kunhi Mahin Kutty Vydyar	:	*Ashtanga Hridaym* (tra.)
		:	*Vydia Jnanam*
7	Ibrahim Moulavi	:	*Maqsanul Mufaradath*
			Chikitsa Saram
			Valiya Vydia Saram
			Vydia Yoga Ratnam
			Shifunllinasi
			Shafa Shifa (Treatment of poison)
			Chikitsa Rajen
			Faridul Mufradath (500 panacia)
			Fathul Malik of Bruni
			Mujar Rabhathussamsi
			Chikitsa Noor
8	Manjapira Abdul Azeez	:	*Swayam Krithimala*
9	K.V. Bava Musaliyar	:	*Paropakara Vydyasarm*
10	Ibrahimkutty Musaliyar	:	*Parojana Upadesam*
		:	*Upakara Saram*

Astronomy

1	Manjapira Abdul Azeez		*Arabi Jyotsyam*
	"		*Thodukuri Lakshanam*
	"		*Kalagrantham*
	"		*Nujum Kanakku*
	"		*Fathul Malik bayanil falak* (Translation)
2	Puthanpurakkal Muhiyudhin	:	*Adabussibiyam* (Arithematics)
3	Mohammed Abdul Khader	:	*Ilmulabihru* (Science of well)

Sources:

(1) C.N. Ahmad Moulavi & KKM Kareem (eds), *Mahathaya Mappila Sahitya Paramparyam* (Mal), Calicut, 1978, pp. 416-505.

(2) K.O. Shamshudhin, *Mappila Malayalam*, Trivandrum, 1978, pp. 130-135.

APPENDIX - IX

PROSE (DIDACTIC WORKS)

Al Dua Wal Ibadath	-	K.M. Moulavi
Ahkamul Haywan Fil Halali wal Haram	-	Sulaiman Moulavi
Ibrazul Inaya	-	C.V. Hydros Musaliyar
Irfathul Islam	-	Mohammed Hamadani Tangal
Umdathul Muslimeen	-	P. Kunchi Moosa
Kithab Futhuhal Mannan	-	Mohammed ibn Muhiyudheen
Kithabul Nabaviya	-	Mohammed ibn Abdul Khader
Tariq Ma'abari	-	Abdul Azeez
Tuhfathul Iqwan	-	Chakkeeri Moideen Kutty
Dawairul Iqwan	-	M.P. Abdul Azees
Failul Fayyal	-	Kulaygara Veetil Moidu Musaliyar

Source:

(1) Balakrishnan Vallikkunu and Umar Tharamel, *Mappilapattu: Padavum Padanavum*, DC Books, Kottayam, 2006.

APPENDIX - X

LIST OF MUSLIM JOURNALS IN KERALA UP TO 1950

ARABI-MALAYALAM JOURNALS

Sl. No.	Name	Date	Name of Editor		Place of Publication
1.	*Malayali*	1880	N.M.Mohd. Kunju	-	Mangalore B.M. Press
2.	*Hidayathul Iqwan*	1890	Abdullakoya Thangl	-	Tirurangadi Amirul Islam Press
3.	*Manivilakku*	1891	Sulaiman Moulavi		Alappuzha, Amirul Islam Lito Press
4.	*Tuhfathul Aqyar Wa Hidayathul Ashrar*	1892	Makti Thangal		
5.	*Salahul Iqwan*	1899	C. Saidalikutty Master	-	Ponnani
6.	*Rafiqul Islam*	1909	"	-	Tirur
7.	*Al- Islam*	1910	Vakkom Moulavi	-	Kayikkara
8.	*Al-Irshad*	1923	E.K. Moulavi	-	Eriyad-Kodungallur
9.	*Al-Islah*	1925	E. Moidu Moulavi	-	"
10.	*Nisa-ul-Islam*	1929	K.C. Komukutty Moulavi	-	Calicut
11.	*Al-Hidaya*	1929	P.N. Haidar Moulavi	-	Irimbiliyam (Ponnani Taluk)
12.	*Al-Bayan*	1929	A.P. Ahmadkutty Musaliyar	-	Calicut
13.	*Al-Murshid*	1935	K.M. Moulavi	-	Tirurangadi
14.	*Al-Ithihad*	1954	E.K. Moulavi	-	Tirurangadi

MALAYALAM JOURNALS

1.	*Kerala Deepakam*	1878	Kadersha Haji	-	Cochin
2.	*Satyaprakasam*	1899	"	-	Cochin
3.	*Paropakari*	1890's	Makti Thangal	-	Cochin & Calicut
4.	*Turky Samacharam*	1909	"	-	Cochin
5.	*Malabar Islam*	1909	P. Abdu Mohd. Haji	-	Cochin
6.	*Muslim*	1909	Vakkom Abdul	-	Trivandrum

			Kader Moulavi		
7.	*Muslim Vruthantham*	1917	A.M. Abdul Kader Moulavi	-	Aleppey
8.	*Khilafath*	1920	A. Mohd. Kunju	-	Varkala
9.	*Al-manar*	1924	"	-	"
10.	*Mahamadiya Darpanam*	1911	P.K. Moosakutty	-	Ernakulam
11.	*Muslim Mahila*	1925	"	-	"
12.	*Muhammadali*	1920	C.K. Bavasahib	-	"
13.	*Islam Deepam*	1921	P.K.Yunus Moulavi	-	Kollam
14.	*Islam Dhutan*	1921	A. Mohd. Kannu	-	Aleppey
15	*Muslim Aikyam*	1921	P.A.Ahmadunni	-	Kodungallur
16.	*Navalokam*	1922	N.A.Abdurahman	-	Kodungallur
17.	*Hidayath*	1923	K. Ahmad	-	Kozhikode
18.	*Shamsul Islam*	1924	Badarudhin	-	Karunagappalli
19.	*Kerala Chandrika*	1924	M. Abdurahimankutty	-	Kollam
20.	*Al-Ameen*	1924	Mohd. Abdurahim Sahib	-	Kozhikode
21.	*Sarasan*	1925	N.M. Mohd. Shafi	-	Aleppey
22.	*Munirul Islam*	1925	Sayed. M. Bava Sahib	-	Kollam
23.	*Musalman*	1927	"	-	"
24.	*Aikyam*	1925	K.M. Seethi Sahib	-	Ernakulam
25.	*Narajilisthan*	1926	V.K. Kunhahamad	-	Tellichery
26.	*Malabari*	1926	Parol Husain Moulavi	-	Kozhikode
27.	*Yuvalokam*	1926	K.C. Komukutty Moulavi	-	Kozhikode
28.	*Muslim Mithram*	1927	M. Ahmad Kannu	-	Trivandrum
29.	*Yuvajanamitram*	1929	O. Mahinali	-	Tellichery
30.	*Muslim Sahakari*	1930	Imbichi Mohamad	-	Calicut
31.	*Isha'ath*	1930	P.M. Abdul Kader	-	Aleppey
32.	*Prakasam*	1930	Dr. Kamalpasha Thayyil	-	Cochin
33.	*Muslim Lokam*	1931	P.M. Mohd. Kunju	-	Trivandrum
34.	*Margadarshakan*	1933	M.C.C. Hasan Moulavi	-	Kozhikode

35.	*Muslim Training School Trimonthly*	1935	C.O.T. Kunhippakki	-	Malappuram
36.	*Punchiri*	1934	C.A. Koya	-	Calicut
37.	*Chandrika*	1934	C.P. Mamukeyi	-	Tellichery
38.	*Mithram*	1935	A.M.Bava	-	Trivandrum
39.	*Ujjivanam*	1937	Vaikkom Mohd. Basheer Zainuddin Naina	-	Cochin
40.	*Pulari*	1939	P.Mohd. Salih Moulavi	-	Valapattanam
41.	*Mappila Review*	1940	K. Aboobacker	-	Kozhikode
42.	*Mithram*	1942	N.Bappu	-	Malappuram
43.	*Pourakahalam*	1945	V. Bappu	-	Trichur
44.	*Mujahid*	1944	P.A. Nainan	-	Ernakulam
45.	*Swaraj*	1945	P.K. Kunju	-	Alappuzha
46.	*Malayala Vrithantham*	1945	T.K. Mohd.	-	Kayamkulam
47.	*Paurashakti*	1943	K. Aboobacker	-	Kozhikode
48.	*Yuvakeralam*	1945	P.A. Syed Mohd.	-	Ernakulam
49.	*Azad*	1946	Punnayal Kunhalikutty	-	
50.	*Yuvakesari*	1946	C.S. Abdul Azees	-	Edava
51.	*Muslim Vanitha*	1946	M. Haleema Beevi	-	Tiruvalla
52.	*Bharata Chandrika*	1946	"	-	Tiruvalla
53.	*Cochin Mail*	1946	V.K. Kutty	-	Ernakulam
54.	*Prabhatam*	1946	Tangal Kunju Musliyar	-	Kollam
55.	*Ameen*	1946	A.I. Khalid	-	Trichur
56.	*Hilal*	1949	T.A. Majeed	-	Kollam
57.	*Hidayathul Muhminin*	1950	N. Ahmad Haji	-	Kozhikode
58.	*Aftab Al Jihad*	1950	Kunhu Muhammad	-	Kodungallur
59.	*Al-Ansari*	1951	C.N. Ahmad Moulavi	-	Karuvarakundu

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APPENDIX - XI

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T.K. Ahmad (D 1995) of Veliyamkode	:	*Islam Charithram* *Kadeejathul Khubra* *Karbalayile Rakthakkalam*
Arakkal Unnikkammed, Edavanna (1915-1975)	:	*Muhammed Nabiyude Jeeva Charithra Samgraham* *Pravachakarude Prabhashangal*
K.K. Jamaludhin Moulavi (d 1965)	:	*Nishpaksha Nirupanam* *Chintharhamaya Yadarthyangal*
Mohamed Abdurahiman Sahib (1898-1945)	:	*Muhamadum Quranum* *Ibn Saud*
K.M. Seethi Sahib	:	*Mohamadali Jinna* *Moulana Muhammadali*
Manppattu Kunhu Muhammadaji (1890-1959)	:	*Islamum Sahodaryavum* *Manushyan* (Man)
T. Ubaid (1908-1972)	:	*Malik Ibn Dinar* *Muhammed Sharool*
K.C. Komukutty (1900.1967)	:	*Swatantra Turky* *Nalu Cherukathakal* *Umar Farook* *Sulthan Salahudhin* (Drama) *Karbala Porkalam* *Kashmir Kathakal* (Stories) *Moulana Azad* *Arab Rashtrangal* *Najid Sulthanmar*
E. Moidu Moulavi	:	*Nabi Charithram* *Turkey Japan Samvadam* *Congressum Muslim Leagum* *Indian Muslingalude Mahathaya-Paramparyam*

Vakkom Abdul Kader	:	*Atmarpanam* (drama about Caliph Omar)
Vakkom Moulavi	:	*Kimiya Sa'ada* (translation) *Islam Matha Siddhantha Samgraham* *Islaminte Sandesam* *Ahlusunnath Wal Jammath*
K.M. Sulaiman	:	*Swantantra Samudayavum-Muslingalum,* Sarason Publishing Bureau Cochin, 1935.
K.M. Moulavi	:	*Islamum Sthrikalum*, Jamalia Press, Tirur. 1936.
C.N. Ahmad Moulavi	:	*Islamile Dhanavitharana Padhathi* (The Distribution of Wealth in Islam)
A.K. Malik Mohamed	:	*Islamum Socialisavum* Manomohanan Press, Kollam, 1936.
Moulana Muhamadali Memorial Library, Cochin	:	*Samathvam Evide*, (Where is Equality?) Kamal Book Depot, Cochin, 1936.
P.M. Abdul Kader Moulavi	:	*Vishwa Vijayi*, M.S. Press, Kottayam, 1935.
B. Mahin Kutty	:	*Islamum Athakritharum* (Islam and Untouchables), Ishaath Society, Aleppy
E.M. Habeeb Mohamed (Ed)	:	*Sahrudayopaharam*, T.V. Press, Quilon, 1930.

APPENDIX – XII

APPENDIX – XIII

APPENDIX - XIV

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