

**MAPPILA HERITAGE:
A STUDY IN THEIR SOCIAL AND CULTURAL LIFE**

*Thesis Submitted to the
University of Calicut for the Degree of*
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY
in **History**

Submitted by
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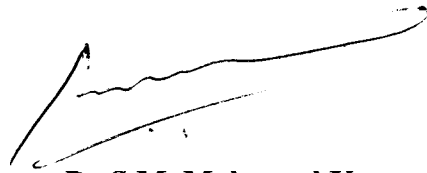
Supervised by
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2004

CERTIFICATE

I, **Dr. S.M. Mohamed Koya**, do here by certify that this thesis, **'Mappila Heritage: a study in their social and Cultural life'** is a record of bonafide research carried out by **Mr. Abdurahiman.K.P** under my supervision. No part of this has been submitted for the award of any degree, diploma, title or recognition before.

Calicut,
15.10.2004



Dr.S.M. Mohamed Koya
Supervising Teacher.

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PREFACE

Mappilas of Malabar are a well-known community of the present Kerala state. The Mappila community is an integral part in the history of Kerala from medieval to modern period. The community has richly contributed to the political, social and cultural history of the land that it has been the centre of attraction in recent years. Sociologists, anthropologists and historians especially westerners, are taking special interest in the study of the community. In many areas of social life, like other Muslim communities of India, the Mappilas of Malabar are influenced by indigenous systems and practices. These aspects of mutual adjustment and adaptation between the Mappilas and the local people are subjected to various studies. As a result of all these new trends, a special area namely Mappila studies are gradually emerging. Mappila studies is a vast subject of abundant depth, but still some of the areas remain untraced. Thus my work is a humble attempt to fulfil this objective that is to contribute a little to the area of Mappila studies.

By this study I wish to bring so many untouched aspects of the social and cultural life of Mappila community into the light of history. For centuries, the Mappilas have been contributing to the history and culture of this land. They have developed so much of literary writings, poetical compositions, dance systems, fine arts and marital arts. In all these spheres their contribution is exemplary and outstanding. With the on rush of modern civilization so many traditional customs and values thus nurtured and fostered through out the period of the development of this community from past to the present, are facing a serious threat to survival. Thus the objective of this study is to bring forth such vanishing values of social and cultural life of Mappilas, to the light of history. Social and cultural changes affected the society through modern education and technological advancement. The economic status that the

community attained by the 'gulf money', as called for the petro-dollar richness, through their migration to Middle Eastern countries, has tremendously transformed the day to day life of Mappilas. This new life style has hampered their old customs and manners of social and cultural life. So this study seeks to examine the social and cultural life of the 'old Mappilas' before this transformation period.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

A work of historical research of this magnitude cannot be undertaken without the support and service of a large number of individuals and I am immensely grateful to a number of persons for bringing this work to fruition.

I am acknowledge with inspired respect and admiration my gratitude to Dr. S.M. Mohamed Koya, formerly Head of Department of History, University of Calicut, under whose effective guidance and supervision the research work has been carried out without which this work would not have been possible. More over it is his love and care that made my task less difficult. He has been a constant source of inspiration in the preparation of this work. No amount of words can even partially express my profound indebtedness that I owe to him.

I am much obliged to my colleague Dr. K. Hussain, who gave me valuable suggestion for my research. I also express my heartfelt gratitude to Mr. A.P. Mohammadali Musliyar, Nellikuth for providing valuable materials from his personal library for this study. To my friend Dr. C.P. Aboobacker, who has taken pain to translate so many Arabic manuscripts to English, I owe a debt of deep gratitude. My friend Dr. K.K. Muhammad Abdul Sathar provided me so many original sources from the collection of his father, Mr.K.K. Muhammad Abdul Kareem. To both I express my sincere gratitude.

Completion of this work is made possible due to the courtesy of a number of personalities who provided me valuable information through interviews, personal talks and providing me complementary copies of their

books. Since their number is so lengthy, a separate list has been given in the Bibliography. To all of them I express my profound gratitude.

I also extend my sincere gratitude to the staff of Tamil Nadu Archives, Chennai, State Archives, Trivandrum and Regional Archives, Calicut. My thanks also go to the Librarian and Staff of Farook College Library, Moyinkutty, ^{Vaidyar} Smaraka Saudhan Library, Kondotty; University Library, Trivandrum, Public Library, Calicut and History Department Library and CH Mohamad Koya Library, Calicut University. My special thanks to the Editor and Staff of Chandrika Daily for permitting me to refer the back issues of the News Paper for several days. I am also grateful to Mr. K. Veerankutty who has given permission to take the photographs of so many old articles from his personal Museum.

I will be ungrateful if I omit the services of my family members who bore the inconvenience caused due to my work and shouldered the responsibilities in my absence.

To the last, not the least, I have special thanks to Mr. Aziz and his Staff, Printo-fast, Calicut for having typed the matter neatly well in time.

TRANSLITERATION

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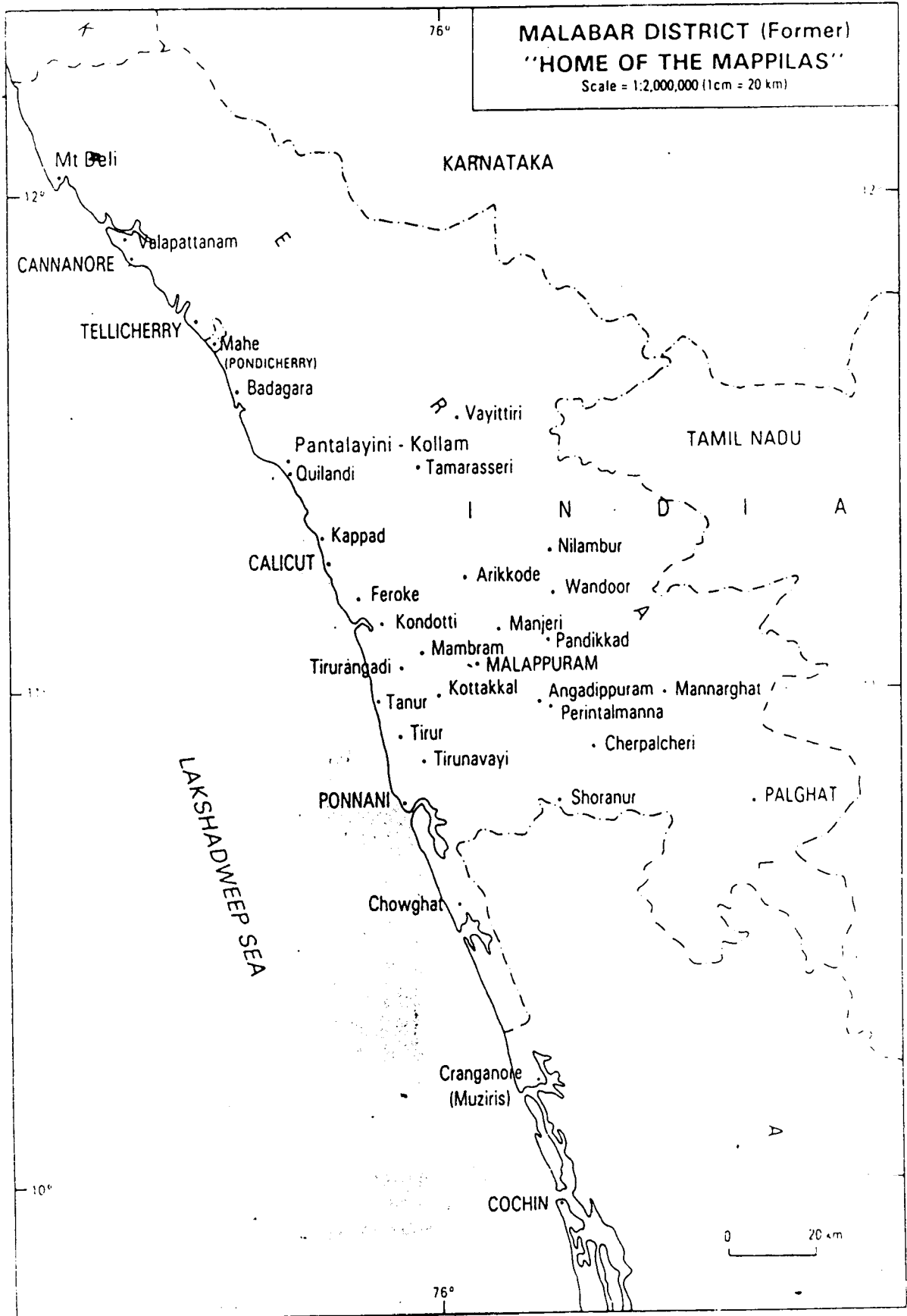
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For Arabic and Malayalam letters other than stated in the above list corresponding English letters are used without any change. However, there are certain exceptions for the transliteration. No transliteration has been given for the commonly used words in Malayalam and Arabic. Mappila names also had not been given complete transliteration, but for Arabic names the rule is followed as shown above. For the places the commonly used style is followed.



Based upon Survey of India map with the permission of the Surveyor General of India.
 The territorial waters of India extend into the Sea to a distance of twelve nautical miles measured from the appropriate base line.
 Responsibility for correctness of internal details shown on the map rests with the publisher.

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INTRODUCTION

Abdurahiman.K.P “Mappila heritage: A study in their social and cultural life”
Thesis. Department of History, University of Calicut, 2004

INTRODUCTION

Mappilas of Malabar occupy a special position in the history of Indian Muslims. They have been an integral part of Kerala history and culture. From the medieval time up to this day their presence is conspicuous in the history of Kerala. Their entry into the political arena of Kerala with the struggle between Portuguese power in the 16th Century and later their bitter opposition to British regime placed them in the high pedestal of patriotism. In spite of this anti-colonial struggle to liberate the country from foreign yolk, on one hand, and deep love and affection to the mother land on the other, little attention has been paid to their historical role so far by the historians. Before Independence of this country, they were not pictured in the pages of historical writing. It was in 1929 AD an article¹ appeared in the book '*Malabar and its folk*' by T.K.G. Panikkar. Roland E. Miller in his work *Mappila Muslims of Kerala* writes about this negligence of Mappila role of academicians thus, "Mappila hiddenness from the academic world has been paralleled surprisingly enough, by a hiddenness from the nearest neighbours of this Muslim community namely Hindus and Christians of Kerala".² But whatever little has been written in the pre-Independence era is not only not the true picture of the community but something prejudiced and biased. History of Malabar Rebellion written by

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1. Hamid Ali. "Moplahs", T.K.G. Panikkar (Ed.), *Malabar and its Folk*, 3rd edition, Madras, 1929. p.267
 2. Roland. E. Miller. *Mappila Muslims of Kerala - A study in Islamic trends* (Revised edition 1992) Orient Longman Ltd., Madras, p.XV.

R.H. Hitchcock and Malabar Manual by William Logan are thoroughly based on official records which are pro-British. The factor which resulted in this sad situation is the role of Mappilas in the rebellion of 1921, which is viewed as both communal and anti-imperialist. Some of the incidents of 1921 rebellion especially the acts against Hindu land lords prompted these historians as well as writers and poets of the country to depict the Mappilas as fanatics. On the other hand, the British imperialist, historians also tarnished the Mappilas as rebels and brutal since they were an unending headache to their regime by their frequent uprisings against them. To make the matters worse, the Mappilas could not defend their stand either in the native language or in English.

The Mappilas had their own literature in Arabi- Malayalam to write and converse, but it was totally alien to both the neighbouring communities, Christians and Hindus. This made Mappilas completely aloof from modern education with the result that they have been not only pictured in dark colour but they could not defend themselves.

After Independence, the situation gradually began to change since the British enmity had vanished, the Mappilas realized the importance of Modern Education, thanks to the reformist movements within the community. It was then the intellectuals among the Mappilas realized the hazards committed by the British through their historical writings against the community. This resulted in the self- awareness and self- consciousness within them and attention now diverted to self-defence through their writings both in English

and mother tongue. Their glorious contributions in the field of literature and poetry in the Arabi-Malayalam script came to the light. From these sources we grasp that Mappilas are once the custodians of a great culture and literature. Much of their past contributions are unearthed and so much of hidden aspects have been brought out. As a result of this new awakening, a branch of study newly developed namely Mappila studies. This thesis is a humble attempt to add something in this field.

Objectives of the study

After independence the Mappila community shed out of their lethargy and started to wake up. Thus they are gradually coming to the public arena. In the field of politics, education and cultural activities, the Mappila presence is conspicuous. Although their educational status have been improved, economic condition is in its lowest ebb. In the last quarter of 20th century an economic boom blessed the society through the 'gulf migration. Bulk of the Mappilas began to migrate into Middle East where there is a lot of job opportunities, accumulated as a result of their economic prosperity gained through petroleum industry. Since the Arabs were the forefathers of Mappilas, and religiously and linguistically Mappilas were attached to Arab culture, migration was much easier and feasible. When the community prospered through this petro dollar of the Middle East, modernization had crept into their life style. Soon the community shed out their traditional values and hereditary way of life. This peculiar condition paved the way for enjoyment of modern way of life, but still the religious beliefs strongly led them. Thus the

community has to cope with the situation. On one hand they are enjoying all facilities of modern life and on the other religious beliefs and practices are also to be observed. In the on rush of modern life the community has abandoned their old pattern of life, traditional values and cultural contributions of the past. One by one, all these past values are gradually vanishing out from the community. So the elements which contributed to the community's 'Mappila character' are diminishing slowly.

In the light of the above facts, the objective of the present study "Mappila Heritage: A study in their social and cultural life" is an investigation of such cultural elements of the society which is in the dying stage or in the verge of disappearance. Unearthing such historical character of Mappilas, especially in their social life, economic life and cultural life, we can get a better picture of the community and its glorious heritage in the past years. Some of the aspects of Mappilas, especially political, religious and educational conditions have been brought into light by various scholars and writers. But still there is a shortage regarding the social and cultural life. So the study is very essential to bring out these aspects into the light of history. Roland E. Miller, eminent scholar on Mappilas writes in his book Mappila Muslims of Kerala inviting the attention of scholars in these words" A great deal of historical, cultural and theological research awaits the doing, and it is our earnest hope that this presentation may help to stimulate the disciplined study of the entire Mappila heritage"³. Taking inspiration from the above words,

3. R.E. Miller., op.cit., p. XVIII.

this is a humble attempt to investigate the social and cultural life of Mappilas during 1800-1975 AD. The area of study includes the whole of Malabar district under the British rule.⁴ Emphasis has been given to the aspects of British period, although light has been thrown to the aspects of post-British period up to the last quarter of 20th Century, when modernisation changed the whole structure of the existing society.

Chapter Descriptions

In this study, the origin and growth of the Mappila community up to present is dealt within the first chapter. The Mappila community is the result of the peaceful interaction of the Arab traders and mariners who practised indigenous customs. The community increased in number as a result of conversion especially from low castes of Hindu society. So many aspects contributed to the spread of Islamic faith among the low castes. The major ones are the missionary activities of Sufis, the caste rigidity of Hinduism, the patronization of local rulers, inter marriage and proselytisation. By 12th century AD, Mappilas became a distinct community from others. They played a pivotal role in the hectic business carried out by Arab merchants with Malabar coast. The community prospered through the process but it did not

4. Malabar District – the dawn of the 20th century saw Malabar as a district in the Madras Presidency of the British Indian Empire. The major part of the district had come into the hands of the English East India Company under the terms of the treaties signed with Tipu sultan at Seringapatam in 1762. After addition and adjustments in the early years, the territory of district came to occupy an area of 5787.45 sq. miles with a coast line of 150 miles along Arabian sea in the west. On the north it was bounded by the North Canara district on the South by the princely state of Cochin and on the east by Westernghats. In 1800 AD the District was transferred from Bombay Presidency to Madras Presidency.

last long. With the arrival of the Portuguese, a European power of medieval world, they seized the monopoly of trade from the Arabs and the Mappilas were ousted from the scene. There began the era of Mappila struggle with European powers, an endless fight which continued to the first quarter of 20th century. After Portuguese they fought with Dutch and finally with British. They have got an interim relief from these series of outbreaks by the rule of Mysorean sultans. The Mappila antagonism towards British culminated in the rebellion of 1921. After 1921 the Mappila community has tremendously undergone changes with the acquisition of modern education. This development of the society from beginning to present is briefly sketched in the first chapter.

Second chapter entitled "Social Customs and Manners of Mappila life" deals with various customs and rites that have been observed in connection with the birth, growth, marriage and death, the events in the life cycle of a person. The Mappilas being Muslims, closely followed Islamic rites and Arab traditions, without much change and modification, but wherever possible they have incorporated so many indigenous conventions. For example in marriage occasions, 'Nikah' is the true Islamic ceremony, but 'Kalyanam' the celebrations that followed is an indigenous part which is not necessary as an Islamic rite, Likewise, the 'Salkarams' (receptions) that follows the marriage and the ceremonies in connection with 'Markakalyanam' (circumcision) and 'Kathukuthu' (ear boring), it is the indigenous customs that are more exposed

and exhibited. In short, the Mappila social customs are a blend of Islamic and indigenous elements.

The third chapter entitled the “Salient features in the social life of Mappilas” is an account of the various paraphernalias of the human life. The dress, ornaments, food are essential part of a person’s life and the Mappilas had glorious past in using these articles. They had used the best and fine items of all these things in their daily life. Likewise, they had addicted to special habits like pan-chewing and smoking. The Mappilas had practised some pastimes in which they put their soul and heart. The ‘Kalapoott’ (Cattle race), fishing and hunting were such amusements which had almost become a part of their life. Some utensils, house hold articles and furniture were unique to the Mappilas. In every aspect there was a ‘Mappila Character’ in the sense that they had kept their own identity in all aspects of life.

The fourth chapter, “Social stratification among the Mappilas”, is an assessment of the social hierarchical structures and sub divisions of Mappila community as a whole. The Mappila society is entirely different from medieval Indian Muslim Society which had four distinct categories such as Royal class, Nobility, Ulama and Slaves. But the Mappila society altogether did not come under the rule of a royal house, although there had been one namely Arakkal dynasty of Cannanore. The majority of Mappilas were the citizens of Hindu local rajas. The Sayyid class of Mappilas is in par with the nobility of Medieval India. But the Sayyids in the absence of a royal class led the society and have the duty of leaders (Umara). The next class is ‘Ulama’

(priest) which is same as that of 'Ulama' of medieval Indian society but no close contact with either rulers or nobles as in the time of medieval period. The 'Ulama' class of Mappilas is independent. The common people, 'Malabaris', consists of all types of social working class, both Zamindars and coolies, scholars and illiterates. However, a brief picture of the zamindar groups of British period has been traced out. The last being the group called 'Ossan', the barber class, who has got very low dignity and status simply because of the nature of their occupation.

The fifth chapter is devoted to the study of "Occupational classes of Mappilas". Among the Malabaris, there are people having so many occupations of their own. The important trade classes among them are Koyas, Keyis and Baramis. Each group have specialized field of trade. Each group consists of a strong family and great possession of wealth. Koyas were the masters of every business activities of Calicut city. Likewise, the Keyis, were the master of timber, rice and spice exporters and had virtually the monopoly of trade in North Malabar. The Baramis are great 'machwa' builders of Beypore. The Khalasis and Kammalis, another group are the real hard working labour group of Mappila community. The Khalasi service was invaluable to the introduction of Indian Railway line during British period. Kammalis played a significant role in Kallai Saw Mills, Pandikasalas and the hectic trading arena of big bazar of Calicut city. The puislans worked hard to thrive their livelihood in the sea. But it was the poor illiterate and hard working farmers of South Malabar who really moulded the history of Mappilas by their

unflinching loyalty to mother land and by taking arms against the tyrannical masters of the land.

After relating the Mappila history, customs and manners, social organization and different occupational groups, the study passes to the cultural aspects of the Mappila community. The sixth chapter, 'Mappila Folk Culture' deals with the various cultural aspects of Mappila community. The Mappila Folk culture has its unique features laid through generations. As the Mappilas themselves formed by the union of Arabs and native blood, the culture they acquired was no exception to this being the mixture of these two ethnic diversities. Thus in the field of Folk songs, the theme is Islamic, the religion brought by Arabs to the land but the language is that of native, that is the primitive Malayalam. In the case of folk festivals, the 'nerchas' are really of Persian origin, but found its root by assimilating the indigenous customs and manners. The outward exhibits of 'nerchas' have closer similarity with the Hindu festivals 'Pooram'. Mappilas have their own folk traditions in the Cheraman Perumal legend and the valiant traditions of Kunhali Marakkars. In the field of Folk tales, Folk beliefs, and Folk dialects, Mappilas have rich and varied cultural identity to be studied thoroughly.

The seventh chapter entitled 'The Mappila Tradition in folk Arts' deals with various art forms prevalent in the society. The art forms are developed as a pastime of the working people, while some are developed in religious context 'Duff muttu' and 'Arabana muttu' are art forms which are used for 'Rateeb', the devotion to sufi saints. Likewise the 'padipparachil' is

completely based on religious background. But the art forms like 'Vattapatt', 'Oppana' and 'Kolkali' have no religious elements in it. They are developed from indigenous forms. Every art has its root in Mappila songs, without which the art forms become dull. These art forms had been enjoyed by people in every walk of life. 'Oppana' was an essential part of marriage ceremonies while 'Kolkali' was an integral part of festivals. Whatever may be the aim and context of the art forms, it revealed the highest cultural standard that has attained the community in the yester years.

Previous works

Very few works have so far appeared dealing with the history and culture of Mappila community. The works on Indian Muslims also give no detailed account of the Mappilas. Perhaps it may be because of the absence of Mappila ruling family that the community had not preserved any record of their past history. The Arakkal Ali Rajas, the only Muslim dynasty of Malabar also provides no historical record of the earliest time. Whatever we have received about the early history is from the travellers who visited the coast.

The Arab travellers like Sulayman, ibn Kurdat, Ibn al Faqih, Masudi, Idrisi, Yaqub and Ibn Batuta had given valuable information regarding the early history of Malabar. Of all the Arab writers, Ibn Batuta has been regarded as the most objective and his account has been more reliable than his predecessors. Ma-Huan, a Chinese Muslim traveller who visited Malabar in

15th Century gives an interesting account of the life of Mappilas. Of the European travellers Marco Polo, Duarate Barbosa and Dr. Francis Buchanan had given contemporary picture of the Mappila Society.

Among traditional sources, Keralolpathi gives an interesting account on the origin of Islam in Kerala and the conversion of Cheraman Perumal to Islam. The position of Mappilas under the Zamorin is also well illustrated in the work. But the information given in Keralolpathi is legendry and has no historical validity.

The earliest historical work which so far came to light is *Tuhfat al Mujahidin fibadhwal al Burtuqaliyyin* (An offering to the Holy Warriors in respect of a brief account of the Portuguse), compiled by Sheikh Zainuddin II, in the sixteenth century. Stephen Frederic Dale remarks, “not only does *Tuhfat* provides the key to the origin of Mappila violent traditions but it is also a fundamental guide to understanding Mappila attitudes in the nineteenth century”⁵. The work has been considered as one of the best historical treatises produced on modern line”.⁶

Fathahul Mubeen, (The Manifest Victory) by Qazi Muhammad gives the political and social structure of the community in the period of transitional change and provides key to the origin of the militant tradition of

5. Stephen Frederic Dale The Mappilas of Malabar 1489-1922. Islamic Society on the South Asian Frontier. (New York, 1980).P.24.

6. A.P. Ibrahim Kunju. Mappila Muslims of Kerala, their History and Culture (Trivandrum, 1989)p 10.

the community. These works act as fundamental guides in understanding the Mappila attitude in the 19th century.

Of the works in English, William Logan's *Malabar Manual* in three volumes (1887) is a monumental one. Logan spared no efforts in collecting the traditional history of Malabar upto the fifteenth century and for sixteenth and seventeenth centuries he had tapped the Portuguese and the French sources. He used excellently the official records, to draw a detailed picture of the so called 'Mappila outrages' in the nineteenth century. He was the first British official who made a thorough study into the economic background of the Mappila revolts. His informations were later updated in the Malabar gazatteer by C.A. Innes (1905) and revised by F.B. Evans (1908) with their own interpretations.

A few studies in English exclusively on Mappilas of Kerala and Malabar have come out in previous years. The important among them are; (1) Roland E. Miller's *Mappila Muslims of Kerala - A study in Islamic Trends* (orient Longman, Madras, 1976) (2) Syed Mohindeen Shah's *Islam in Kerala* (Trichur, 1974) (3) Stephen Frederic Dale's. *The Mappilas of Malabar, 1498-1922, Islamic Society on the South Asian Frontier*. (New York, 1980) (4) S.M. Mohamed Koya's *Mappilas of Malabar* (Calicut, 1983) and (5) A.P. Ibrahim Kunju's *Mappila Muslims of Kerala, Their History and culture*, Trivandrum, 1989).

Roland E. Miller mainly deals with the modern period of Mappila History while his description on early period is rather sketchy. However he had tried to collect all the existing information. 'The Frontier theory developed by Stephen F. Dale is the most interesting aspect of his work. But his over emphasis on Mappila's martial character had compelled him to record that "religious militancy" was their most prominent cultural characteristic feature.⁷ He had seldom depended upon indigenous sources and accepts the official records without question. However the book provides as a mine of information on the condition of the Mappilas during the British period and their changing character.

Conrad Wood's Mappila Rebellion - its genesis and growth is a well documented study on the Mappila outrages culminating in the rebellion of 1921 and brought out the religious and social factors which necessitated the rebellion.

In Malayalam language, two Directories have come to light. The first one is published by Kerala History Association in 1960 and edited by Sri. P.A. Syed Muhammad. The Directory shows a vivid picture of society. Another Directory which has been compiled by Dr. C.K. Kareem about the statistics of Muslim Community is a work of merit and acts as a reckoner for reference.

7. Dale., op.cit., p.1.

Dr. S.M. Mohammed Koya's *Mappilas of Malabar* throws light on the formation of Mappila community on the basis of Mut'a marriage. It is a new theory untouched by other writers. He also excellently portrayed the development of the community as a trading class on par with the rise of Calicut city. He also brings out the modern developments of the community ~~as a trading class on par with the rise of Calicut city. He also brings out the modern developments of the community~~ in brief. Dr. A.P. Ibrahim Kunju's work is a documented study of the history and culture of the community. He goes into various problems the community has faced in course of centuries. Besides official records, Dr. Kunju has depended up on various Malayalam works and provides new informations.

A few articles have appeared in various journals. Hamid Alis "The Moplahs" in (Ed) T.K. Gopala Panikkar's *Malabar and its Folk* (Madras, 1929), Victor S. D'souza's "Kinship organization and Marriage customs among Mappilas on the south west coast of India" (Ed). Imtiyaz Ahamed, *Family Kinship and Marriage among Muslims in India*, (Delhi, 1976) Victor S D'Souza's "Status Groups among the Moplahs in the South West Coast of India" (Ed) Imtiyaz Ahmed, *Caste and Social stratification among Muslims in India* (Delhi, 1973) are some of them. A collection of articles on Mappilas in historical perspectives had been collected and edited by Asghar Ali Engineer (New Delhi, 1995).

There are articles in various Malayalam journals which are meant for popular reading and not with much historical evaluation. A few Ph.D theses

have also been submitted in Aligarh Muslim University, Bombay University and Universities of Calicut and Kerala on the subject.

Arguments

Apart from presenting the various social and cultural aspects of Mappila community the thesis will emphasise with the following aspects:

- a) The social customs of Mappilas are a blend of Arab, Islamic and indigenous customs.
- b) Although Islam doesn't preach any class or caste, it advocates complete equality, in practice Mappilas are following a class system, not of untouchability as in Hinduism, but of restriction in matrimonial relations.
- c) Mappilas of North Malabar have inherited Arab's tradition in trade while Mappilas in South Malabar are exclusively agriculturists. The former had fought with the Portuguese and Dutch powers while the latter with the British.
- d) Militancy of Mappilas against foreign powers alienated them from national stream and this resulted in forming separate dialect, script and cultural systems.
- e) Mappilas mixed the indigenous Art-forms in the Islamic context and developed them into peculiar styles of their own.

Approach and Methodology

Large number of unpublished materials belonging to the period under review has been identified in various centres of Islamic learning in Malabar. In such centres, so many scripts are available in Arabic and Arabi-Malayalam. Besides there are so many writers and dignitaries who had written poetry and articles in Arabi-Malayalam such documents are consulted. In order to get more information regarding social activities, personal interviews have been conducted with persons more than sixty years old who could remember the customs of pre-Independent India.

In the process of collection of data, the old 'Tarawads' of North and South Malabar have been visited and observed the old furniture, utensils and so on used in that period. Besides in Museums where such old things should have been preserved were also visited. Besides libraries attached with mosques and great families, where enough manuscripts dealing with social condition of the period have also been used. Some great scholars have preserved so many Arabi-Malayalam works and many Mappilapattu, are also collected. The libraries of Jifri house of Calicut, Chakkeri home of Vengara and personal collections of K.K. Mohamed Abdul Kareem, V.M. Kutty and A.P. Muhammadali Musliyar Nellikuth have also been utilised for the study.

A thorough investigation has been made through different official documents and manuscripts. The government manuscript library of Chennai, Tamil Nadu Archives (previously the Madras record office), regional archives

of Kerala at Calicut and Ernakulam and State Archives at Trivandrum, have provided records of immense value.

For the secondary data, various libraries, such as Cannemara Library at Chennai, University Library at Trivandrum, Calicut University Library and various libraries attached to Arts Colleges, Arabic Colleges and Local administrative bodies have been utilised. Interviews with Sayyids, Ulama and members of important families have also been conducted to get an insight to the study.

The patterns of documentation followed in this thesis are in the conventional style. The Latin word 'Ibid.' is used to mention the book just referred before. The Latin abbreviation 'op.cit.' is used to indicate the work which has already been cited. Besides the terminologies of Malayalam and Arabic languages are written in italicized forms. Their corresponding meaning in English has been given in brackets. A detailed explanation of such terminologies is given in the glossary. Arabic and Malayalam words are written using transliteration to a limited extent.

ORIGIN AND DEVELOPMENT OF MAPPILAS - BRIEF SKETCH

Abdurahiman.K.P “Mappila heritage: A study in their social and cultural life”
Thesis. Department of History, University of Calicut, 2004

CHAPTER - 1

ORIGIN AND DEVELOPMENT OF MAPPILAS – BRIEF SKETCH

Islam in India began in Kerala with all evidences supporting it and the Mappilas are the first Muslims of India.¹ The origin of Mappilas can be traced to the long standing Arab contact with the coastal areas of India. These Arabs have been carrying on trade with India from pre-Islamic times.¹ Till the establishment of the Roman empire, in the first century A.D, the carrying trade was in the hands of Arab merchants and South Arabians excelled in this carrying trade.¹ Long before the Greeks and Romans had begun to frequent the parts of the Arabian sea, the Arabs had established contact with West coast of India. King Solomon carried on trade with West Indian parts and the bulk of imports came from Kerala.¹ This contact resulted in the union of Arabs with local women, producing a new generation. This new generation which arose as a result of the Arab contact is termed as Mappilas.² Even before the mission of the Prophet in Arabia in the 7th century A.D many pagan Arabs must have settled in the coast of South India for the purpose of trade.³ This period marks the emergence of Malabar ports at the centre of Arab

1. A.P Ibrahimkunju, Studies in Medieval Kerala History, Trivandrum, 1975, p.2.
2. The word Mappila is a combination of two Dravidian words, *Maha* (great) and *pilla* (child). *Pilla* is a term of respect and intimacy and the Nairs of Travancore even now use this honorary title with their names. The Muslim Mappilas are called *Jonāka Mappilas* while Christians are called *Nazrani Mappilas*. For the details of various theories of origin of the term Mappilas see William Logan, Malabar Manual (superintendent, Madras, 1887) Vol, I, p.191, Roland E. Miller, Mappila Muslims of Kerala - A study in Islamic trends. (Orient Longman, Madras, 1976), pp.30-37.
3. W. Logan, Malabar Manual, Vol. I, Madras, 1887, p.230.

mercantile and maritime activities.⁴ The legendary figure, *Upukkuttan Mappila* in *Parayipetta Pandirikulam* said to have lived in 378 BC, was a non Muslim Mappila.⁵

It was with the advent of Islam that the Arabs became a prominent cultural race in the world. 'The Arab merchants and traders now became the carriers of the new religion and they propagated it wherever they went.' The Arabs were probably the carriers and merchants of the Indian ocean before anybody else.⁶ In Malabar the Mappilas may be the first community who came to the fold of Islam since they were closely connected with the Arabs. The earliest clear evidence of Muslim presence of Kerala is represented by the *Tarisappalli* copper plates, dated 849, A.D.⁷ The Mappilas are spread on the southern part of the west coast, in the contiguous tract from Cape Comerin in the south to about Mangalore in the north. Incidentally it is in Malabar these people are called Mappilas and for practical purposes the name is applied for the entire section. They are also found in the Laccadive Islands, where the entire population consists of Mappilas alone.⁴

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4. Maqbul Ahmad, Indo-Arab Relations, Bombay, 1969, p.7.
 5. Quoted in Ulloor S. Parameswara Aiyar, Kerala Sahitya Charithram, Vol II, Trivandrum, 1957, pp.80-81.
 6. Ahmed Nafis, 'The Arab's Knowledge of Ceylon', Islamic Culture, XXIV, Hyderabad, 1945, p.224
 7. E. Kunhan Pillai, Studies in Kerala History, Kottayam, 1970, p.370

Spread of Islam in Malabar

The spread of Islam in Malabar can be ascribed to various reasons such as the role of traders and missionaries, Sufis, Patronage of native rulers, intermarriage, proselytisation and caste rigidity of Hinduism.

It was the practice of the Arabs to settle down wherever they arrived for trading activities. The establishment of Muslim settlements on the East Coast of India had direct bearing on the advent and propagation of Islam in the area. Many of the Muslim traders encouraged by this kind attitude of the Hindu chiefs took up their abodes in places like Calicut and Quilon.⁸ These merchants were allowed to build mosques and permitted to practice their religion without hindrance with the result that these early Arab Muslim settlers established themselves all along the coast, intermarried with the Hindu population and thus gave rise to the various Muslim communities in the coast that are found today.⁹

Of the several factors that facilitated the spread of Islam in Kerala, the most important was Sufi missionary activity.⁴ But we have scanty information relating to such activity in the early period, in contrast to detailed accounts of such activity in north India.¹⁰ However, from certain Arabi-Malayalam works known as *malas* we have reference of sufi activities.⁴ The

8. Victor. S. D'Souza. "Kinship organization and Marriage customs among the Mappilas in South West coast of India", Imihiaz Ahamed, (ed.), Family, Kinship and Marriage among Muslims in India, New Delhi, 1978, p.2

9. M.T. Titus. Indian Islam. London. 1930. p.37.

10. A.P. Ibrahim Kunju. "Origin and spread of Islam in Kerala". Kerala Muslims - A Historical perspective. A. A. Engineer, (ed.) New Delhi, 1995. p.24.

first missionary activity is that of Malik-ibn-Dinar, a disciple of famous Sufi, Hasan-al-Basri who died in 130 A.H (748 AD).¹¹ The tradition current in Kerala is that Cheraman Perumal during his visit to Arabia was accompanied by Malik-ibn-Dinar and his relatives and on the death of the Perumal on the Arabian coast, they arrived in Kerala, on the special request of Perumal to spread the new religion. The growth of Islam in Kerala has to be seen along with the founding of mosque of Malik-Ibn-Dinar and his party.¹² The role of mosques in the propagation of Islam cannot be exaggerated. Mosques have been and continue to be the centre of missionary activity, a mission of propagating the faith of Islam and the culture represented by it.¹³ They travelled all along Kerala and established ten mosques in different parts of Kerala. They were at Quilon, Kodungallur, Chaliyam, Pantalayani, Kollam, Dharmadam, Srikantapuram, Madayi, Kasargod, Mangalore and Barkur. In all these places, *Qazis* guided local Muslims and spread the religion.¹³ *Mamburam Thangals*, another group of *Sayyid* origin settled at Mamburam in 17th century played a significant role in the propagation of the faith in Malabar. The missionary works done by persons of saintly tradition in the interior parts merit consideration. Likewise, Zainuddin Ali, Syed Muhammed Maula, Kondotty Thangal, Malappuram Thangal, Thangals of Kozhikode, Koyilandy and Badagara tried to propagate Islam.¹⁴

11. Fariduddin Attar. Tadhkiratal Auliya (Ar). (Tr. A.J. Arberry. Muslims Saints and Mystics). London. 1966. p.26.

12. Roland E Miller. Mappila Muslims of Kerala - A study in Islamic Trends. Madras. 1976. p.233.

13. Shaikh Zainuddin Maqdam. Tuhfat-ul-Mujahideen. (Mal. Tr. By C. Hamza) Calicut, 1995. p 39.

14. Syed Mohiyuddin Shah. "Islam". Kerala Charitram Vol. II. Cochin. 1974. p 517.

The spread of Islam is also attributed to the support of native rulers. In this regard we have the legend of Cheraman Perumal, the last Chera Emperor, though not strong evidences supporting it, the growth of Islam might have received an added encouragement through the conversion of a *Malayali* ruler.¹⁵ There is no reason to reject the legend that the last Chera King embraced Islam and went to Makkah since it finds a place not only in Muslim chronicles, but also in Hindu Brahmanical chronicles like *Keralolpathi*, which need not be expected to concoct such a tale, which in no way enhances, the prestige or further the interest at the Brahmin or Hindu population.¹⁶ The native rulers reciprocated favourably the support given by the Muslim traders settled in the port-towns of Kerala in promoting economic prosperity. Shaikh Zainuddin writes: "The unbelievers never punish such of the country men who embrace Islam, but treat them with some respect shown to the rest of the Muslims, though they belong to lower castes of their society. As a result of such kindly treatment, Muslim merchants of olden days used to come in large numbers.¹⁷ Muslims and their trading activities prospered not only because of the regard shown to them by the rulers, but also because of their respect for ancient customs of Muslims. Among the rulers of Kerala, it was the Zamorin of Calicut, who showed special regard to Muslims in his kingdom. The support extended to the Mappilas by the Zamorin has already been mentioned.

 15. Roland E. Miller, *op.cit.*, p.15

16. M.G.S. Narayanan, "Political and Social condition in Kerala under the Kulasekhara Empire." (Unpublished Ph.D thesis), Kerala University, 1972, pp.185-90.

17. Shaikh Zainuddin Maqdum, *op.cit.*, pp.51-52.

The role of the Ali Raja and family which established itself as a kind of city state dynasty in Cannanore city and who are said to have originated from an important Nair family which was converted to Islam sometimes in the 11th century A.D is an important factor. As a result of this close alliance large numbers of Muhammadan traders were attracted to Calicut by the freedom of trade they enjoyed there.¹⁸ Another aspect of patronization shown by the Zamorin towards Mappilas¹ was that he wanted them to serve in his army and navy especially against the Portuguese power. 'In order to get more army personage, the Zamorin issued orders enabling one or two members of the fishermen family to embrace Islam.'¹⁹ This helped in large scale conversion of fishermen community now known as *Puislan* evidently a corruption of *Pudu Islam* and facilitated adequate supply of man power to man his navy and sea-trade because attitudes were averse to sea and sea trade and left such vulgar profession either to lower classes or to foreigners.²⁰ Such patronization has in fact resulted in the growth of Islam. Of all native rulers of Malabar, the Zamorin of Calicut showed special regard to the welfare of Muslims within his territories. The establishment of Arakkal dynasty in Cannanore greatly increased the influence of the community in North Malabar.'

Spread of Islam in Malabar is attributed to a system of marriage prevalent among the Arabs from time immemorial. The *Mut'a* marriage enabled the Arabs to contract marriages of temporary nature with the native

18. W. Logan, op.cit., Vol.I, p.292.

19. Trachand, Influence of Islam on Indian culture, Allahabad, 1963, p.31.

20. M.G.S. Narayanan, Cultural symbiosis in Kerala, Trivandrum, 1972, p.33.

women of Malabar and those of other areas of South India.²¹ *Mut'a* marriage was an old Arab custom of temporary nature in which contracting parties agree to live together in the house of woman for a stipulated period of time, and for which the man has to pay an amount mutually agreed upon called *Mahr* (bride price). It was a purely personal arrangement between the two parties and it was arranged without any intervention of the woman's item. Accordingly no *Wāli* was necessary. At the end of the specified period both parties were free without any further ceremony to depart, provided that the woman had received the fee due to her.²²

Mut'a marriage was a special institution of the early Arabs which has survived today. And the marriage relations the Arabs contracted in Malabar were some sort of *Mut'a* marriage while they were in the parts of India. Such marriage practices were obtaining in early Arabia especially in the coastal towns now had their way into the Malabar coast where the Arab merchants and mariners had to stay for longer or shorter period as the nature of their trade and occupation would require them. Such marriage practices had their way into Malabar coast where the Arab merchants had to stay for a period required by the nature of trade. It was not possible for them to settle down for a long time in one particular place attaching themselves to the same wife or wives. Much of their time was spent in the sea and the remaining period was

 21. S.M. Mohamed Koya, Mappilas of Malabar, Calicut, 1983, p.12.

22. Reuben Levy, The social structure of Islam, London, 1969, p.145.

distributed among different parts. During such periods, it was customary for them to marry the local Muslim women for they did not travel with their native wives. When it was time for them to leave the port they would also leave their wife behind and establish fresh martial connections in a new port. The Arab practice of marrying women at one place and divorcing them and taking new wives at other places and leaving them behind when proceeding home can be seen in the same manner if we examine the practice of Ibn Batuta, though not an Arab himself, when he came to coasts of India, the Maldives Island and Ceylone.²³ The social conditions of Malabar at the time facilitated the Arabs coming to this region to have marital unions, as a woman could entertain more than one husband; it is not taken into account the Arabs were of a different religion for marital relation with the women.²⁴ Thus the Mappila community was formed as a result of the union of Arab sailors and traders with native women!

It was the prevailing social system which facilitated the growth of Islam in Malabar. Malabar was the most conservative part of southern India where caste system was in its full form. The worst practice prevalent in Malabar was that the lower caste people could not come close to upper class but they had to keep certain distance called *Ayitham*. The minimum penalty to those who violated the law was excommunication or often death. Under the native Rajas

23. Velayudhan Panikkasseri, Ibn Batuta Kanda India, Kottayam, 1965, p.323.

24. *Ibid.*, p.19.

Nairs thought nothing of cutting down in the spot of number of lower castes who had approached with polluting distance of his person.²⁵ It was this worst social system which asserted the rashness of aristocracy. To escape the disabilities and discriminations of upper castes, the only way was to convert either to Islam or to Christianity. ⁴

'Since the Muslims had no problem of pollution they made close contact with people of the low class who were employed in various professions. They worked more freely under their Mappila masters than Brahmins or Nairs. This made them to accept the religion of their masters. Portuguese writer Gasper Correa writes "by becoming Moors they (lower class) go wherever they liked and eat as they pleased. When they become Moors and Moors gave them clothes and robes with which to cloth themselves."²⁶ The conversion of upper class Hindus was mainly due to excommunication, a punishment which the caste regulations inflicted upon the society. To such people life becomes difficult and they resorted to Islam. The Muslim population of Kerala, to a great extent consists of the converts who came to the fold of Islam attracted by the tenets of Islam. The elite and rich of local population had commercial and economic intercourse with the Arab merchants, for the lower strata of the society the existing caste system coupled with its attendant evils acted as a formidable factor. To them more than the tenets of Islam its brotherhood and

25. Francis Buchanan, A journey from Madras through the countries Mysore, Canara and Malabar. Vol.I, London, 1807, p.383.

26. Gasper correa, Lenda da India (Por), (Eng. Tr. Henry Stanely, Three voyages of Vascode Gama). London, 1849, 155F, quoted in Miller, op.cit., p.56.

equality might have appealed most. It was a time when social ostracism was prevailing in its highest form among the various communities in Malabar. Islam attracted those who had developed a sense of dissatisfaction with the prevailing religion of the country. It was not only the oppressed and the privileged, but also a section of the intelligentsia who were drawn by the simplicity and vigour of new faith.²⁷

¹ The Mappilas are the off springs of the union between Arabs and the local women. The Arabs who settled on the Malabar coast are those of different Arabs lands. Some of these Arabs might have come from Hijaz, Uman and Bahryan. However, they were chiefly businessmen from Yaman and Hadrmawt and many Mappila families particularly those known as *thangal* families trace their origin to this area.

² Thus the Mappilas of Malabar as a Muslim community originated with the rise of Islam in Arabia and spread through a process of peaceful communication and economical relationship between the Arabs and people of Malabar, the missionary zeal of the Arab traders, the religious tolerance of native Rajas and their subjects. These factors transformed Malabar into a country dominated by Muslim Mappilas and there is no area, as stated by Gleason "so extensive with so concentrated a Muslim Population in all of Peninsular India as in Malabar."²⁸

27. Humayun Kabir, "Islam in India", Cultural Heritage, Bombay, 1969, p.504.

28. A Gleason, Religious communities in the India - A regional survey, (Published by Author 1947) p.91 quoted in Miller, op.cit., p.34.

The Mappilas became a community by 12th century. The early Zamorins encouraged trade and as a result the Arab merchants settled in large numbers in their dominions. The powerful among the native rajas were indeed Zamorins after the exit of Perumals. By the Zamorin's favour these Arab traders were able to drive the Chinese out of market; and in return not only did they increase his power and wealth by the trade which they attracted to Calicut, but they directly supported him in his campaigns. In the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, Malabar apparently had rest from foreign invasion, the glorious period of Arab trade from which Mappila transformed to a prosperous community.'

Mappila rivalry with the Portuguese

The Portuguese – Mappila rivalry in 16th century Malabar can be looked as an ideological extension of the European phenomenon of cultural and economical annihilation of Muslims as part of crusades. Here in Malabar the idea of the Portuguese was to root out the trade of Muslims and destroy them as far as possible. K.M. Panikker observes "This was not only due to commercial rivalry, but to a hostility which the Iberian powers had inherited from their long drawn out fight with the Moors in Spain and Africa."²⁹ The chief port of Malabar, Calicut, where Vasco De Gama alighted was with the objects of conquests, commerce and conversion. The Malabar coast afforded them free scope for the fulfilment of their objects.³⁰ Malabar opened its door

29. K.M. Panikker, A History of Kerala, Annamalainagar. 1969, p.159

30. S.M. Mohamed Koya. op.cit., p.24.

to all foreigners and the Portuguese were not an exception to it. Blessed by ignorance and without knowledge of the language, the Portuguese, however, were not in the mood or the position to consider the style and emotion of the society to which they came. At the heart of the Portuguese entry into India was the drive for economic power, the control of the spice trade and amassing of the wealth associated with orient. Its chief, Zamorin, was tolerant to all religions and people like Manichaeans, Musalmans, Jews and Christians were welcomed by them.³¹ Arabs, the masters of Arabian sea, feared that their trade with India would be jeopardized with the advent of the Portuguese. Then the Arabs tried to prevent the Portuguese establishment of warehouse at Calicut for which Zamorin had agreed. The Portuguese handled a small store of the merchandise and began to buy and sell. Their strange mercantile behaviour of accepting goods at more than double their value and giving excess weight on all they sold alarmed the foreign Muslims all the more. They represented to the King's treasurer that the Portuguese were really robbers and they did not appear to possess even ordinary mercantile prudence and that they should be killed and their ships burnt.³² The Portuguese began to capture Arab *Sambūk*, the first step towards the interception of trade.³³ The fear of Arabs was shared by Calicut Qazi and Koja Kasim, port officer and they represented to Zamorins for the Arab cause.³⁴ Their representation did not have the desired

31. W.W. Hunter. A History of British India, Vol.I, London, 1899, p.95.

32. O.K. Nambiar, op.cit., p.20.

33. Gasper Correa. The Three Voyages of Vasco Da Gama, London, 1969. quoted in O.K. Nambiar. op.cit., p.19.

34. S.M. Mohamed Koya, op.cit., p.25.

result. The Portuguese who succeeded in winning the heart of the Zamorin were allowed the freedom to trade. This move of the Zamorin disappointed the Arabs on sea and Mappilas on the land. The return of Da Gama to Lisbon, with a freight that repaid sixty times the cost of expenditure called forth an outburst of mercantile enthusiasm in Portugal. The Portugal ruler sent Pedro Alvares Cabral with a fleet of 13 vessels to conquer India. P.A. Cabral reached Calicut port with 7 fleets and attacked Arab vessels. Arabs under Khoja Kassim retaliated against Portuguese killing its leader, Ayres Correa and 53 of Portuguese were killed.³⁵ Cabral took revenge by bombarding the city and left to Cochin. After this incident, the Zamorin realised, the treachery of the Portuguese and became enmical towards them and inclined to Muslim merchants. Portuguese friendship with Cochin and Cannanore opened a new commercial and political rivalry with Calicut, who with the support of Mappilas made bitter opposition against the Portuguese for a century. The trade rivalry that developed between the Muslims and the Portuguese was marked by acts of inhuman cruelty on the part of the Portuguese. Vasco Da gama, who came a second time in 1502 AD, to settle Portuguese affairs on the coast on a firm footing, inaugurated the policy of violence, which plunged Portuguese-Muslim relations into an antagonism that was beyond repair. Da Gama demanded Zamorin to expell all Muslims merchants from the country, but the Zamorin expressed his inability to drive out without a just cause more than four thousand Muslim families, Calicut had been a free port and

35. H. Morse Stephens, Albuquerque. Oxford, 1897. pp.26-27.

Portuguese were as welcome as others to trade there. This answer did not satisfy Da gama who captured 800 fishermen of the coast, cut off their hands and feet, loaded them in a vessel and allowed it drift ashore.³⁶

Vasco Da gama on his second visit destroyed a ship carrying Haj Pilgrims from Makka in which 380 men, 50 women and children burnt alive and looted 12,000 ducats³⁷ He also killed innocent traders and fishermen. The Portuguese atrocities opened the eyes of Calicut citizens. The Portuguese also burnt the grand mosque built by Nakhuda Mithqal.³⁸ The Portuguese were hostile to Muslims only and tried to renounce the faith of Islam and accept Christianity. They monopolized the pepper trade and repulsed all efforts of Arab merchants. Portuguese continued their attacks even against the Zamorin. Open clashes between Portuguese soldiers and Mappilas became a daily occurrence in the streets of Calicut.³⁹ Portuguese domination and hostilities compelled the Muslims to turn inward from the profitable maritime commerce in search of new avenues of economic well-being. But there they found the lands totally occupied by Hindu land lords.

It was in this wake of time the Mappilas put a strong resistance under Kunjali Marakkars, the hereditary Admirals of Zamorins. During the raid of Ponnani, one of its merchants named Kunhali was subjected to great hardship

36. Gasper Correa, The Three Voyages of Vasco Da Gama, p.170, quoted in Ibrahim Kunju, op.cit., p.46.

37. K.G. Jayne, Vasco Da gama and his successors, New York, 1970, p.6.

38. Shaikh Zainuddin Maqdam, op.cit., p.37.

39. K.V. Krishna Ayyar, A History of Kerala, Ernakulam, 1966. pp.192-93.

by the Portuguese. Out of sheer desperation and vengeance he dedicated himself and his descendants to the destruction of the Portuguese and to support of the Zamorin who conferred him the title *Marakkār* which in local dialect meant 'chief boatmen'.⁴⁰ Another version regarding the origin of the name *Marakkār* is that *Marakkān* means fisherman and *Marakkār* is the honorific plural means the traditional occupation is fishing.⁴¹ In the fight against the Portuguese the *Kunjalis* were a constant source of strength of the Zamorin. They were valiant fighters who sacrificed their sweat and blood for their country. In the war that took place in 1524 AD, between the Zamorin and the Portuguese, *Marakkārs* sided with the ruler of Calicut. Kutti Ali was the commander of Zamorin's fleet, the bravest of the family of *Marakkārs*. He inflicted heavy damage on Portuguese shipping. The naval guerilla battles in which Kunhali Marakkar's fleet had distinguished itself, were fought on similar principles as land guerilla warfare.⁴² In retaliation, the Portuguese burnt 38 ships of the Zamorin and a large number of Mappilas were killed. Kunjali Marakkar I and II bravely led the Mappilas against the Portuguese on equal terms inflicting heavy loss. As a result the Portuguese trade with India almost came to a stand still.⁴³

40. I.K.K. Menon, Kunhali Marakkar, Calicut, 2003, p.17.

41. V. Kunhali, "Origin of Kunhali Marakkars and organization of their Fighters", Indian Naval Traditions, New Delhi, 1997, p.45.

42. Murkoth Ramunny, "Perpetuating the Memory of Kunhali Marakkars", Indian Naval Traditions, New Delhi, 1997, p.55.

43. A. Sreedhara Menon, A survey of Kerala History, Kottayam, 1976, p.2188.

In 1571 AD, the Zamorin captured the fort of Chaliyam, which was a heavy blow to the prestige of the Portugueses.⁴⁴ Kunjali III fortified his base of operations at Putu Pattanam, later known as Kottakkal with permission from the Zamorin. Mappilas on this time took many Portuguese ships. Fed up with these set backs, the Portuguese made peace treaty with the Zamorin and obtained permission from the Zamorin to open a factory at Ponnani, Kujali IV did not like the act and challenged the Zamorin, who with the help of the Portuguese reached in an agreement to crush the power of Kunjalis. Then the Zamorin led an army of 6000 men, besieged the fort of Kunjali and Kunjali was compelled to surrender before the Zamorin who agreed to spare his life.⁴⁵ But the Portuguese, thirsty for the blood of Kunjalis, changed the mind of the Zamorin, and took Kunjali to Goa and executed.

After a century of sanguinary warfare in which the Muslims spent all their resources in men and money to defend their right to trade, they not only lost the war but also their trade which was the mainstay of their prosperity⁴⁶. The continuing reverses in the war and the loss of trade affected the prosperity of Zamorin's kingdom, and it naturally closed his vigour in fighting the Portuguese on the side of Muslims. This situation inevitably strained the relations between the Muslims and their patron, the Zamorin. The process

44. K.M. Panikkar, Malabar and the Portuguese, Bombay, 1929, pp. 134-135.

45. K.V. Krishna Ayyar, op.cit., p.197.

46. A.P. Ibrahim Kunju, "The Mappilas, their history and culture" Journal of Kerala studies, Part I & II, Trivandrum, 1979, p.95.

went on such length that the Zamorins sided with the Portugese against the Marakkars, their erstwhile captains. This was a turning point in the history of communal relations in north Kerala. Old ties of loyalty were loosened and seeds of communal conflict were sown. This drift which started then continued for a century.⁴⁷

With the death of Kunhali IV, a great epoch in Kerala history came to an end. Without the alliance with the Zamorin, the Portuguese could never have gained victory over Mappilas. Thus a century long resistance put forward by the Mappilas against Portuguese power would remain fresh in the minds of the people of this land.

Mappilas under Mysore Sultans

The coming of the Dutch undermined the power of the Portuguese and struggle for power by these foreign countries relieved Mappilas from their rivalry with the Portuguese. When the political condition of Kerala overhauled by the coming of these European powers, the Dutch, the French and the English, Mappilas gained a shelter under Tipu Sultan, the most powerful individual figure in the history of South India during the second half of 18th century.⁴⁸ The political instability, wealth of Malabar and proximity to the sea were the motives of invasion. Another motive which prompted him to undertake the conquest of Malabar was to collect the war indemnity from the

47. M.G.S. Narayanan, Cultural Symbiosis in Kerala. Trivandrum. 1972. p.7.

48. R.E. Miller. op.cit., p.85.

Zamorin which had not been paid so far.⁴⁹ Hyder Ali has been described as one of the ablest personalities in the history of India.⁵⁰ He entered in the year 1766 A.D and conquered the Kolathiri Kingdom without much opposition and reached Calicut. It is clear that he was happy to associate with the Mappilas and the latter in turn received him with a great and hearty welcome, about 8000 Mappilas joining his armed forces.⁵¹

Hyder Ali gained control of North Malabar and then easily occupied Calicut. The Zamorin, unable to meet Haidar's modest demand for an indemnity of a crore gold mohurs, was confined in his palace and debarred from performing the ceremonies of his religion.⁵² When the Zamorin refused to see him, Hyder reduced his rice ration to nothing, and humiliated, Zamorin finally committed suicide by fire.⁵³

The cause for the tragic end of the Zamorin was that he could not pay one crore of gold Mohars demanded by Hyder. Before he withdrew Hyder Ali appointed a governor and garrisoned Calicut. He established the rates of tribute to be received from each raja, allowing them to retain their rule. He assumed the monopoly of exports from Malabar, setting up his chief factory at

49. M. Janaki, "Hyder Ali and Tipu Sultan in Malabar", Kerala Muslims - A Historical perspective Asgarali Engineer (ed), New Delhi, 1993.

50. Majumdar, An advanced History of India, London, 1948, p.655.

51. P.A. Syed Mohamed, Kerala Muslims Charitram, Trichur, 1961, p.23.

52. Joint Commissioner Report, para 18, State Archives, Trivandrum.

53. W.C. Mackenzi, Life of Hyder Ali, Edinburg, 1952 quoted in R.E. Miller, op.cit., p.87.

Badagara.⁵⁴ Hyder Ali wanted to conquer the kingdoms of Cochin and Travancore. When Raja of Cochin agreed to pay a tribute annually, Cochin territory was never molested. Since Cochin was an ally of Carnatic Nawab, Hyder could not press and in the case of Travancore, monsoon averted his desire.

After Hyder Ali, his son Tipu Sultan, who had the same courage and vigour of his father, exercised his rule over Malabar through his appointed governor, Arshad Beg Khan. Descendant of Zamorin revolted but Tipu personally appeared on the scene to restore order and established a new capital at Feroke. His desire to invade Travancore was a failure. The British determined to detach Malabar from Tipu, defeated Martabkhan, 9000 Mysore soldiers and 4000 Mappilas, were defeated by Colonel Hartley.⁵⁵ The British also captured Cannanore from Arakkal Beevi. Travancore in alliance with Cochin collected Malabar. In retaliation Tipu marched against Travancore but in the way at Alwaye he returned to Mysore when the British attacked his capital.⁵⁶ After the treaty of Srirangapatnam in 1792, Malabar came under English East India Company.

The advent of the highly successful Muslim rulers gave the Mappilas a psychological boost. The Mysorean rule brought many changes in the then existed polity, society and religion of Malabar. With the invasion of Mysore

54. R.E. Miller. op.cit.. p.87.

55. R.E. Miller: op.cit.. p.91

56. C K. Kareem. Kerala and her culture. Trivandrum. 1971. p 18

Sultans and their suzerainty over Malabar the political status of rajas and nobles were eliminated when the political power of the Nairs as the hereditary fighters of the land ceased, the main feudal character of Malabar society came to an end.⁵⁷

Tipu was shocked to see the social customs that prevailed among Hindu castes. Being a man of morality he wanted to eradicate the social evils such as polyandry, exposure of naked breasts by women, drinking of intoxicating liquors etc., and issued orders to stop these practices. But the high Nair class considered it as an encroachment upon their religious beliefs and observances. Tipu's reforms were thus looked at with great suspicion by conservative Hindus. Mysorean occupation thus changed the inherited social structure in a manner which was impossible to revive.⁵⁸

This emotional impact was reflected in the support given by the Mappilas to Hyder Ali and Tipu Sultan including involvement in their forces. The size of Mappila community must have increased sharply during this period. This is not by forced conversion, as often alleged, but low-castes and out caste Hindus joined Islam, which asserted their equality, given freedom from pollution and provided economic improvement. The religious policy of Tipu was mistaken by so many historians. He was a tolerant ruler to Hinduism which can be proved easily that so many of his ministers and generals of

57. K.M. Panikkar. Malabar and Dutch, Bombay. 1963. p.63.

58. K.M Panikkar. History of Kerala. op.cit., p.342

Malabar were Hindus. But in Malabar he punished Nair or Brahmin Hindus not because he is antagonistic, but it was due to his revenue policy.⁵⁹ The death of Tipu Sultan and accession of Hindu ruler to Mysore kingdom very much satisfied the Nair class Hindus. They believed that the situation became conducive to their interests.⁶⁰ The Mappilas, not only obtained service in large numbers in the military forces, but they were also employed in administrative system.⁶¹ The first land survey in the history of Malabar was conducted by Tipu. The land was surveyed and the land tax was fixed on the basis of produce. With this feudal aristocracy was completely eliminated. Mappilas were able to purchase lands at low cost or seize land rights from Hindu landlords who left Malabar. The Mysore era resulted in a temporary release from the shackles of the feudalistic system. The acquisition of land opened a new vision for the Mappilas. The vision of land ownership and new economic order did not disappear after the Mysoreans left. With Mysorean withdrawal, a new era heralded in Malabar with the English rule for more than a century and a half.

Mappila resistance against British Power

The British ruled Malabar from 1792 to 1947. The descendants of the Mappilas eventuated a series of violent out breaks that occurred throughout the

59. C.K. Kareem, op.cit., p.195.

60. Malabar District Records, political, file No.1800, pp 281-83, Tamil Nadu Archives, Madras.

61. F. Buchanan, op.cit., p.550.

nineteenth century. For the Mappilas the outbreaks were heroic but unproductive. The troubles varied from small affairs, which included large number of participants in several sub-districts. During the period 1836-53, twenty-two outbreaks were recorded. The period from 1821-1921 produced a total of fifty one Mappila out-breaks.⁶²

The leaders of first organized fight against the English were Unni Moosa Mooppan, Chempan Pocker, Attan Kurukkal, Hydrose Mooppan and Kunhi Achan of Palghat, prince in the time of Zamorin. Attan Kurikkal and chempan poker were *darogas* (police chiefs) under the British in Ernad and Cheranad Taluks. The *darogas* had powers to decide civil suits upto Rs.200, inflict corporate punishments and were responsible for payment and sole control of the men under them.⁶³

Mappila unrest reached its high watermark between the years 1836 and 1853. In this period of 18 years no fewer than twenty two outbreaks took place. One of the bloodiest tragedies of the whole long series was enacted in Manjeri and Angadippuram in 1849 A.D. In 1832 A.D a revolt occurred at Kolattur and Melattur. After this Mr. Strange, a Judge of the *Sadr Adalat*, was placed on special duty to enquire into the disturbances their course and remedies. But strangely, Mr. Strange attributed the course to Mappila 'fanaticism' rather than agrarian discontent explained in the earlier studies.⁶⁴

62. C.K. Kareem, Malabar Revolts, Cochin, 1971, p.26.

63. Conrad Wood, The Moplah Rebellion and its genesis, New Delhi, 1967. p.111.

64. C.A. Innes. op.cit., p.80.

In 1893 A.D, Mr. Logan was appointed as the special commissioner to enquire into the land tenures and tenurial rights. In Mappila outbreaks he saw an element of agrarian discontent, the worries and woes of evicted Mappila by the Hindu *Janmi*, the denial of basic right to own sites for mosques and burial grounds.⁶⁵ Besides Mr. Logan's huge volume of reports two other commissions also discussed the tenancy problem for making 'Malabar compensation for Tenants Improvement Act' (Act I of 1887 and Act I of 1900).⁶⁶ The Mappila outbreaks may be attributed to three main causes, poverty, agrarian discontent and religious fervour. The revolts did not win wide support, and did not last long and were quickly suppressed. Hydrose Mooppan of Velattore was captured by the English in an encounter and transported to Australia. Chempan pocker was also captured by the English and imprisoned in Palghat fort but he escaped and joined in the rebel camp.⁶⁷

Unni Moosa was really a warrior of class, shrewd politician who organized a strong army, built numerous fortified palaces and garrisoned them with his own men. His soldiers were trained in guerilla warfare.⁶⁸

Unni Moosa was in continuous correspondence with Tipu Sultan, and helped his cause against the British. A lot of such letters of Tipu were obtained by the English, when they captured the fortified palace of

65. C.A.Innes, op.cit., p.81.

66. Ibid.

67. Ibid., p.27.

68. C.K. Kareem, Kerala and her Culture, Trivandrum, 1971, p 20

Unni Moosa. It was done in violation of an agreement with company and Unni Moosa which reads like this.⁶⁹

“Agreement between Major Murray on the part of the English East India Company and Oona Moot Moopan the part, that he (Oona Moota) agrees to become the friend of the company and to give the country no molestation from this day forward, and it is hereby agreed by Major Murray that he shall be considered as our friend. In conformation of this, his estate of Irumbalacherry is given upto him with a promise of further marks of our favour, that he shall have an appointment under our government or an allowance in money in view of it, as shall be agreed on hereafter. Signed near Oorumpuram, the 8th May 1794, before Captain, Mac Donald, Lieutenants and burr, M Murray” witness – J. Mac Donald, Charles Stuart and Burr.

Unni Moosa was also offered a pension which he refused. In retaliation his house at Pandalur was demolished. Later Unni Moosa joined Pazhassi Raja’s rebellion and in 1802 he was shot dead.

Aṭtan Kurukkal of Manjeri was another Mappila leader who revolted against the English openly. Actually he was a police officer under company who made use of this office to organize a band of soldiers for fighting against company’s government in Malabar.⁷⁰ In 1799 A.D. Adam Muhammed Musaliyar, brother of Attan Kurikkal was imprisoned by the British for his

69. William Logan, op.cit., Vol.III, Para LXXVIII, p. 218.

70. Ibid., Para CXIII, p.251.

anti-government activities and was hanged to death. Attan Kurikkal with an armed force reached the jail and forcefully took the dead body and buried it in his own plot. From this incident onwards Kurikkal decided to make an open fight against the British and joined with Unni Moosa and Chempan Pocker.⁷¹ When asked to the Attan Kurikkal, why he is so opposing the British government, he declared openly that if a Nair suited a file against Mappila, British court verdicts in support of Nair even on the production of the false witness.⁷² Through proclamation dated 25th November 1800 A.D he was declared a rebel and offered a reward of five thousand rupees for his head.⁷³ Later he was shot dead with other leaders.

The Company's rule in Malabar had never been destined to be marked by peace. The Mappila peasants who were cruelly disposed of their property never made a compromise with the ruling East India Company. At intervals there were armed peasant uprisings. Several ring leaders were arrested and transported to Andamans. In the Manjeri revolt led by Attan Kurikkal 14 persons died. In 1852 A.D. Sayed Fazl of Mamburam with his family deported to Arabia for his instigation behind revolts. In 1855 A.D. Malabar Collector Conolly had been assassinated by the Mappilas. As a result the British constituted in 1855 A.D the Malappuram special police force, raised solely for use in outbreaks and this still exists.⁷⁴ Such revolts occurred at

71. Malabar District Records, Political, pp.273-75, State Archives, Trivandrum.

72. Malabar District Records, political, 1800, p.268, State Archives, Trivandrum.

73. W. Logan, op.cit., Vol.III, Para. CCXXIV, p.341.

74. Hitch Cock. History of Malabar Rebellion, Madras, 1925. p.178.

Paral, Pandikkad, Ponnani and Manarkkad in which so many of them deported to Andamans and several others killed in the encounter.⁷⁵ These type of revolts continued up to 1921A.D. when it shaped to a major rebellion.

Mappila Rebellion of 1921

The Rebellion of 1921 was a turning point in the life of Mappila community. It was the last Mappila outbreak against the English. The Rebellion began on August 20, 1921 and was active for a complete year. Rebellion was largely confined to South Malabar.

The causes for the Rebellion can be summarized as Mappila economic discontent, Khilafat Movement, religious intolerance, freedom movement and British administrative oppression. During the First World War, a very large number of Mappila men were recruited to the Army. While in the Army, these men had learnt the 'arts of war'. They were sending regular monthly remittance to their families at home, who, as a result, were leading a comparatively easy life. After the war, gradually, these men were disbanded and returned home. Most of them were unemployed and there was unprecedented economic trouble all over. The unemployed ex-soldiers who had not, while in the Army, known what starvation was, were now actually leading a precarious existence. Prices of articles of daily necessities soared high. They and their children found life becoming more and more miserable

75. C.K. Kareem, Kerala and her Culture, Trivandrum, 1971, pp.21-23.

every day.⁷⁶ Ordinary labour got provisions for two meals.⁷⁷ The tenancy problem had its role in Rebellion. The main causes for the rebellion were the stack poverty among the Moplahs and the bad treatment they received at the hands of the landlords. There were many such Moplah riots during the last 85 years, and all the officials who had enquired into such riots had reported that underlying causes were the Land-Lord Tenant problems of Malabar.

A section of Mappila community supported the Khilafat issue. They were dominated by important 'Ulama of the time. K.C. Abdullakutty Musliar wrote a *fatwa* namely *Mahkul Khilafa Ala Ismul Khilfa*, a *fatwa* against non-co-operation and Khilafat movement and it created a hue and cry among nationalist Mappilas.⁷⁸ Non-co-operation and Khilafat meetings had been going on in the district since July 1920. While the main thesis of the speakers was non-co-operation, this had been given different localities. The 'Punjab atrocities' was quoted every where, the religious aspect of Khilafat question was emphasized in Mappila strong holds while in the neighbourhood of unpopular *jenmi* (land lords) the pure doctrine of non-co-operation was reinforced by anti-*jenmi* agitation. As a result of good organization on the part of central Khilafat committee a considerable following was obtained among the Mappilas.⁷⁹ *Jenmi* of Nilambur was murdered in an incident. The uprising

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76. HFM 103, Part I, History of struggle in Malabar (1800-1922), Tamil Nadu Archives, Chennai, p.21.
77. T. Tokinam. Mopla-Nad, Calicut, 1924, p.40.
78. Kodyam Chakkanakath Abdulla Kutty Musliyar, Mahkul Khilafa Ala Ismul Khilafa, Madras, 1921, pp.3-6.
79. Madras Presidency Confidential files, No.79190 – The non-cooperation and Khilafat Movement in the Presidency, Part II, p.40, Tamil Nadu Archives, Chennai.

was the result of oppression and poverty of the peasants.⁸⁰ While economic factors continued to dominate the situation, new elements had now appeared with the rise of Khilafat Movement. The cause of their co-religionists was their own cause. It brought Islamic spirit directly into the centre of the Mappila reaction and became the immediate cause of Rebellion.

The Rebellion began at Tirurangadi, where Mappilas under the leadership of Ali Musliar were early participants in the Khilafat Movement. Ali Musliar is typical of the Mappila leadership in the Rebellion. He enrolled armed volunteers and preached against English. The British determined to take Ali Musliar into custody, and that night raid was made in force in Tirurangadi, August 20, 1921 A.D the mosque was searched, but Ali Musliar and his friends escaped. News spread that both mosque and Mambaram shrine had been destroyed.⁸¹ Mappilas gathered from all directions and two English officers were killed. But on account of high pressure English army retreated their steps. But English forces came back and fired killing so many Mappilas and Ali Musliar came out and he was arrested and executed. Only a minority of Mappilas were actively involved, some Mappila communities remained loyal to the government.⁸² In the Pookkottur and Pandikkad revolts so many Mappilas lost their lives. Attacks were made on government offices, courts, treasuries, police stations and banks. In Ernad parallel government was

80. W.C. Smith, Modern Islam in India, London, 1946, p.207.

81. K. Koyatti Moulavi, 1921 Malabar Lahala, Calicut, 1953, p.22.

82. Evans, Charithram, p.128, quoted in R.E. Miller. op.cit . p.138.

established by Varayamkunnath kunhahamed, Chembrasser Tangal and O. Kunhi Koya. The former styled himself "Collector of Ernad", appointed officers who were largely ex-servicemen, issued passes, restricted looting returned gold and goods which were given as security to banks by the poor and collected Khilafat taxes.⁸³ As Rebellion went on its way, cruelty increased, upon all Mappilas as enemies.⁸⁴ At Melmuri and Kuzhimanna innocents were killed. But the heart rendering cruelty was that of wagon tragedy when 122 Mappila prisoners were loaded into a goods wagon at Tirur for transportation to prison at Coimbatore by sealing the wagon. The gradually weakening cries of the prisoner's enroute were ignored by this guards. When wagon was opened at Coimbatore, sixty four of the prisoners were found suffocated to death, an incident parallel to the Jalian Wallah bagh tragedy.

As the rebellion progressed the Mappilas severely suffered at the hands of more and more British troops. Two brigades of soldiers, special policies, *gurkha* and Chin soldiers were brought to deal the crisis. Court martial were active and decreed many executions. British extended pardon on all people who would co-operate and rebels were isolated and driven to jungles. All ring leaders surrendered one by one.⁸⁵ Chembrasser Thangal and Amakandan Mammad were trailed by court martial and shot on 9th January 1922.⁸⁶

83. R.E. Miller, op.cit., p.139.

84. Evans, op.cit., p.143, quoted in R.E. Miller, op.cit., p.140.

85. Koyatti Moulavi, op.cit., p.113.

86. R.H. Hitchcock, op.cit., p.100.

By February 25, 1922 martial law could be lifted and normal life to a considerable extent restored.⁸⁷

The Rebellion has got a communal colour when some Hindu leaders withdraw from the scene, contrary to Khilafat ideas and when some landlords supported the British, the Mappilas turned against them, and some of them were killed. Thousands of Moplahs were hanged and shot according to the orders of the special court. And thousands were exiled from India and sent to the Andamans where a colony of Moplahs has sprung up new.⁸⁸ The Rebellion taught Mappilas many lessons that the way they followed was unreasoned and unplanned. Bearing the negative reputation, the community wished for a change. The widened gulf with Hindus should be bridged. But it was a slow process and took many years to attain the goal. The Mappilas were a hundred years back than their Hindu brothers in education, economy and progress.

Mappilas in Post-Independence era

The Mappilas of Malabar, a comparatively backward and unique type of Muslim community has also shown trends of change in the recent times. Before Independence they participated in Independence struggle sharing the views of the All India Muslim League. They were clamoured to the demand of Pakistan put forward by League and at the same time argued for a separate

87. Ibid., p.102.

88. HMF - 103, op.cit., p.27, Tamil Nadu Archives, Chennai.

'Moplastan'⁸⁹. With partition, Pakistan was materialized but Moplastan was ruled out. Mappilas found salvation in the offshoot of Muslim league, Indian Union Muslim League which grew as an influential party and placed them in administration of the state.

Modern Education has come to the community as a factor contributing for reformation. The study of Malayalam, which hither too was a taboo, was taken as the first step of progress and later English, the hatred language of enemies, was given importance. The Mappilas abandoned traditional methods of education in *Othupallis* (single teacher institution) and developed *Madrasas* (in the pattern of schools) and Arabic Colleges for religious education. For secular education they depended on government institutions and other private institutions run by other communities.

They also set up their own institutions and the foremost among~~them~~ was the foundation of Farook College at Feroke, near Calicut established in 1948. Thereafter the Muslim Educational Society was formed and they established Colleges at various parts of Malabar. Later various agencies among Mappilas started schools and colleges to cater the need of education of Mappilas. In spite of all these movements, they are still lagging far behind of other communities.

89. K.M. Seethi Sahib, Debates of Madras Legislative Assembly 1947, Madras, 1947, pp. 793, ff.

Socially Mappilas have undergone many changes in which many superstitious beliefs are being given up. So many social ceremonies lost their importance or reduced to the minimum requirements. In the religious field, new reformist movements appeared as a result many anti-Islamic practices are given up.

The process of modernization and urbanization has had their impact on Mappilas. Women have come out of the house and are participating in public life. The migration which started in 1970's to Middle East has given them well balanced economy and paved the way for modernization. In ways of living, employment, dressing and other social aspects of life, Mappila men, as well as women, have shown that they could equal with the members of other communities. Undoubtedly the community has changed visibly since the last fifty or sixty years. In spite of all changes the Mappilas have remained faithful Muslims and they are recognized as a symbol of hope for other Muslims.⁹⁰

90. Roland E. Miller, *op.cit.*, p.308.

SOCIAL CUSTOMS AND MANNERS OF MAPPILA LIFE

Abdurahiman.K.P “Mappila heritage: A study in their social and cultural life”
Thesis. Department of History, University of Calicut, 2004

CHAPTER - 2

SOCIAL CUSTOMS AND MANNERS OF MAPPILA LIFE

Mappila social customs are a blend of Islamic and native elements, for religious obligations are a must on one side while indigenous and hereditary ceremonies are a convention on the other. This peculiar condition paved the way for the formation of unique customs in connection with Birth, Marriage and Death which are the inevitable part of human life. The Mappilas are very keen to follow the tenets of Quran and teachings of the Prophet, at the same time, they are determined to follow the indigenous customs. These social customs are evolved through centuries of practice, incorporating so many native cultural elements especially by the converted people to Islam. These two lines of way commonly did not contradict each other but on certain occasions did contradict and on such occasions the native, inherited customs gained an upper hand. A common example is the *penpanam* or dowry, a native custom for which there is no base in Islam which insists on *mahr*, the value given to woman to legalise marriage, and in Mappila hereditary marriages dowry takes an upper hand while *mahr* is retained as an essential part. Another aspect of Mappila social customs is that they have given birth to their own customs which is neither Islamic nor of native origin. The *Salkārams* (reception parties) in connection with marriage are such ones, which has their own identity as genuine Mappila customs. In short, Mappila customs have their own unique nature whether based on Islam or on the native land or new innovations.

The social customs and manners of Mappilas during the British period have been more or less continuing even today but with less elaborate and less festive manner. So many customs are observed in its essence while the outer fabrics have almost been stripped off. Thus the birth, growth and marriage customs are the shadows of the old ones which had been observed with traditional fervour.

Birth

Ever since a girl is married, her kith and kin eagerly would wait for the news of conception and any delay in this regard would cause concern in their minds. Normally conception is grasped by the stoppage of monthly periods, it is confirmed by some body symptoms such as tendency for vomiting or an appetite for sour things, such as lemons, oranges and mangoes, but also a little bits of clay and gravel. If a pregnant woman expressed a strong desire to eat any particular kind of dish, it was considered that such desires may be immediately satisfied for the better health of child and mother. Thereafter the expectant mother is subjected to various taboos, such as that she should not wear new clothes or ornaments, use *suruma*, staining hands or feet with henna because such things attract the evil eye.¹ Many of these taboos are identical with those of Hindus or have been borrowed from them. Infact Islam does not visualise any rituals in respect of a pregnant woman. It advocates some rituals only after delivery. The so called ceremonies in connection with conception

1. Jafar Sharif, Qanun-I-Islam. New Delhi. 1991, p.19.

are out of Islam. Islam insists on proper attention and nursing care to pregnant women as in chapter Talaq of Quran which reads “Lodge them where you dwell, according to your wealth and harass them not so as to straighten life for them. And if they are with child, then spend for them till they bring for their burden”.² (65:6) Another Quranic Verse which stresses the care of pregnant woman is that “Give due respect and care to carrying ladies. Treatment to harass them mentally and physically is objectionable³” (4:19) Quran suggests “to pray to God for easy delivery” (7: 189-90)⁴ Until recent times Mappilas used to pray to *Sheiks* or *pīrs* for easy delivery. Some visited tombs or *Dargahs* and some used to recite *Nafisath Mala* and *Badar Mala*. With taboos on one side, the woman has to follow strict rules of food and hygiene for the proper development of infant in the womb. However, she is not allowed to remain inactive and lazy for it is considered that a certain amount of physical exercise would facilitate delivery. Therefore a pregnant woman did not usually abstain from the ordinary household duties. Before modernisation transformed the society, the Mappilas were addicted to superstitious practices. If the carrying woman felt any uneasiness her people would approach a *thangal* or *Mulla* who wrote some Arabic letters in a paper or in a porcelain plate which added to water was consumed by the mother called *Urukkezhuthu*.[?] With reformists’ repeated preachings, the people have almost dropped these practices and are approaching modern hospitals for their natal and pre-natal problems.

2. M.M. Pickathall, Glorious Quran, Delhi, no date, p 637

3. Ibid., p.82.

4. Ibid., p.172.

When the pregnancy reaches about 7 months old, the parents of the woman take her to their home, since it is a general custom that the first child should be born at the house of the mother's parents.⁵ But among the very poor and needy she is confined at her husband's house. On this occasion, when her parents invite her to their house, a group of women will reach the house of bride groom, they put new clothes on her. She packs all her dresses ready to go to her own house. She bids farewell to the in-laws with tears. After a dinner she accompanies the group of women. This is purely a women's function. This ceremony is called '*Pettinukoottel*' (taking for labour).⁶ With the breaking up of joint family system, this custom is gradually vanishing.

At ninth month, the ladies of in-laws of the pregnant woman make a return visit to know the whereabouts of the lady. This custom is known as *pallakānal* (seeing the womb).⁷ The in-laws will bring delicious dishes, sweets and snacks to feed the lady. They will also bring coconut oil for her bath after delivery.⁸ There she remains with special care until delivery. When the woman begins to feel the pains of child birth and signs of an impending delivery become visible, she is led to the delivery room. In labour she is assisted by a *Velatti*⁹ or *Vayattatti*, a mid wife probably a woman from the ossan or barber family who knew the techniques for easy delivery. The

5. Ibid., p.21

6. Ibid.

7. A. Abdusalam Sullami, *Muslimkalile Anacharam*, Calicut, 1996. p.12

8. Ibid., p.13

9. C.A. Innes, *Malabar Gazetteer*, Vol. I and II, Madras, 1917, p.191

delivery takes place in a dark room set apart for the purpose. It was customary to keep the delivery room dark, which still continues. In spite of the fact that the '*Velatti*' who is thus called to attend to the delivery is not a person with any medical training, it appears that an easy delivery is often made possible. However, delay in delivery is watched with anxiety. In spite of the efforts of the woman in attendance, the child did not appear and the expectant mother is in prolonged labour. In case of prolonged labour, the men used to recite prayers calling the martyrs of *Badr* for help. Some people give the ailing woman a drink made of Quranic verse written on a porcelain plate prepared by some *Mulla* or *Thangal*. After delivery, cutting of umbilical chord and proper expulsion of placenta are carried out by the "*Vayattatti*". The *Vayattatti* washes the baby in cold water who carries the baby and hand over to the relatives. A *mulla*¹⁰ is then called in and he lifts the child up and recited *Adhan* or *Banku* into one ear and *kalima* to other ear of the baby.¹¹ This is to ensure that the first words the child hear must be of Allah and the Prophet. It is believed that the child would grow up as a true Muslim by this action. Then the child is given a little gold dust mixed with some honey or date juice, as in the case of rich parents and drops of '*Zam Zam*' water in the case of poor parents. The mother should bathe on the 15th, 28th and 40th day and her pollution doesn't cease till the last bath.¹² In south Malabar it is more

10. Mulla is a religious teacher who teaches small children the alphabets of Arabic, reading the text of Quran and elementary lessons of compulsory prayers.

11. A.P. Ibrahim Kunju, *Mappila Muslims of Kerala - Their History and Culture*, Trivandrum 1989, p.86.

12. C.A. Innes, op.cit., p.191.

usual for a Mappila woman called *pettichi* or *etichi* to be employed to look after the mother. But the child's care and attention is still held as a privilege of *Ossāthi* or barber woman. The infant is bathed mornings and evenings by the *Vayattatti* or *Ossāthi* by applying juice of coconut peelings with water. Meanwhile the child's head gets moulded to shape by the midwife by soft rubbing. The washing of the clothes of child and mother is done by a *Mannathi*, a low-caste Hindu woman. Presently, '*Vayattattis*' and '*Mannathis*' have withdrawn from traditional jobs and the whole job of after care is being undertaken by '*pettichi*' and the whole process of delivery is carried out by nurses of hospitals.

The 7th day after birth is usually the prescribed day for naming the child, but the time varies in different places and may extend upto six months. Islam suggests the naming of the child on the same day of delivery rather than on 7th day even if one could not sacrifice an animal¹³. Quran suggests for giving names of good meaning and intention to children. "It is advisable to give good names to children. Do not give names of bad meaning, names that indicate *shirk* (polytheism)" (49: 11).¹⁴ It was a custom among some people to bring the child to a *Thangal* or to a *Jāram* (tomb of saint) to name the child.¹⁵ It is not customary among Mappilas to give their own name to their children,¹⁶

13. Imam Bukhari, quoted by Abdusalam Sullami, Islamile Anushtana Murakal, Calicut, 1996 p.18.

14. M.M. Pickthall, (Quran Tra), op.cit., p.572.

15. A. Abdussalam Sullami, Muslingalile Anacharam, Calicut 1996, p.20.

16. C.A. Innes, op.cit., p.191.

but the name of grand father or grand mother is most preferred. After it the names of Prophets of Islam are preferred and next names of Allah starting with 'Abd have been considered. In case of female children names of the daughters and wives of Prophets have been given. But in Malabar especially in British era, so many names came into vogue which was the diversified form of original Arabic names. For example the name *Muhammad* was modified into *Mammad*, *Mayamad*, *Mamu*, *Mayamu*, *Mammu* and *Mayami*. Besides native forms like Kunhi, Kutty, Unni et.al., are either prefixed or suffixed or both. The Sayyid class followed strictly Arabian names starting with the prefix *Sayyid* and suffix *Thangal*, if the baby is a male, *beevee* in the case of females.¹⁷ But most of them are called by locally modified names such as Pookoya, Mullakoya, Imbichikoya, Mulla Beevee, Atta Beevee, Kochu Beevee et.al. Presently, the Mappilas are preferring more flavoured names in the Persian or Afghan styles like North Indian Muslims.

Major Holland Pryor describes another method of naming existed long ago among the Mappilas thus; 'The name is selected by calling upon the Moulavi to open the Koran at hazard. The first letter at the top of the right hand page will then be the initial letter of the child's name. The method above described is considered the most orthodox and correct'.¹⁸

Though the naming is varied according to convenience, the shaving of head is fixed on 7th, 14th, 21st and 28th days of birth respectively and seldom

17. Ibid., p 191.

18. Major P. Holland Pryor, Mappilas or Moplahs, Calcutta, 1904, p.38.

extends to 40th day. On that day the child's head is shaved by an *Ossan* or barber and this rite is known as *Mudikalachil* or removing the hair. Some rich people weigh the removed hair and distribute an equivalent quantity of gold or silver among the poor. Not only hair is removed but a cow or goat is sacrificed and its flesh is distributed to the poor. This sacrifice is called *Aqiqah*, which is a *Sunnah* of the Prophet. The Arabs usually sacrifice two sheep for a boy and one for a girl.¹⁹ The animal requires to be either above a year old and perfect without any handicap. It must not be blind of one or both eyes, or lame.²⁰ This is a festive occasion and relatives are invited for a feast following the *Aqiqah* and shaving of the head of the child. Among the respectable and wealthy, *Aqiqah* is first performed and shaving afterwards. Though most people have the child's head shaved on the '*Aqiqah*' day, the lower class people only observe the latter ceremony; Those who are very poor, to save expense do it on the same day with 40th day observations, while the rich perform them all on different days. After the head is shaved a solution of coconut juice is applied on it. The hair is then weighed and its weight in silver is given in alms as the Prophet did when a son was born to him in his old age.²¹ Then the hair is tied up in a piece of cloth, either buried in the earth or thrown in to the water.²² It is now more common that these *Aqiqah* ceremonies are conducted on the birth of first child only.

19. Thomas Patrick Hughes, Dictionary of Islam, New Delhi, 1998, p.17.

20. Jaffer Sherif, op.cit., p.20.

21. Ibid., p.21.

22. William Muir, Life of Mahomet, New Delhi, 1992, p.411.

Among the Arabs the impurity of the mother lasts for 40 days²³ which is closely observed by Mappila women. During these days she is not allowed either to pray or touch the Quran or to enter the mosque. She remains in her own chamber attended by *Pettichi*, the maid to serve her. During these days she is fed upon rice with ghee, the inner parts of a goat, *Kichdi* (a mixture of pulses and rice) and *pulāvu*.

The 40th day is observed as the shedding of impurity of the woman and in the early morning she is bathed and dressed in new clothes and much money is squandered for celebrations.²⁴ Fortieth day is the boundary of self denial. On this day the female relatives and the neighbours assemble and have the lying-in-woman and infant bathed and dressed out in fine clothes. The guests coming to the feast, necessarily bring some presents, every man according to his ability. It is customary among close relatives to bring with them a present of gold, silver, jewels or clothes to the child.

The relatives used to bring gifts for the child on the day and after the 40th day's celebrations the woman is free from her taboos. The maid servant is disposed off with money and clothes. But it is common among the Mappilas of Malabar that woman does not actively participate in social gatherings or household works until 56th day or some other up to 90th day. During lying-in days the mother is served with fine dishes and special

23. Jaffer Sherif, op.cit., p.37.

24. K.P. Padmanabha Menon, History of Kerala, Cochin. 1924. p.558.

medicines prepared by mixing meat, flour, spices and sugar known as *pettulehyam* in order to regain her health. Women of the new generation are using allopathic medicines rather than this *pettulehyam* which has almost become a part of heritage.

Growth of the child

When the baby attains the age of 6 months, besides breast milk, boiled rice with pulses are being fed. There is no separate function to note the event among Mappilas as in the case of Hindus who have the ceremony called *Choroonu* (rice giving). When the baby reaches the age of one, meat and fish are included in the menu. As most of the Mappilas of British period believed in omens and superstitions, *Elassu* (brass plate folded with written *mantras* chanted by *Mullas*) were tied on the waist. Some people tied black threads or wore black bangles in order to avoid evil eyes.²⁵ When a girl is a year or two years old, her ears are bored and it is a festive occasion for the family. The boring is done by a goldsmith or barber. Holes are bored along the edge of ear so as to enable her wear round bracelets known as *Chittu* and in the lower lobe a hanging ornament known as *Manikkathila*. The girl is beautifully dressed and seated amongst relatives where she is enjoyed by singers. This celebration known as *Kathukuthu Kalyanam* which lasted 3 to 7 days.²⁶ Before the modernisation of the society, the ceremony was conducted in elaborate

25. Jaffer Sherif. op.cit., p.18

26. M.T. Moideen, "Kathukuthu Kalyanam", *Pudava*, Calicut, June 2000, p.32

manner. A Mappila song from old *Kalyaṇapāṭi* reads like this:- (see appendix 1 for the original lines)

All of you hear '*Kathkuthu*'
 The act is so grand
 This is an occasion of celebration
 With festive mood of marriage,
 Thousands come to witness the scene
 The lovely girl laid on the floor,
 The *Ossān* will sit to pierce many holes on ear
 The *Ossāthi* will hand over nail with strings
Ammāyi will sit with plate full of presents,
 If the presents are below standard
 Anger will come to the face of *Ossāthi*

Each ear has 8 to 9 holes. Right ear has one hole excess than the left. In olden days besides gold smiths, *Chettis* were normally employed to pierce the ear. In the later period *Ossān* (Muslim barber) also performed this operation. The screw which is used to pierce the ear known as *Chila* was made up of brass. Among the wealthy, ears are pierced with gold, copper or silver *Chilas*. Once the ears were pierced with *Chila*, a black string was inserted through holes which made the wounds easy healing. After some days the strings were removed and gold or silver *Chittu* were replaced. There were several types of *Chittus* like *parachittu*, *polachittu* etc. The celebration was less festive than marriage but the relatives were invited for sumptuous feast. Women came

with breads, sweets and presentations. Francis Day observes in this regard thus: “The Muhammadan Moplah girls have a succession of holes pierced, in each of which a ring is fastened, dragging down the ear by their weight”²⁷ Infact Islam does not advocate this ear boring ceremony. It is neither an Arab custom nor a Prophetic tradition. With the educational awakening the *Kathukuthu Kalyanam* celebration has almost vanished. Since this caused economic loss and social decay the reformers of the society severely criticised this custom. The renowned Mappila poet Pulikkottil Hyder has written a poem against this evil practice in the following lines.²⁸ (See Appendix 2 for the original lines)

The evil custom *Kathukuth*,
 Makes many loss oh! you hear,
 Explains here, you to grasp,
 Don't . . . deform the young girls
 Shun away this practice hereafter,
 Mother and Father insist to pierce,
 The ears of their lovely daughter,
 And harm them with pain,
 When the girl struggles to relieve,
 No pity remains in the heart of mother,
 The *Ossān* pierces ten to fifteen holes,

 27. Francis Day. Land of Perumals, Madras, 1863, p.372.

28. Pulikkottil Hyder. Pulikkottil Krithikal. Wandoor 1979, p.184.

Causing much pain in the ears,
 The string that inserts,
 Doubles the pain which turn into
 Septic, makes a nasty smell.
 The rich insert *chitts* in ears,
 To prepare their girls for marriage,
 Fall in danger, when thieves
 Cut the ears and stolen the gold.
 May this enough for perish,
 This custom of *Chitt* on ears,
 Makes many havocs in daily life.

Othupalli.

During the British period, a boy or girl among Mappilas was first introduced to *Othupalli* (religious school) for his or her education at the age of 4 or 5. The parents distributed a mixture of coconut piece and *avil* namely *Cheerani* among the students. This *Othupalli* was a single teacher institution. The teacher was known by the name *Mullakka*. He taught the Arabic alphabets and reading and reciting Quranic verses. The elementary principles of religious laws like performing of ablution and prayers were also taught by the *Mullakka*. When the chapter *Yaseen* (from Quran) was taught, special celebration took place. *Cheerani* was being distributed among the students. This ceremony is known as *Ettezhuthu*. The learning in the *Othupalli* ended with *Khatam* (Complete recitation of Quran).

After 1950 the *Madrasa* system generally evolved just in the manner of modern school system through out Malabar and *Othupalli* system has vanished.²⁹ Presently, *Madrasa* system has been wide spread in Malabar imparting good religious education upto 10th standard.

Circumcision or Marka Kalyanam

The process of removing the fore skin of the men's genital organ is known as circumcision. The rite of circumcision has a very long historical background. The Jews and Muslims perform the rite as a part of their religious observations while the tribal people of Central America, Amazon, Australia and Abyssinia have taken it as a convention of ancestors. Circumcision is also mentioned in the *Kamasutra* of Vatsyana (300AD) as a peculiar feature of the people of south India.³⁰ It is doubtful about the origin of circumcision as to whether it was from Arabia or Egypt. Totoneks of Mexico had done this rite as soon after the birth of the child, the Jews on the 8th day; the Muslims before the age of 10 and the tribes of South Africa at the age of 16. Jews and Muslims do circumcise as a religious rite the aborigines of Central America, Amazon and Australia do it as a convention. This practice has been prevalent from the time of Prophet Abraham. Bible says "The God command

29. K. T. Muhammadali, Education among the Mappilas of Malabar, New Delhi, 1990, p.40.

30. S. Srikanta Sastry, "Sources of Karnataka History," Dravidan Encyclopaedia, Vol 1, New Delhi, 1975, p.15.

Abraham to circumcise his son Isaq on 8th day which he performed.”³¹ In olden days sharp edged stones were used. Some of the Egyptian Mummies were found to be circumcised.³²

Among the Mappilas, circumcision is generally done between the age of 5 and 10 but some do it earlier. Since it is the symbol of complete body purity, in order to perform the prayers (*niskāram*) prescribed by Islam, which advocates a boy should perform the prayers from 10 years of age. The day of circumcision is a day of celebration for the family of the boy. On the day a *Mulla* offers prayers before the operation which is done by an *Ossān* with a sharp razor. The boy is dressed in red clothes and seated on a chair or stool (*Mukkāli*) with a red kerchief spread over it. A person holds the boy firmly in his lap and with his two hands shuts the eyes of the boy to prevent the sight of the operation which would make the boy frightened. The *ossān* sits opposite to the boy who has his cloth tied up over the shoulder of boy, and a by-stander holds a lighted lamp, even if the operation is performed in the day time. Circumcision is a natural way for the complete purification of the body. It is not an option at the time of one’s conversion to Islam. It is not compulsory for one’s belief in Islam but a new believer usually prefers to do it, hence the name, *Markakalyānam* (rite to join the new faith). In Islam there is no celebration or feast in connection with circumcision. Prophet never invited people for a feast.³³ But the Mappila Muslims made it a festive occasion. The

31. Bible, Ulpatti, 21:4.

32. Dr. C.P. Aboobacker, “Circumcision”, Chandrika Weekend Edition, 25-02-1978. p.II.

33. A. Abdusallam Sullami, Islamile Anushtana Murakal, Calicut, 1996, p.21

ceremony which is the outward sign of the boy's admission in to the fold of Islam is made the occasion of much feasting and rejoicing and large sum of money is often distributed to the poor.³⁴ The barber has been paid profusely by rich people. The severed skin is properly buried. After the operation the barber applies a dressing and the wound heals in the course of a week or so. During these days the boy is given delicious food. Relatives would bring sweets especially *Halwa* as a special item. Normally it takes one week to heal the wounds and on the first Friday after his recovery the boy goes to the *Jumu'a* prayer in mosque.³⁵

Mr. Hughes in his Dictionary of Islam explains a traditional method of operation for circumcision practiced by Muslims of India. "A bit of stick is used on a probe, and carried round and round between the glans and prepuce to ascertain the exact extent of fraenum and that no unnatural adhesions exist. The foreskin is then drawn forwards and pair of forceps consisting of a couple of pieces of split bamboo, 5 or 6 inches long and a quarter of an inch thick, tied firmly together an end with a string to the extent of an inch, applied from above at an oblique direction so as to exclude about an inch and a half of the prepuce above and 3 quarters of an inch below. The forceps severely grasping at, causes a good deal of pain, but this state of suffering does not continue long, since the next thing to be done is the removal which is done by one stroke of razor drawn directly downwards. The hemorrhage which follows is

34. C.A Innes, op.cit., p.192

35. Ibid.

inconsiderable and easily stopped by the application of burnt rags and ashes.”³⁶ However, the traditional *ossāns* have now disappeared and the ceremony is now marked without celebration, operations being performed by surgeons in their hospitals.

When a girl attains puberty, there is no special ceremony to mark the occasion as practised by some classes of Hindus. But her freedom to travel and mingle is some what restricted and the parents from the very moment start to enquire marriage proposals. Thus among the Mappilas, attaining the age of puberty of a girl is considered as a herald for marriage alliance. But with the acquisition of modern education, among educated sections of the community, marriages are belated, that they would think of it after their studies are over, but among the uneducated they still follows the tradition of olden days.

Marriage

Like most Indian Communities marriage among the Mappilas of Malabar is looked upon as essential for man and women. It is one of the important stages in a person's life. Parents are said to be 'not free' unless they see their daughters and sons are happily married. Marriage is a major change in the life of an individual Marriage is looked upon by the Muslims as *Sunnah* and it is regarded as an important obligation of Muslims. Only physically and mentally handicapped person who cannot carry out the day to day activities

36. Thomas Patrick Hughes, op.cit., p.17.

remain unmarried. A boy becomes a full fledged man only after marriage. The girl acquires the status of a woman consequent upon her marriage. Thus a boy or a girl will not acquire social personality until marriage.

Marriage in its origin is a contract of natural law and though entirely a personal consensual contract, it is not merely a civil contract under the Muslim law. Marriage is regarded by the jurists as a secular contract pertaining of the natural *Ibādath* (religious rite) for the procreation of children, the regulation of social life and for the benefit of society Islam considers marriage as a religious devotion. As one *Hadeeth* reports, "Marriage is my *Sunnat*, and those who do not obey it are not my followers". Marriage is regarded by all the jurists as *sunnat Mavakida*, that is an institution the compliance with which is considered as virtuous and a deviation from which is regarded as a sin.³⁷ Hence marriage is a religious rite under the Muslim law, although it is in the form of a secular transaction and a civil contract.

Marriage is an institution created for the protection of society in order that human beings remain chaste and unpolluted. The primary base of any civilised society is to be sought in the process when two people of different sexes unite in a perfectly lawful way. In Islam marriage between a man and woman is a solemn pact for life, Sexual relation is sanctioned between two individuals of the opposite sex leading to the procreation of the human species, restraining men from debauchery, encouraging chastity, promoting

37. Al Haj Muhammedullah, 'The Muslim Law of Marriage', New Delhi, 1986, p.2.

love and fixing descent. Marriage amounts to *Ibādat*, devotion and *mu'amalat* (dealing among men).³⁸ It is founded on contract in which the consent of both the parties is essential. In several places the Quran speaks of the marriage alliance, meaning that marriage, one of the prime and original necessities of man is made for the solace of life that man and women are created to live in marital bliss, tranquility and natural understanding.³⁹ (25: 21)

In Islam marriage is a social contract and not a religious rite. The most important of the new rules was the restriction in the number of wives which the Muslim might at any one time hold on lawful marriage.⁴⁰

Marriage-Age

There is no fixed age limit for the marriage of Mappilas who favoured an early age for boys and girls. The marriage of their children involved many delicate and complicated problems, for instance, those of family status, ancestral rites and tradition and the social honour of the parties. The parents usually carried out their responsibilities most scrupulously in every detail. Marriage was more a family question than a personal concern of the marrying couple.⁴¹

Among Mappila Muslims a boy is ready for marriage as soon as he is strong enough to do a man's work on land or to handle business

38. Zeenath Shoukath Ali, Marriage and Divorce in Islam, Bombay, 1957, p.64.

39. M.M. Pickthal, (Qr. Tr), op.cit., p.434.

40. Ruben Levy, Status of Women in Islam,. London, 1957, p.100.

41. K.M. Ashraf, Life and Condition of People of Hindustan, New Delhi, 1976. p.42.

independently. A village boy is able to do practically all the work on the farm by the time he is 15 or 16 years of age. A girl is considered to be ready for marriage a year or two after attaining puberty. The parents are eager to get their daughters married as soon as they reach marriageable age. Failure to get their daughters married in time means not only incurring wrath of relatives but also of society. Unmarried girls are noticed and they become targets of comment and gossip. It is from this notion that the usage in Malayalam *Pura Niranchu Nilkuka* (be very much as the size of house) originated. If they remain unmarried too long, it is considered an eternal shame on the part of her parents. This is the basic reason behind the hurry of parents to marry a girl than a boy. If a man has boy and girl of marriageable age, preference is given to girl, not only because the girl has to be married before over aged but also, the boy has to help his father in accumulating the dowry of the girl. Sometimes early marriages occur due to the close friendship of parents, who wish to tie their hands after generations. Some other times in order to please elderly grand parents who insist on seeing their grand children married before the death.⁴²

In olden times when child marriage existed, *Nikāh* was performed in early years. Fathers of bride and groom would settle the terms on behalf of their children, especially when the fathers were close friends. It is considered proper for wives to be younger than their husbands; consequently girls marry

42. C.G Hussain Khan, Marriage and Kinship among Muslims in South India. New Delhi, 1994. p.78.

at a younger age than boys. Most girls marry between the ages of 12 to 18 and boys between 18 and 21 years old. Occasionally men marry women who are older, especially a widow is wedded to a younger brother of her deceased husband.⁴³ If a son and a daughter attain marriageable age, preference is given to the daughter. With the acquisition of modern education the youth of the community now-a-days is marrying at a later age. It was customary in Malabar for a wife to avoid mentioning the name of her husband. In cases of necessity he is usually called the father of son or one of her children or by some such euphemistic term. It is looked upon as a breach of female decorum to indulge in such prohibited form of address.⁴⁴

Fixed Mahr

Mahr is the amount which a Muslim bride groom has to pay his wife as a formal nuptial gift. This is one of the pre conditions of marriage. Though in theory there is no limit to the amount of *Mahr* a woman can demand, in practice *Mahr* is fixed by custom. Among the Mappilas, the fixed *Mahr* varies, according to social status of the woman's family. Generally it varies from 3 to 31 *mithqāls* or equivalent rupees. One of the oldest customs in the relationship within the human family is that man has acknowledged the right of the woman to a dower (*mahr*) on the occasion of marriage. He used to pay something of value to the woman or to her father. Moreover, he was

43. Imtiaz Ahamed. Family kinship and Marriage among Muslim in India, New Delhi, 1976. p.275.

44. Gopala Panikkar. Malabar and its Folk, New Delhi, 1983. p.23.

responsible, during the whole period of marriage for the maintenance and upkeep (*mafaqah*)⁴⁵ of his wife and children.

Sociologists have traced the evolution of the dower system. In the first period man lived as a parasite and as an attendant on woman. In that period the woman used to rule over man. In the subsequent period, when the power fell into the hands of man, he abducted the woman from her tribe. In the third period, in order to obtain the woman of his choice, man used to go to the father of woman and work several years for him. In the fourth period man paid an amount of money as a present to the father of the woman and from here the custom of the dower began.⁴⁶

Though *Mahr* is the Islamic rite of marriage, among Mappilas of Malabar another transaction at the time of marriage, *penpanam* or *Stridhanam* became prevalent. This is an indigenous custom probably prevalent among the Nair community of Hindus which had been copied down by the converted Mappilas. The high class among Mappilas used to give *pen-panam*, that is money, ornaments or lands to the bride-groom as a pre-condition of the marriage. Subsequently the lower section also adopted this. Later marriage brokers handled the issue to gain their commission, as a result this system got rooted deeply in the society. When the transaction of land became difficult, the demand for gold increased. This system put the lower section of the

45. Murtade Matahari, The Rights of Woman in Islam, Tehran, 1981, p.191.

46. Ibid., p.192.

society in great difficulty, since the bride groom demands high amount of money the father of the bride suffered much.

Marriage restrictions among Mappilas ✓

Islam recognises a circle of persons within which lawful marriage may be contracted. A man is prohibited from inter marrying in the ground of *nusūb* or consanguinity, affinity and fosterage. Persons within these prohibited degrees are called *Mahram* or forbidden to one another. All others are called *Na-mahrams*⁴⁷ or those with whom marriage is not forbidden.

Quran clearly mentions those who were forbidden for marriage in the following verses.

“Forbidden unto you are your mothers and your daughters and your sisters and your father’s sisters, and your mother’s sisters and your brother’s daughters and your sister’s daughters and your father-mother, and your foster sisters and your mother in-law and your step daughters who are under your protection (born of your women) and the wives of your sons, two sisters together and all married women.”⁴⁸ (4:23)

Islamic law also forbids marriage of uncle and niece. But among Mappilas there have been cases of inter-marriage between the sons and

47. K.M. Ashraf, op.cit., p.114.

48. M.M Pickthall (Qr. Tr.), op.cit., p.83.

daughters of brothers in order to avoid partitioned family property being enjoyed by an outside member. The Mappilas had avoided marriages during the whole *Ramzan*, *Id*, *Bakrid* and the first ten days of *Muharram* and times of family mourning. A widow cannot not only re-marry until three months and ten days after the death of her husband but also she has to confine in her house without the sight of another man. This is observed strictly by women and the custom is known as *Marayirikkal* (*Iddah* period).

Ara (Maniyara)

In the North Malabar and coastal towns where *Marumakkathayam* is the family order, bride groom used to live in the brides house and in such system the bridal chamber is decorated with the maximum means of the bride's parents. All the costly furniture, carpets, blankets and utensils had been used for decoration. Illustration of such a *maniyara* is presented through a *Mappila* song starting with the lines, '*Puthamathram manayil*', meaning of lines can be summarised as follows: (See Appendix 3 for original lines)

“The newly built cot has picturesque carvings on its head side. The legs of cot are very beautifully placed. On its side is placed a glittering brass *kolāmbi*. Next to it is betel dishes with carvings and calligraphic writings. The aromatic betel leaf with arecanut and lime is placed in the dish. The cot has fine blankets spread over it as well as on the upper part (*Melāpp*)⁴⁹

49. P.K. Mohamed. Kunhi, op.cit . p.291.

Polygamy among Mappilas

In Islam the practice is allowed. It should however be noted that Islam did not introduce the custom but rather restricted the practice already existing. Quranic verses concerned thus reads.

“And if ye fear that ye will not deal fairly with the orphans, marry of the women, who seem good to ye, two or three or four and if ye fear that ye cannot do justice (to so many) there one (only) or (the captives) that your right hand possess. Thus it is more likely that ye will not do injustice”⁵⁰(4:3)

This verse which is the only one on the topic clearly shows that the Holy Quran favours the natural course of monogamy; however to meet certain physical, family, social or political situations, it has given permission of polygamy. The Holy Quran grants permission of taking more than one wife under the provision of justice. The verse which permits upto four wives also contains a clear order that if you cannot do justice, you should keep one wife only.⁵¹(4:129)

Among the Mappilas, polygamy was of course practised but it was restricted to certain classes. The aristocrat considered it a symbol of status to have more wives. But the second or third marriage is preferably from poor families. Some *Mullah's* doing religious service in various places had the habit of marrying women from the locality especially girls of poor families.

50. M.M. Pickthall, (Quran Tr.). op.cit., p. 79.

51. Ibid., p.184.

Like wise some persons took it as a craze to marry women. But C.A. Innes, the then Malabar collector, exaggeratedly reported, "in South Malabar 80% of the husbands have two wives and 20% more then two"⁵². This statement is, however, not correct.

Divorce among Mappilas

Marriage with all its sacredness is a civil contract in Islam and can be subjected to any reasonable and lawful stipulation. Divorce, according to Islam, being a preventive measure against breach of peace, a device for securing an amicable settlement, and after all a salutary safeguard to protect the weaker sex from continuous ill treatment, due to disagreement or any other reason, has justly been provided as a dissolution of an unhappy marriage which may turn out to be a burden rather than an asset and contrary to all expectations of happiness and help, may happen to be a horror and hindrance.

In Islam divorce is not an easy process. Actually it has three stages. If disagreement arises between two parties, as a precaution, Quran recommend three ways, to advise them, banish them to beds apart and scourge them.⁵³ "If she disobeys again put this matter to arbitration with arbiters from both sides."(4:34) "If they desire amendment, Allah will make them of one mind."⁵⁴(4:34) "If the arbiters are not able to reconcile the parties they have

52. C.A Innes. op.cit., p.193.

53. M.M Pickthall. (Qur. Tr.), op.cit., p.85.

54. Ibid., p.85.

the option to depart; but before it they should again try for agreement.”⁵⁵ (33:37). “If this attempt fails they can depart themselves that is the first divorce come into effect. And if they decide upon divorce, Allah is Hearer, Knower.”⁵⁶ (2:227) But the departed wife should be kept in the House of husband for 3 months (*Iddat*). Meanwhile if both parties propose to reinstate relation they can do it.⁵⁷ If again disagreement arises the whole process should be once again repeated. If the second divorce also materialised she should be kept in his own house for another three months. During these days she should be provided with food clothing and essential things. If they propose to unite within the *Iddat* period (three months) they have the option with public announcement. If disagreement arises the third time and if all attempts fail the third *Talāq* or divorce can be made after which he could not take her back except that after her second marriage she should be divorced in 3 stages by that person, a rare possibility.

The above is the actual process of divorce as envisaged by Islam. But the Mappilas of Malabar diluted this process by pronouncing three divorces at a time in order to curtail the relation in an easy way instead of observing the above said stages. Since *'ulama* (priest) gives permission this is a most prevalent type of divorce (*Mutalāq* or *mozhichollal* or *mozhithuppal*) among Mappilas.

55. Ibid., p.456.

56. Ibid., p.35.

57. Ibid., p.636.

As a condition to remarry the divorced wife, Islam insists that if she was married to another person and if this person happened to divorce her through genuine ways, the former husband can remarry her. Again in this matter some dilution of the law can be seen. If a woman is divorced by a man, sometimes he repents in his deed and in order to remarry her without delay, he employs another man, probably his friend, to marry her pronouncing *Nikāh* and the next day he would pronounce three divorce simultaneously. This is known as *Chadangu Kalyānam*, a system quite contrary to Islamic tenets which has been silently approved by 'ulama.⁵⁸

Widow remarriage has been allowed in Islam after *Iddat* period is over.⁵⁹ Among Mappilas widow marriage often takes place especially if the woman is financially sound or she possesses beautiful look. It is almost considered as a law among Mappilas for the unmarried brother remarries the widow of his elder brother because it is the responsibility of the family to look after her and the properties of the deceased brother. The widower preferred widows and some rich people when proposed for second or third marriage preferred widows than a virgin.

Arabikalyanam

Arabikalyanam is a special institution resorted to by the Arabs in the last few decades of 20th century in the coastal towns of Malabar especially in

58. A. Abdussalam Sullami, op.cit., p.372.

59. Mohammed Ishal Siddiqi, The family laws of Islam, New Delhi, 1986, p.86.

Calicut city. This was quite contrary to the marriage into which the Arab merchants of early days entered with local women on the Malabar coast which was *muta* marriage in nature.⁶⁰ It was a marriage of temporary nature in which the contracting parties agree to live together in the house of the woman (wife) for a stipulated period of time and for which the man has to pay an amount mutually agreed upon, the *Mahr*, the bride price. The word *muta* may be rendered according to Heffening, a marriage for pleasure.⁶¹

In *Muta* marriage of olden days the woman did not leave her home, her people did not give up rights which they had over her and the children of the marriage did not belong to the husband. But contrary in *Arabi Kalyānam* the husbands sometimes carry their wives into their home and the children have full right of property of their father⁶²

The Arabs visited the coastal towns to complete their business or with the sole purpose of marriage. The brokers approached the poor class people with the offer of marriage. The Arab pays a huge amount as *Mahr* and provides money and material. The wealthy ship owners, captains of ships and workers and all sorts of people indulged in temporary marriages as their means allowed. Most of them kept their wives in their houses and contacted with them in the visit to the land. But the Kuwaitis show some integrity in this type

60. S.M. Mōhamed. Koya, Mappilas of Malabar, 1983, Calicut, p.17.

61. Encyclopaedia of Islam, Vol III, London, 1937, pp.744-746.

62. P.P. Mammad Koya Parappil, Kozhikotte Muslingalude Charithram, (Mal.). Calicut, 1994, p.275.

of marriages. They have been not only paying abundantly to the family of the girl, but even carries the girl and children home and also used to give the kith and kin of girls high jobs in Kuwait⁶³ Most of the girls are victimised in *Arabikalyanam*. With the departure of the Arab the girl becomes helpless and may go astray. Native men took aversion to marry such girls.⁶⁴

Now the *Arabikalyanam* has almost vanished. The Arabs seldom come to Malabar. The native awareness against this practice, the strict orders from the part of government and the clamour of social organizations have almost put an end to this practice of Mappila community.

Marriage Ceremonies

It is essential for Muslims to marry and lead a family life since it is a tradition of the Prophet. Among the Mappilas the boys are married at the age of 18 to 20 as a rule and girls at 14 to 15. But in early days it was 14 to 18 for boys and 8 to 12 for girls. In Islam marriage is a simple ceremony. The actual ceremony is called *Nikāh*. The father of the bride, if he is not alive, brother or grand father and so on, and bride groom sit face to face holding each other's hand. The *Qāzi* or *Musliyār* then announces publically the condition of the marriage contract and *maḥr* that the bridegroom has to pay to the bride. Then *Qazi* recites the oath of undertaking. The bride's father and bride groom will repeat the same. Although Islamic marriage is so simple in practice, Mappilas

63. Ibid., p.275.

64. Ibid., p.278.

are following numerous customs before and after the *Nikāh*. In this regard lot of variations can be seen among the North Malabar and South Malabar Mappilas.

Marriages in North Malabar

Among the North Malabar Mappilas, especially those who are following matrilocal system, the proposal for the match has to come from the bride's side.⁶⁵ This is usually done with the help of an intermediary like the mosque official or a local *Karānavar*. When the preliminaries are decided a day is fixed for the formal betrothal ceremony called *Vakkukodukkal* (Word giving) which has to take place in the house of the bridegroom.⁶⁶ The *Karānavar* of the brides *tharavād* along with near relatives go to the groom's house and are received by a similarly constituted gathering of men there. This function is called *nischayam* (fixation of date and terms).⁶⁷ This is mainly a men's function. The chief parties to the discussion are the *Karānavars* of both sides besides local *Qāzi* also take part. Father of the bride and groom has no formal say in the matter. Father of the bride usually does not accompany the party to the groom's house. At the function, the terms and conditions of marriage are made public to the gathering. The terms and conditions are mostly one sided; the bride's party has to fulfill the terms. As a symbol of

65. Victor S.D'souza, "Marriages of Kerala", Family Kinship and marriage among Muslims in India. Imtiaz Ahamed (Ed), New Delhi, 1978, p.157

66. Ibid., p.157.

67. Ibid.

acceptance of the terms, betel is exchanged between the *Karanavars* of both sides. The functions connected with marriage are held at night.

While accepting a girl for marriage, neither the bride groom nor any of his relatives; including the women, have any opportunity of seeing the bride, for, among Mappilas, as soon as a girl is considered to be of marriageable age she has to observe *purdah* (seclusion) not only towards men but also towards women who are not related to her.⁶⁸

Although the central and most important ceremony of a Muslim marriage is the contract called *Nikāh*, for Mappilas this ceremony alone is not sufficient to enable the bridal couple to live as man and wife. The consummation of marriage can take place only after holding another function. This latter function is called *Kalyānam* or marriage and the ceremony of *Nikāh* is called *Kaniyath*.⁶⁹ They make a clear distinction between these two ceremonies and sometimes the *Nikāh* ceremony is held months ahead of *Kalyānam*. But the bride groom cannot contact with bride until the *Kalyānam* function.

Once the date for *Kalyānam* is fixed preparation for the function has to be made. The first step is the *Mangalam Vilikkal*⁷⁰ or invitation to relatives, dignitaries, labourers and friends. The invitation is made by young boys of the

68. Ibid.

69. Ibid., p.158.

70. Ahamed Kavannur. Puthiypla Pokku, *Chandrika Daily Weekend edition*, 4.4.1995, p.I.

family accompanied by servants of the house.⁷¹ The invitation of the members of bridegroom's house is called *Koodipparayal*.⁷² All the invitees then prepare to give presents on the occasion of marriage. The second step of *Kalyanam* is the beautification of the house. In the court yard of the house a *pandal* is arranged using arecanut tree pillars and coconut leaf roof. Relatives and neighbours may help in this which lasts for some days. Then the invitees begin to bring their presentation mainly eatable items such as rice, sugar, ghee, banana, goat etc; the poor people also accept money as presentation. To all visitors delicious dishes especially snacks boiled in oil such as *Kayvātti*, *Kaypori*, *Unnakkay*, *Puliyaral*, *Thariyunda*, *Nermapathiri*, *Muttyappam* are supplied.⁷³ The previous day of marriage is known as *Vettlakettu*, since betel and areca are prepared by ladies for the next day.⁷⁴ In olden days *Kalyanam* used to prolong for 40 days. Of the overall preparations of marriage the most important item is the decoration of the bridal chamber, called *Ara* or *Maniyara*.⁷⁵ Two cots, each a double one, one with a canopy or *Kattipiri* and other without one are placed in the room which is profusely decorated. Besides *Mekkatti*, upper canopy; *Almirah* with mirror are essential in *Ara*.

71. In North Malabar area there were professional ladies called *Vilikkarithikal* to extend invitation to friends, relatives and people of same street. They announced the marriage in all houses and glorified both bride and groom.

72. Ahamed Kavannur, *op.cit.*, p.I.

73. K.P. Kunhimoosa. "Kalyana Ravukal". *Chandrika Weekened edition*, 11.7.1993, p.1.

74. P.P. Mammed Koya Parappil, *op.cit.*, p.268.

75. Victor S. D'souza, *op.cit.*, p.158.

Among the higher sections, the cots are spread with seven mattresses or quilt one above the other.

On the eve of *Kalyānam* function there is a function called *mailānchi* in the bride's house.⁷⁶ *Maitānchi* means henna and the ceremony consists of applying henna juice to the nails and toes, palms and feet etc. of the bride. The henna juice has to be brought ceremonially from the house of the bride's father by a procession of women. The *Ammāyi* or sister or sisters of bride's father have the prerogative of applying henna. Only ladies are invited to this function. This is purely a women's function. The invited guests would come in their best attire with a lot of gold ornaments. A large number of female guests are given feast mean while singers sing and clap their hands beautifully to enthuse the bride. They are called *Kalikkārathikal* and they sing *oppana* songs. On the same day, during day time, there is a function in the bride grooms house called *Kanhikudi*⁷⁷ or drinking of porridge.

In the day of *Kalyānam* which usually starts in the evening before the arrival of the bride groom, the bride is ceremonially dressed in wedding clothes and adorned with ornaments. This ceremony is called *ponnoppikkal*⁷⁸ or putting on gold ornaments. After this the bride is seated in a prominent place in full view of all the guests. This part of the function is called *oppana*

76. Ibid., p.159

77. Ibid., p.157.

78. Ibid., p.160

when women singers will sing, clap their hands and dance around the bride to enthuse all the participants. Only women are witness to this function.

In the bride groom's house the groom has to undergo a 'Sham-shaving Ceremony'. The actual shaving must have been done before hand but the groom is seated in the midst of young men who keep in clapping while the barber pretends to give him a shave. Subsequently the groom is seated in prominent place when he is presented with gifts and garlanded by friends and relatives.

A small party from the bride's side, headed by a *karanavar*, goes to bride groom's house to extend invitation. This ceremony is called *Thēdal*. Among higher classes an elephant is decorated as the vehicle of bridegroom. Persons carrying *Kāntavilakku* (lanterns) accompany the party. Fire works are burned out as a symbol of welcome. As the party comes in *thēdal* they are warmly received by the groom's house holders. After it the dinner is served in *māsara*. Then the bridegroom leaves his house accompanied by his relatives and friends. The *Karanavar* of the brides side then hands over the *Kizhipanam* or dowry to the *Karanavar* of the bride groom.⁷⁹ After this, the wedding procession which is the grandest of all processions connected with marriage functions proceeds to the bride's house while crackers are burnt, singers clap all the way singing. Singers are specially trained in *Vaypāṭi* (vocal song) and they make the occasion happier. At the entrance of the bride's house, on a

79. Ibid.

raised platform, water is kept in a small copper vessel. One of the bride's brothers poses to wash the feet of the groom with the water when the latter drops some money or gold ring into the vessel as a present.⁸⁰ The groom then is seated in a decorated high platform (*Kottil*) spread with white sheet and above it a *melappu* (upper canopy). If the *Nikāh* ceremony has not been performed earlier, it is the occasion for the ceremony. The *Qāzi* performs the *Nikāh* holding the hand of groom and the father of bride.⁸¹ Next, the guests on both sides; consisting mainly of men, are entertained to a dinner.

Masara (Dinner)

The people invited for marriage sitting in the *pandal* form temporary circles of 6 or 8 persons around a *supra* (dinner sheet), which is spread on a mat. At the centre in a big porcelain plate (*san*) ghee rice and meat curry and other dishes are arranged. In the olden days all the people ate from the same big plate, that is, from each side without making problem to his neighbour. This system of dinner around a *supra* is known as *Masara* in Calicut town.⁸² However larger the number of *Masara*, the system was so efficient that nobody has any complaint. After the dinner, the bride groom is ceremonially taken to bridal chamber. The bride groom and his friends are then entertained to light refreshments in the bridal chamber after which the bride groom returns to his house, probably after midnight.

80. Ibid., p.162

81. A.P. Ibrahim Kunju, Mappila Muslims of Kerala, their History and Culture. Trivandrum, 1989. p.183.

82. P.P. Mammed Koya parappil, op.cit., p.269.

On the day following *Kalyānam*, one of the bride's brothers arrives with a present of sweets and invites the groom to the bride's house. At the bride's house the groom is entertained to a dinner after which he is led by the *Kāranavar* to *Ara* (bridal chamber). When he is alone, the bride is brought to the door of the room by women by singing songs and pushed into the chamber. This ceremony is called *arayilakkal* or pushing inside the room.⁸³ This is the night of the consummation of marriage.

The bride groom is supposed to leave the chamber early in the morning before any one could see him. In the next day a brother-in-law comes to invite him to lunch and again at night is taken by his brother-in-law for dinner and groom spends the night with the bride. While going to the bride's house at night the bride groom invites his friends to accompany him and four servants will light the torches on their way. While his friends depart soon after dinner bridegroom stays on. This routine has to be repeated for forty days and the last day's ceremony is called *Pallikkiyal*.⁸⁴ One day women guests from the groom's side go to the bride's house to invite the bride. The bride is ceremonially taken to the groom's house. This function is called *pudukkam*.⁸⁵ and only women are invited to it. The bride remains in the groom's house for a day or two. Next, the bride is ceremonially taken back to her house, the function is called *Marupudukkam*.⁸⁶

83. Victor S. D'souza, *op.cit.*, p.162.

84. P.K. Mohamad Kunhi. *op.cit.*, p.295.

85. Victor S.D'souza, *op.cit.*, p.162.

86. *Ibid.*, p.163.

Moodayum Panavum

It is a custom in Calicut city after the *Pudukkam*. Letters were sent extending invitation to relatives and friends which is known as *Nallarikka*. It is observed to mark the first occasion when the groom goes to the bride's house for night co-habitation. The family members and close friends are invited to this function. Some boys would come from bride's house to invite the groom. Before the groom would reach in the bride's house, persons from groom's house would bring a basket of rice covered known as *Mooda* and *Panams*, this is followed with a grand feast comprising of various dishes like *Muttamala*, *Muttasurka*, *Muttapathiri*, *Vazhakada*, *Samosa*, *Chattipathiri*, *Taripola* etc., This type of *Salkāram* would last for 40 days. Four items of dishes would be sent in 10 days' interval for 4 times from bride's house to groom's house, this custom is known as *Tannimkudi*.⁸⁷

Jamat

This relates to another custom of Calicut city. The first Id after marriage would be celebrated with great pomp. The groom sends dresses to all the household people of the bride. All the dresses are tied with a white cloth which would be exhibited to all relatives.⁸⁸ The groom takes this *Jamāt* as a matter of prestige. After this ceremony is over no special attention is paid to the bridal couple. The bride groom is required to take his meals in his own

87. P.P. Mammed Koya Parappil, op.cit., p.271.

88. Ibid.

house and he visits his wife at night. It is supposed that after this the nightly visits of the husband to his wife's apartment should remain unnoticed. But in later days it is usual for the husband to go to the wife's house early at night and return late in the morning.

Marriages in South Malabar

The Mappilas of South Malabar celebrate the marriage in a lesser scale, the festivities being wound up within a week. They observe many of the customs of the marriages in North Malabar, but slight changes can be seen in the customs since most of them are following the patrilocal system. For example, the proposal of marriage has to come from the groom's side. The betrothal as well as *nischayam* ceremonies take place in the bride's house. The *Kaniyath* and *Kalyāṇam* take place on the same day in the bride's house.⁸⁹ After the ceremony, the bride groom stays for a few days in the bride's house, but the marriage is not consummated there. A few days or the very day after the *Kalyāṇam*, the bride and groom are ceremonially taken to the groom's house where marriage is consummated. The later days of marriage are marked with *salkarams* (reception) in the houses of various relatives of both sides.

The marriage customs of the *Thangals* and *Arabis* are very different. Among them *Kaniyath* and *Kalyāṇam* are celebrated on the same day in the house of bride. Their *nikāh* ceremony is performed on a carpet and hence it is called *padathil kaniyath* (nikah on carpet).⁹⁰ All the guests present have to

89. Ibid., P.164

90. Ibid.

give presents in cash to *Qāzi* who officiates the ceremony. The bride groom used to carry decorated umbrellas in the marriage procession. Some of the local customs like *Kanhikudi*, washing of the feet by his brother-in-law etc. are avoided. The payment of *mahr* is strictly made at the time of the *nikāh*.⁹¹ The *nikāh* ceremony is never performed much in advance of the *Kalyanam* and only in their case does the consummation of marriage take place on the night of *nikāh* itself. In general invitations to the different marriage functions are restricted to different categories of guests. Only males are invited to functions, but under no circumstances will men and women mix together.

On the whole it will be seen that the Mappila marriage has two main aspects - one Islamic and the other local. From the Islamic point of view a Muslim marriage is a simple affair. The essential requirement is that partners to a marriage should give their full consent and husband should pay a contracted amount called *mahr* to the wife, and that the marriage contract or *nikāh* should be solemnized in the presence of a witness, usually the *Qāzi*. The Mappilas no doubt, satisfy all these requirements but their local marriage customs almost overshadow the importance attached to Islamic practices.

Death

When a sick man passing through his last days at death-bed and at any time he executes a written agreement (*wasīyath*)⁹² or a will in which he

91. Ibid., p. 165.

92. Jaffer Sherif. op.cit., p.89

disposes off his property and appoints an executor. According to Islamic *Sharia* every Muslim having full mental consciousness has the right to make *wasiyath* of his properties. But *wasiyath* will be valid if only one should follow some conditions. A person could make *wasiyath* in respect of 1/3rd of his property only that also after deducting the debt amount due from him. He does not require the permission of his successor in this matter. But if the *wasiyath* property exceeds 1/3rd of his whole possessions, after his death, his successors can either allow or disallow the exceeding portion of property. If they disallow, the *wasiyath* is not binding upon the property that exceeds 1/3rd of the property.⁹³ When his disease takes serious turn a *Mulla* is called to recite *Yaseen* chapter of Quran in a loud voice. This chapter is recited to tranquilize the soul. When he breaths his last. *Kalima*⁹⁴ is recited by the bystanders and the patient is not required to repeat it. The moment the soul has departed from the body his mouth is shut, eyes are closed and cotton placed in ear and nose holes and two toes are fastened together with a thin strip of cloth to prevent the legs from remaining apart and the face is turned towards Makkah. Then the dead body (here after called *mayyat*) is removed to a platform and covered by a white cloth. Frankincense or sandal is burnt to avoid any bad smell. Then *Mulla* or nearest relatives of the deceased begins to recite Quran sitting at the place of head. Then persons are sent to all relatives

93. Haji T.M. Abdullah, Muslim Niyamam, Kannur 1965, p.76.

94. *Kalima* - The Arabic words one must pronounce to profess Islamic faith. The words are 'Lailaha illa Allah, Muhammad Rasul-ullah'. (There is no God except Allah, Muhammed is His messenger).

with the message of death. Relatives rush to see a last look of the face of the dead person. A bystander lifts the cloth and shows the face of the *mayyat* to visitors and then covers.

When almost all relatives and friends reach the house, preparations start for washing the body of the dead. There are professional washers of the dead who wash and shroud the dead for payment. Sometimes the relatives perform the duty themselves. A hole is dug in the ground to receive the water used in the washing because some people consider it dangerous to tread on such water. Some people use cold water while majority use warm water mixed with camphor and some medicinal leaves. The washer uses a cotton glove over his hand rubs abdomen pouring plenty of water and completes the cleansing with soap. Then rest of the body is washed gently. This is greater ablution (*Ghuzl*) and it is followed by lesser ablution (*Wuzu*), purifying the mouth and nostrils and washing the arms upto the elbows. Then the body is washed completely from head to feet, then from the right and finally from the left shoulder to the feet. The body is then wiped dry with a piece of new cloth and camphor powder is rubbed on the hands, feet, knees and forehead.

The Shroud (*Kafan*)⁹⁵ consists of three pieces of cloth for a man, five for a woman. First piece of man is from naval to knees, second piece neck to the knees; third a sheet reaching from the head to feet. Women have two additional pieces; a breast-band over the chest and a veil, which encircles the

95. Kafan - The process of covering the dead body by the pieces of white cloth after washing.

head once and has its two ends hanging on either side. Perfume such as rose water is sprinkled over the body. Finally a coloured shawl or some covering is thrown over the upper sheet; and the body is ready for internment. Then the body (*Janāza*) is laid in a coffin or (*sunduq*) and lifted by holding its corners and carried to the burial place. If it is a distant place the bearers were relieved by an equal number of bearers. Before the burial ceremony the prayer to the dead (*as-salatu-al-Janāza*) is to be performed. Since burial ground of the Mappilas traditionally is around the mosque, the prayer is also carried out in the mosque. The *Janāza* laid before the *Imām* (leader of prayer) who leads the prayer is quite different from actual prayer in the sense that it is performed only by standing glorifying the lord, blessing the prophet, and praying for the peace of the departed soul. After the prayer is over the *Janāza* is taken to the grave. The grave which is usually dug before hand, is about four cubic square, with a narrow square in the centre so as to make it possible to place the dead body. One or two persons descend in to the grave to lay the dead body down, while two take the sheet that covered the body, twist it round, and lifting up the body put it under the waist. Then standing one on each side of grave they hold on by the two ends, and with the help of two or three at the head and as many at the feet, they hand the corpse to the men who have descended in to the grave. They lay that body on the back with the head to the north and the feet to the south, turning the face to the westward towards Makkah, the *Qibla*. Each person takes up a little earth and recites mentally or in a whisper the words from Quran; "From it (the earth) we have created you, and on to it we

will return you, and out of it we will bring you forth a second time”⁹⁶ (20:55). The earth is then filled in the grave and completes the process of burial. Sometimes the head and feet of the buried are marked with two stones called *Mizān*.

It is common among the old Mappilas to place a message with the dead: A *Mulla* then recites some prayers and gives instructions to the dead the probable answers to the questions asked by angels to the dead man. Then he prays for the peace of soul and a better life hereafter. All the people assembled in the burial ceremony join in this prayer and disburse.

It was customary among Mappilas of Malabar to build a hut over the grave in order to recite Quran completely. This is known as *Kuzhikkalothu*.⁹⁷ Since the recitation is to be made uninterrupted *Mullas* take turns and in a relay of recitation the whole Quran (*Khatam*) is completed. At the end the *Mullas* are rewarded, sweets are distributed to all those who are present at the mosque. Cloth and money are distributed to the poor.

On the third day after the burial the function called *Kannookk*⁹⁸ is performed, the word came from the fact that the eye balls of the dead person detach from the body and absorbed to the mud. On those days visitors in the

96. M.M. Pickthall, (Q. Tr.), op.cit., p.328.

97. A. Abdussalam Sullami, op.cit., p.352.

98. P.K. Mohamed Kunhi, op.cit., P.260

house of dead are given *payasam* or other sweets are distributed. Special prayers are also performed by the *Mullas* on the occasion. /

On the 28th or 40th day or 60th day another function called *Adiyanthiram*⁹⁹ is conducted. This is the occasion when a large feast is arranged and food is distributed to the poor. Then *Mullas* pray for the peace and blessing of God to the deceased and the ceremony is closed. There after the anniversary of the dead known as *Andu* is to be performed in the same date. For *Andu* relatives are invited and a feast is arranged. Widows should keep themselves in seclusion in their own houses for three months and ten days without seeing any of the male sex. This period is called *Iddat*. After that period they are at liberty to remarry.

Presently, so many practices such as *Kuzhikkaloth*, 'Kannookk', 'Adiyanthiram' and 'Andu' etc. have been given up by a large section of the community due to the reformist preachings that the customs are alien to the true Islamic principles and are mere imitations of the other communities.

Thus a look in to the personal customs and manners in the life of a Mappila, it can be seen that, most of them have ^{been} framed on the basis of religion where as quite few of them have ^{been} framed on the basis of indigenous customs. However the Mappilas are keen to follow all the observances without fail.

99. Ibid., P.261

SALIENT FEATURES IN THE SOCIAL LIFE OF MAPPILAS

Abdurahiman.K.P “Mappila heritage: A study in their social and cultural life”
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CHAPTER - 3
SALIENT FEATURES IN THE SOCIAL LIFE OF
MAPPILAS

The Mappila habits and customs are typical in character. In every aspect of life they have evolved new customs and manners. They exhibit a variety of culture in the fields of dress, food, ornaments, household articles and cosmetics that they used in daily life and in the personal habits, amusements and observances they are identical in every respect. They made use of indigenously developed articles but followed a special pattern and style to make their own individual identity. It is this identity which developed a unique character particular to them which alienated them from other sections of the society. Even though the dress used by Mappilas and other Hindu classes are same, that is mundu, Mappilas wear it from right to left and thus kept their own identity. Historians have noted this special character of Mappilas. In the food habits, Mappilas followed a mixed culture of local origin and Arab traditions. Since Islam allows meat as a food, it is a common sight through out Malabar that in every localities there is a meat shop. The Mappilas have a special interest for ornaments and they designed their ornaments using local artisans. So many gold ornaments are typical Mappila ones, that other sections of the society never copied it. Though houses are built by local artisans in the traditional style, in Mappila houses certain pattern is specific. *Padappuram* was typical to Mappila houses. Likewise in personal amusements and recreations Mappilas have their own special items. Thus in

all aspects of life Mappila customs have kept their own identity and individuality. Following is a study of these special characteristics of the community during the pre-modern period.

Dress

In the matter of dress and costumes Mappilas present a picture of variety. A common feature which emerges from the study of the historical sources is that both Mappila men and women used different types of dresses in daily life as well as on special occasions. The impact of Arabian and Persian influence in clothing was specific due to the age long contact with West Asian countries and merchants. This brought about significant changes in the dressing style of people especially in the coastal areas.

Simplicity and elegance of dress was a trait of the Mappila character. In the British period, the common male dress was the white *mundu* (cloth) which was worn round the loins. This *mundu* was rough making by the traditional weavers of Deccan. This cotton *mundu* was only used in special occasions but for common use a red mundu known as *Kindam* had been used. The Mappilas had the habit to combine the two edges of mundu to form a cylinder in shape.¹ The well to do men of society used much polished white *mundu* known as *soori* with red or blue line border. Another type of cloth was the linen, white or coloured imported from Britain, hence the name 'common

1. Adoor Ramachandran Nair, Chila Kerala Charitra Visheshanga!, Thiruvananthapuram, 1980, p 14

wealth' cloth.² Mappilas had the practice to wrap the cloth from right to left (Hindus tie them to the right)³ Usually the *mundu* was tied to a *charad* (waist string) to hold it in position. The underwear was usually made up of long piece of cloth called *Langottis* which was tightly tied around the loins.

As far as upper body part, for the poor common Mappilas, it was half naked, but they had one shirt reserved for special occasions. But the nobles and rich, 'Thangals' (Sayyids) and 'Ulama' (priest) used to wear full sleeve long shirt reaching down to the feet with golden buttons in the neck. The shirt was stitched by the tailors of big cities.

As head dress, the Thangals used black caps while nobles used white caps and the 'Ulama' used white turbans. But the common people satisfied with a rough cloth known *parikkan mundu* around their head. Besides caps of various nature such as Persian, Turkish and Afghan type of caps were worn by aristocrats of the community. The common people also sometimes tied a towel known as *Bayambōri Urumāl* or *Madras rumāl*.⁴ There was a baniyan type upper garment used by rich and poor alike known as *Kanniprak*. The boys used red *kindom mundu* until circumcision. Thereafter white mundu, a symbol of maturity, was worn.

2. Mohamed. Yahya, S/o Badsha Haji, Cloth Merchant of Perinthalmanna (the British Walluvanad taluk) from 1900 A.D. onwards, in an interview on 23.2.2000.

3. C. Achutha Menon (Ed), Cochin State Manual, Thiruvananthapuram, 1995, p.396.

4 P.A. Mohamad Koya, Sulthan Veedu, Trichur, 1974, p.10.

Women used to wear different coloured clothes commonly known as *Kātchi*, White *kātchi* which had green, blue or violet borders, blue *kātchi* and green *kātchi* with red border were common in practice. Rich ladies used *soori*, a white cloth with *kasavu* (golden coloured thread) border. Old ladies used *soop*, a black cloth with flower border.⁵ In coastal areas, ladies of aristocratic families used silk clothes of different varieties like *Karakayithuni*, *churul* and *karupp*. On festive occasion ladies wore *Mathāv* and *churul* of silk clothes embroidered by golden or silver strings all around the plain of clothes.

For upper garment, the ladies of Calicut and other coastal areas used a white loose shirt *Kuppāyam*. In South Malabar the Mappila women after their conversion from low caste Hindus, who had not the practice to cover their breast, were compelled to cover and hence used a type of tight jacket called *penkuppāyam*⁶, made up of sharkan or Dakha Muslin cloth embroidered in neck and sleeve. The head dress was a linen piece of cloth with *kasavu* border. This was *kochi thattam*, usually made at Turayur. Wealthy ladies used silky *thattam*. The ladies of Sayyid class covered their whole body with a long veil called *Burqa* or *Jilbāb*.⁷

The bridal dress of Mappila women should be specially noted for its colourful and attractive nature. In North Malabar the bride wore *Mathav* (a

5. Mohamed. Yahya. Cloth Merchant in an interview. On 23.2.2000.

6. P.K. Mohammed Kunhi, *Muslimingalum Kerala Samskaravum* (Mal), Trichur. 1982, p.300

7. Ibid.

full dress set, *mundu*, *kuppāyam* and *thattam* with glittering, ornamental decoration with coin dots of *kasavu*). Bride had other types of dress namely *kasavāra thuni*, *pachapatt*, *pullithuni*, *kalliyum pulliyum*, *churul* etc, Besides the bride, accompanying ladies, relatives, newly wedded ladies and wealthy ladies were dressed in *Oothapatt*, *chuvannapatt*, *karakkāyi*, *chempolappacha* etc.

The bride groom in North Malabar wore white *Muslin mundu* and white linen shirt with an overcoat. But in South Malabar, the groom was simply dressed in white mundu and white shirt. The groom had worn a turban with fine cloth or a cap or towel according to his means.

Mappilas of Malabar had thus a long tradition and special interest in clothing. The Arabian influence was behind this interest to a great extent. The merchants of Java, Tunis, China and Rome presented their dress to native people.⁸ Thus they came across new variety of dress materials. The Mappila dresses made a revolutionary change in the social life of Kerala. The Nair class Hindus and later *Shudra* class also imitated the Muslim style of dress that their ladies started to cover their breasts which was hitherto a taboo on their part. This resulted in the women dress *rowka* which was widely used in British period.⁹ But with modernization and educational awakening, the dress system has undergone drastic changes. Young men and women among Mappilas are mostly accepting modern dresses like other communities. Pants

8. P.A. Said Mohammed, Charithram Oru Kannadi, Kottayam, 1975, p.27.

9 Baskaranunni, 19 Nootandile Keralam (Mal), Trivandrum, 1988, p.33

and shirts are the commonly accepted dress of males. Young women prefer sari and blouse. Only age old men and women of Mappila community are now using the old traditional dresses.

Food

The surroundings of a man influence his lifestyle and food habits. Mappilas being the inhabitants of the agricultural area, where paddy cultivation was intensively carried out, they heavily depended on the rice, as their staple food. Besides, they consumed all types of vegetable items. But in coastal areas fish was preferred to vegetables. The rice was cultivated in the fields of their own in the case of rich people, but poor earned it from land lords by daily labour. Then the people had depended on what they got from the homesteads. The easily available and grown items like cucumber, tapioca, colocasia, elephant yam, jack fruit, coconut, banana etc., were the most preferred items. Meats of cow, buffalow and goat were used according to their means. Mappilas were very particular in using *halāl* meat, that was killed in the name of *Allah*, having its throat cut.¹⁰ Coconut was mixed with rice to prepare *Thēngachor*, likewise jaggery was mixed to prepare *chakkarachor* and *uluva* (*Trigonella Foe-num*) mixed with rice to make *ulavachor*. They were the special dishes of festive occasions. Among the rich Mappilas *Neychor* (Ghee rice) and *Biriyāni* (mixture of meat and rice with spices) were common.¹¹ Later all people used this on festive occasions.

10. C.A. Innes, Malabar gazetteers, Thiruvananthapuram, 1997 (First print in 1908) p.188.

11. P.A. Syed Mohammed, Charitratile Silakusumangal, Trissur, 1967, p.23.

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Among the common people of South Malabar food habits were confined to meager items unlike the coastal areas mainly because most of them were peasants and led a poor life. In the morning before they go out to labour, they generally take their *conjee* or porridge consisting of water in which a certain quantity of rice has been boiled till all its mealy nourishing and cooling properties were dissolved. The mid day meal was again *conjee*. In the evening they prepared rice with curry, a soup which consists of herbs with pepper and cardamom, which was served with a *kayil* (wooden spoon). But among the wealthy class for breakfast, *vellappam*, *idiappam* and *puttu*, the dishes of Nair Hindu class, had been prepared. But the favourite item for breakfast was *pathiri* an exclusive dish of Mappilas, a bread made out of rice flour.



During the British period, they used wheat as their staple food and distributed it through civil supplying centres. It was used to make *barōtta*, *chappāthi* and *pūri* which became common items of menu. Later *barōtta* became a favourite dish of Mappilas. Some items like, *pappadam*, pickles, *sāmbār*, *ada*, *pāyasam* etc., which were inherited from Hindu class became a part of Mappila life. The poor people also used tapioca as staple food especially in the time of famine. Kerala being the land of coconuts, it is only natural that coconut and coconut oil were used extensively in preparations. The Calicut city had its special sweet, *halwa* and fried banana chips, *kayvātti*.¹² With the British arrival tea and coffee had been widely used

12. A. Sreedhara Menon, Social and Cultural History of Kerala. New Delhi. 1979. p.124.

by common people. *Sarbat* and *Sāmbharam* were the summer drinks. *Avil* made out of paddy by pressing it hard, was a favourite snack of Mappilas. The water mixed *Avil* was used as a soft drink. Presently, these food items are following with slight variations, that are more meat items are included in the menu. Besides instant food items are also used.

Among the North Malabar Muslims, a variety of *appams* (bread) were used. Some common items were *Pathiri*, *Aleesa*, *Ediyappam*, *Pongappam*, *Kinnathappam*, *Neypathiri*, *Pālada*, *Adakkappam*, *Pathal*, *Oratii*, *Manippoot* etc., Items which had been roasted in oils were *Achappam*, *Kozhalappam*, *Diamond*, *Chembappam*, *Vayakkathappam*, *Unniyappam*, *Neyappam*, *Avilos unda*, *Poorappodi*, *Unnakkay*, *Karakkappam*, *Maniyappam*, *Chukkappam*, *Poorappam*, *Amlathilada*, *Unda*, *Madakku*, *Mukkippori*, *Areeram*, *Maṇḍa* etc., Some special dishes for *Puthiyāppila* (bridegroom) were *Halwa*, *Muttamasāla*, *Muttasurka*, *Kiskis*, *Muttapathiri*, *Muttathapam*, *Turkipathal*, *Pancharapāṭta*, etc. Among the various *porridges*, *Rava Kanhi*, *Parippu Kanhi*, *Palkanhi*, *Cherupayar kanhi* were important. With meat, dishes like *erachipathiri*, *erachikurma*, *erachikeema*, *erachikabbāb*, *cutlet*, *Samoosa*, *erachippidi*, *brain roast*, etc., were prepared.¹³

In the month of Ramzan, the Mappilas took fast during day and in the evening special dishes were prepared. *Tarikanhi* and *Jeeraka Kanhi* were special *porridges*. Special snacks like *Kozhi Ada*, *Unnakkay*, *Baji*, *Muttamari*,

13. P.K. Mohammad. Kunhi, op.cit., p.302.

Kozhi Nira, barōtta, Pathiri, Vellapola, Ōttapathiri were specially prepared during Ramzan at the time of breaking the fast.¹⁴ In the eve of *Id* day, special dishes like *puliyaral, ada, Aleesa* etc; were prepared. With modernization so many of the items are extinct and a few are surviving. The ladies of modern period have not inherited the tradition of food making of olden days which are rather time and money consuming. So they prefer modern food preparations. Thus the so called *appatharams* have become a part of Mappila heritage.

Among the old Mappila Folk Songs, there is a very popular *oppana* song known by the name '*Ammayipātt*',¹⁵ in this there is a special reference about various *appams* of North Malabar prepared by mother in law to her son in law. (See Appendix 4 for original lines)

Bread Items (*Appatharam*)

To tell the bulk of *appams*,
 Made by *Ammāyi* for her son in law,
 To boost the body well,
 To love more and more.
 So huge is *Kiskisi*
 So is *Pola* and *idiyappam*

14. K.P. Kunhi Moosa. "Perunna Ravu", Chandrika Weekend Edition, dt.31.3.1993, p.III.

15. Ammayipatt is a special branch of old Mappilapattu. These songs mainly describe the relation between mother-in-law with her in-laws.

The *Muttamari* is golden in colour,
 The *Māsara* shines as lightning.
 Fine be *Kalathappam* and *Kulusiappam*
 Fair be *Kavābappam* and *Mudachilappam*
 Many of the *Muttasurka*
 Made keenly the *Panchārappāta*
 Limitless the spices added to make,
 Lot of white *Kalathappam* and *Odappam*
 Best of *Kozhi Muraba* and *Turkipathil*
 Better the Chicken filled *appams*
 Every one of them cost much,
 Eagerly waited sugar beats reached,
 Nicely prepared *Kozhikanhi*
 Neck sticking *Bellapola*
 Every bread made polishly,
 Eggs were much added to *erachiyappam*,
 Beauty to see *Koyi Sirva*,
 Better to serve before guests,
 Milky *Tawāb* is much tasty
Muttamāla is ready to serve,
 Tasty egg filled, *Appams*
 Toasted *Bala appam* with *Madakkipathal*

Ornaments

Ornaments are quite an important item for the decoration of the body, the wearing of ornaments on almost every part from head to feet, is a special weakness of the female sex. The Mappila women have been in the forefront in observing this particular habit from very long time. In matters of decorative ornaments, bulk and profusion rather than quality and elegance seem to have determined the female choice.¹⁶ To a woman married life signalled the use of ornaments all over the body. The ornaments were primarily made of gold and silver and also by some plastic beads and glass piece cuttings. Jewels have not been used by Mappila women. The religion of Islam permits the women to be adorned by gold ornaments, but to a certain limit. One can use 20 *mithqal* gold (10 ½ Sovereign) ornaments and 52 ½ *mithqal* silver.¹⁷ If this limit exceeds the surplus is considered as deposits for which *zakāth* (Poor tax) is to be paid. The poor people who could not afford gold mainly depended on silver ornaments.

In the earlier period before the on rush of modernization, several ornaments were worn by Mappila women. Small boys and girls used gold or silver ornaments in their anklet known as *Thanda* and *Thala* respectively. *Thanda* was circle in shape having *Arakku* (*lac*) in its inner parts. But *Thala* circular in shape having a hollow inside but with some iron granules inside for

 16 S.M Jaffer. Some cultural aspects of Muslim rule in India, New Delhi, 1972, p.177

17. K.M Pannikkottur, "Passion for ornaments", Chandrika Weekened Edition, Calicut, 24-11-1984, p.II

producing a giggling sound.¹⁸ Men never used gold ornaments for the same is prohibited by Islam. Instead they used copper rings-(*Nāmb*) in their finger and also wore *ēlassu* (Talisman) made up of copper plates.

Women wore ornaments mainly in ear, neck, finger, wrist, waist, anklets and seldom in head.

Ear ornaments: In the lower lobe of the ear a hanging ornament was worn by the ladies which was fixed by a screw. This was called *Kummath* and screw was called *Changeeri*. Another ornament of same type was known as *Minni* and *Maṇikāthila*. Mappila women had the habit of piercing the edges of ear drum inserting rings from top to bottom. This leaflet rings were called *chittu*. *Thekkan chittu*, *Nadan chittu*, *Alukkath*, *Elachittu*, *Parachittu* were various type of *chittu*.¹⁹ The poor people used silver *chittu*. There was a belief among the people that *chittu* should be used in odd number. Usually it was 13. Some minimized it to 5 or 7.

Neck ornaments: Neck ornaments are both types: 1) Ornaments around the neck which was worn very tight to the body (Necklace) (2) ornaments hanging from the neck up to breast or belly known as garlands or *māla*. Among the necklaces, *changelas*, *Koralāram*, *Elakka koralāram*, *kombeles* and *paranneles* were important items. There were a variety of *mālās* (garlands)

18. Balan, gold smith, Ramapuram, Malapuram Dist in an interview on 30-1-2001.

19. Ibid.

used by women. Each was named according to their shape and feature. *Gothambatharamāla* was in the shape of wheat seeds, *Arakkāpavan māla* was in the shape of coins. *Kattipathakkam* was in the shape of Jasmine flower.²⁰ *Poothali*, *Elakkathali*, *Ādimāla*, *Pavanmāla*, *Chakkaramāla*, *Chavidimāla*, *Kanīmāla*, *Kashumāla* were some other commonly used garlands in South Malabar. But in North Malabar and Calicut areas some other types were used. *Thandurukk*, *Kārakkallu*, *Edakallu*, *Anju Pathakku*, *Pavizhelas*, *Muriyelass* *Āmādakkootam*, *Vairamāla*, *Thoda* and *Panchya*²¹ were widely used. These types of *Elassu* (necklace) and *māla* (garland) were used according to the financial condition of the people. All these ornaments were indigenous in origin. No Arab or Persian influence could be seen because the gold smiths who were the skilled labours were exclusively from the Hindu class *thattān* who was never acquainted with foreign influence.

Wrist and Finger: The wrist ornaments were called *Vaḷa*, to name a few, *Ottavaḷa*, *Olavaḷa*, *Naduvaḷa*, *Parankivaḷa*, *Kannādivaḷa*, *Pirivaḷa*, *Reyilivaḷa*, *Kadakam*, *Talusser vaḷa*, *Urulan Vaḷa*, *Kuriya vaḷa*, *Kothuvaḷa*, *Kalluvecha vaḷa*, *Chettuvaḷa*, *Tarivaḷa*, *Tholuvaḷa*, were commonly used by women.²² Finger ornaments are called *Mōthirams*. Various types of *Mōthirams* with Jewel stones and glass stones were used. The well to do ladies used a special ring in the edge of *Muṇdu* known as *Konthalamōthiram*.

20. Ibid.

21. P.K. Mohamed. Kunhi, op.cit., p.295.

22. Sathish Menon, "Patharamattu". *Malappuram Peruma Monthly*. Malappuram, Nov. 1999. p.4.

Waist ornaments: As the Mappila women used to wear *kātchi* (cloth) around their body, it is essential to have a string to tie it firmly to waist. Thus they wore a belt like ornament namely *Aranjānam*, usually made up of silver. Poor people made the *padi* (buckle) with silver and the other portion by copper wire (*cheema kambī*).²³ The *Aranjānam* is broad, big and belt like in shape with woven network of strings. A small type of this *Aranjānam* known as *thorad* was also used by women.²⁴ *Aranjānam* was of course the proud symbol of wealthy ladies and a dream of poor. These two ornaments are still used by age old women of the society.

Leg ornaments: The common ornaments worn in anklet were *Pādasaram* or *kolusu*. The poor made it of silver while the rich by gold. *Pādasaram* is like a chain having many leaflets on the body part. The silver *pādasaram* of children had small modules to produce bell sound. In head, brides used *Mudikkinam*, *Mudipoornam* and *Nettipattam*.

So many of the above mentioned ornaments have vanished beyond revival and only names of such ornaments remain. The new generation of gold smiths could not reconstruct them in its old form. The main reason for the disappearance of the old ornaments is attributed to the inconvenience to wear them especially by modern ladies. The ornaments were very heavy due to the use of *Arakku* (lac) inside it. Several ornaments were merely for exhibiting

23. C. Abdullah aged 80, a native of Wandoor in Malappuram Dist. in an interview on 18.2.2000.

24. Balan, op. cit.

and they became proud symbol of family status rather than personal beauty of the wearer. A Mappila song in the old *Kalyāṇapāttu* selections of anonymous author, vividly describes the various ornaments of North Malabar during the British period.²⁵ (See Appendix 5 for original lines)

Ornaments

Vairamāla and *Ratnamāla* ,
 Perfectly made for all,
Chakkaramāla, and *Minnimāla* ,
Madirachilli is a best *māla* ,
 Finely shaped *Kothumala* ,
 Flower like *Eranhimāla* ,
Rāgamāla rises beauty,
Pattamāla twists round the body,
Kuruvamāla like feather,
Vairamāla shining well,
 Grand be *Kashumāla* ,
 Great be *Kadirumāla* ,
 Gold like *Kāthila* ,
Maṇikomban adds beauty ,
 Little branched *Maṇikāthila* ,
Maṇivukāthila like jasmine flower,

 25. P.K. Mohamed Kunhi, op.cit.. p296.

Better named *Binakey*
Pakasamani in forehand,
Kadavan Otta, shines well,
Kadavan otta is jasmine shaped,
Padivin otta is famous ,
Chinnam otta is spiral ,
Piribala wears in the wrist,
Tolbala shines in the shoulder,
 So many laces in the world ,
 Bearing so many names of own .

Special Wearings

Thalappavu (Turban)

Thalappāvu or turban is a dress item of Arabian tradition which is accepted by Islam as *sunnah* of Prophet Muhammed. As the followers of Islam, Mappilas closely followed this practice. Prophet's turban was known as *Sahāb*. The Arabs had the practice to use a white scarf with black-knot around it. Iraqis and Palestinians use turban with coloured checklines. The turban of Afghans was the greatest of all other turbans, having 10 meters in length. The name of turban varies according to its shape. Mappilas usually tie turban with their second *mun̄du*, that is the towel worn on the shoulder namely *parikkan mun̄du*.²⁶ This towel had dual purpose. Besides using it for tying as

26. V.K. Abu, "Thalappavu Mahatmyam", Chandrika weekend edition, 11-6-1984, p.III.

turban it was also used as towel for bathing. *Mulla* or *Musliyār* wore permanent turban since it is a symbol of scholarship. The Mappilas had the practice to shave their head clean. The turban protected them from the heat of the sun falling directly to the shaven head. Besides, by tying the turban, they got free access to their hand while working. Another use of turban was that it could be used to spread on the soil when they have to pray at an open place. *Thalappāvu* had thus served various purposes in the day to day life of Mappilas.

Arapatta (Belt)

Wearing of *Arapatta* (belt) was common among the Mappilas during the British period. The belt was made up of leather having multiple pockets for keeping coins. It served the purpose of fixing the *mundu* tightly to the waist. The belt is said to have been introduced from *Yeman* because it was the *Yemani* fashion that was inherited by the *Kakkās*²⁷. (typical Mappila was known by this name). The knife, the constant companion of a peasant Mappila was inserted through the side of this belt.

Kadaram (sharp knife)

Wearing of *Kadāram*, a sharp knife, similar to a dagger was a special habit of peasant class Mappilas. The knife was mainly for the purpose of betel cutting and to cut arecanut to pieces as a part of pan-chewing. The knife was

27. T. Madhava Menon, (ed) A Hand book of Kerala, Vol I, Trivandrum, 2000, p.759.

also used to make *miswāk* (tooth brush of coconut bark). Since Malappuram was the centre of South Malabar where bulk of the Mappilas were peasants, the knife they wore earned the name *Malappuram kathi*.²⁸ But this knife was never used for any atrocities as it was depicted by several persons, but it was solely for the purpose of peace. The knife was dagger in shape with fine decorative handle made out of the horn of deer. Silver bindings were given for more shine. The knife had also a leather sheath to keep in. In the British era the knife became the proud symbol of every Mappila.

Methiyadi (Wooden footwear)

A wooden foot wear was worn by the Mappilas known as *Methiyadi*. Leather chappals were rare and costly during those days. Most of the poor people had not the practice to wear footwear. They walked and worked bare footed. But the purpose for which *Methiyadi* wearing was practised was to keep their feet clean after taking the ablution for prayer from the near by well or pond.²⁹ The *Methiyadi* was simple in construction. A flat wooden piece with a nut for the finger grip and thick heel. It required some practice to walk by wearing *Methiyadi*, but some people practised walking very fastly wearing this. With the introduction of Rubber chappals of very cheap value this *Methiyadi* became out dated.

28. Babu, "Malappuram Katthi", Malappuram Peruma, Dec 2000, p.14.

29. P.A. Mohammed Koya, Sulthan Veedu, Trichur. 1974. p.10.

Elassu (Talisman)

Mappilas had the practice to wear *ēlassus* (small cylinders of copper with Quranic writing) around their waist or on the upper arm, which are tied to a string. There were writings on the paper usually from the text of Quran or any magic number columns (*Abjad*) tied in copper or silver sheets.³⁰ The wearing of the *ēlassus* considered as a talisman, was to avert misfortune and evil eye. *Mullās* chanted *Mantras* and wrote Arabic letters or numbers in the paper which is carefully covered in copper plates and tied in through holes to a string. The *ēlassus* were considered essential to avert bad omens.

Mappilathoppi (Cap)

The difficulty to use and maintain turban gave way to the use of more convenient caps. It was the Turks who were famous in history for the glory of the caps. The Mappilas of North Malabar kept a great tradition in making and using of caps known as *Thalankara thoppi*. Arabs had great admiration for this *thoppis*. It was used to cover the head during prayer, while visiting the house of nobles and when walking in hot sun. It was from 1420 AD, *Thalankaratoppi* came to the scene.³¹

The parts of *Thalankara toppi*³¹ were made in various places nearby. The body was built at Banglore, embroidery works at Chemnad and Malapparamba. The cloth of this *toppi* is either *kora* or *malmal*. *Toppi* has

30. C.A. Innes. op.cit., p.187.

31. M.H. Khali lullah, "Talankara toppi", Chandrika weekend edition, Calicut 24-11-90. p.1.

two parts, base and side (*Adi* and *vallu*). Base is cut in round shape and the edges joined with side. The base and side is joined from *thoppi*. Then it is given to various houses where the embroidery and other finishing works are done. Holes are made (*kannu*) in its base and sides. After it, it would be ready for sale. *Thalankara toppi* had been exported to Turkey, Yeman, Indonesia and Malaysia. Among Mappilas, the *Sayyid* class had constantly used various caps. Besides the indigenous ones they preferred caps of abroad like those of Turkey, Yeman, Indonesia and Malaysia. Turkish fez caps were their favourite item. Like wise Afghan, Mughal and Iraqi caps were worn by nobles and ulama. The trading class among Mappilas, Koyas, Keyis and Baramis wore special caps as a symbol of status and pride.

Furniture

Among the house hold furniture and articles of Mappila houses in the by-gone period, chairs, tables and cots were common. The rich men made all these with fine rose wood or teak wood with beautiful carvings. Chairs were usually made out of wood. The elders used a special kind of chair namely *Charukasera*. This was a cradle type of chair for relaxation and easy sitting. Tables were either round or square in shape. Dressing tables with mirrors were the fashion of the day. Cots were examples of stylish and elegant works of craftsmanship with fine carved legs and with majestic body. *Kōchikattil*, *Pallankikattil* and *Paramanchakattil* were examples of decorative cots.³² But

32. P.K. Mohammed. Kunhi, *op.cit.*, p. 291.

among the poor *padi* was used which was made out of cheap wooden planks. In place of chairs the poor used *Mukkāli*, a stool with 3 legs. The rich stored grains in big wooden boxes namely *Pathāyam*. But the poor made *mancha*, a small and cheap box made out of light wood mango tree planks: Both in *Pathāyam*³³ and *Mancha* the upper part was used as a cot, for the purpose of lying. *Pathāyam* was usually placed in inner rooms while *mancha* was placed in kitchen. Cradle was commonly used in the house of rich people and with modernization, furniture of easy and comfortable types have replaced the old and traditional ones.

Utensils

A variety of utensils were used in Mappila houses. The utensils were made of copper, bronze, porcelain and clay. Big narrow neck utensils were known as *Kalam*, wide neck utensils known as *Uruli* and big plates called *Talika* were common. *Kudam* was used to bring water from wells. Big pots to store oil, pickles and flour known as *Bharani*. Porcelain (China clay) was used to make plates, jugs, cups and saucers.³⁴ So many porcelain utensils were made from Mangalore and towns of Tamil Nadu which were imported to Malabar. Since the porcelain items were costly it was the privilege of the rich. The poor entirely depended on earthen pots. The *Kusava* class of Hindus manufactured these earthen pots and marketed through the houses. The

33. P. Baskaranunni, op.cit., p.156.

34. P.K. Mohammed. Kunhi, op.cit., p.294.

earthen pots were usually known by the name *Chatti*. With the introduction of Aluminium utensils and later steel utensils, the earthen pots are completely eliminated from the scene.

Household Articles

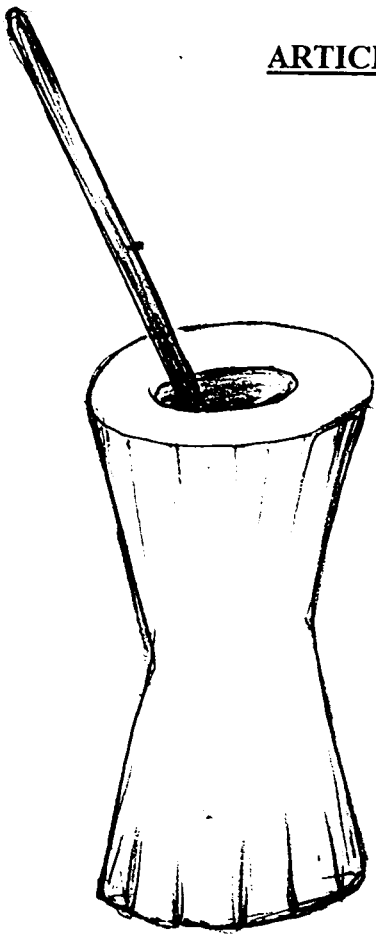
Besides furniture and utensils, many household articles were used in Mappila houses. Bed with beautiful blankets were spread by rich on their cots while the common could not afford it, they simply depended on mattress or *pāya*. The common mat was made out of coconut leaf namely *ōlapāya*. The green leaves of coconut were dried and interwoven to make mats. Another mat was *pulpāya*³⁵, which was made out of fleshy green grass grown in river beds. This grass was cut and dried and processed and tied with each other to form a mat. This was for much soft use and as spread on auspicious occasions especially for guests visiting the house. Another mat was *Achipāya*.³⁶ This was made up of fine polished leaves of a shrub growing in river beds. These types of mattresses were used by people irrespective of the rich and poor.

Another household article worthy of mention was *Ural*. This was a wooden cylindrical shaped article. The mouth of *Ural* is used to grind grains with a piston *Ulakka*. Sometimes two *Ulakkas* were used simultaneously in an *ural*. Likewise the paddy was unhusked using *Kunthani*, a broad shaped

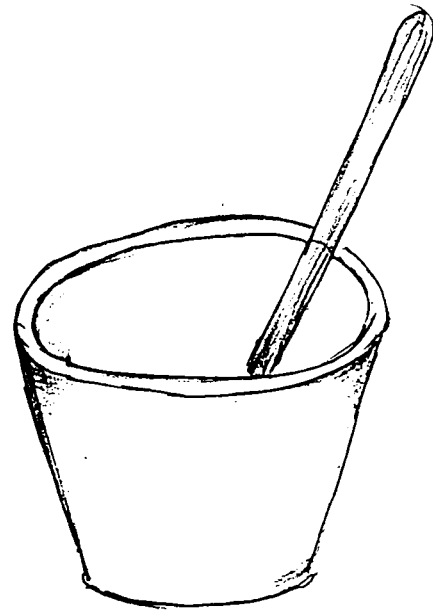
35. P. Baskaranunni, *op.cit.*, p.156.

36. *Ibid.*

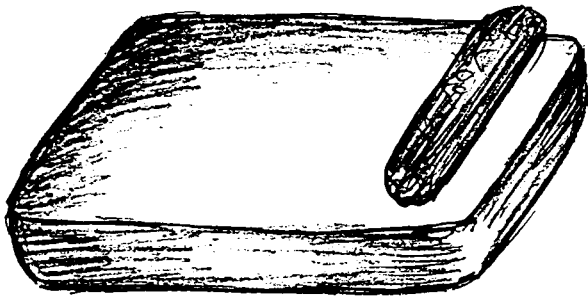
ARTICLES FOR HUSKING AND GRINDING



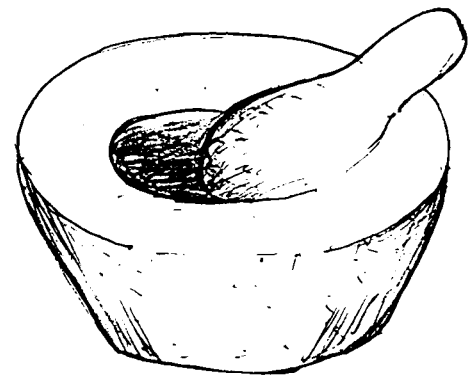
Ural with Ulakka



Kun:thani with ulakka



Ammi



Attukallu

wooden vase. The paddy grinds with two *Ulakka* at the same time by two persons. *Kottuvadi* was another wooden article with a handle and a body in order to press the soft mud hard to the ground usually used for flooring. Small wooden plank with legs, *palaka* was used to sit, eat and to work.

Chellam was a box like house hold article that was used to stock small things. Usually this was used to store things for *Murukkān* (pan-chewing). Hence it earned the name *Vettilachellam* (Betel-box). *Chellams* were made out of cheap metals like brass and had many decorations in and around it. *Chellam* varied in its size and shape according to its use. *Abharana chellam* (jewel box) was much big in size. So was *panachellam* (Cash box). This was considered as proud symbol of rich families who even made silver chellams.³⁷

Kindi or *Mooli*, as it was known in North Malabar was a very useful household article that was used to carry small quantity of water needed for ablution (*wuzu*) or sanitation. *Kindi* was made out of bronze. The tail like outlet to pour water made it more useful that one can control water flow and minimize its use. This also varied in shape depending on its use. When somebody wished to drink water, he had poured it from *kindi*, directly into throat without letting it touch his lips.

Kolāmbi was another household article widely used by Mappilas in the past years which was only for spitting purpose.³⁸ As the senior members of

37. K.P. Padmanabha Menon, *History of Kerala Vol III*, New Delhi, 1984, p.238.

38. *Ibid.*, p.224.

the family were accustomed to pan chewing periodically, it was difficult for them to go outside often to spit out the chewed material. The elders and the sick used to spit out the mucus in it which was cleaned often. Big *Koḷāmbis* were one meter in height.

Erhāl was an 'x' shaped wooden article used both in mosques and houses to place the text of Quran opened for recitation. It was very convenient that the heavy text of Quran should not be lifted in hands. Old people used it in houses and Mullahs used it in mosques especially when they have to complete the *khatam*.

All these house hold articles were used by rich and poor of the society alike. But the rich preferred bronze material while poor had to content with brass or iron material. The above articles are considered outdated ones. They can be rarely seen in modern houses. Most of them are kept as specimens in museums.

Lighting Equipments

In olden times, exactly before the introduction of electricity, the people of Malabar used a variety of things to cater the need of lighting in their daily life. In place of torch, for travelling through difficult ways, they used *pānīs* or *Rāntal*. (Chimney lamps).³⁹ *Pānīs* was simple in making. A lamp was placed in a metal piece and four sides covered with glass pieces. This structure was

39. K.P. Kunhimoosa, Madurikkum Ormakal (Mal), Calicut, 1997, p.35.

hanged from an Iron handle which was lifted through the top portion. *Rāntal* was more sophisticated than *Pānīs*. It was a chimney lamp fitted to metal frame. The lamp has its burning wick immersed in a kerosene tank from which the fuel is coming. Since this was a portable type, it was used in mosque, houses, *Madrasas* and also while travelling. The common people in their journey used two lighting things. One was *Ōdakutti*, the thin bamboo (*ōda*) was cut in one end and kerosene was filled into the hollow part. It was given a burning wick by a rough cloth or coconut fibre. The other lighting thing was *Choott*, a bundle of dried coconut leaves. This was made instantly picking leaves and it could perform through a short distance. The *Choott* was periodically blown in air in order to maintain the flame. A *choott* was burnt for 10 to 15 minutes. The British introduced petromax with the use of kerosene oil. This had much stronger intensity of light and used on the occasion of marriage and other functions.⁴⁰ Another lighting object was *Kāntavilakku*, mainly used in North Malabar. With the advent of electricity all these traditional equipments have disappeared from the scene and have become the part of heritage.

Cosmetics and Perfumes

Mappila women were conscious about cosmetics and perfumes to increase their personal appearance especially on festive occasions. In these cosmetics *Suruma* (eye stainer) plays an important role. This was mainly

40. Ibid., p.36.

intended for eye beautification and besides it acted as freshener for eyes. Ladies of Egypt and other Asian parts used it as medicine and it was also used as hair dye. In Egypt *suruma* was used to decorate 'mummies'. The stick to apply it was made out of ivory. It was introduced in Malabar through Arabian merchants in 7th century A.D. The main ingredients of *suruma* are sandal, frankincense and copper particles. Later it is manufactured in India. *Suruma* became the part and parcel of Mappila women's life. It was the main cosmetic item of a Mappila bride till recently. With the introduction of modern eye-stainers, *suruma* has been losing its position as the sole cosmetic of Mappila women. Mappila folk songs have rich reference of *suruma*.⁴¹

Mylānchi (henna) is a shrub whose leaves possess medical properties and are used as a dye. The use of henna is universal. Medically it is useful for treating burns, swelling and inflammation. Applied to palms of the hands and soles of feet they closed the pores and reduced perspiration⁴². But it is as a cosmetic that henna is usually used by Mappilas in their life. Fine dried leaves, finely crushed or ground, then sieved, are mixed to a paste with little water, can be used over night, dyes in reddish orange colour or of varying intensity. Old men used it to dye their beards. Women used it to decorate hands, nails and feet on all festive occasions. The Mappila celebrations are synonymous with its Malayalam name, *Mylānchi*. The previous day of marriage is even now known as *Mylānchi Kalyanam*, an occasion when the bride is applied *Mylānchi* by her kith and kin.

41. Basheer Irumbuzhi, "Suruma", Chandrika Weekend Edition, Calicut, 27.12.1986, p.II.

42. G.S. Colin, Encyclopaedia of Islam, Vol III, Netherlands, 1971, p.461.

The Mappilas have their special perfumes. The most typical being the *athar*. The word *athar* means fragrance, perfume etc. *Athar* has a special place in Islamic civilization and prophetic life. Prophet always carried a bag of perfumes with him. Likewise Ayisha, wife of prophet also used the best perfume of the time. Pliny and Marcopolo, the travellers had recorded as having seen many gardens of Arabia producing perfumes. Dofar was the main centre of Arabian perfumes. The Arab merchants brought this *Athar* from Arabia and Mappilas as their progeny had used it in their day-to-day life.⁴³ In festive occasions like marriage and for Friday prayer it was a must. It was a common sight that *Athar* merchants had camped around mosque premises. Mappila folk songs are replete with the glory of *Athar*.

Poovenna (scented hair oil) was quite common among the Mappilas which were special to the brides. The newly wedded had a collection of this scented hair oil. It is a mixture of coconut oil added with perfumes of various flowers. This oil was usually applied after bath. Hence the fragrance had lasted for a long period. This has also been outdated with the introduction of different kinds of perfumed sprayers.

House Pattern

The British period heralded a transitional change in pattern of houses. The British brought with them new technologies of building construction which was later adopted by the native people. In the Portuguese period most

43. A.K. Abdul Kader, *Islamic Encyclopaedia* (Mal), Vol I, Calicut, 1994, p.97.

of the houses of haves and have-nots were made out of thatched roofs. The British introduced the system of tiled roofing and its manufacture. The buildings they constructed for administrative purpose were with this type of roofing. The change from the age old thatched roofs to tile roofs first appeared in the house of rich of the Mappila society. The old system of dividing walls by wooden planks changed into stone walls. The ceiling was made by wooden beams and paved planks over them. The old Muslim *tharavādu* (joint family houses) in its structure and construction resembled the Hindu Nair *illams* (big houses) because of the fact that the carpenters were the same and one, i.e. the people called *thachans* (carpenter). In the cities of Calicut, Cannanore, Tellicherry, Ponnani and other Muslim centres of Malabar, the storied buildings (*mālikaveed*) were quite common.⁴⁴

The *Mālikaveedus* were ^{of} *Nalukettu* and *Nadumuttam* style in their appearance. The main entrance from road to house was a gateway house (*padippura*). And after the vast court yard (*muttam*), the main structure opened with long *Varāndha* with so many pillars known as *Kolai*. Usually common people and strangers could enter and sit in this area only. Only relatives and dignitaries had entrance into the next portion of the house, through the well carved main door of the house, that is *padāppuram*.⁴⁵ High platforms of stone on either side with beautiful spreading of mat and blankets were the hallmark of this section. It was the resting place for guests and

44. Mohammed Kunhi, *op.cit.*, p.323

45. *Ibid.*

dignitaries. Food was also supplied to them in this place with a spread called *supra*.

The inner part of the house actually begins with *kottil* where we can see so many *Aras* (bed rooms) arranged in the western side of *Nadumuttam* (the central courtyard). In the Northern side *Vadakkini*, (kitchen) and store room were arranged. In the eastern and southern side work areas for household works were arranged where servants and dependents worked and slept. Besides these main structure, additional structures like *thēngāpura* (coconut store), latrines and bathroom, *virakupura* or *chāyp* (log store) were arranged on the backyards. The upper storey (*malika*) was exclusively for bed rooms and *kalavara*, (store room) of valuable things. Some houses even had a third storey, *kochu mālika*, rarely some others have fourth one.⁴⁶ But the third and fourth ones were usually used to store grains, vegetables and household utensils especially big pots used on special occasions. These rich *mālika veedu* had unique names of their own, such as, *Akam*, *veedu* and *kandi* were the common suffixes, for example, *Mappilakam*, *Srānbintakam*, *Palliveedu*, *Sūpeekka-veedu*, *Mappilakandi* and *Pallikandi*. These names were derived from the names of person or place. The famous *Tharavads* of Calicut city were *Māliyākkal Barāmintakam*, *Jiffri house*, *Thamīm veedu* and *Thōppil*.⁴⁷

In the interior areas of South Malabar there were two types of houses. The house of Mappila land lords similar to *Mālikaveedu* of Calicut city but

46. P.P. Mammed Koya Parappil. *Kozhikotte Muslingalude Charithram* (Mal). Calicut. 1994. p.267.

47. Ibid.. p.265.

was more spacious with courtyards big ponds, sheds for agricultural equipments, ponds, cattlesheds and *kalappura* (paddy processing house). But the poor peasant Mappilas had thatched sheds with minimum requirements. These huts were often called *kudi* by them. These thatched roofs required periodic maintenance by way of replacing them either with coconut leaf, palm leaf or grass. The walls were made with mud balls. With the modernisation, so many of these big *Mālikaveedus* have been demolished and new real concrete structures replaced it.

Special habits and etiquettes of Mappilas

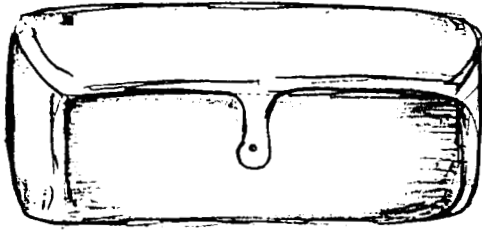
Murukkal (Betel Chewing)

Betel leaf chewing was common among the people of Malabar irrespective of caste and creed from very long time. Al-Masudi, the Arab traveller had given a detailed description of *pān* (betel leaf) he saw in Malabar. He says, “*Pān* is a kind of leaf and its plant grows in India. When the Indians chew it together with lime and arecanut, their teeth turn red like the grains of the pomegranate, their mouth become fragrant and they feel refreshed.”⁴⁸ The white teeth of a man who doesn’t chew pan is disliked in India. The leaf is so fine that it soon dries up and crumbles. It could not therefore be imported to Arabia in good condition. Al Maqdisee writes, “In these days in Yeman and at Makkah in Hijaz, it is the fashion to chew betel nut”⁴⁹

48. A.P. Ibrahim Kunju, *Studies in Medieval Kerala History*. Trivandrum. 1975. p.9.

49. *Maqdisi, Al-sin-ul-Teqsum-fi-Merifat-al-Aqila*, p.142 quoted in *Ibid* . p.9.

ARTICLES FOR BETEL CHEWING



Vettila Chellam



Idi Ural



Chunnamb Chellam



Vettila (betel leaf)



Arecanut



Tobacco roll

Betel leaf was considered essential in so many ceremonies on those days. The *Mulla* was presented with betel leaf when a child first began his education in *Othupalli*. In marriage fixation ceremony it had an important place. After every feast the Mappilas used pan chewing as a custom. A ceremony in connection with Mappila marriages in North Malabar was known as *Vettalakettu*. That is providing betel leaf to groom and his friends. Betel leaf has many medicinal qualities. The alkaline quality is a germicide which causes teeth decay and it enhances the production of saliva which in turn catalyse digestion. Betel leaf is abundant in Vitamin A, carotin and Iron. In pan-chewing, lime and arecanut are an essential part. The calcium in lime is good for teeth growth and areca is good for disease in mouth and catalyse digestion.⁵⁰ Some persons use spices like cardamom, camphor and cloves as ingredients. The variety of betel leaf includes Coimbatore, *Tulsi*, *Kilivālan*, *pandalam* items.⁵¹ In Malabar, betel leaf cultivation as a side crops of areca cultivation became an important item of agriculture. Later 'tobacco roll' became an essential part of pan chewing which was imported from the parts of Deccan.⁵² The chewing items used to stock in a *Chellam* of varied size. The usage in Malayalam *Nālumkootti Murukku* (Chewing the four things together) is derived from these practices. Presently pan-chewing is identified as the reason behind so many dangerous diseases. With this increased health awareness this practice has almost been abandoned by the younger generation.

50. P.M.P. Rawther, "Vettila Murukkal", Chandrika Weekend Edition, Calicut, 18.5.1984. p. II.

51. Ibid.

52. Ibid.

Smoking

With the advent of the British the use of tobacco crept to the public life of people. The Mappilas took a special interest in using tobacco in different forms such as *Beedi*, *churutt*, *Hukka* and nasal powder. *Beedi*, the layman's cigar was made by ladies in their houses. Later so many beedi making units were opened in different parts of Malabar. These units promoted smoking among the public upto the extent that even boys were accustomed to it. The famous brands of Malabar were the *Sādhu beedi* of Cannanore and *Kājā beedi* of Chawghat. The *churutt* is a kind of beedi having high dose of tobacco. In the fasting month of Ramzan, a special kind of beedi, *thirakkott*⁵³ was used. This was made by adding some fragrance into the tobacco powder. *Hukka* was used by wealthy people of society. Nasal powder was also commonly used. Thus one way or the other tobacco had deep-rooted in the society. With more scientific studies and increased health awareness among the new generations the practice of smoking is gradually decreasing day by day.

Salutation (Salam)

Before Islam, the Arabs used to salute others, in the traditional style *Hiyathan Subah* (good morning) and *Hiyathan Masah* (good evening). It was a system in respect of nature and time. But Islam introduced a new salutation namely *salām*. The wordings are *Assalām Alaykum* (peace and bless of God

53. Mohammed. Kunhi, op cit., p. 295.

unto you), the Quran insisted on believers to pronounce this *salām* when they wish to enter other houses (24:27-29).⁵⁴ It is better to say *salām* than to make any mis-sound or shouting when we enter other's house. The prophetic teaching also emphasises this system of salutation as the unifying factor of believers in one single fraternity. This *salām* is a symbol of equality. If the *salām* is pronounced it is the duty of the hearer to respond in the same spirit as *Wa alaykum Salām* (Peace and blessing of God un to you).⁵⁵ There is no restriction to *salam*, since it can be said by children to parents, students to teachers, a rich man to poor and so on. But generally, small group should say *salām* to a big group, those who are mounted on a vehicle to those who walk, a guest to a host, walking man to a sitting man, young person to an old person a speaker to an audience and gents to ladies, this is the conventional order of salutation.⁵⁶ The Mappilas of Malabar strictly follow this style of salutation when they meet each other.

Amusements

Kalapooth (Cattle-race)

An important recreation of the peasant class Mappilas of South Malabar was *Kālapooth* or cattle racing. It was conducted as a part of cultivation, but in high competitive spirit. Both bullocks and buffaloes^e were employed for this

54. M.M. Pickthall, (Qr. Tr.), op.cit., p. 372.

55. M.N. Abu Harun, "Salutation in Islam", Chandrika Weekend Edition, Calicut, 16.7.1982. p.II

56. K Abdulla, "System of salutation", Chandrika Weekend Edition, Calicut. 4 7.1964 p.II

game. The cattles had been specially trained for this race. They would not use for ploughing and tilling but they would sufficiently fed and well cared through out the year. They were the proud symbol of status of the owner. Usually landlords and rich had maintained them. The day of race would be declared earlier and the competing bullocks were brought to the field with so many assistants. There the pairs of bullocks yoked to a plough (*Urchamaram*) and were driven very fast one or two rounds around the field by expert cattle drivers.⁵⁷ This was repeated with each competing pairs of bullocks belonging to different persons. In olden days the winners were selected by judging the style, strength and stamina of bullocks. But later with the coming of clock, the competition was held by time wise. The bullocks which were taking least time to complete the specified round were declared winners. Single cattle race that is, race of one cattle called *eruthu* was also conducted. When the race was finished the next race was announced in another place. Thus in the cultivating seasons these types of cattle-race were conducted through out the fields of South Malabar and it was a favourite past time of peasant class Mappillas. Still in few places of South Malabar *Kālapoott* is performed in remembrance of the old glorious days of cultivation. There is a Mappila song in connection with *Kālapoott*⁵⁸ written by the famous poet Pulikottil Hyder who vividly explains the events of the race (See Appendix 6 for original lines).

57. T.K. Gopala Panikkar, Malabar and its folk, New Delhi. 1983, p.187.

58. Pulikkottil Hyder, Pulikkottil Krithikal, Wandoor, 1979, p.36.

Kalapoott

The glory of *Kālapoott*

So many told and I wished

I took my cattles one day

Reached in the field of race,

Cattles and men were numerous

The field was so vast and pitched,

With water soaked mud,

Lots of competing bullocks came,

Led my pair of bullocks to the field,

People came with the sticks to drive,

Yoked the bullocks and washed them,

Prepared them in the first corner,

People shouted and drove the bullocks,

The spectators made their bets,

Bullocks driven by *Mudinkol*

Bite the tails to inspire them,

Beat them in the return from field,

Bullocks got punching on the back,

Completed one round soon as

Driven by people with their sticks,

Blown on the back of the cattle,
 In excess joy of triumph
 Receives the prize of honour
 'Silk and Bangles' as the custom

Fishing in land water

Malabar is a land full of rivers, canals and ponds. In these water reservoirs there existed a lot of fishes. But these fishes were not in quite large quantity as that of marine fish, to make fishing a profession, but it appeared in rainy season and developed in size in summer. Thus the catching of fish became a recreation of the people. Fishes in the paddy fields were caught using a basket trap or *Kuruthi*. This trap was installed where the water flows strongly through a vedge from one field to another. The basket trap was made up of closely woven bamboo strips and entrance was shaped with inverted bamboo strips. So was it arranged that it was easy for fish to pass in and impossible to get out again.⁵⁹ At the lower end it was twisted and tied. When fish passes through the trap with water, it became prey to the trap and having filled the trap, it was transferred to another basket and replaced the trap quickly as possible. In small canals, *thodu*, another type of net was used for fishing. A bamboo strip is made in arch shape around which net was woven and this net known as *Kuthipidiyan vala*. This net was hard pressed to the ground and fish was driven inside. As the fish entered, it was lifted soon and

 59. H.C. Wilson, Egg – Reports on the Methods of capture and supply of fish in the rivers of the Nilgiri District, Madras 1907, p.II.

fishes were transferred to the basket. In shallow rivers another type of net known as *Veeshivala* had been used. This would spread to the water and by sinking deep, persons caught the fish. Usually men started in the evening carrying petromax and basket. This fishing continued throughout the night. The fish so caught was equally distributed among participants. With the use of pesticides the fish resources of canals and rivers are exhausted to a great extent and this pastime of Mappilas have become extinct.

Nayat (Hunting)

Hunting was another favourite pastime of Mappilas from the earliest time. In olden days hunting dogs were widely used for this pastime. But with the introduction of gun in the British period, its use became very common which made hunting an easy task. People went in group to forests and chased animals like deer, bison, rabbit, wild goat etc., and their flesh had been used for eating. Some times cruel animals which posed a threat to human life such as tiger, boar, wolf etc., were hunted and killed. When the hunting dogs were used, they were sent to the inner parts of forests, up on finding the prey, they were either caught if it was small, or barked against it if it was beyond their reach and hunters rushed to the spot and shot it or pierced with long lance or cut it with long knife. The hunters knew the exact location known as *kadavu* where the animals used to appear or their exact outlets from forests. Hunters had special shouting, signals or whistles to mark the movement and route of the animals. When the cruel animals like tiger, boar, Jackal etc; which had been a constant threat to domestic animals, the hunters took the responsibility

to kill it and planned a major hunting programme in which the whole villagers took part and the people rejoiced in triumph. Veteran Mappila poet, Pulikottil Hyder has written an interesting song about tiger hunting, in the name of *Nari Nāyāi*.⁶⁰

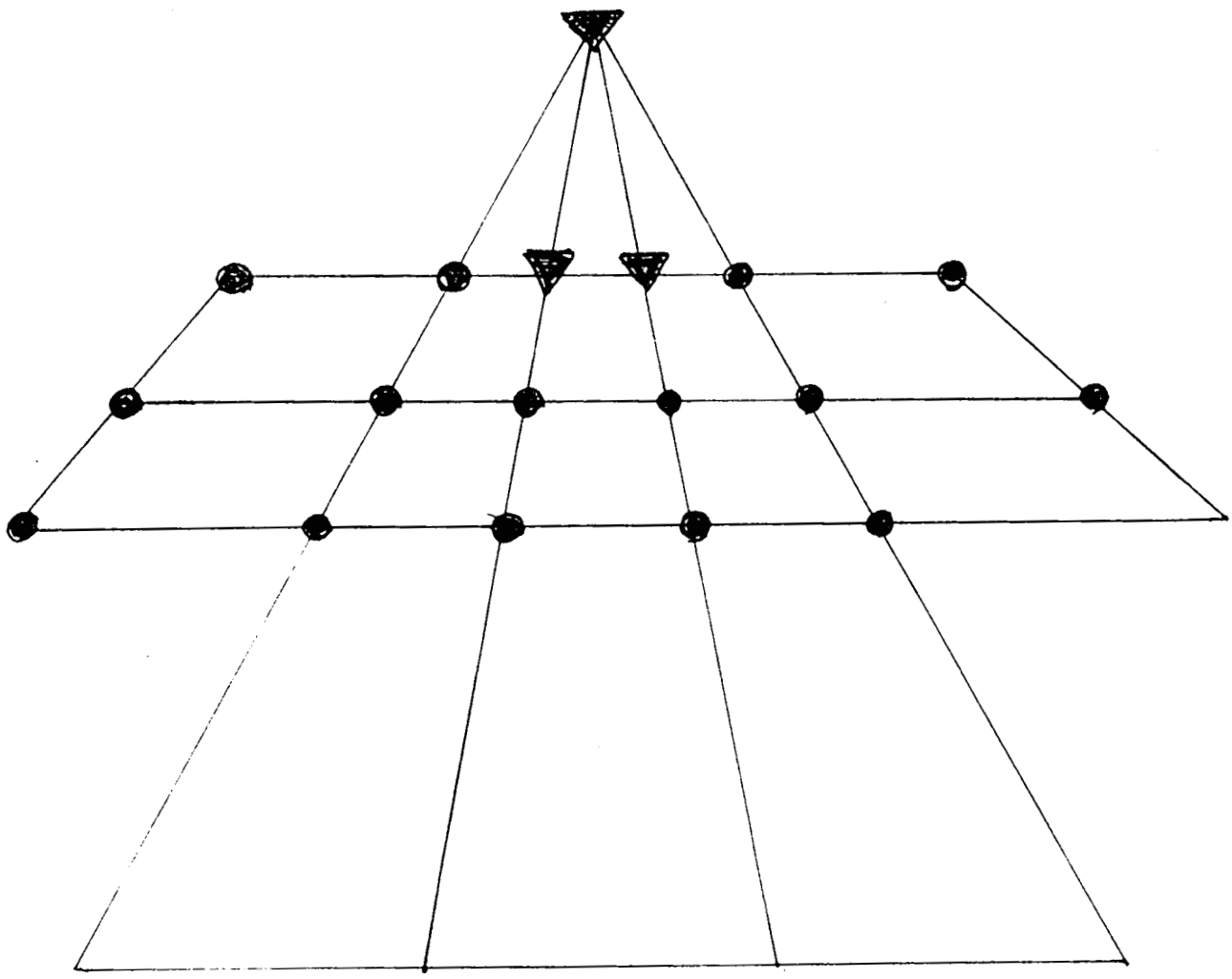
Indoor games

One of the favourite indoor games played by Mappilas of Malabar was that of 'Dogs and tigers'. A triangle with criss-cross lines is drawn on a bench or cemented platform. Then 15 small stones are picked as dogs and three big stones as 'tigers'. The person having 'tigers' would arrange the stones in the top corner and will have to move first through the lines. Then the person with 'dogs' would arrange the stones in each junction according to the movement of 'tigers'. If one 'dog' is not sufficiently protected by another 'dog' the 'tiger' can swallow the 'dog' means that the 'dog' can be removed. The 'tiger' man will be victorious if he swallows all 'dogs' with three faced attack by his 'tigers'. The 'dog' man will win if he could protect all his 'dogs' and can trap all the 'tigers'. If one turn is completed the play repeats. This is an interesting indoor game for amusement which requires intelligence and dexterity. Usually this was played in *makkānis* (tea shops) of country side. The peasants had a long interval between cultivation and harvesting that they spent such time for this type of amusements.⁶¹

60. Pulikkottil Hyder, op.cit., p.5.

61. This was played by the Present Writer himself in 1960's.

Playing Board of 'Tigers and Dogs'



▼ Tiger

● Dog

In some rich and well to do Mappila families, *Chaturanga* (chess) had been played following the practice of big Nair families. With the advent of the British, the cards play, a pastime of Englishmen was copied by elite class and employees under them. Later common people also got accustomed to cards play; but it was looked down by *Ulama* and the commons had to play it secretly.

Among the children, a lot of indoor games were prevalent. The most common indoor play was that of 'hide and seek' or *olichukali*.⁶² One boy or girl counts the number aloud from a corner while all other would hide in different corners of the house. The boy who counted had to find out others without allowing the others to reach the counting point. If any of the hiders succeed to reach the point without the notice of counting boy, the counting boy had to repeat the counting and the play is going on.

Among the girls, the favourite indoor game was *Kothakallu* or *Kallukali* (play with pebbles).⁶³ Fine polished stones were selected and each girl tossed with stones increasing the number and changed style of play. Each girl in turn played with stones and completed the round. The play is repeated several times. Another game was *Ammayikallu*, girls sitting on a line and one girl, *Ammayi* holding a stone passes into the hands of another girl while all others pretended to have received the same. Then the girl asked one of the

62. This play was also witnessed by the Present Writer in 1960's.

63. Ibid.

players to find out the actual position of the stone. If she says the correct person she would get the position of *Ammāyi*, the chance to distribute it.

Out door games

In addition to the indoor games, there were a number of other games conducted by Mappilas in the field. But these types of out door games were mainly conducted in the summer that is in the paddy fields evacuated after harvest. The favourite out door game was *Padakali*, a kind of wrestling. The wrestlers wore a minimum dressing i.e., a *langotti* (dress around loins). Their full body would be washed with oil. The two combats would struggle hard to topple the opponents. Blows on the body were also permitted. A large number of people had watched the game standing around the paddy field.

Another outdoor game was *Attakalam*.⁶⁴ This was similar to modern *Khabbadi*. One among the participants voluntarily comes out, while other players are crowded in the circle. The man comes out circumvents the court and tries to catch any one of them and pulls out upon which he also becomes an ally to the puller's side while getting inside the first circle or touching any player who is inside the circle pull. It is not permitted to hold the *kakka* inside the *kalam*. Endeavour becomes easy when more players are pulled out. The game continues till one remains in the *Kalam* and he will be the puller in the next game. The game stops when all are tired.

64. P. Chathukutty, "Structural and cultural aspects and variations of select rural games in Malabar". (Unpublished Ph.D thesis), Calicut University, 1998, p.155.

Among children there were various games played through out the year. *Talapanthukali*⁶⁵ was a popular rural game played by boys with slight variations throughout Malabar. It is played by a team of 10 boys. There are 10 types of strikes one can play before he is caught. Otherwise fielders can throw to the target to get him out. If one successfully completes the 10 steps the other person should come to play. Presently rural boys seldom play the game.

*Kuttiyum Kolum*⁶⁶ was another outdoor game. *Kutti* refers to ball and *Kolu* to a bat. This is played by two teams. One from a side first plays by tossing a *Kutti* over a ditch. If the *Kutti* was caught, the striker is out. Otherwise *kutti* would throw back which is either beaten or prevented, the distance between the ditch and *kutti* is measured by *kolu*. Grand total of all strikes enables to get total score. The team scoring maximum *kolu* wins the match.

*Kakkukali*⁶⁷ was an outdoor game played by girls. It was played in a 8 square court. The player from outside the square throws the *kakku* (a piece of stone or earthen pot) to first square. Then the player steps to first square and picks the *kakku*. Then she steps to every square and after completing 8 squares step outside. This is repeated till all 8 squares are completed and wins the game if she succeeds in all these rounds.

65. Ibid., p.36.

66. Ibid., p.66.

67. Ibid., p.96.

Besides boys played *goli* (glass globes) and one *goli* would be struck with another till he completed the ten fittings in earthen pits. *Pambaram* (top) rotation was another interesting play among boys.

Personal Hygiene

The Mappilas were particular about personal hygiene since it is a compulsory aspect of religious life. They got up early in the morning and took ablutions to observe the early prayer. His tongue and teeth were cleaned. The burnt husk of paddy (*Umikkari*)⁶⁸ and mango leaves were used for cleaning the teeth and the midrib of the coconut leaf split into two served the purpose of the tongue cleaner. The 10 hygienic practices for a Muslim according to *hadith* literatures are “cut the Mustache, grow the beard, clean the teeth, sneeze the nose with water, cut the nails, wash finger gaps, remove the hair of armpit, remove the pubic hair, wash the secret parts and rinse the mouth with water.”⁶⁹ The Mappilas observed all these hygienic practices. These were considered as essential rites of religious obligations. The origin of barber community was the result of such needs. Usually Mappilas selected Friday for these practices. The barbers attended the people personally reaching their homes. To clean the teeth, the Mappilas developed a brush made out of the bark of coconut usually called *Miswāk*. Such *Miswāks* were kept in houses and in mosques. With the advent of the British, the shaving of face became

68. A. Sreedhara Menon, *Social and Cultural History of Kerala - State series*, New Delhi, 1979.

69. Imam Muslim, *Sahihul Muslim* (Ar.), Vol I, (Tr. Abdul Hameed Siddiqi), New Delhi, 1977, p.159.

common and ordinary people accepted it as a convenience while the priest class strictly adhered to growing the beard. Religiously it is compulsory for Mappilas to take bath after co-habitation in the night. Likewise it is also compulsory to wash after urination. The five time ablutions for compulsory prayers are indeed a way to personal hygiene.

Morals and Manners

Islam insists on its followers certain 'do's and don'ts and Mappilas being loyal to religion almost followed these instructions. They seldom violated the basic principle. In the food habits Islam allows all vegetable items and meat of some animals. But the meat should be properly slaughtered that is in the name of God by shedding all the drops of blood. Such meat is called *ḥalāl* meat and the Mappilas are very strict in this regard. In no case, they eat dead animals. The *Musliyār* is entrusted for the duty of slaughtering. Likewise in the drinking habits, all drinks except intoxicating ones are allowed. Intoxicating liquors made out of allowed fruits are also prohibited. Thus all intoxicant liquors are rejected by Mappilas. In dressing styles there is some restriction that is they should not use silk clothes.⁷⁰ All the Mappilas observe this rule. Likewise women are asked to cover their head and all ladies are using *thattams* (Scarfs). Among ornaments, gold is prohibited to men, so men abstain from wearing rings or chains.

70. Yusuf al Qaradawi; The lawful and the prohibited in Islam. New Delhi. 1990. p.82

Islam strictly prohibits pictures and photographs to be venerated, so all Mappila houses have avoided such pictures and photographs. Likewise any kind of idols and images are totally alien in their houses.

In behaviour, the Mappilas more or less are indigenous in character. They respect elders, parents, preceptors and strange people. They are kind and generous towards fellow being. Islam insists some obligatory duties towards neighbours and fellowmen. If he is poor, he should be fed. If he is sick he should be visited, if he died his body should be accompanied and he should pray for the dead. Mappilas had followed all these instructions without fail.

In North Malabar most of the Mappilas are traders. Islam insists on so many moral principles in this field. *Harām* (forbidden) goods cannot be sold, price manipulation, black marketing, manipulation in weight and measures are strictly prohibited. The merchants of North Malabar are following these ideals. Since interest and usuary are prohibited in Islam, Mappilas kept aloof from such persons and institutions. Islam also prohibits all plays for the exchange of money. As such gambling is rare among Mappilas and they were thus away from all such economic vices.⁷¹ Mappilas also took aversion to adultery and prostitution as it is condemned by Islam. Suicide is considered a major sin and the number of Mappilas is less in the community who commit this sin. So is murder and theft. The general morality of Mappilas is high due to the strict adherence to Islamic practice although some exceptions are there who are disloyal to their religion.

71. Ibid., p.304.

Compulsory Religious Observance in Mappila life

The Mappilas firmly believed in strict observance of their religious duties. It is the duty of every faithful Muslim to practice the prescribed prayers of the religion. The first requirement for a person to profess faith is to pronounce *kalima*, the formula of faith "I bear witness that there is no deity save Allah (God), and that Muhammad is His Rasul". Every boy or girl of a Mappila family pronounces this faith in their childhood and repeats several times throughout their life; Besides, he hears it five times daily through the *Adhān* (call for prayer) from the mosque.

The next duty enjoined on a Muslim is to exercise stated prayers, this is the most important of the Islamic observances. Prayer has been prescribed to keep a constant memory of God, the creator and sustainer of the Universe. Quran command to believers "verily I am God, There is no God but I. So serve Me (only) and establish regular prayer for celebrating my praise". Some rules and conditions are to be observed during the prayer, which mainly relate to the external form of the prayer. The main postures are standing, bending (*ruku*) prostrating (*sujūd*) and sitting.⁷² The *Fatiha* – opening chapter of Quran forms an essential part of every prayer, *Allāhu Akbar (takbīr)* pronounce in the change of every posture, praise of God in bending and prostrating, pray to God in sitting postures are the main pronouncement of Islamic Prayer (*salāt*). The five times prayers are *Zuhr* (of noon), *asr* (of afternoon), *Maghrib* (of sunset) *isha* (of night) and *subh* (of day break).

72. Syed Abdul Latif. Bases of Islamic Culture. New Delhi. 1959.

Besides, the *Zuhr* prayer of Friday is observed as congregational prayer and known in the name of *Juma*. There will be a sermon by the *Imam* (leader) of the prayer called *Khutba*, followed by reduced prayer of two 'raka't'. In addition there are so many *sunnat* (tradition of prophet) prayers like *rawatib* (after five times day prayers), *Tarāvih* (in the nights of Ramzan), *Tahajjud* (mid night) etc;

In short, the aim of prayer enjoined upon Muslims is to think of God, to have a pure heart, to take care of the body and clothes, to overcome evil desires and to be good-natured, be a decent person in all respects. The ablution, cleaning of face, hands and feet called *wuzu*, keeps a man hygienic and the fully devoted prayer to God ensures moral, spiritual and material advantage. The Mappilas of Malabar are keen to observe prayer by assembling in their nearest mosque where the *Imām* (*Musliyar*) leads the prayer. The mosque conducting weekly Friday Sermon (*Juma*) is known as *Juma masjid* (*Jamāt palli*). Besides these mosques there are small mosques in some places known as *Srāmbi* in Malabar and *Takkiave* in Travancore.

On emergency and state of unhealthiness one can perform prayers in the home itself. But the women among Mappilas have been prevented from coming to mosque for prayer though there is evidence for this in prophet's history. The women exclusively performed the prayers within their homes. The *ulama* interpreted *purdah* system of Islam as the confinement of women folk within the home instead of allowing the right for worship in mosque.⁷³

73. C.N. Ahamed Moulavi, Religion of Islam – A comprehensive Study, Calicut, 1979, p 108.

Zakāth is the third fundamental observance of Islam, which makes charity obligatory and binding upon all those Muslims. The enjoinder upon the rich to pay *zakāth* to the poor subjects puts him to a practical test, by which a real brotherhood is established between the rich and the poor. The word *zakāth* means purification, where it is also used to express apportionment of the property bestowed in alms, a purification of the remaining property. It is an institution of Islam founded upon a command in the Quran, as one of the fine foundations of practical religion. The *zakāth* becomes incumbent upon a Muslim when his property, in terms of deposits of gold and silver, crops or any other products that he earns annually, attains a certain limit called *nisab*.⁷⁴ The *nisāb* for different kinds of property differs in certain respects. The Prophetic tradition is to collect the *zakāth* from persons and same is distributed. But this practice had vanished centuries before and the practice of Individual *zakāth* came into society. Thus the rich among the Mappilas had paid *zakāth* individually but not as per the *nisāb* limit but certain amount which he thought suitable. The *ulama* have their own interpretation for this limitation. Usually on the 27th of Ramzan; the month of fast, this *zakāth* amount used to be distributed among poor when the people rush to house to receive the *zakāth* share. But due to the reformist activities within the community people are more aware of giving the exact *zakāth* owed by them and *zakāth* committees are formed for the purpose of collecting *zakāth* and for distribution among the deserving people.

74. Ahmad A. Golwash, The Religion of Islam, Vol.II, Cairo, 1957, p.27.

The fourth fundamental observance is fasting during the whole month of Ramzan, the 9th month of *Hijra* era, In Islam fasting is enjoined for the moral elevation of man and for his spiritual development – Quran declares “Oh you who believe! Fasting is prescribed for you, so that you may be more able to guard against evil”.⁷⁵(2:183) Hence fasting in Islam does not mean simply abstaining from food, but also from every kind of evil.

In Mappila community there developed so many customs and practices around fasting in the month of Ramzan. Fasting duration is scheduled from dawn (appearance of twilight) to sunset. Nothing whatsoever is allowed to be eaten or drunk within that duration. But before the appearance of dawn the supper (*Athāzham*) is taken, usually a heavy food with rice, meat, curry, fish and all other ingredients. In the evening after sunset, the fast is broken by a soft drink, date fruit and thereafter tiffin. The main item of tiffin is *pathiri*, a bread made out of rice flour. After the special night prayers in the mosque (*Tarāwih*) people would take *Muthāzham*, usually special porridge, *Jeerakakanji*. There is a vast difference in the dishes used in South Malabar and North Malabar Mappilas. While South Malabar Mappilas mostly belonged to peasant class, liked simplicity in food items, while North Malabar Mappilas, mostly traders and aristocrats preferred fine dishes. However it is an occasion of a changed life during the whole month, with piety and devotion. The last ten days are of special importance. People used to indulge

75. M.M. Pickthal, (Quran Tr.), op.cit., p.28.

in more and more prayers and Quranic recitation in those days. More pious people performed *Ithikāf* (Meditation in mosque in night). The 27th day is celebrated as day of *Lailathul-Qadar* (Day of destiny). In that night the people indulged in complete devotion in expectation of God's grace.

During the night of Ramzan days, there was a special custom in Calicut city and suburbs known as *Athāzham Muttu*⁷⁶ At a time when timepieces were not common among people, a group of people engaged themselves in the duty to awake the people from sleep and to inform the time of late-night supper. These people were known *Athāzham bābās*, used to beat drum and sing beautiful *Bayth* (Arabic songs). Having heard the drum beats the people of the city would be awaken and lit their lamps, the rich *Archilamps* and the poor kerosene lamps. The *babas* roamed around the city with *Arabana* and *pānīs* in their hands and reached in the mosque before dawn.

In the earlier period, the *Ramzan* days in the mosque were eventful, older people reached in the mosque for early morning prayers and recited Quran. After the noon prayers were over, the *ulama* used to deliver religious speeches known as *Urudi*.⁷⁷ The elder people and children who had no particular business gathered for this speech. The ladies also came to mosque to hear the *Urudi*. They departed after the afternoon prayers. It was a custom to complete a *Khatam* (recitation of whole Quran) by ladies and men by the end

76. Jamal, "Athazham Muttukar", Chandrika Weekend Edition, Calicut, 24.10.1999 p.II.

77. Pokker, "Acharangal Marippoyi" (Mal), Mathrubhumi Ramzan Supplement, Calicut, 1996, p.57.

of Ramzan days. In the night all the people had assembled in the mosque for the *Tharāwih*, special night prayer. After the prayers were over the *Mullahs* used to recite *Thawba* (Regret prayers for sins) and people, had repeated his words, for which the *Mulla* got special gifts and money at the end of Ramzan.⁷⁸

The fifth observance is the Hajj or holy pilgrimage to Makkah. It is performed in the month of *Dhul Hajj*, 12th month of *Hijra* year. It is the fifth pillar of the Muslim practical religion and an incumbent religious duty, to be performed once during life time. Pilgrimage is a fundamental ordinance of practical devotion in Islam. Of the principal requirements of the pilgrimage is what is called *ihrām*, two wrappers covering himself. The other rites are making circuits round the *Ka'aba* called *tawāf*, and running between two appointed small hills' known as *Al-safa* and *Al-Marwa* called *saḥy*. The cardinal event of Hajj is *Jamrāti* stone throwing to symbol of devil and last being the sacrifice of animals. Then the pilgrim has to shave his head and the *ihrām* (pilgrim's dress) is taken off. Most Muslims go to Al-Madina to visit the shrine of prophet afterwards.⁷⁹

Religious Festivals of Islam

The first important celebration of Mappila Muslims is that of *Id-al-fitr*, that is the conclusion of one month's fasting. After the fasting in the month of

78. K.M. Ahamed, "Marunna Ramzanile Acharangal" (Mal), Mathrubhoomi Ramzan Supplement. Calicut, 1996, p.30.

79. C. Abdul Hameed Madani (Ed.). Islam, Vol II, Calicut. 1998, p.859.

Ramzan has completed on the outset of next *Hijra* month, *shaval* first, the *Id* is celebrated. As the new moon is sighted it is the herald of new month, hence the fasting is over and next day is fixed as the day of *Id*. As soon as the new moon is sighted on the horizon, all the believers who have surplus provisions should distribute 3 kilo grains per person to the poor and needy which is known as *fitr*. This is to ensure that no Muslim should starve on the day of celebration. Although the Islamic practice is to provide the *fitr* into the hands of the poor and needy by a committee entrusted⁸⁰ by collecting all the *fitr* of the area, from the very long time in Malabar, the poor people wandered over the streets to collect it from the house of the rich. After this the Muslims gathered in the mosque and recited *Takbirs* (Praise of God). On the day of *Id* the people take a bath with applying oil in their body and would wear new dresses specially made for the occasion. The women and children have applied henna on their hands. The men and children then attend the *Id* prayer in the mosque. It is a short prayer with a sermon. After the prayer, people eat fine dishes of food. The common people usually prepared *Thengachor* (coconut mixed rice) with beef. The rich among them made *Neychor* (gheerice) with chicken and other ingredients. The children played variety of games and the elders used to visit their relatives and friends. Thus the day of *Id* is celebrated in a very festive mood throughout the entire Malabar region.

80. Ibid., p.603.

Id-al-Azha

Another most important celebration of Mappila Muslims is *Id-Al-Azha* (The Id of sacrifice). This is celebrated in connection with the annual pilgrimage, al-Hajj, in the month of *Dhul Hajj*, the 12th month of *Hijrah*. All those who are taking part in the Hajj have to offer animal sacrifice, similarly Muslims all over the world do it on this day. The Id is actually celebrated on 10th of *Dhul Hajj* although the actual Hajj day is one day prior to it in Makkah. On this day as in the day of *fitr*, people would take bath wear new dress and go to mosque. After the prayer and sermon they eat fine dishes prepared by their ladies in home and women then enjoyed in singing and clapping as in the style of *oppana*. The men then engage in the sacrifice of animals, *Ozuhiyyat*,⁸¹ which is compulsory to all Muslims. Quran says “their flesh and the blood do not reach Allah, but the devotion from you reaches him”(22:37)⁸² The animal chosen for the purpose should be free from defects. If it’s a goat it should be one year old. If it is a cow or buffalo it should be two year old. The sacrifice can be performed by a single person or a group of person upto seven. 1/3rd of the meat can be taken by the individual and 2/3rd should be distributed to the poor and needy of the society. The expenses for the sacrifice should not be taken from the meat.

81. C. Abdul Hameed Madani (Ed.), *Islam*, Vol. III, Calicut, 2000, p.297

82. M.M. Pickthal (Qur Tr), op.cit., p. 352.

Special days of religious importance

The Mappilas observed some days as religiously special days in their day to day life. Besides the compulsory fasting of the month of Ramzan and the two festivals, *Id-ul-Fitr* and *Id-al-Azha* are observed personally without much rejoicing but with religious fervour and zeal. Among these days the *Mirāj*, *Barāth*, *Muharram* and *Milādun Nabi* are the important ones.

Mirāj is the event of prophetic life in which he ascended to the heavens and met with Ultimate Reality and bestowed humanity with five times compulsory prayer. Traditionally the Mappilas observe this day on 27th Rajab,⁸³ the 7th month of *Hijra* calendar to commemorate this event. On this day they used to take fast and in the night they perform special prayers, recited *Maulīd* (praising songs of prophet) and took special dishes of food.

Barāth is another auspicious day observed by Mappilas. This was on the 15th of *Shaban*, the 8th month of *Hijra* era. It is believed that *Barāth* is the book of records, in which all the actions of men are registered which they are to perform during the ensuing year and it is said that on this day, God annually records them in the book.⁸⁴ On this day people used to observe fast and in the night the chapter *Yāseen* of Quran is recited. Then all the members of house would pray for their long life, nourishment, health and prosperity of next year. After the prayer they ate special dishes prepared especially

83. Jaffer Sherif, *Qanun-I-Islam*, op.cit., p.165.

84. Ibid., p.166.

chakkara chōr prepared with fine rice or wheat mixed with jaggery and coconut that are boiled in ghee. In North Malabar *Seer Vazhaka* and *Mathura Cheerni*⁸⁵ are also prepared. From *Barāth* onwards Mappilas would busily be engaged in preparing for the fast of next month, Ramzan.

Muharram, the first month of *Hijra* is observed by the *shia* sect of Islam as the month of mourning on account of the death of Imam Husain, the grandson of Prophet. But the majority of *sunni* sect do not observe it, but they observe fast on 9th and 10th of *Muharram* as a tradition of prophet. Since Mappila community belongs to *sunni* sect, they also follow the same tradition.⁸⁶ There will be no special dishes on this day to mark the occasion.

Milād-un-Nabi is observed by Mappilas with great fervour and zeal. It is the birth anniversary of holy prophet, on 12th *Rabiawal*, the 3rd month of *Hijra* era. The first 12 days were observed with the recitation of *Moulīd* songs (praising songs of prophet). People individually in their houses and the *Ulama* in the mosques would recite these *Moulīd* songs. The last day 12th *Rabi*, is celebrated on a festive mood.⁸⁷ Feast (rice and meat) used to be arranged in large scale, and after the *Moulīd* recitation it is distributed among public from the mosque'. In the houses, relatives and neighbours are invited by rich, and after *Moulīd*, grand feast is arranged.

85. C.A. Kader, "Nombukalam", *Chandrika Weekend Edition*, Calicut, 21-1-1996. p.1

86. Mohammed Kunhi, *op.cit.*, p.274.

87. *Ibid*, p.275.

Nanachukuli (total cleaning) is observed during the days before the starting of Ramzan fast. There is no particular day for this event. It can be observed any day after the *Barāth* day. The whole house hold articles are being washed in order to welcome the month of Ramzan. Furniture and utensils are brought outside of the house and subjected to thorough cleaning. The whole house also got cleaned especially dark rooms, removing all dusts and cob-webs.⁸⁸ Some people do white washing of their houses and thus 'annual cleaning' is being performed. This system is a symbolic representation of cleaning ones own mind to prepare for the days of Ramzan which are considered to be the days for spiritual purification.

Ramzan 17th is observed by Mappilas as the day of the anniversary of the first battle against non-believers by *Badr* Martyrs. It is in commemoration of the martyrdom of the warriors who died during the time of Prophet of Islam from the side of Muslims. Their number is supposed to be 313. This historical battle was fought on the 17th day of Ramzan, 2nd *Hijra*. Since this battle paved for the foundation of Islam, these martyrs were respected by Muslims all over the world. To observe this day people used to prepare the special item of food namely *pathiri* (rice bread) with meat and the same is sent to the mosque from all well to do houses.⁸⁹ After breaking fast, it is distributed to the assembled people of mosque. Special prayers for the martyrs would mark the occasion.

88. P.P. Mammed Koya Parappil, op.cit., p.272.

89. T. Umar, "Ramzan", Mathrubhumi Ramzan Supplement, Calicut, 1998, p.94.

Ramzan 26th is observed by Mappilas as the day of *Lailath-al-Qadr* (the night of blessing). It is believed that on this day the angels from the sky descended to earth to bless all believers. This day is considered meritorious more than thousand months and believers through the night would engage in prayers, Quranic recitation and *Ithtikāf* (meditation in the mosque). In the houses special dishes like *Neyyappam*, *Kalathappam*, *Poovada* are prepared.

A common religious observance is the celebration of *Moulīd*. A *Moulīd* is a short treatise in Arabic celebrating the birth, life works and sayings of the prophet or some saint such as Shaikh Mohiuddin, eleventh descendent of the prophet and performer of miracles. For ceremony a *Mulla* is called in to read the book parts of which are in verse, and the congregation is required to make responses and join the singing. The ceremony which usually takes place in the evening concludes with or is preceded by a feast to which these friends and relations are invited.⁹⁰ Those who can afford it should perform a *Maulīd* in honour of sheikh Mohiuddin on the 11th of every month and one in honour of the Prophet on the 12th. The custom was that a *Moulīd* should also be performed on the third day after a death.

So many of these observances have been criticized by the reformist *Ulama* as innovations and baseless having no examples in prophetic traditions as such so many of the Mappilas have minimised the observances to simple rites without any festive aspects such as preparing fine dishes or other rejoicings.

90. C.A. Innes op.cit., p.191.

SOCIAL STRATIFICATION AMONG THE MAPPILAS

Abdurahiman.K.P “Mappila heritage: A study in their social and cultural life”
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CHAPTER - 4

SOCIAL STRATIFICATION AMONG THE MAPPILAS

The Mappilas are spread along the west coast of India. The major portion of this tract is included in the state of Kerala. In Kerala, however, it is in the erstwhile district of Malabar of Madras state under British rule that they abound in numbers accounting for about one third of the total population of the district. Incidentally it is in this district that these people are called Mappilas. Despite their similar origin and many common characteristics, such as religious persuasion, language and dress, Mappilas do not constitute a homogeneous group for certain ethnological and religious reasons.

Thus the significant feature of Mappila society is social stratification, which is never to be compared with the caste system of Hinduism. The stratification had its origin in the status acquired by a group of people in regard to their parentage and spiritual superiority. The social division thus formed did not have the rigidity of the caste system, which prevents social inter course. But the people of different divisions of the community unite in matters of religious practices and commonly participate in social ceremonies in connection with birth, marriage and death that are followed in any group provided they are invited. Thus the Mappila social stratification has its own characteristics unlike the other religious communities.

Thus social stratification came to its practical form and maintained its features. This differential criteria was mainly in the field of matrimonial relations. There came a great hindrance to social amalgamation by following this differential treatment. Each group or division in order to maintain the purity of blood restricted the marriage within their group with the result that the gulf between the divisions increased day by day.

Another factor that enhanced the stratification was the ancestral parentage which they considered as sacred and the intermixing of the blood they thought would dismantle all the lineage that they maintained for centuries. So this over anxiety and concern to keep up their own purity of blood further enhanced the width of stratification. In these status criteria they had purposefully forgotten the tenets of Islam, their religion, which advocates the unity and integration of all believers despite difference of colour, creed, nationality and parentage. Islam denies such divisions among the believers. In Malabar, the foundation of Mappila community was laid by the early Arab settlements resulting mainly from the unions of Arab sailors and traders with the Hindu women of the coast of Kerala. But the large increase in the population of the community was due to the conversion of Hindu class irrespective of their castes.¹ Thus among the Mappilas there existed these two divisions within the community. Although the cementing bond of Islam created a sense of fellow feeling among the new converts and the traditional

1. Victor S. D'souza, "Status groups among the Mappilas", Ahmed Imtiaz (ed.), Caste and Social stratification among Muslims in India, New Delhi, 1978, p.42.

Mappilas of Arab lineage, they could not eliminate the old difference or the former status they occupied. Further among the converted class, there were people from both higher and lower classes. Though they came under the umbrella of Islam and began to intermingle and interdine, the age long psychological alienation prompted them to form their own status group resulting in the formation of class system. Thus this kind of segregation especially in matrimonial relations was the salient feature of the class system in Mappila community.

Like the conversion criteria which played a major role in the foundation of stratification the spiritual superiority also played an important role in the formation of these class divisions. Those who acquired great knowledge are respected in the society and possessed a commanding power on other groups mainly due to the ignorance and illiteracy of common people. This was how the scholars of religion or ulama have occupied a supreme position in the society.

Another factor constituted in the formation of class divisions can be attributed to the special system of social living that is the mother right (matriliny) and father right (patriliny) systems. Of course, the groups following these systems manifest them in different degrees. One of the prominent cultural elements of mother right section is a type of visiting marriages in which wife does not leave her parental house and the husband has to visit her at her own place. This system is actually a tradition of Arab sailors all over the world.² With only a few exceptions, the Mappilas of Arab descent

2. Ibid., p.43.

have still retained many of the mother right traits. This explains why the Mappilas of coastal lines became followers of mother right in their social pattern.

Another factor which culminated in the formation of these status groups were indeed the aristocratic elements that differentiated it between the divisions. The affluent and wealthy, especially traders of the coastal town, kept away from the lower sections in their social behaviour and cultural contacts. This is more conspicuous when these groups have their own mosques and separate burial grounds.

Among the Mappilas in Malabar, in a broader classification they can be divided into the major groups such as the Royal class, the Arakkal house, spiritual leaders, the Sayyids, the priest class, ulama and common people who are outside the purview of Sayyids, the Malabaris and the inferior class the Ossans. The social hierarchy by status wise criteria of the classes could not be identified easily. But it was the generally accepted rule that the Sayyid class was treated superior. The royal Arakkal being Malabaris was confined to the city of Cannanore but held supreme position. Some groups are again divided into sub divisions. In the following pages an elaborate discussion on each group of the class has been given.

Arakkal House: The Mappila Royal Class

The Arakkal house of Cannanore came into prominence as a political power by the middle of 16th century. This was the only Muslim ruling house

of Kerala.³ The rulers of the house were generally known as the Ali Rajas of Cannanore. They were also known as 'Azhi rajaś. Though Islamic law did not recognize succession in the female line, in this royal family succession had always been through females and many a time the Beebis, the senior most ladies assumed the responsibility as rulers.⁴ This system of matrilineal succession and inheritance followed by this Mappila royal family is a distinctive feature of the family.

The Arakkal principality had indeed played an important role in the history of Malabar. The rulers of this house once held sovereignty over the parts of Chirakkal and Kottayam Taluks, Laccadives, Minicoy and Amindivi Islands. Initially the principality's territorial extent was a small area on the main land. However, it eventually established its political power in an around Cannanore city and enjoyed monopoly of trade in that area.⁵

They were interested in trade with foreign countries and held virtual monopoly of the export of turmeric, pepper and coir to European and Arab countries. The Arakkal rulers gradually became an unquestioned maritime force and came to be called 'Azhi Raja' (Kings of the seas).⁶ The Arakkal dynasty being under the vassalage of Kolathiris gradually became independent

3. S.M. Mohamed Koya, Mappilas of Malabar, Calicut, 1983, p.37.

4. R.E. Miller, Mappila Muslims of Kerala, Madras, 1976, pp.57-58.

5. K.K.N. Kurup, Ali Rajas of Cannanore, Thiruvananthapuram, 1978, p.1.

6. S.M. Mohamed Koya, 'Muslims of Malabar with special reference to their distinctive character' (Unpublished Ph.D thesis), Calicut University, 1987. p.170.

by economic stability and political strength. The possession of the Jagir of Laccadive Islands and the maritime commerce with West Asia had helped the royal house to become an independent principality.

There appear to be more than one theory regarding the origin of this royal family. The traditional history of Kerala as revealed in Keralolpathi contains few references to this principality. A Jonaka (Mappila) male and female were invited to Cannanore from Velapuram or Aryapuram and the male was given a title the Azhi Raja or the 'lord of the sea' by the last Chera ruler.⁷

Another account still current in Malabar is that a princess of kolathiri Dynasty, on account of illicit relation with a person of lower standing lost her chaste and in order to cover up the disgrace, she was given in wedlock to a rich Arabian Moor, on whom was conferred the title of Prince and the general name of Adi Raja.⁸

In the version of W. Logan, the first chieftain of this house was one Arayan Kulangara Nair, one of the ministers of the Kolathiri, who lived about the 11th or the beginning of 12th century A.D and who embraced Islam and adopted the name of Muhammadali.⁹

7. Herman Gundert, Keralolpathi, Trivandrum, 1961, p.54

8. Galletti, Dutch in Malabar as quoted by K.K.N. Kurup, op.cit., p.1.

9. W. Logan, Malabar Manual, Vol. I, Madras 1951, p.357.

The Arakkal records kept in the house reveal another story. The sisters of the Chera emperor, Sreedevi residing at Dharmapattanam was asked to crown her son Mahabali after the emperor's departure to Mecca with his conversion to Islam. The nephew of the emperor also converted to Islam who adopted the name Muhammed ali.¹⁰ As he was the first Muslim ruler, he assumed the title 'Adi Raja', the first king. The title 'Adi Raja' or the 'noble raja' or 'Ali Raja' were very commonly used titles by this House as early as 1545 A.D.¹¹ The House had maintained the local custom of matrilineal succession which was contradictory to the rules of Shariat. The Hindu customs of succession had been later sanctioned by the Caliph as the 'custom of land' in one of his letters.¹²

The growth of Arakkal dynasty was accomplished with struggle and reconciliation with colonial powers such as the Portuguese, Dutch and English with native principalities such as Kolathiris and Mysore. The Portuguese advent to Malabar coast jeopardized the maritime activities of Arakkal house. In the beginning of 1504 AD, as the Portuguese had the supporters of the Kolathiris in their fight against the Zamorin of Calicut, the Arakkal House also must have maintained good relations with the Portuguese. As the Portuguese power achieved its zenith in Malabar coast, it enforced passess for native

10. Arakkal Records (kept in the History Department Library, Calicut University).

11. Shaikh Zainuddin Maqdam, Tuhfat-al-Mujahiddin (Mal. Tr. by C. Hamza), Calicut, 1995, p.76.

12. Arakkal Records, Letter send on Shawal Ist, 1194 A.H from Constantinople.

vessels to undertake journeys by sea. The Portuguese coastal presence had blocked the Arab influx and subsequent intermarriages and Hindu conversion to Islam. The Mappilas lost the attractiveness of a dominant group and were clearly defensive.¹³ Through out the 16th century as a nationality the Mappilas were struggling for naval independence at the Arabian sea. Valiya Hassan a Mappila trader was one of the great enemies of the Portuguese who molested several Portuguese vessels. He was caught as a prisoner and beheaded.¹⁴ After this Muslim opposition to the Portuguese became more violent. When Kutti Ali, veteran sea dog of Zamorin intercepted the Portuguese relations between Cochin and Goa, the Arakkal house gave all possible assistance against the Portuguese.¹⁵ As a result of rivalry with the Portuguese, there was a continuous war for three years with the queen of Malabar (Ali Raja Beebi). The queen was forced to the peace and her son was killed when he was on a pilgrimage to Makkah.¹⁶

In this critical situation Arakkal house requested for help to Sultan Ali Adil Shah of Bijapur for saving Mappilas of Cannanore from atrocities of the Portuguese.¹⁷ Responding to request, Adilshah fought against the Portuguese as a matter of sympathy to co-religionists. But the Portuguese wanted peace for their religious propagation and concluded a treaty with Arakkal. A fort

13. R.E. Miller, op.cit., p.74

14. O.K. Nambiar, Portuguese Pirates and Indian Seaman, Mysore, 1955, p.101.

15. K.K.N. Kurup, op.cit., p.5.

16. Ibid.

17. Shaikh Zainuddin Maqdum, op.cit., p.85.

and Church were built at Cannanore which was a shame to Arakkal dynasty. Once the Arakkal maintained monopoly of trade of Arabian sea and earned the name *Sultān-al-Bahr* (Lord of sea) they possessed the islands of Laccadives and denied the suzerainty of Kolathiris. The mutual jealousies of these houses prevented them from making a common front against the rising power of the Portuguese.

During the 17th century the coast of Malabar became a hotbed of European rivalry. With spirit of mercantalism European powers rushed to eastern countries, after the Portuguese the Dutch reached Malabar coast. They were eager to curtail the Portuguese power and establish their own monopoly of trade.¹⁸ The Arakkal house established friendly relation with the Dutch. But when the Dutch established relations with Kolathiris this friendship ended. By a treaty of Feb 1664 A.D.¹⁹ Dutch maintained superiority in trade but Arakkals secretly broken the treaty and open hostilities with Dutch began.

The Arakkal power created jealousy among Kolathiris who with the assistance of the British attacked the city of Cananore in 1772 A.D. The Dutch kept neutral in this war. The treaty concluded as a result of war gave a blow to Arakkal that they had to surrender all Kolathiri land which they annexed earlier from Kolathiris.

18. K.K.N. Kurup, op.cit., p.9.

19. Ibid., p.15.

The shame and revenge against Kolathiris prompted Ali Raja to seek help of Mysore Sultan Hyderali Ali Raja presented him a silver table, Rupees 400 and a new vessel. He invited Hyderali to invade Malabar. Hyder sought the help of the English at Tellicherry, but they promised neutrality.²⁰ In 1766 A.D. Hyder Ali crossed the boarder and invaded Kolathunad. Ali Raja helped Hyderali with a troop of 8000. As a mark of gratitude Hyder entrusted the whole Kolathunad (the Chirakkal Principality) to Ali Raja. But Ali-Raja could not hold it too long as a result of the sudden death of Hyderali, and the subsequent fall of Cannanore fort to the British. But a treaty with the English resulted in Tipu giving back the fort again to the Beebi, Arakkal queen. These political developments in Malabar reveal that the native rulers like Arakkal and Mysore were neither united by religious affinity nor by loyal friendship against common enemy. It was done out of consideration of self existence before a superior power.

The relationship between Arakkal and the English company was cordial at the beginning but with the seize of Laccadives, Arakkal sovereignty ended and they were reduced to an ordinary land lord.²¹ In a treaty concluded between the company and Arakkal, the company demanded 1 lakh rupees as annual tribute to protect all territories of Beebi intact from enemies. This is the first treaty providing for a tribute for political protection.²² The Arakkal

20. W. Logan, op.cit., p.405.

21. Arakkal Records.

22. Ibid., 'Memorials of Mariumma Beebi'.

manifested its loyalty to the British by granting any property they needed. The Beebis also agreed to admit the company's troops to garrison her fortress of Cannanore during the period of war between the English and Tipu.²³ When the town and fortress of Cannanore surrendered without conditions, the people were at the mercy of the English, however they granted protection to Bibi, her family and assured that no insults shall be offered to them.²⁴

In March 1791 A.D. the Beebi entered into an engagement with the English by which she agreed to do everything in her power to conciliate and attach Mappilas on the Malabar coast to the English interests especially in the war against Tipu. The proposed payment of tribute was fixed as Rs. fifteen thousand annually for the protection against Tipu's invasion. By the treaty of 1792 A.D., the entire territory over which the Royal house exercised undisputed sovereign rights till British occupation of Malabar was restored to the house. For nearly 80 years this agreement continued.²⁵

From 1759 A.D. to 1795 A.D., the Royal House held the *Karar* territories at Cannanore comprising many acres of land.²⁶ By the peace treaty of Srirangapatam all the *karar* lands inclusive of Laccadives were restored to the Arakkal family. The Laccadives and Aminivi Island revolted against

23. W. Logan, Malabar Manual, Vol. III, clause (i) xcvi, p.85.

24. S.M. Mohamed Koya, Mappilas of Malabar, Calicut, p.40.

25. *Ibid.*, p.41.

26. Arakkal Records.

authority of Arakkal House and accepted authority of Tipu Sultan. In the treaty concluded between the Beebi Sultana Janumma Beebi and the English, the Beebi gave her consent to the sequestration of the Laccadive Island by the company whenever required.²⁷

There were no troubles in the affairs between Arakkal House and the English company till 1847 A.D. In 1847 A.D, the Beebi failed to remit the annual tribute. That marked the beginning of a new phase in the already strained relations between Arakkal and the company. The subsequent events made it clear that the ultimate aim of English was usurpation of the sovereignty of the Cannanore principality, a process which had begun already.²⁸

Taking advantage of the scarcity of Laccadives, the company intervened and supplied provisions for which they asked the price of articles, and the helpless House could not do anything but to surrender their sovereignty.²⁹ The Company was taking all the rights and prerogatives of the House one by one. Likewise, when the islanders complained to Company that Arakkal House was oppressing them, the company took opportunity to interfere in the affairs of the Arakkal house, first attached the Beebi's lands at Cannanore and then in 1854A.D. brought the Laccadives under sequestration.

27. W. Logan, op.cit., Vol.III, clause (ii) cxxxv, p.181.

28. S.M. Mohamed Koya op.cit., p.42.

29. Ibid., p.43.

By this time the liquidation of the power of Arakkal had become a necessity to the English. In 1903 A.D. the Ali Raja failed a case against the government of India. Though the Raja failed in Madras court he prepared to appeal to the Privy Council.³⁰ Then the Collector of Malabar under government orders arrived for a settlement with Raja in 1908 A.D. by which the final relinquishment of the sovereignty of the Laccadives was agreed upon in return for an annual payment of Rs.23,000 as Malikhana to the Ali Raja.³¹ By this agreement the Arakkal house was reduced in power and status and deprived of its sovereign rights. The story of the house provides another example of British policy of annexation imposed on native princess. The Arakkal rulers were having salute of guns since a long time past. There used to be a salute of 21 guns on the occasion of procession by the Raja. The guns were also fired on the occasion of visits by high Company officials and commanders. Later on the East India interfered in this and reduced salute to 7 guns in 1832 A.D. and afterwards completely stopped the salute. This occurred during the reign of Janumma beebi who died after ruling 42 eventful years. The rulers who succeeded her, Mariumma Beebi and Ayisha Beebi tried their best to regain their lost rights and privileges. But due to the increased power of the British Government and the incapacity of the officers of the Arakkal House, the efforts of the Beebis were not crowned with success.³²

30. Ibid., p.44.

31. A.P. Ibrahim Kunju, Mappila Muslim of Kerala, Thiruvananthapuram, 1989, p.168.

32. M. Aboobacker, "Kerala Charithravum Arakkal Swaropavum" Kerala Muslim Directory. Cochin, 1960, pp. 385-408.

The two rulers of Arakkal house who preceeded Junumma Beebi were females. Her successors were also females, namely Mariyumma Beebi and Ayisha Beebi respectively. When Ayisha Beebi died in 1862 A.D., there was a great conflict in the family regarding the succession. One party in the family argued that the ruling title should belong to the females only and that the man of the family should content themselves with the management of the house especially its day to day affairs only. Another party argued that when there are men old enough to occupy the Gadi (throne), they must be allowed to do so in preference to the females. Both parties took their dispute to the Government of India for decision and the Government of India accepted the senior most male member of the family as Ali Raja. After Junumma Beebi (1819-31) 4 males and 4 females occupied the throne. The person who ruled between 1921A.D. and 1932A.D. was Sultana Ayisha Beebi Ali Raja. She was a woman of progressive views in social and educational matters. She had great interest in the education of women. The late Abdurahiman Ali Raja ruled between 1932 A.D. and 1946 A.D. was a remarkable personality. He was an ornament to the Arakkal House and the Muslim community of Malabar.³³ The first thing he did after ascending the throne was to obliterate the irregularities in the administration of the house. He appointed proper staff for the same and highly qualified man as private secretary. He created unity and co-operation in the family. In company with other leaders of Malabar, he did much for the advancements of the Muslim community, he hosted the All India Muslim leader from Pirpur Maharaja to Liaqat Ali Khan.³⁴ He was the

33. K.K.N. Kurup, op.cit., p.393.

34. S.M. Mohamad Koya, op.cit., p.181.

vice-president of Madras state Muslim League. In 1942, he was elected to the Madras Legislative Assembly from Chirakkal Taluk. He was also a member of Malabar Tenancy Committee. An acclaimed Muslim leader, he had been the head of several institutions in Malabar. Mariyumma Beebi who succeeded him, was highly cultured woman who took great interest in the administration of the house. She was succeeded in her death in 1979 by Adi Raja Hamzakoya mma Thangal.³⁵

The Arakkal house enjoyed the leadership of the Muslims of Malabar. It was looked upon by the natives, English and later the British government as the spokesmen of Muslim community. Through out the period of its administration in Cannanore as well as in the Laccadive Islands, the house supported and encouraged the spread of Islam. The ruler of this house was recognized by the Muslim community of Malabar as the symbol of their political unification. The House claimed as 'Thangals', that is descendants of the holy prophet. It has its decorated and wood carved throne and great seal and royal emblem. But the rulers never used any type of crown. The House had issued its own silver and gold coins.³⁶ Arakkal Royal House rendered great service for the spread of Islam. Islamic institutions flourished under the principality. The house initiated the construction of several mosques in North Malabar. Beebi Imbichi was mainly responsible for the construction of

35. W. Logan, op.cit., Vol. I, p.358.

36. K.K.N. Kurup, op.cit., p.91.

Mohiyuddin Masjid of Cannanore. The house managed the mosques of Madayi, Mattul and Dharmadam. The house enjoyed a supreme authority in the Cannanore *Mahal* in all religious affairs. The Ali Raja or the Beebi takes the decision with regard to the date of *Id* celebrations, Ramzan fast and especially sighting of new moon as the beginning. The Arakkal house had made liberal donations towards Islamic institutions, mosques etc., In 1916 A.D. one elephant was given as gift by Sultan Ahammed Ali Raja for *Kandoory* festival at Nagore Durga.³⁷

The house has very good collection of religious and philosophic works on Islam. Several works in calligraphy are still maintained. Books in calligraphy were imported from Egypt. The members of the family were given education on subjects like Arabic and theology. Some of the Beebis were well versed in Hindustani and Persian language also. Later English also was taught by special tutors appointed by the house.

A remarkable personality connected with the history of the royal house was Mayinkutty Elaya, a keyi and a member of a royal family through marriage.³⁸ He was the son of Abdul Khadir Keyi of Tellicherry. An accomplished writer, he is renowned as the translator of the Holy Quran. He started the work of translating the Quran in Al-Hijra 1272. It took fifteen

37. Ibid., p.94.

38. The men married the women of Arakkal house belonged to outside Cannanore, that is Tellicherry and Calicut, often called by the name 'Elaya'.

years for him to complete the work. Hundreds of copies of this translation were copied down by scribes at Arakkal palace and sent them to well known Muslim *tharavāds*. His translation of the Quran is called *Tarjamat-ul-tafseer fil Quran*. It is considered to be the first translation of Quran in Malayalam language.³⁹ The author faced vehement opposition of the community, mostly the orthodox section, for having translated the Holy Book to Malayalam. But the youths of Tellicherry, Cannanore, Baliapatanam and Kasargode were given their support to him for printing and publishing the translation. The first volume was published in prints in HE 1289. In HE 1294 the sixth and the last volume came out. All the volumes now adorn the library of the mosque near the palace.⁴⁰ Mayinkutty Elaya was a reformer and writer. He wrote many Mappila songs in Arabi-Malayalam. He spread the message of Islam among non-Muslims. He also opposed *Marumakkathāyam* (Matriliny) which was being adhered by the Arakkal House in the matter of succession to the *mushad*.⁴¹

The properties of the House were generally found under three categories that is Arakkal Pandaram, Puthiya Pandikasala and Valiya pandikasala. It is supposed that the Pandaram property in the traditional possession of the family. Valiya Pandikasala also may be a later addition

39. S.M. Mohammed. Koya, (Unpublished Ph.D thesis). 'Muslims of Malabar with special reference to their Distinctive Character', Calicut University, 1987. p.174.

40. C.N. Ahamed Moulavi and K.K Mohammed. Abdul Kareem. Mahathaya Mappila Sahitva Paramparyam, Calicut, 1978, pp.219-24.

41. Ibid., p.225.

through the profits of trade. Puthiya Panadikasala also may be a later development. The two magnificent public works which belonged to this house were the ground mosque near palace and sultan's canal about two miles length.

Even after the loss of power, the house played a predominant role in the history of Malabar. The Mappilas clustered round the Arakkal house and manifested their loyalty towards the British during their rebellion of 1921 A.D. in South Malabar. They stood by the British government through thick and thin and suffered all difficulties and appealed to the Mappilas by issuing pamphlets and notices requesting them not to participate in any out break. If the rebellion had not extended to the northern parts of Malabar it was mainly due to the pacification of the Mappilas under the leadership of Arakkal. In 1934 A.D. when a riot occurred among the Tiyyas and Mappilas in Cannanore the house played a prominent role for reconciliation which was appreciated by the district officials.⁴²

The political leadership of the Mappilas of Malabar was enjoyed by the Arakkal house in 20th century also. When Sultan Abdu Rahiman Ali Raja attended the government and returned to Cannanore, he was given a grand reception by all communities. Another ruler of this house, Khan Bahadur Sultan Abdurahiman Adi Raja was an elected member from Chirakkal Taluk in the Madras Legislative Assembly in 1940 A.D. and for a short period he was the vice president of the Madras state Muslim League. He was also a

42. K.K.N. Kurup, op.cit., p.92.

member of the Malabar Tenancy Committee of the Legislature. He had been the head of several Islamic institutions of Malabar. After formation of the state of Kerala in 1956 A.D. the Inam lands of Arakkal under the agreement of 1908 A.D., were also assessed, But the Malikhana of the house has not been stopped. It still continues and that payment brings to the memory of the students of Kerala history a long political tussle of a small principality for its existence.⁴³ An analysis of the history of this House clearly brings to light the dubious ways by which the English company acquired territories in India, particularly in the South. The Ali Rajas have in no way become an enemy of potential to the mighty British empire, but they were not spared from liquidation. It was an inevitable historical circumstance in which either diplomacy or treaty could save this principality. The territories were sequestered by a superior power and reduced to the status of a mere land holder. In short, the growth of Islam in Northern Kerala can be well identified with the origin and growth of the House.

Thangals: The Sayyid Class

Sayyids are a small section among the Mappilas who trace their ancestry to the progeny of Prophet Muhammad's daughter, Fatima. In the Muslim world such people are known as Sayyids and among Mappilas they are called by the respectable term 'Thangals'. Although the Thangals are confined mainly to South Malabar, they are spread in all other parts. By virtue

43. Patricia Uberoi, Family kinship and marriage in India, New Delhi, 1993, p.3.

of their descent from the revered family of the prophet, the Thangals are held in highest esteem by all Mappilas.

The Thangals generally follow endogamy in the sense that they would marry within the family group. But an exception can be seen for this rule, that they also follow hypergamy that is only the male of them marry the female of an inferior group and not vice-versa. Thangal males can marry women from other group of Mappilas but Thangal woman cannot marry any man other than a Thangal. If a woman belonging to a Sayyid family marries a man from a lower group, she and her children automatically lose their family status.

The higher social status that the Thangals held is on account of spiritual considerations. The *ahl-al-Bayth* (people of the house of Prophet) concept made an everlasting impression upon the mind of Mappilas. The love and respect for the family of holy Prophet prompted the Mappilas to respect Sayyids as a superior class in every respect. Sayyids have the Arab lineage better in their physical appearance as well as in their religious merit. Since they are well versed in Arabic language, they are good in Quranic recitation and have acquired good knowledge in *fiqh* (rites of Islam) and *tassawuf* (Philosophy). Their extreme piety and devotion towards religion made them the living personifications to be emulated by the common people. The common Mappilas have very meagre knowledge of religion. Apart from observing some basic beliefs and some essential religious duties such as prayer, fast and keeping some prohibitions (*harām*), they have never gone to the extent of getting deep knowledge or imbibing the spirit of Islam. Thus the

superior knowledge of Sayyid class in religious literature made them to claim superiority in the society as a result they are venerated by the common Mappila folk as their spiritual leaders.

This extreme reverence towards Sayyids prompted the common people to seek *barkath* (blessings) from their personal presence. The Sayyids also considered it as their benign duty to give blessings and consolation to ailing people who approached them for both physical and mental sufferings. The knowledge acquired in Arab medicine through Arabic books written on medicine during the glorious medieval period of Islamic civilization, enabled the Sayyids to take up the treatment of the people especially in a period when the modern medicine was not at all introduced before the advent of the British. It was the *mantrās* (chantings) of Sayyids considered as the means to pass the *barkath* through so many mediums. Water is the most commonly used medium for chantings of Sayyids through which it is believed that the blessings of Sayyids are passing in to the body of the sufferers. Other medium for chanting is string, the chanted string is tied in arm or neck or wrist of the suffering person. For permanent use of some chronic diseases as well as a precautionary measure, *Elassu* has been widely used. The chantings are written in a copper plate which is folded into a cylindrical shape and it is tied to the body by a string. Another type of this talisman is *Urukku* with writing of Arabic letters and numbers in a proper order, in a porcelain plate which is mixed with water and swallowed by the suffering person. Besides, chanted ghee or other eatables are also given as blessing. It is this type of curing

methods practised by the Sayyids and mental consolation imparted by them to personal problems resulted in the extreme veneration towards the Sayyids as a superior class.

But, more than the spiritual leadership and psychological blessings offered by the Sayyid class, their role as the leaders of community have to be appreciated. The Mappilas transformed themselves into a living community from 12th century onwards. They had virtually no leaders as ruling class compared to the north Indian counterparts who had been under Sultans and emperors. Even though the House of Arakkals existed as a Mappila ruling class, they had limited jurisdiction, rather confined to Cannanore city. In all other areas Mappilas were under the beck and call of Hindu rajas or high caste Brahmin *Naduvazhis*. Their only relief in this regard was the rule of Mysore Sultans, Hyder Ali and Tipu Sultan for a shorter period. With their fall Mappila community had fallen to a deep gutter, a state of being without proper leadership and guidance. The advent of the British worsened the situation. It is in the wake of this situation, the leadership given by Sayyid class deserves great importance. Of the several Sayyid groups of Malabar, most of them were anti-colonial in their attitude. In this regard the role of Ba-alawi Sayyids, Ibn Shihab Sayyids and Shah Sayyids was prominent. Sayyid Alawi and Sayyid Fazal, members of Ba-alawi clan made a relentless fight against the British. Sayyid Fazal had to suffer a deportation from the land. Likewise Sayyid Hussain Attakkoya Thangal of Ibn Shihab (Panakkad) clan vehemently opposed British regime with the result that he was imprisoned to death. Shah

Sayyids of Kondotti rather took a conciliation policy with British power. The political leadership of Sayyid clans was an everlasting contribution of Mappila community against colonial invasion of the mother land.

No wonder the Sayyids were depicted as the *Umara* (leaders) of Mappila community, especially when there were no rulers to protect them and the whole wrath of invaders were poured upon them. Thus Sayyids were the *Umara* of the Mappila community and this tradition is still kept by them. So many Sayyids rose in to the political leadership of Mappilas and led them through crisis. In the following pages there is a study of important Sayyid classes and their socio-political, religious and cultural contributions briefly have been given.

Sayyids are the descendants of the holy Prophet of Islam through his daughter Fatimah. On account of their descent from the revered family of the Prophet they are held in high-esteem by other section of the Mappilas. They are commonly known in Malabar as Thangals (respected) who constitute a small section of the community. The higher social status that the Thangals held is on account of spiritual considerations. Thus Thangals stand supreme in the social hierarchy only next to the royal class, Arakkal House of Cannanore.

The formation of the Sayyid class in Malabar can be traced from the days of the advent of Islam. With the historic event of Malik ibn Dinar's entry in to Malabar as the head of missionary group there followed an influx of

missionary groups from Yeman and Hadrmawth. Among such missionaries the Sayyids of Hadrmawth better known as Hadrami Sayyids who were among the one hundred and sixty elans in Yeman and Hadrmawth who claimed their origin from Prophet Muhammed through his daughter Faimah and cousin Ali held supreme position.⁴⁴

Hadrami Sayyids played a major role in the propagation of Islam in distant countries. From Tarim they spread east and west. In Aden they had made little progress, since the inhabitants were uneducated traders. Their great emigration to India had begun in 1220 AD. They settled in important commercial, cultural and political centres like Bijapur, Surat, Ahamedabad, Hyderabad, Delhi, Baroda, Malabar and Bengal. They travelled from place to place propagating the religion of Islam and settled in various parts of South East Asia.⁴⁵

There are several Qabilas of Hadrami Sayyids in Malabar. Ba-Alawis, Hydrus, Ba-Faqih al-Jifri, al-Habshi, al-Haddad, al-Sakeel, Jamalullaili, Ibn Shihab clans were important among them who had settled in different parts of Malabar in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.⁴⁶ Another prominent Qabila of Sayyids to migrate to Malabar apart from Hadramis, were Bukharis

44. Sayyid Muhammed ibn Ahammed ibn Umar Ali-Shathri. Al-Muajjanu-Latif-li-Ahsabi-ali-Qabi-Wal-Qanafi-Nasbi Sherief (Arabic). Jeddah, 1986. p.135.

45. R.B. Serjeant, The Sayyids of Hadamawth, London, 1957. p.24.

46. T. Abdul Azeez, "Sayyid Vamshastinite samskarika paramparayam". Karma veethivil kal Nootandu (Essays & Memories). Calicut , 2001, p.130.

who migrated from Bukhara, a place of present Russia. They first migrated to Lahore and Delhi, later came and settled in Malabar. Both Hadramis and Bukharis shared some common features in their tradition and beliefs. Both belonged to Hussainis, that is, the descendants of Imam Hussain, the grand son of holy Prophet. Both of these branches maintained liberal views, religiously and politically. They abandoned their traditional stand of Shiite views and accepted Sunnite views.

The people of Malabar had given a warm welcome to the Sayyid *Qabilas* who came and settled here. The prime reason that prompted the natives of Malabar for this hospitality could be attributed to style of life followed by the Sayyids. Their firm belief in religious *Aqeeda*, (way of belief) their strict adherence to *madhab* (school of thought in Islam) and their *Tariqat* (mystic approach) were the outstanding features of *Sayyids* that won the hearts of the common Mappilas of Malabar.⁴⁷

Among the Hadrami Sayyids some *Qabilas* marked their presence in the socio-political field of Malabar. They were the Ba-Alawis-Ba-Faqihs, Jiffris, Ibn Shihab, Idid and Hydurs. The other branch, Bukharis was mainly divided into two sub divisions, the Padoor and Kuruvanthiruthi, the name followed by their place of settlement. A brief account of the main *Qabilas* and their socio-political role with outstanding personalities is given in the following pages.

47. T. Abdul Azeez, op.cit., p.131

Ba-Alawis

In an inaugural lecture delivered by R.B. Serjeant, Professor of Arabic at University of London, traced the role of the *Qabīla* in the following words:

“Nor can any branch of the numerous sharif and sayyid families founded over fourteen centuries ago claim a more varied sphere of activity, of achievements indeed, than the Alawi Sayyids of Hadrmawt.⁴⁸

The first Ba-Alawi Sayyid's presence in Malabar was confirmed at least by the eighteenth century through the geneology of Sayyid Hassan Jifri, the descendant of Sayyid Shaikh Jifri. His genealogical table shows several generations of Hadramis, both Alawis and Jiffris settling in Calicut. Among Ba-Alawi Sayyids settled in Malabar, Sayyid Shaikh Jifri, Sayyid Hasan Jiffri, Sayyid Alawi popularly known as Tammal Thangal and his son Sayyid Fazal deserve special mention because of their hectic religious, social and political activities spread during the the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Sayyid Shaikh Jifri, the first among Ba-Alawi Saints settled in Calicut in the middle of the eighteenth century.⁴⁹ The Calicut raja, Zamorin provided him accommodation. His cousin Sayyid Hassan Jiffri came after him and settled at Mamburam. These two thangals engaged themselves in missionary activities and kept aloof from political issues.⁵⁰ The last two Thangals, Sayyid Alawi

48. R.B. Serjeant, op.cit., p.3

49. Muhammed Abdul Kareem. K.K, Hazart Mamburam Sayyid Alawi Thangal. (8th edition). Venniyur, 1989, p.15.

50. W. Logan, op.cit., Vol. I, p. 691.

and Sayyid Fazl, began their activities when the country began to experience the evils of the British rule. Hence the changing circumstances knowingly or unknowingly influenced their careers. Sayyid Alawi and Sayyid Fazl were arch enemies of the British and they were moved by the deplorable condition of the people under British rule. The Ba-Alawis of Malabar were later divided into two divisions, the Jiffris and Mauladdavilas. The first two thangals are in Jiffris and later two thangals are in Mauladdavila division. Syed Shaik Jiffri was born in 1706 A.D. at Tarim, Hadrmawt. After primary education from his father, he continued his study under Hasan-al-Haddad, a well known theologian. Before he was attaining twenty years of age, he mastered theology and philosophy, and was well known thorough out Hadrmawth as a great theologian. Why he selected Malabar was not known, perhaps he might have been influenced by the merchant's description of Malabar. He came with an Arab caravan of Hadrmawt and accompanied by Shaikh Ali Barami founder of the family.⁵¹ He came to Malabar to propagate Islam and the raja of the land, the Zamorin, warmly received him and granted a plot of land at Thekkumtala of Kuttichira.⁵² The house he built at Thekkumtala was later known as *Māliyēkkal* House or Jiffri house. Sheikh Jiffri had an unending quest for knowledge that he became the disciple of Shaikh Qutab Sayyid Mohammed ibn Hamid of Quilandy. He travelled throughout Malabar preaching the message of Islam⁵³ Zamorin considered Sayyid Shaikh's

51. K.K. Muhammed Abdul Kareem, op.cit., P.238.

52. K.K. Mohammed Abdul Sathar. "History of Ba-Alawis". (Unpublished Ph.D Thesis). Calicut University, 1999. p.24.

53. Nisamuddin, "Jiffri Vamsham". Chandrika Weekend Edition. Calicut. 25.07.1987.. p.I.

presence in Calicut as a blessing and considered him as the religious head of Malabar Muslims.⁵⁴ He was exempted from taxes and his descendants were later known as Jiffris, a major subdivision of the branch of Ba-Alawi Sayyids. He was in friendly terms with Tipu Sultan and he hosted the Sultan who was impressed by the personality of Shaikh. Shaikh Jifri was credited with writings of many books.

He firmly opposed the views of his contemporary reformer of Arabia, Ibn Abdul Wahab and also opposed the *Tariqat* of Kondotti Thangals.⁵⁵ He showed true path of Islam to the illiterate Mappilas of Malabar. He died at Calicut in 1808 AD.

Sayyid Hasan Jifri was the cousin of Shaikh Jifri, who came to Malabar in 1755 A.D. W.Logan says "In the early part of 18th century a Thangal named Sayyid Hassan ibn Alawi. Jifri Thangal who was supposed to have settled at the place called Mamburam near Tirurangadi."⁵⁶ The house he constructed there later was known as *Maliyekkal*. Tirurangadi was a centre of religious learning as well as the hot bed of anti British and anti-colonial activities. Before him, an Arabi Thangal of Tirurangadi had persuaded the Mappilas to fight against the British. The Mappilas were looking for a new leadership which would guide them properly.⁵⁷

54. R.E. Miller, op.cit., p.255.

55. P.P. Mammad Koya Parappil, Kozhikkotte Muslingalude Charithram, (Mal), Calicut, 1994, p.93.

56. W. Logan, op.cit, Vol.II, p.cclix.

57. C.N. Ahamed Moulavi and K.K. Muhammed Abdul Kareem, op.cit., p.174.

Sayyid Hassan Jifri gave successful guidance and leadership to the people. He convinced them that dynamic and strong leadership as well as sufficient preparation were essential for meaningful attack against colonial rule. Following the traditions of Ba-Alawi Sayyids, Hassan Jifri travelled in Ernad and Walluvanad taluks preaching the message of Islam⁵⁸. He advised the Mappilas to observe *Sharia* and warned them against forbidden practices. He had sent his disciples to various parts of Malabar for missionary activities. A large number of people belonging to different castes and creeds used to visit his house and sought his spiritual blessings. His abode at Mamburam was a seat of communal harmony and friendship. Whatever he received, he had given it as charity to the needy and poor. He was a Sufi and he spent his time for tradition, learning and preaching. He prepared the geneology of Ba-alawi clan.⁵⁹ His shrine became a centre of pilgrimage. Both Muslims and Hindus visited the shrine for seeking recovery from prolonged sickness; for good crops in their field etc. Hasan Jifri never indulged in the political and socio-economic grievances of the people. His sole aim was to purify the Mappila community from superstitious beliefs and customs. Later his nephew Sayyid Alawi began his mission where Sayyid Hassan Jifri had ended.

Mauladdavilas

The Ba-Alawi Sayyids of Malabar take a deviation into another clan from the most famous Sayyid Alawi, the nephew of Sayyid Hussain Jifri. His

58. K.K. Muhammed Abdul Sathar, op.cit., p.44.

59. Ibid., p.46.

father Sayyid Muhammed Ibn Sahl Mauladdavila was a great scholar and leader of Tarim, in Yeman. His mother was Fatima, the sister of Hasan Jiffri. Sayyid Alawi became an *Hafiz*, (one who can recite Quran by heart) at an early age and brought up in spiritual atmosphere.⁶⁰ He arrived in Malabar in 1768 AD, at the age of seventeen. He came to Malabar at the invitation of Shaikh Jiffri of Calicut to be the heir of Mamburam shrine which was left vacant after the death of Sayyid Hasan Jiffri.⁶¹ He became an erudiate religious leader widely respected and venerated and as a result, Mamburam became an important religious centre. Sayyid Alawi married Fatima, daughter of Hasan Jiffri, his maternal uncle, Qazi Jamaladdin Maqdam took particular interest in the marriage as ordered by the late Hasan Jiffri.

Sayyid Alawi took special interest in the missionary activities. He travelled throughout Ernad and Valluvanad taluks for this purpose. He had realized the importance of mosques in Islamic solidarity of Mappilas and took initiative to erect mosques in various parts of Ernad and Walluwanad.⁶² He neither established any *tariqat* nor introduced any customs alien to the spirit of Islam. He vehemently opposed the practice of Kondotti Thangal. His life is discribed as an epitome of Islamic values.

60. C.N. Ahamed Maulavi and K.K. Abdul Kareem, op.cit., p.176.

61. Ibid., p. 176.

62. K.N. Panickar, Against Lord and State: Religion and Peasant uprisings in Malabar -1836-21. New Delhi. 1992, p.61.

Both Sayyid Alawi and later his son Sayyid Fazl adopted a strong anti-colonial attitude. British authorities did their best to appease the Thangal the spiritual leader of Mappilas. But Sayyid Alawi refused to meet any government official. Non co-operation was the method adopted by Thangal and other *Ulama*.⁶³ His anti colonial outlook is clearly depicted in his famous work, *Assayf-al-Battār* (sharp sword). This work is a collection of *fatwas* (religious decree) issued by Sayyid Alawi against the British. The copies of this book secretly circulated in Mappila houses, were later seized by the British. The original copy was inherited by his son Sayyid Fazl who compiled it and published along with other fatwas of Arabian and Indian theologians, from Egypt in 1856 AD. under the title *Uddat-al-Umara-wal-Hakum-Li-inhanatil-kafarat-wal-Abadat-al-Asnam*. This book also was secretly circulated among Mappilas but Malabar Collector Conolly banned the book from circulation.⁶⁴

An important *fatwa* of Sayyid Alawi Thangal was that *jihād* becomes compulsory at the moment the infidels (British) entered the country. All the old and women upon whom *jihād* is not compulsory should take part in the *jihād*. The *jihād* against the British is an obligation upon all Muslims.⁶⁵ Sayyid Alawi Thangal tried to interpret all problems of the Muslims through religious perspective. He never believed that Mappilas would get justice from British government.

63. A.P. Ibrahim Kunju, *Mappila Muslims of Kerala*, Thruvananthapuram, 1989. p.218.

64. C.N. Ahamed Moulavi and K.K. Muhammad Abdul Kareem, op.cit., p.181.

65. Sayyid Fazal, *Uddat....Asnam*, Egypt, 1856-57, p.27 as quoted in K.K. Muhammed Abdul Sathar, op.cit., p.48.

His ultimate decree to the Mappilas was that it is the obligation of believers to liberate the country from colonial rule. He advised them to fight the British till the end. His anti-colonial view was largely an extension of his religious beliefs and his teachings aroused anti British, anti colonial feelings among Mappilas.⁶⁶ He was inspired by north Indian *Ulama* against British raj. His contemporary *Ulama*, and also his best friend, Veliyamcode Umar Qazi had given practical shape to his ideas by the policy of non co-operation and non payment of taxes against British raj. British officials suspected that Sayyid Alawi was behind the Mappila uprisings led by Unni-Mutha Moopan, Manjeri Athan Gurikkal and Chemban Poker during 1800-01 A.D. The British thought of his arrest. What held them back was fear of possible protest of riot.⁶⁷ He was accused of working behind the riots of 1817 A.D., Cherur riot and other local riots of these types although there was no clear cut evidence. Mr. Logan says there is no doubt that Sayyid Alawi had blessed and sanctioned the action. This is evident from the sayings of the rebels as cited in the cherur padapattu.⁶⁸

Personally, Sayyid Alawi led a sufistic life and spoke little and kept his promises. He observed fast weekly and slept little. He was a well wisher of the poor and needy. He was an angel of communal harmony who strongly opposed the atrocities of Mappilas against Hindu land lords.⁶⁹ His scribe was

66. Sayyid Alawi, *Assayfulbatar* (Ar.), op.cit., p.29.

67. K.K. Mohammed Abdul Sathar. op.cit., p.50.

68. W. Logan. op.cit., p.129.

69. C.N. Ahamad Maulavi and K.K. Mohammed Abdul Kareem. op.cit., pp.31-32.

Konthan Nair, constant companion of him till death. Mamburam Thangal as he was known among the Mappilas is highly influential in the cultural and religious life of Mappilas.⁷⁰

Sayyid Fazl, son and successor of Sayyid Alawi Thangal, was born to his third wife, Fatima of Quilandy.⁷¹ He was brought up in the strict religious and spiritual atmosphere imparted by eminent ulama of the time. Chalilakath Qusayy Haji and Maqdam of Tirurangadi were his teachers. He was thus trained in *Qurān*, *Hadīth*, *Thasawwuf*, *Fiqh* and other religious subjects.

He was a model of piety and virtues. He devoted his time for the pursuit of knowledge. For imparting better training to believers in religious tenets, he erected the Mamburam Juma Masjid and began the congregational *Juma* at Mamburam. In these *Khutuba* (Sermon) he directed the Mappilas towards the practice of orthodox Islam, and also to keep their Islamic identity by keeping aloof from the dominant Hindu castes. The poor peasant Mappilas respected their high caste Hindu landlords. He advised the Mappilas not to secure food from Hindus, a custom continued even after they converted to Islam. He wanted to establish the cultural and social identity of Mappilas different from that of Hindus. He advised the Mappilas to abandon the practice of ploughing their fields on Fridays and not to use the honorific plural addressing Nairs.⁷² He severely criticized the anit-islamic practices of

70. K.N. Panickar. op.cit., p.63.

71. W. Logan, vol.III, op.cit., p. ccclix

72. K.K. Muhammed Abdul Sathar. op.cit., p.100.

the disciples of Kondotti Thangal, that is, kissing the hand and prostrating before the Shaikh etc. His dynamism, prudence and charisma to attend the problems of the oppressed turned out to be a blessing to the poor Mappila peasants. Sayyid Fazl was a prolific writer, He wrote about 25 books of various Islamic subjects like *Tasawwuf*, *fiqh*, *Aqīda* all in Arabic.

More than his father, Sayyid Fazl was an arch enemy of the British. Upper caste *Jenmis* had exploited the poor Mappila peasants with the support of British authorities. Sayyid Fazl issued a *fatwa* against *jenmis*, the copies of which were printed in Egypt and secretly circulated in Mappila circles. The book of *fatwas*, *Al uddat-ul-umar-wal hukum li-the-wilka-ifarat-wa-abadat-al-asnam*, was in 24 pages. Through this he called upon the people to fight against British.

Mr. Conolly, the Malabar Collector accused Sayyid Fazl as the instigator of all Mappila outbreaks of his time. Though the British officials in Malabar insisted on his removal from the District, they were well aware of the danger behind this move. A forceful eviction would have resulted in the slaughter of so many Mappilas, since they would be determined to sacrifice themselves to save this spiritual head. The moderate policy of the Collector was not appreciated by his subordinates like Robinson, Acting Joint Magistrate of Malabar who asked for forceful arrest of Thangal.⁷³ T.L Strange, Special Commissioner also recommended for this action. But

73. Prof. A.P. Abdurahiman, "Deportation of Sayyid Fazl", 40th Anniversary souvenir of Farook College, Feroke, 1988, p. 204.

Collector Conolly continued for a peaceful exile of Thangal which was accepted by the government. The Thangal himself expressed his willingness to leave Malabar and to take permanent settlement in Arabia. On 19th March 1852 A.D. Sayyid Fazl with his family, followers and servants set off for Arabia. By the time the Thangal reached the coast, the crowd swelled into 8000 showing grief at his departure. The farewell of Thangal was prudent and polite. The departure of Thangal did not produce any change in the turbulent and volatile situation of Malabar, a fact which proves that the notion British was prejudiced and Sayyid Fazl was the inspiring force behind the riots.⁷⁴ With his departure the Mouladdavila branch came to an end in Malabar. Sayyid Fazl later became the advisor of Egyptian and Ottoman caliphs. He was appointed as the governor of Yeman, but his last days he spent with Ottoman caliph Mahmud where he died in 1901 AD.

Ba-Faqih

Another Qabilah of Hadrami Sayyids who migrated to Malabar from Tarim, Yeman, was known as the Ba-faqih. The Ba-faqihs were led by Sayyid Ahamad whose sole purpose was missionary work. Having reached Quilandy, he married the daughter of Ahamad Munafare, and settled there. He then extensively travelled throughout North Malabar preaching the message of Islam and constructing several mosques in the important centres.⁷⁵

74. Ibid., p. 205.

75. P.P.Mammad Koya Parappil, op.cit., p.96.

The son of Sayyid Ahamad was Sayyid Abdulla who led quite a peaceful life. His son was Sayyid Muhammad who also led a peaceful life. But his son Sayyid Abdul Qadir, turned his attention to business rather than missionary pursuits. He was a leading business man of Calicut city and controlled the copra export. He widely exported dry fish to Maldives and Ceylone. He was invited by Maldivian Sultan to visit his country. Accordingly he visited Maldivian Sultan and the Sultan pleasingly exempted him from all customs taxes of his goods.⁷⁶

Sayyid Hashim Bafaqih was the most learned man among the Bafaqihs. He was an ardent disciple of Maulana Shoukathali and having imbibed the spirit of *Khilāfat* activities and non-co-operation, Sayyid Hashim left his studies from Aligarh Muslim University.⁷⁷ Later he joined for medical course where he faced a premature death. He married the daughter of Sayyid Abdul Qadir and had two sons. The eldest, Sayyid Umar Bafaqi later became a prominent politician of modern Kerala.

The most renowned personality among Bafaqihs was Sayyid Abdurahiman Bafaqi who had multiple roles as a spiritual leader, affluent business man, a social reformer and more than that an enthusiastic political leader of independent India. In his childhood he acquired religious knowledge from the *Qāzi* of Veliyancode. But instead of assuming missionary duty, he followed the footsteps of his father in business. In Calicut city at Copra

76. Ibid.

77. Ibid., p.97.

Bazaar, he opened a shop for this business. Later the shop was shifted to big bazaar. In 1947 A.D. he opened a shop at Rangoon, the capital of Burma in the name 'Bafaqi and Company'.⁷⁸ In 1938 A.D., Bafaqi Thangal joined All India Muslim League. In 1943 A.D., he became the president of All India Muslim League of Calicut city. In 1947 A.D. when the President of Malabar Muslim League left for Pakistan, Sayyid Abdurahiman Bafaqi was raised to the post. In 1956 A.D., when the state of Kerala was formed, he became the State President of Indian Union Muslim League. Later in 1972 A.D. he became President of Indian Union Muslim League. He was the architect of many a coalition government with Muslim League in the state ministry. Due to his extra ordinary political calibre he was termed as Kingmaker of Kerala politics.⁷⁹ Besides he was the Chief patron, leader and member of various socio-political organizations and leader of religious organisations. He died at Makkah after the completion of Hajj Pilgrimage. Later his nephew, Umar Bafaqi, inherited his role in politics. The Bafaqi Qabila thus tremendously contributed in the soio-political arena of Malabar as well as Kerala.

Ibn Shihab

Ibn Shihab Qabila is one of the important branches of Hadrami Sayyids. They belonged to the Ba-Alawis of Yeman. Sayyid Shihabuddin of Hadrmawt migrated to Malabar in 18th century and reached Balipatanam where the

78. Ibid., p.394.

79. Ibid., p.395.

Mappilas had given him a hearty welcome.⁸⁰ He settled there and tremendously contributed to the spread of Islam through missionary work. Sayyid Shihabuddin was considered as the 33rd line of descendants of the prophet Muhammad.⁸¹ After him his son Sayyid Hussain Shihab married from Arakkal royal house a lady named Khadija, and being the son in law of the royal house, he earned the name *Elaya*. But he could not cope with the system of Arakkal house, thus shifted to Idiyangara, south of Calicut city. There he purchased the house of *Musaplakam* within a coconut garden. This house was later known as *Ilayantakam*. He constructed a mosque nearby his house which came to be known as *Ilayante Palli*. After his death, he was buried nearby the mosque.

His eldest son Sayyid Muhammed Mulahar alias Attakkoya Thangal, shifted to Malappuram, and constructed a house *Pazhaya Maliyakkal* in the nearby village Panakkad. Hereafter his descendants were known as Panakkad Thangals. The son of Mulahar, the fore father of Panakkad Thangals was Sayyid Hussain Attakoya Thangal. Sayyid Hussain Thangal played an important role in the nationalist movement of India.⁸² He mastered in Islamic theology from the renowned scholar Aukoya Musliyar of Parappanangadi. After studies he taught the students in various *Dars*. Then he permanently settled at Panakkad where he received the people who came for blessing and

80. P.P.Mammad Koya Parappil, op.cit., p.113.

81. K.K. Muhammed Abdul Kareem, "Samara Poralikalude Pythrikam", Sayyid Muhammed Shihab Thangal Snehopahara gantam, Vol. II, Calicut, 2001, p.135.

82. Ibid., p.136.

seeking advice for their mental and physical ailments.⁸³ So many people of Hindu class visited him and later accepted his faith. His anti-British attitude prompted the high officials to look upon him with suspicious eyes. The authorities strongly suspected his role in instigating the rebels of Trikkalur outbreak which he never denied.⁸⁴ He was arrested in 1882 AD and sent to Vellore Jail. His determination and anticolonial attitude never allowed the authorities to liberate him. He breathed his last within the jail in 1882 AD itself. His body was buried in the compound of famous religious institution of Vellore, the *Baqi-at-al-salihat*. The third son of Sayyid Hussain was Sayyid Abdulla Koya, a great Sayyid leader. His son Sayyid Shihabuddin Ba Alawi shifted to Tirurangadi. There he associated with Khilafat leader, Ali Musliyar and played a prominent role. He died and buried there. The first son of Sayyid Hussain was Sayyid Muhammad Koya Alias Kunhikoya who was a prominent Sayyid leader. It was his son Sayyid Ahamad alias Pookoya Thangal who earned great name and fame as a political leader in independent India. He vehemently opposed the British and had been arrested by them in 1948 in connection with Hyderabad riot.⁸⁵ He was imprisoned in Calicut and Manjeri sub jails. He was then raised to the leadership of Indian Union Muslim League. He also held high posts in Sunni Organisations. His house *Kodappanakkal* was a centre of consolation to thousand of people who came for blessing, cure of sickness and other personal affairs. After his death, his

83. Ibid., p. 137.

84. Ibid., p. 138.

85. Ibid.

son Sayyid Mohammadali Shihab rose to the leadership of Muslim League which he still holds. His other sons are actively involved in sunni associations and continuing their spiritual services.

Bukharis

Bukharis are the Sayyid Qabila who came from Bukhara in the erst while Soviet Russia, the native place of famous Islamic scholar, Imam Bukhari. Sayyid Ahamad Jalaluddin al Bukhari a pious and great scholar of Bukhara, was an enthusiastic missionary who started towards India and reached Balipatanam. He started his *Da'wa* (missionary) work in and around Balipatanam. Many Hindus and Christians embraced Islam as a result of his activities.⁸⁶ He married the daughter of Ibrahim, the *Qazi* of Balipatanam. He belonged to the *Khadiriyya Tariqat* (a Sufi way) and had so many disciples all over Malabar. After the death of his father in law he became the Qazi. He died at Balipatanam and his tomb became a visiting place of his followers.

His son Ismail Ibn Jalaluddin al Bukhari studied in the *Dars* of Ponnani and later propagated the faith through out Malabar by inspiring speeches and 'fatwas.' He married from the *Qazi* family and later became the *Qazi* of Balipatanam. Towards his last he went to Cochin and settled there where he died. He had two sons and one daughter. Later generations migrated to Chavakkad, Padur, Puthiyangadi, Tellicherry, Matul, Karuvanthiruthi,

86. C.N. Ahamad Moulavi and K.K.Muhammed Abdul Kareem, *op.cit.*, 2002 , p.207.

Pazhayangadi, Cannanore, Chaliyam and Malappuram. Some of them later abandoned the suffix Bukhari from their name.

Sayyid Muhammad Maula Bukhari, second son of Ismail Bukhari was a prominent Bukhari Thangal, who propagated the faith in the Tamil regions and Travancore areas. He was a model of social harmony. At Cochin, a Jew presented him with wood sufficient to construct a mosque.⁸⁷ His house was built by Hydrose kutty Moopan, a general of Zamorin.⁸⁸

Muhammad Maula Bukhari was invited to Tamil land by Umar Alim Sahib of Kayal Patnam and travelling extensively through the coromandal coast he preached the message of Islam winning the heart of many people to faith.⁸⁹ In Travancore area, he built two mosques one at Vaduthala, which became a great Muslim centre. Another mosque was at Tirivithamcode, the site being donated by Travancore Maharaja. He sent his disciples to various parts of Travancore and Tamil land. He died at Cannanore and buried there. There were two *maulīds* to his credit. One was *Minhatulbāri* written by his Tamil friend Labba Alim Sahib in Arabic and the other by Chettuva Pareekutty in the same name in Arabi-Malayalam.

Sayyid Ahamad Bukhari, the nephew and son in-law of Muhammed Maula Bukhari, shifted to Chavakkad and settled there. A generous Hindu land lord presented him with 80 acres of land freely in which he built a

87. Ibid., p.208.

88. Ibid., p.204.

89. Sayyid Hameed ibn Mohamad alias Koyamma Thangal in the written manuscripts preserved in the personal library of Nellikuth Muhammadali Musliyar.

mosque and residence.⁹⁰ This area later earned the name *Bukhara beach*. A large number of people approached him for blessings and cure of diseases. He had four sons, Sayyid Muhammed being the eldest. He was a missionary of excellent nature. He died at Tamilnadu. His son Sayyid Hamid Koyamma Thangal was a renowned *Tibb* (medical practitioner), *Sufi* and *Mufti* of his time.⁹¹ His grandson known in the same name also became a *Tibb* and *Sayyid* leader of *Bukhara beach*. He holds the post of Vice-President of *Samastha Kerala Jamiyatul Ulama*, an organization of *Sunnis* of Kerala

The Padoor Thangals of Bukhari Qabila had tremendously contributed in the socio-religious field of the Mappila community. Sayyid Muhammad Fakhruddin Bukhari commonly known as Padoor Koyakutty Thangal, the grandson of Maula Bukhari, had his early studies at Bettom. Having become a scholar of great merit, he conversed with scholars of Arabia on so many religious issues. He had written many books in Arabi-Malayalam for the enhancement of religious knowledge among common people. He was a severe critic of Kondotti thangal's *Tariqat*.⁹² He had written a hand book on *Hajj* for the use of pilgrims namely *Manāsikul Malabāri*, in Arabi-Malayalam. About the beliefs and rites of Islam, *Baisullyam* had been written by him who was admired by the scholars. He vehemently opposed pseudo-tariqats and *Malas*

90. M. Ahamad Kannu, Kerala Muslim Directory, Cochin, 1960, p. 440.

91. Anees Kathrammal, Sayyid Hamid Koyamma Thangal, Sunni Afkar Weekly, Malappuram, 8 October, 1997, p.17.

92. Sayyid Ahmad ibn Fakruddin alias Koyakutty Thangal, Kitab-al-Faydissari-fi-Tariqui-Sadathul-Bukhara (History of Bukhara Sadath), unpublished manuscripts from the personal library of Nellikuth Muhammadali Musliar (Manjeri).

(praising songs of saints). Himself an Arabic poet, he had written many poems in Arabic. He had a good collection of books with him. His son Sayyid Muhammad Isa alias Kunhiseethi Thangal was also an Arabic scholar of great merit. He had written a book, *Sivarunullar*, the history of Bukhari Qabila. Sayyid Ibrahim ibn Ahamad Bukhari, Sayyid Muhammad alias Kunhi Koya and Sayyid Hamidul Bukhari were other scholars and writers of Bukhari Qabila. The last among reputed scholars of Bukhari Qabila was Sayyid Muhammad Koyakutty of Kadappuram. The Karuvanthiruthi Thangals also played an important role in socio-religious affairs. Thus Bukharis equally stand with Hadramis in the missionary work of Malabar.

Sha Thangals

An important Qabila of Sayyids indeed is the Sha Thangals or Kondotti Thagals. They differed in many aspects from Hadramis and Bukharis. They maintained their Shia belief even in Malabar, which was already a seat of Sunni faith. The propounder of this family was Muhammad Shah who came from Kalyan near Bombay. His father was Ismail Muqaddam and mother Fatima. He had his earliest studies from own family and gradually attracted to Sufism. His higher studies were at Aurangabad with *Shia* scholar Karram Ali. Later he wandered through out India for 16 years. At the age of 30, he had gone for Hajj Pilgrimage. After his return to India, he mastered in medicine. In the meantime, he was introduced to Tipu Sultan, and Sultan asked him to go to Cochin. Thus Muhammad Shah reached Cochin. He was aware of the growing opposition to Tipu and his land reforms from Mappila leaders siding

with the Zamorin. Thus he started towards Malabar in order to pacify Mappilas and meanwhile rested at Areekode hill in meditation. Common people impressed by his meditation, invited him to the village.⁹³ On compulsion Shah came to Areekode and later went to Konduvetti where a wealthy man, Kunharamutty offered him land for residence and construction of a *Takkiave* (a small mosque)⁹⁴

By his mysticism, Muhammad Shah attracted many people around the country towards him. The then *Mufti* and spiritual leader of Malabar, Sheikh Jiffri, differed with him in many subjects like *Madhab* and *tariqat*. Jiffri had given a *fatwa* against Muhammed Sha Thangal that his *tariqat* is on the wrong path'. There after a long standing rift appeared among the scholars. This rift was known as *Ponnāni – Kondotti Kaittharkkam*. Religious scholars from each side competed with *fatwas*. Books were also published by these rival groups accusing others as deviators. After much furore the issue was settled by the subjugation of Kondotti faction abandoning the irreligious practices.

Muhammed Sha maintained good relation with Tipu Sultan. In AD 1788 Tipu visited the Thangal. In AD 1889, Tipu again visited Malabar and at the fort of Feroke, he called an assembly of religious scholars and in that meeting Tipu bestowed *Ināmdar* title to the Thangal. By this title Sha got the right to levy tax from tenants. Moreover he was exempted from paying

93. C.N. Ahamed Moulavi and K.K Muhammed Abdul Kareem, op.cit., p.192.

94. Ibid.

revenue tax on his lands by the East India Company.⁹⁵ Followers of Shah richly contributed to him as a result he became one of the biggest *jenmis* of Malabar. Tipu gave him the title of Jagirdar in Kolathur village, the privilege of a large area (135.9 Acre Wet land, 267.09 acre garden and 146.03 Acre dryland)⁹⁶ Muhammed Shah played a prominent role in creating love and loyalty among Mappilas towards Tipu and his rule.

In the outset of 19th century, Kondotti witnessed a riot between Mappilas and Nair class Hindus. The British were instigating Hindu classes to attack the Mappilas and thus to create hostility among them. Such a Nair troop of Paranambi, Nair Naduvazhi of Malappuram came against the *Ināmdār* of Tipu, Kondotty Thangal. The Mappilas came to the rescue of the Thangal. In a fierce fight 50 Nairs died while 25 among Mappilas lost their lives.⁹⁷ The fallen Nairs dropped guns in the field and Shah got enormous booty. In later years a *nērcha* was performed annually in the name of these *Shahids* of Kondotti Takkiave. Major Dew was deputed to Mappila district and council of protection was issued in favour of Kondotti section of Mappilas who had been oppressed by Nair land holders.⁹⁸ The Pazhayangadi mosque was in possession with Shah but his opponents claimed the right, there by the High court of Madras gave verdict recognizing Shah as the *Muthavalli* (Manager) of the mosque.

95. W. Logan, op.cit., Vol.III, clause Lxvi, p.200.

96. C.K. Kareem, Kerala under Haider Ali and Tipu Sultan, Cochin, 1973, p.203.

97. CN Ahamed Moulavi and K.K Muhammad Abdul Kareem, op.cit., p.195.

98. W. Logan, op.cit., Vol.III, p.152.

The son of Muhammed Sha died in infancy but three daughters survived. His son in law, Aftab Sha assumed the title 'Muhammad Sha Valiya Thangal' and became the heir apparent to the headship of Sha Thangals. The *Qubba* (dome) of Kondotty near the *takkiave* of Muhammed Sha was built by Aftab shah and Ishtiaq Sha, his successors. The tomb of Muhammad Shah was built in granite by the labourers from Madura. This was actually the tradition of Shias of Central Asia.

Muhammad Sha wrote beautifully in Persian and Arabic. So many books were copied by him in beautiful hand writing. The British bestowed on him the same title *Ināmdar* and gave the right to levy tax from tenants. The *Murīds* (disciples) also contributed immensely to him and as a result he possessed great wealth. He got Rupees 2734 as Inamdar in 1815 AD. Ashiq Ali Shah, a successor of Kondotti Thangal wrote in Persian and Arabic. He was also a Mappila poet who wrote a history of various *tarīqats*. So many of his Persian books are still kept in Kondotty *Takkiave*.⁹⁹

Minor Sayyid Groups

Every Sayyid who migrated to Malabar had been known in the name of their *Qabilah*. Sayyid Abdurrahman-al-Hydrose came from Hadrmauth to Kerala and settled at Veliyancode, near Ponnani. He was a great scholar, reformer and expert in medicine. He preached through out the coastal area from Ponnani to Cochin and so many people converted to Islam as a result of

99. C.N. Ahamed Moulavi and K.K.M Abdul Kareem, op.cit., p.287.

his missionary works. He married from the family of *Othangānakam* of Ponnani. Later he married from Cochin also. He died at Chawghat but his body was brought to Ponnani and buried there. His tomb later became a great pilgrim centre known as *Valiya Jāram*. His descendants known as Hydrose, played a major role in the socio-political field of Ponnani. The eldest member of this family is commonly known as Valiyathangal.¹⁰⁰ The Chembrasseri Thangal who played an important role in the Mappila Rebellion of 1921 A.D. belonged to the Hydrose Qabila. The Malappuram Qazis of *Ottakath Maliakkal* family also belonged to this *Qabīla*. Abdur Rahman al-Habshi was an Hadrami Sayyid who settled at Tirurangadi. He married the daughter of Sayyid aliyul Khadiri who had his roots in the Maqdam family of Ponnani. The descendants of Abdur Rahman al Habshi were later known as Habshi thangals. Sayyid Abdulla ibn Idid, a Hadram Sayyid settled at Ponnani. He married from Mamburam and settled near Tirurangadi. They were known as Ideed Thangals. Sayyid Muhammad al Turabi came from Khurasan of Persian in 1228 AD. He settled at Munniyur, near Tirurangadi, and the later generations were known as Turabi Thangals. Sayyid Abdur Rahman al Maqdi (Makhti), an Hadrami Sayyid came and settled at Veliyamekode. His descendants became great scholars. The eminent social reformer Sayyid Sanaullah Makhti Thangal belonged to this Maqdi Qabilah. Sayyid Muhammed al Faqih, another Hadrami Sayyid came and settled in North Malabar. His descendants were known as Faqihir, likewise another Hadrami Sayyid is Hadad. His group is known as Hadadis.

100. Prof. K.V. Abdurahiman, Mappila Charitra Sakalanganal, Ponnani, 1998, p.20.

Musliyors: The Ulama Class

After Sayyids the most respected group among Mappilas are 'Musliyors,' the *Ulama* (priest) class.¹⁰¹ This class is not formed from a common origin like that of *Sayyids*, who originated from Arabs. They rather come under a group for the purpose of religious service. The Musliyors live in the premises of mosques. The religious service they performed is most valuable for the common people. Each Mappila family contributes one or two members, young boys, to be enrolled as a member of the *ulama* class. These young boys after acquiring deep religious knowledge would function as *ulama*. The *ulama* class engaged in religious service thus maintained a special segregation and identity different from the common people. This resulted in the formation of *ulama* class and they are next in hierarchy to Sayyids in their social status.

The *Ulama* among Mappilas are known in the name of *Musliyor*. The word *Musliyor* came from the honorific plural of *Musliyan*, a word used by Hindu class to address Mappila Muslims. Another opinion regarding the origin of *Musliyor* is that since *ulama* observes prayer in mosque, he was known as *Musalli* (one who prays) and the honorific plural *Musliyor* came to be in use. Whatever may be the origin it became a common suffix of learned *ulama*. In the British period another word, *Mulla* or *Mullākka* was also used to denote the *Ulama*. Some other *Ulama* preferred the suffix *Moulavi* with their name.

101. *Ulama* – The plural form of '*Alim* (scholar) in Arabic. But English writers often used *Ulama* as singular and *Ulamas* as plural. Here the English version is accepted.

Each ulama has been moulded in the religious institutions namely *Madrassa* in the elementary level and *Dars* in the higher level. In earlier days, the religious education conducted adjacent to mosques, commonly in thatched roofs were known as *Othupalli*. (Madrassah in Arabic language) *Othupalli* was a sort of elementary school for religious and Arabic education of Muslim boys and girls. As the very name *Othupalli* denotes, the method of teaching in these schools was oral. The *Mulla* would recite the lessons and the students would be asked to repeat the same again until they memorized it. The curriculum was limited to learning of the recitation of Quran and memorizing some hymns and invocations used in prayers.¹⁰² The teacher would teach Arabic alphabets and words to children by writing them on a wooden slate polished with white clay, with a pen made of bamboo dipped to ink which was made of some kind of charcoal. No other writing materials like books, pencils, pen, black boards and chalks were used.

The advanced religious classes conducted inside the mosque were called *Dars* (class). The students who wished to acquire higher education in Arabic and Islamic subjects after completing their studies at *Othupalli* were usually admitted to the *Dars* in the mosque. With the introduction of *Madrassa* system as in the school model, the 'othupalli' system almost vanished. The students who did not have the idea to be a Musliyar stopped his studies with the completion of *Madrassa* education.

102. K.T. Muhamadali, Education among the Mappilas of Malabar, New Delhi, 1990, p.38.

Though we do not know exactly when the *Dars* system of education came into being, it is most likely that it was started along with the advent of Islam in Malabar, because the first thing that the early Muslims missionaries headed by Malik Ibn Dinar did in Malabar was to establish twelve mosques.¹⁰³ It is probable that *Dars* classes were started in these early mosques, immediately after their construction. There is no evidence to prove the existence of any other arrangements for religious instruction in those days.

In the following centuries after the advent of Islam the number of *Darses* went on increasing in mosques. The *Dars* system was a unique feature of Malabar which was not prevalent in other parts of the country.¹⁰⁴ This explains why the mosque in Malabar was built double storied. The ground floor is used for prayers and the first floor is set apart for the lodging of the inmates who study in *Dars*.

The most prominent and renowned of all the *Darses* in Malabar in early times was that of the big Juma Masjid at Ponnani in Malabar. The *Dars* which was conducted by celebrated scholars in the Juma Masjid attracted students not only of the entire Malabar, Travancore and Tamil land but also of Indonesia, Malaya and Java. The *Dars* classes were conducted in the inner quarter of the mosque where students sat around a lamp which earned its reputed name *Vilakkathirikal* (sitting around lamp).¹⁰⁵ In 1887 A.D. there

103. Ibid.

104. Ibid.

105. Prof. K. V. Abdur Rahiman, op.cit., p.28.

were about 400 such persons belonging to various and distant places pursuing their studies in the Ponnani mosque.¹⁰⁶ Besides Ponnani, *Dars* were conducted in the mosques of Cranganore, Quilon, Pantalayini, Chaliyam, Cannanore and Tanur.

The usual mode of conducting the *Dars* was that the teacher would sit on the floor of the mosque in a fixed place and students would sit around him forming a semi circular ring. The teaching was oral. The teacher read each of the sentences of the Arabic text and translated it into Malayalam, word by word. The students were asked to repeat what was said by the teacher and they did so like parrots until they memorized the lesson. The period of *Dars* course was indefinite and usually covered a number of years. Senior students served as tutors of younger students. In the early period of *Dars* system its curricula were very broad, designed to give an almost comprehensive education covering both religious and secular subjects. Besides religious subjects like Quran, Hadith, Fiqh, Arabic language and literature, grammar, secular subjects like geometry (Euclid's), Astronomy, Logic, Philosophy and Medicine were used as text books. In course of time the curricula of *Dars* shrank and were confined to religious subjects only. Though the *Dars* system had many drawbacks, it had so many credits that it had been able to hold high the torch of Islamic learning and religious awareness among the Muslims of Malabar.¹⁰⁷ It produced many great scholars, theologians, religious leaders and

106. K.T. Mohammadali, op.cit., p.39.

107. Ibid., p.41

reformers to whom the present Muslim community of Kerala owes their religious, intellectual and educational revival.¹⁰⁸

The role of Mulla was confined to religious aspects of human life. In the British period, the Mappilas considered their presence a blessing on the events and customs connected with life. The Mulla was a single teacher in an *othupalli* where he taught limited students the art of reading Quran. Besides his duty was *purayiloth* (to recite Quran in houses) for quite few times. Moreover he was called to give *Adhān* into the ear of new born child, to slaughter animals or even a cock and to recite *Moulids* (songs in praise of the Prophet). A Mulla had limited knowledge in Arabic,¹⁰⁹ but he was well versed in Arabi-Malayalam. A Mulla also performed the duty of *Muazzin*, to call for prayer daily 5 times. More than that, a Mulla knew some panacia for sickness. A Mulla thus was a friend of common people. He was not paid in cash but as kind by the parents or house holders. A Mulla was paid handsomely by the parents when a child was admitted to *Othupalli*, when he started to learn *Fatiha* (first chapter of Quran), when he started to learn *Yaseen* (the 8th chapter of Quran) and the *Khatam* or completion of the whole Quran. In 1937 A.D. a Mulla was paid averagely 8 Annas (50 paise) by the parents on important occasions. Mullas were paid sacks of paddy by the parents of the children in the harvesting seasons. Mulla had to control more than hundred children at a time. He could teach a few, for others he controlled by a stick in

108. Ibid.

109. C.A. Innes. Malabar Gazetteer, Trivandrum, 1997, (1st Published in 1908), p.189.

hand. Sometimes he inflicted severe punishment upon children. But the children suffered everything silently because Mullas taught them that they could be rewarded in the next life. Mullas were appointed to recite Quran in a hut built over grave. He had to complete 40 days Quranic recitation.¹¹⁰ This *Kuzhikkalothu*, although very tough in the mid night, was undertaken by them since they got a handsome amount out of this. The menial income they received made their life miserable but the common people came to his rescue by helping him in time of necessity. In the British period so many *Othupallis* were upgraded as schools and the respective Mullas were appointed as teachers by imparting them teacher training for 2 years (lower training).¹¹¹ The Mullas thus became both teachers and managers of such schools. Even now the successors of Mullas are holding the post of Managers.

A Musliyar or a *Moulavi* is superior in status to Mullah. A Musliyar is usually appointed as an *Imām* (leader in prayer) of a Jumua Mosque. The five time congregational prayers are usually held in Juma mosque. In small mosques called *Srāmbi*, prayers are engaged by the available persons. *Adhan* is used to call only from a *jumuā* (Friday noon prayer) mosque. A Musliyar besides performing *Imāmat* (leadership) to prayers also performed Friday Sermon, *Khuthuba*. Thus he had to act as *Khatīb*, but sometimes a different person has used to be appointed as *Khatib*. A Sayyid or highly learned *Ulama*

110. C.A. Innes, op.cit., p.194.

111. Prof. T. Abdul Azeez, 'Illathayitheerunna Mullamar', Chandrika Weekend Edition, Calicut, 16.8.1998, p.I.

held the post of *Qazi* who had privileged to decide the canonical issues.¹¹² The caller of *Adhān*, *Muadhīn* usually known as *Mukri*. A Musliyar also leads a *Dars* and known as *Mudarris*. After the decline of Mullahs as teachers and with the establishment of *Madrasah* basing in the principle of modern schools, the *Musliyār* became the teachers in the absence of Mullas. The ceremonial function, especially *Nikāh* was conducted by a *Qāzi* (A Musliyar who has canonical power). Besides a Musliyar has the duty to impart religious knowledge to common people through *Waaḏ*, the midnight speeches. Many Musliyars are experts in such speeches prolonging hours to hours.¹¹³ Musliyars, both *Mudarris* and disciples are fed by the common people. Each Musliyar student of *Dars* is adopted by a family and his meals are provided by them. *Mudarris* get the meals inside the mosque carried by any student of *Dars*. Musliyars are always conscious about their dress. They are dressed in pure white cloth washed always without any dirt in it. His common dress is a white dhoti white shirt and a white turban. Thus the Musliyars constituted the *Ulama* class who is much superior in status than the common people. But they formed a class by their profession and they intermingled with common people married and lived amongst them. The Mappilas of British period considered that it was meritorius to have a Musliyar from the family. Persons with more male children always send one or two sons to this noble profession. The tenets of Islam never encourage such an establishment of priest class

112. C.A. Innes, op.cit., p.189.

113. Ibid.

within the religion. But the illiteracy and ignorance of common Mappilas paved the way for the establishment of such a class within the society.

Among the *Ulama* class, there are some important families who rise to prominence as *Ulamas* of great merit. The Muqdots of Ponnani and the Qazis of Calicut were such group of *Ulamas* who deserve special study. Besides, there were some outstanding *Ulamas* who not only became famous as scholars but also as reformers and nationalists. Among these *Ulamas* Umar Qazi of Veliyancode, Hamdani Thangal, Chalilakath Kunhamed Haji, Shujai Moidu Musliar, Makti Thangal, MCC brothers, K.M Moulavi, E.K Moulavi, Ali Musliyar and Shaliyati were some of the outstanding *Ulamas* of British period.

Maqdots of Ponnani

The earliest among the *Ulama* class were the Maqdot family of Ponnani who marked their presence in the pages of Mappila history. The Maqdot¹¹⁴ clan originally belonged to Yeman. They migrated to India in the 6th century and settled in the *Ma'bar* coast (Coramandal coast). Their missionary work along the coast of Indian ocean resulted in the spread of Islam in these areas. The prominent scholar of Maqdot family, Shaikh Ali ibn Ahmadul Ma'bari shifted to Cochin and settled there. His son Zainuddin Maqdot was born in this house. The brother of Ahmadul Ma'bari, Ibrahim,

114. Maqdot – Some Historians opine that Maqdot is the Qabila of Ma'bari migrants. Some others opine that it is an honourable title given by the people to the family to denote their service.

son of Ahmadul Manbari was the Qazi of Ponnani. Seeing the extra ordinary intelligence of the boy Ibrahim Ma'bari brought him to Ponnani and taught him Quran, *Swarf*, *Nahv* and *fiqh*. Ibrahim Ma'bari was the first *Maqdūm Qazi* of Ponnani and through the years they maintained this tradition. Maqdums were later hailed as the spiritual leaders and Qazis of the entire Malabar and Travancore areas, Maqdums held the post of Qazis from Coromandal to Konkan coast.¹¹⁵ *Odakkal* and *Musliyarakath Ulama* families were the offshoots of Maqdums. Ibrahim Mabari in his time was the unquestionable religious leader of Malabar and Travancore.

Shaikh Zainuddin Maqum, (senior) mastered in *fiqh* from Fakruddin Abubaker ibn Qazi Ramzanushaliyati of Calicut. He later went to Egypt and studied in the *Madrassa* of Qazi Abdurahman Adamil Misri, spent five years during which he mastered hadith. After Hajj pilgrimage Zainuddin returned to Ponnani.

Reaching Ponnani Zainuddin called a meeting of all Muslims of Ponnani. He presented before them the need to construct a *Juma* Mosque. People gave contributions enormously. This was how the *Juma* mosque was established. He introduced the *Dars* system in the mosque.

Zainuddin Maqum (senior) played an historical role in giving leadership to Muslims against colonial power the Portuguese. The Portuguese

115. Ma'bar – The facing coast of India to Ceylone (present Srilanka) of South India was called 'Ma'bar' (ferry) by Arabs. The Maqum's ancestors settled here centuries ago, hence called 'Ma'baris.

were playing all havocs and atrocities against the innocent Muslims. Besides being inflicted butchery upon the Muslims they even killed people who had gone for Hajj pilgrimage.¹¹⁶ He advised all the Muslims to take arms against these Portuguese. The Zamorin, Calicut raja blessed such a movement. Zainuddin roamed around the villages instigating people for *jihād* against the Portuguese. He had written an Arabic poem *Thafrees Ahlil Imani Al-jihadi Abadthssulbani*. Thousands of copies were circulated among people that inspired them to undertake *jihād*.¹¹⁷ It was when the Mappilas were thus seriously engaged in anti-colonial war that Zainuddin Maqdam wrote in Arabic and Persian languages. He is credited with so many *fiqh* books. Besides, he had written so many Arabic poetries. Above all he was the great *Muhaddis* lived in the land of Malabar.

His second son Shaikh Abdul Aziz Ma'bari followed his foot steps. He learned from his father and from Calicut *Qazi*. He took the charge of *Qazi* of Ponnani, in the vacant post after the death of his father. He took a leading role in the campaign against the Portuguese atrocities and successfully led the Muslim army in the fight for Chaliyam fort.¹¹⁸ Shaikh Abdul Aziz Maqdam was a symbol of communal harmony. He had been a close friend of the Zamorin and polite to the Hindu class. He was equally proficient in Arabic and Persian. He wrote interpretations to so many books of his father. So many

116. C.N. Ahamed Moulavi and K.K Mohammad. Abdul Kareem, op.cit., p.142.

117. Ibid.

118. T. Abdul Aziz. *Fathuhul Mubin* (Tr. in Mal), Calicut, 1996, p.56.

fatwas and books he had written have been lost beyond revival. He had no issue and died at Ponnani and was buried near his father.

The third son of Zainuddin Maqdam (senior), Shaikh Ghazzali was a great scholar and had been the Qazi of North Malabar. He married and settled at Chombal near Mahe. He died and was buried at Chombal mosque. His son was the renowned scholar and historian of Mappila community, Shaikh Zainuddin Maqdam, same name of his grand father, hence known as Zainuddin Maqdam Junior.

Zainuddin Maqdam Junior

Shaikh Zainuddin ibn ghazzali Maqdam Ma'bari was an eminent scholar and historian of Malabar. He was born in Ponnani and his early education was from his own father and his Uncle Abdul Aziz Maqdam. He went Makkah in pursuit of higher studies. There he became the disciple of Imam Ahmad Ibn Hajarul Makki, one of the prominent Imam of Shafi School of thought and the author of *Tuhfa*, a book on *fiqh* (jurisprudence). He was a beloved desciple of Imam Hajar. After studies he returned to Ponnani and assumed the Maqdam post. Shaikh Zainuddin was in good terms with Sultan Ali Adil Shah.¹¹⁹ of Bijapur. He acted as the scribe of Zamorin in writing letters in Arabic to Arabian countries.¹²⁰ Shaikh Zainuddin Maqdam was a

119. C.N. Ahmed Moulavi and K.K Mohammed Abdul Kareem, op.cit., p.145.

120. Diwan Bahadur C. Gopalan Nair, "Ponnani Maqdam Thangal", Malayalathile Mappilamar. Mangalore, 1917, p.45.

prolific author. He wrote about 10 books on fiqh and *tassawuf*. The great contribution to *fiqh* is *Fathhul Mueen* which is wide spread not only different parts of India, but in Middle East and far eastern countries. This has been the text book of several Arabic institutions and *Dars* of mosques. Several persons have written interpretations to this book.

But it was the composition of *Tuhfat-al-Mujāhideen* which installed him in throne of renowned historians. This was the first book on the history of Malabar. Shaikh Zainuddin Maqdam lived in a period when the Portuguese intrusions exceeded all boundaries of humanity. So the book contains only first hand informations regarding the events described and thus considered as true and genuine history of the period. He submitted this book to Sultan Ali AdilShah of Bijapur. The book was written in Arabic which contains about 400 pages. *Tuhfat al-Mujahideen* has 4 parts. In the first part he deals with the laws of *jihād* (holy war) in Islam and its relevance in Mappila society and his advice to make jihad against the Portuguese. He describes the benefits to be earned from the fight in this life and hereafter. The second part of the book deals with the origin and growth of Mappila community in Malabar from the very early period. The third part exclusively contains various customs and ceremonies of the Hindus of the time, a true picture of Hindu society never given before. The fourth part is divided into 14 chapters. It deals with the Portuguese atrocities from 1498 to 1583 and the long struggle of Mappila Muslims against them under their raja Zamorin. *Tuhfat al Mujāhideen*, which placed Zainuddin Maqdam as one of the best historians, has been translated to

several languages of the world.¹²¹ So many of them translated into Indian languages. Ferishta, the famous historian of Medieval India had incorporated the abridged version of *Tuhfat* in his book *Tārīq*, Shamsulla Qadiri had translated it to Urdu with foot notes. Mr. Anderson and Major Roulandson, Amerson, James Briggs, Rox, and Muhammed Hussain Nainar had translated it to English language. Mr. De-Loppe had it translated to Portuguese language. Shaikh Zainuddin Maqdam, Junior died in 1583 AD and buried near his father at Chombala, near Mahe.

The later *Maqdūms* were also prominent *Ulamas* of the time. From the time of Abdu Rahman ibn Uthman, the succession of Qazi post of Maqdam family was shifted to maternal line. The eldest member of the family holds the post of Maqdam. *Pazhayakam*, *Puthiyakam* and *Ghassāli Musliyārakam* were the famous branches of Maqdam family. 38 generation of *Maqdūms* became the *Qāzis* of Ponnani.¹²² Besides so many Maqdums had assumed the post of Qazi in North Malabar and various other places. The Mappilas of Malabar placed the Maqdamis in respectable post of Qazis.

In 1847 A.D. when Puthiyakath Ahmad Maqdam was the Qazi, he was arrested and imprisoned for 3 years in Chingalpetta on account of the involvement in Jannat Beevi case.¹²³ A Sindh Muslim lady named Jannat had

121. C.N. Ahmad Moulavi and K.K. Muhammad Abdul Kareem, op.cit., p.146.

122. Prof. K.V. Abdurahiman, op.cit., p.46.

123. Ibid., 49.

accompanied an English officer, Captain Patridge and were staying at Ponnani. The neighbours suspected that the British officer had kidnapped the lady and informed this matter to Maqdum. The Maqdum ordered his followers to capture this lady forcefully and the people violently taken this lady from the custody of British officer. The British charged Maqdum as the conspirator and sentenced for 3 years imprisonment.

The Qazis of Calicut

The first reference regarding the Qazis of Calicut comes from the narration of the famous traveller Ibn Batuta, who mentions that during his visit Fakruddin Uthman was the Qazi of Calicut.¹²⁴ His seat was the Juma Masjid of Kuttichira. After him the most prominent Qazi was Abu Bakr ibn Ramzan Shaliyati, who was a famous Sufi and the preceptor of Shaikh Zainuddin Maqdum Junior. He had written many Arabic books. His son Shihabuddin Ahmad and his grand son Abdul Aziz were prominent scholars. Qazi Abdul Aziz was the main advisor of the Zamorin in the fight against Portuguese at Chaliyam fort.¹²⁵ Son of Abdul Aziz, Ali Nashiri was the contemporary of famous Sufi, Shaikh Mamukoya of Idiyangara.

The second son of Abdul Aziz, Qazi Muhammed was an exemplary writer in Arabi-Malayalam. He was a disciple of Qazi Abdul Aziz, Shaikh Usman and Abdul Aziz Maqdum. He wrote an elegy on the death of Shaikh

124. P.P. Mammad Koya Parappil, op.cit., p.106.

125. Prof. T. Abdul Aziz, op.cit., p.56.

Usman. He was well versed in Quran *fiqh*, *Tajwīd*, *Nahv*, Mathematics and Astronomy. In Arabic he had written more than 50 books. But he was famous for his work in Arabi-Malayalam, *Muhyiddin Māla*, the first of its kind. *Muhyuddin Māla* said to have been written 5 years before, the father of Malayalam language, Ezhuthachan had written his masterpiece *Adyatma Ramayana*. This is a composition in poetical style which praises his Shaikh and most celebrated sufi Sheikh Muhyuddin Abdul Qadir Jilani of Bhagdad. The book is replete with the miraculous deeds of the saint. This work has been written in AD 1606. This book later influenced the life of Mappilas that it became part and parcel of their daily life. The recitation of this *māla* is considered to have the power to cure of so many diseases.

Another noteworthy book that Qazi Muhammad had written was *Fathhul Mubeen* (Distinct victory). This is a historical narration in poetry of the capture of the fort of Chaliyam by Mappila – Nair Warriors of Zamorin, This book has been considered as an historical source of the Portuguese invasions of Malabar. He dedicated this book to the benevolent raja of Calicut the Zamorin. Qazi Muhammed had written so many books in Arabic on Islamic theology, all in poetry. He was a spokesman of nationalism and advised the people of land to fight against the colonial powers with all their means and capacities. He died in AD 1608 and was buried in Juma Mosque of Kuttichira, Calicut.

After Qazi Mohammed his son, Muhyuddin assumed the post of Qazi of Calicut. He had been the scribe of his father. He wrote a book on different issues of religion namely *Vellatti Masāla*. He was a nationalist and advocated

his community to fight against Dutch. He also wandered through out Malabar with speeches and advices. After Qazi Muhiyuddin, the most prominent among the line was Muhiyuddin alias Kunhideen Kutty. His early education was from his father and then at Ponnani. He was a writer preacher and poet. He had a lot of disciples throughout out Malabar and had special favour in the court of the Zamorin. He had been appointed as the legal advisor of the court of East India Company on Muslim laws.¹²⁶ He was an intimate friend of Umar Qazi, the freedom fighter. When Umar Qazi was arrested by British, people assembled before Hazur Katcheri of Calicut, British ordered them to disperse, but it was when the *Qazi* came and ordered they obeyed. Muhiyuddin Kutty Qazi had under him the control of 40 *Mullāhs* who acted in his assembly and they were the *Imāms* of the neighbouring mosques and possessed all legal powers of their respective jurisdiction.¹²⁷

Aboobacker Kunhi was another prominent personality among the Qazis of Calicut. His early education was from his father and later at Ponnani. He was a writer, preacher and wrote poetry in Arabi-Malayalam dialect. The Zamorin had consulted him often in matters concerned with Muslims. Veteran Mappila poet, Moyinkutty Vaidyar had got the complete history of Uhud battle from Abubaker Kunhi Qazi, for his celebrated work *Uhud Padapāttu*.¹²⁸ During his time there broke out a controversy among the Muslims of Calicut

126. P.P. Mammad Koya Parappil, op.cit., p106.

127. Ibid., p.109

128. Ibid., p.111.

in respect of *Oppana songs* on the marriage occasions. One group argued that the songs must be accompanied by clapping of hands while others stood for songs without clapping.¹²⁹ Those parties were known as *Muttullavar* and *Muttillāthavar* respectively. The *Muttillāthavar* became the 'big faction' (Valiyabhāgam) and *Muttullavar* became 'small faction' (Cheriyā bhāgam).

Among the 'big faction', Sayyid Hussian Shihabuddin Mullakoya was elected as the Qazi. His father Ali Shihabuddin was migrated to Malabar from Hadramaut and settled at Balapatanam. Sayyid Hussain later married from Arakkal house at Cannanore, but shifted to Calicut where he resided at *Kammutiveedu*. His followers later shifted to Panakkad near Malappuram and were known as *Panakkād Thangals*. After Mullakoya, his son Sayyid Ahamad Attakoya assumed the Qaziship. After him, Sayyid ibn Hussain Imbichikoya Thangal became the Qazi in a festive atmosphere. From 1947 A.D. his son Sayyid Ahamad Shihabuddin Imbichikoya Thangal had been the Qazi of 'big faction'. From the time of Mullakoya onwards, the Qaziship had been the privilege of Sayyids only. The small faction had a line of Qazis of their own. Palliveetil Mohammed had been the first among them. He became the Qazi at the age of 20. He was a great scholar, historian and poet. Unfortunately his book on history had been lost. He died in 1927 AD and buried in *misthāqāl mosque* compound. His son Palliveetil Mamukoya who succeeded him was an important person who settled many disputes that was

129. C.N Ahamad Moulavi and K.K Mohd. Abdul Kareem. op.cit., p.159.

over ruled by courts.¹³⁰ In 1958 A.D., he died and the present Qāzi, his son Nalakath Muhammed Koya took the position of 'small faction' Qāzi. The Qazis of Calicut, thus are an *Ulama* group who made tremendous service to religion.

Besides these *Ulama* groups, so many of the *Ulama* scholars individually contributed to the community. Many of them were great reformers of community as well as nationalists. Veliyancode Umar Qazi, a scholar, pious and Sufi of Malabar was a great social reformer and nationalist. He vehemently opposed so many social evils that prevailed among Mappilas such as false prestige on aristocracy family status and ancestry.¹³¹ He was an arch enemy of the British regime. He was the first *Ulama* who implemented non-taxation movement against British regime.¹³² For this he was arrested by Chawghat Judge Tukti Sayip and imprisoned from where he miraculously escaped. But again he was arrested and sent to Calicut sub jail. From there he sent a letter to Mampuram Thangal. Mampuram thangal asked the British to release Umar Qazi and British released him in fear of mass agitation. *Sallalahu ilal bayth* is his most famous poetry written in praise of Prophet. With his death an amazing personality that the time has produced came to an end.¹³³

130. P.P. Mammed Koya Parappil, op.cit., p.118.

131. C.N. Ahmad Moulavi and K.K. Muhammed Abdul Kareem, op.cit., p.198.

132. Ibid., p.199.

133. Ibid., p.205.

Shujai Moidu Musaliyar was an eminent scholar, eloquent speaker, a mystic poet and historian of great merit. He did not accept the traditional dress of a Musaliyar but always dressed like a noble man, hence got the name *Shujai* (gentleman).¹³⁴ He took a leading role in *Kundotty-Ponnani Kaitharkam*, by representing Ponnani faction.¹³⁵ He wrote a book in Islamic History in Arabi – Malayalam. His celebrated work is *Safalamāla*, a poetry in philosophical grounds, throw lights on the need of leading a good life.¹³⁶

Sayyid Sanaullah Makti Thangal was one of the greatest religious reformers of Malabar. He was well versed in English Hindi, Urdu, Arabic, Malayalam and Tamil. It was a period when the Christian missionaries were trying to proselytise the Mappilas by vehemently criticizing Islamic ideology. Not a single man came forward to check the propoganda. Makhti Thangal rose to the occasion by leaving his job in British government. He travelled through out Malabar and Trvancore and made inspiring speeches.¹³⁷ He published a book *Parkaleetha Porkalam* a refutation to Christian propaganda. He published *Kadora Kadāram*, a magazine in Arabi-Malayalam to propagate Islamic ideology. In a debate held at Cochin he defeated the Christin missionaries.¹³⁸ Makhti Thangal tried hard to educate Muslims in Malayalam and English. Of his 35 books 32 books are in Malayalam script not Arabi-Malayalam. He criticized those ulama who had aversion to write Malayalam.

134. Ibid., p.400.

135. Ibid.

136. Ibid., p.402.

137. Ibid., p.426.

138. Ibid., p.427.

Shaikh Muhammad Hamadani Thangal was great reformist *ulama* who was well versed in Urdu and Persian. He spread his *Hamadani tariqat* among the people of Travancore and formed an association “Muslim conference” in order to spread education among Travancore Muslims.¹³⁹ He wrote a book *Irfatul Islam* with the aim to eradicate superstitions. He built up a college near Aluva.¹⁴⁰ and strongly educated the Muslims to acquire modern education.

Moulana Chalilakath Kunhahamed stands supreme among the reformist *ulama*. He studied from Ponnani *Dars* and *Baqiat Salihat* at Vellore after which he also graduated from Lathifiya college of Vellore. When he was the *Imam* of Pulikkal mosque a controversy aroused namely *Qibla* controversy,¹⁴¹ regarding the direction of *Qibla* of the mosque. After much debate his stand was proved true. Later he laid the foundation of *Darul Uloom* (House of knowledge) Arabic college at Vazhakkad. It was from here he took steps to revolutionise the *Dars* education and restructure it in the line of modern schools such as class rooms were arranged, benches were provided and Black Boards were erected. The syllabus was framed and Maulana himself written books for study.¹⁴² Thus he was the propounder of Madrasah education in Malabar¹⁴³, whose revolutionary ideas caused bitter opposition from Orthodox *ulama*. He framed script of Arabi-Malayalam to match with Malayalam

139. Ibid., p.481.

140. Ibid., p.483.

141. Ibid., p.483.

142. Ibid., p.483.

143. K.T. Muhammadali, op.cit., p.41.

alphabets and encouraged reading newspapers and introduced girls education. Besides Islamic subjects, he taught secular subjects like Mathematics, logic geography etc., Later his sons, the MCC brothers continued the Madrasa movement and revolutionised the society.

K.M. Moulavi and E.K. Moulavi were important reformist Ulama of the society. K.M. Moulavi was a Khilafat worker.¹⁴⁴ He joined in hand with Ali Musaliyar, the leader of Mappila outbreaks against British. British government declared him guilty and tried to arrest him but K.M. Moulavi disappeared and sought asylum at Kodungallur where he worked for *Kerala Muslim Ikyasangam*. In 1932 British regime declared general amnesty and KM Moulavi returned to Tirurangadi. He was the founder of the orphanage at Tirurangadi. EK Moulavi was an Arabic teacher in various schools and Lecturer in Maharajas College. He wrote many books to reform the society.

Ali Musaliyar was not only an outstanding Ulama scholar of the time but a great nationalist freedom fighter who sacrificed own life to the cause of freedom of the country. He studied from the famous Ponani *Dars* and later at Makka for 7 years. He byhearted 700 *Hadith* (Sayings of the Prophet).¹⁴⁵

In 1907 A.D., when he became a *Mudarris* (Grand teacher of *Dars*) of Tirurangadi he entered to the Khilafat activities. When Moulana Shoukat Ali

144. C.N Ahmad Moulavi and K.K. Muhammad Abdul Kareem, op.cit., p.546.

145. Nellikuth A.P. Muhammadali Musaliyar, Malavalathile Maharathanmar, Calicut, 1997, p.93.

constituted Khilafat Committee, Ali Musaliyar became the vice president of the committee who was in fore-front of all Khilafat activities. British officials accused Al Musaliyar behind all these Khilafat agitations and decided to arrest him forcefully. The British tried to arrest Musliyar by encircling the mosque, but due to the wide protest of Mappilas they abandoned the idea. The next 6 months was the *Khilāfat* rule of Ali Musaliyar in Malabar.¹⁴⁶ So many pro-British Mappila officials such as Chekutty, Amu and Moideen were killed. The British came with Goorkha regiment and gave an ultimatum to Ali Musliyar to surrender. After the end of a fierce fight, Ali Musliyar with 42 others was captured and send to Coimbatore jail. Court Martial ordered to hang Ali Musliyar at Coimbatore jail. It was carried out putting an end to the life of the great nationalist ulama. Katilasseri Muhammad Musliyar was another nationalist ulama took part in Khilafat activities who eluded British arrest and had taken asylum in French occupied Karakkal. He also opposed the orthodox ulama and reformed the society.¹⁴⁷

Besides reformist and nationalist ulama there were numerous ulama scholars who were in the strict sense religious scholars. To name a few, Aukoya Musliyar, Tanur Shaikh, Kunhikoya Musaliyar, Baytan Muhammad, Pang Ahamad Kutty Musliyar, Puthiyappila Musaliyar and Ahamad kutty Shaliyati were some of them. There were hundred others to mention who with their scholastic knowledge threw light to the society. Each of them had

146. Ibid., p.94.

147. C.N. Ahmad Moulavia and K.K. Muhammed Abdul Kareem, op.cit., p.509.

another hundred disciples. In short, Ulama class of Mappila society played prominent role in the political, social and spiritual development of the community.

Malabaris: The Common Class

The foundation of the Mappila community was laid by the early Arab settlements resulting mainly from the unions of Arab sailors and traders with the Hindu women of the coast of Malabar. Though this was the origin of the community the real formation of the society happened later when large number of conversions from Hindu class took place. Thus among the Mappilas we find both the descendants of Arabs through local women and converts from among the local people. The women the Arabs associated with and the people converted by them belonged to different Hindu castes. Although Islam does not advocate any caste, class or sect distinctions among its believers, as Quran called all believers as brothers (49:10),¹⁴⁸ in practice the Mappilas continued to observe some sectarianism, not castiesm, as the remnants of old beliefs which followed them. The Mappila community thus constituted by many classes based on their conversions. The group of Arab lineage had possessed some superiority, like wise the middle caste Hindus, such as *Tiyyās (Ezhava)*, *Kanakkār*, *Mannāns* and *Āshāris* when converted had considered their position somewhat inferior. So was the case with high caste Nairs and Brahmins, though very few in number had the conviction that they

148. M.M. Pickthall. (Qr. Tr.), op.cit., p.572.

were the superior class than the low caste converts. To the bottom of the society, there were the converts from low caste Hindus like *Mukkuvan* (Fisherman) and *Ambittan* (Barber). The high caste Hindu converts, though abandoned all caste observances like untouchability, pollution etc., had deep in their mind the status possessed in the pre-conversion time.

Among the Mappilas in Malabar, thus^{was} formed a community with all complexities such as Arabs lineage, conversion criteria, spiritual superiority, mother right and father right systems, occupational dignity and Aristocratic set up. From this multi variant elements we could not segregate the genuine ones, but all of them constituted the elements of the same body. However, with the exception of Sayyid class, who claimed lineage from the family of the holy Prophet, all others can broadly be grouped into the people of the land of Malabar in Short, 'Malabaris'. Malabaris is a word coined by the Sayyid class to differentiate the status of their family in relation with the indigenous groups. This demarcation is also defined for the purpose of the permissibility in matrimonial relations. The Sayyids are endogamous and the same time hypergamous. In order to preserve the purity of blood, they never give their women in marriage to outsiders or Malabaris, as they often called. The Arab society and Islamic conventions consider the paternal lineage as the criteria of hereditary rights, so the girls given in marriage to Malabaris would never have the tradition. But at the same time, the male members of Sayyids can marry a lady from Malabaris. Since the lowest groups such as *Puyslans* and *Ossans* were so inferior in status that they were eliminated from the purview of

Malabaris. The hypergamous system of Sayyids can very well compare to the Brahmanical system that prevailed in the Hindu society. Brahmans were hypergamous with *Nair* class.

The Malabaris thus are a mixed class of Mappila community. Within Malabaris there existed so many sub divisions based on wealth, occupation, scholarship, family connection etc. The Aristocratic and occupational class among Malabaris, Koyas of Calicut and Keyis of Tellichery had considered superiority over other local people. They followed endogamy and if hypergamous, it was limited between them. But there was no rigidity to this class system as in the case of casteism, such as untouchability, restriction from intermingling and interdining. Of course they had their own mosques in their strong holds, but they never restricted or prohibited others from the matters of worship. They even intermingled with Puislans and Ossans.

Arakkal House, the royal class was under the perview of Malabaris, but due to the hierarchial position as the ruling class, they were not in a position for intermingling with commons. But they were exogamous with Koyas and Keyis.

The middle caste Hindu converts mainly fall in the South Malabar area who were peasants largely and rarely petty merchants, labourers and few land lords. Since the Sayyid class was widely spread in the South Malabar area, especially for religious service, it was with these groups that they were often related in their hypergamous marriages than the Aristocratic Keyis and Koyas.

The lowest ebb of society though a part of Malabaris who were excluded by Sayyids from the jurisdiction of Malabaris, the Ossan (Barber) groups and *Puyslans* (fishermen) group, had possessed inferior status mainly because the Sayyids excluded them from matrimonial relations with them. Later, Malabaris also took aversion with them in matrimonial alliance. This segregation towards these lowest groups compelled them to accept endogamy in matrimonial alliance. The ulama class, Musliyars fall in the category of Malabaris, but inspite of the dignity they possessed as persons of religious service for which they received respect and consideration, in social relations they have no special segregation.

On the basis of economic condition and living standards, the Malabaris stood in different positions. Although most of them were peasants or tenants, quite few of them were landlords or Aristocrats, still another major portion were petty labourers. A detailed study of those occupational groups and peasant class has been dealt separately in the next chapter. About the few Mappila landlords of British period, Tokinam briefs like this, "The landlords of the country were almost entirely Hindus. There are about half a dozen *Jenmis* among Moplahs, but they are of recent origin and when compared to their brotheren Hindus, they are so few that they are negligible, when the economic condition of the tract is considered. Numerically the *Jenmis* are few but their way is large and extensive. It is of great interest to know how a handful of *jenmis* got sway over large areas. Suffice to say that Malabar had very many pleasant convulsions owing to the Mysore invasions, and then

powerful chiefs lost no opportunity to grab the poor as much as they could. Thus consolidated, the *Jenmis* commands large tracts under his way.¹⁴⁹

Based upon the briefings of Tokinam, here is a short look upon the major land lords of Mappilas. On close examination these groups were identical in their status, all of them fall under Malabaris, none of them were Sayyids, and all of them were confined to South Malabar, the cultivable area of Malabar. These landlords, most of them grabbed wealth from Hindu land lords by means of force, by means of faithful presentation for their loyalty and by legal land transactions. These 'half a dozen' Mappila *Jenmis* were^{of} these families — Kurikkals of Manjeri, Kiliyamannil family of Malappuram, Mooppans of kalpakancherry, Nahas of Parapapnangadi, Koyappathodis of Vazhakkad and Kalladis of Mannarghat.

Kurikkals of Manjeri

The Kurikkals of Payyanad, near Manjeri in the Ernad taluk of British Malabar were a distinguished aristocratic family who played a major role in Mappila outbreaks against the British regime. Their ancestry can be traced to very past exactly to the sixth century AD.¹⁵⁰ Abu Ubayadat-ul-Jarrah, was a *Sahaba* (Companion) of the holy Prophet. He was a general of Islamic army during the reign of Caliph Umar. Later he had been appointed as the governor

149. Tokinam, "The Moplals", Mopla-Nad, Calicut, 1924, p.13.

150. A.P. Muhammadali Musliyar, "Ibn Jarrah to Kurikkal", Pythrikam. Manjeri. 2002. p.58.

of Syria. During this time plague had stricken Syria and Abdul Qadir son of Jarrah fled to Hamdan, a distant city. By his capabilities he became the ruler of Hamdan. Later his son Usman Hamadani became the ruler but quit the throne and wandered in sufistic pursuits. During his visits to the east he reached Balipatnam. There he married the daughter of Balipatnam Qazi. He got a son namely Abdul Qadir Sani and when the child was young Usman Hamdani returned to Hamadan with the intention to come back. But unfortunately he died at Hamdan, upon which his friend Shaikh Mahmudul Qaboo Sani thinking the plight of child came to Balipatanam. By the time the boy was 16 years old and the Chirakkal raja impressed by the extra ordinary intelligence appointed the boy as his minister. But Shaikh Qaboo sani advised the child to renounce the worldly office and advised to study more on Islamic subjects and to continue his father's *tariqat*. This advice was taken to account, Qadir sani then spent his days on spiritual pursuits. He married from Purathiyur. He had one son and two daughters. The son Khamaludheen Shaikh followed the footsteps of his father and became a great sufi of the day. He had 3 sons, Nuruddin Shaikh, Fakruddin shaikh and Shaikh Ahamad. Eldest son Nuruddin Shaikh shifted to Chaliyam and settled there, second son Fakruddin Shaikh shifted to Ancharakandy Kollam and settled there. Third son Shaikh Ahamed shifted to Mauvanchery and later to Purathiyur. He had two sons – Moideen Kutty and Hassan Kutty. The two sons were mastered in martial arts like *Kalaripayatt* and *Vadipayatt* for 20 years and earned great name as *Gurikkals* (Masters of *Kalari*).¹⁵¹ Later the word transformed to

151. Dr. Kunhali V., "Kurikkals of Manjeri", *Pythrikam*, Manjeri, 2002, p.46.

Kurikkal. Hassankutty Kurikkal was invited by the Zamorin in order to teach his soldiers the art of *Kalaripayatt*. Thus he came to Chaliyam and settled there. Moideen Kutty later followed his brother to Chaliyam. Moideenkutty Kurikkal married a widow of Ponnani Maqdums, the lady was from the *Musliarakath* family. The lady had a son namely Seeman. Later Moideenkitty migrated to Turakkal, a village of Ernad and bought so many lands there. Hassankutty Kurikkal also migrated to Ernad and as a trainer of the Zamorin earned a big amount which he used to purchase thousands of acres of land from Brahmins. He settled at Payyanad near Manjeri. It was Hassan Kutty Kurikkal, who was the fore-father of present Kuriakkal family. This was a period when Tipu Sultan had been encroaching the Ernad areas. Hassan kutty Kurikkal a descendant of the former Hassan Kutty Kutikkal, was the agent of the Zamorin at Manjeri. In 1785-86 A.D. Arshad Begh Khan Tipus agent, seized this territory to earn the revenue, Hassan Kurikkal revolted against him.¹⁵² The prudence and ability shown by Kurikkal attracted the East India company officers who appointed him as the police officer. But Kurikkal, loyal to the Zamorin, did not like this office. He secretly made alliance with the rebel leaders, Unni Moosa Moopan and Chempan Pocker. Hassan Kurikkal had organized a band of soldiers using his influence as a police officer. Through proclamation dated 25th November 1800 AD, he was declared a rebel and offered a reward of five thousand rupees for his head.¹⁵³

 152. W. Logan. Malabar Manual, Vol.III, para. CXIII, p.251.

153. *Ibid.*, para. CC XXXIV, p.341.

In the Manjeri revolt led by Hassan Kurikkal 14 dead. He was shot dead with other leaders in 1802 AD. Hassan Kutty Kurikkal had 4 sons, Ahamad, Moideen, Kunhahammad and Hassan. Hassan Kurikkal, third son who followed the foot steps his father was an arch opponent of British. Hassan Kurikkal and his gang seized the Manjeri Karananulpads temple. A British troop came from Malappuram and began to shoot, as a result the rebels were fled. They later retreated to the Bagavathi temple at Angadippuram. In a fierce encounter with British troop 64 members of gang including Hassan Kurikkal lost their lives.¹⁵⁴ Their bodies were thrown to a well near Talook Cutchery. With the death of Hassan Kurikkal the anti-British policy of the family was gradually withdrawn. Many of the members took jobs in the British government. The son of Kunhammed Kurikkal (third son of Hassan kutty Kurikkal), Khan Bahadur Ahmad Kurikkal was the Circle Inspector of Police under British. This pro-British policy was very well reflected during the 1921 rebellion when the family did not participate in the rebellion. In modern times another family member, Ahmad Kurikkal, became a Keral state minister and hero of the formation of Malappuram District.¹⁵⁵ Later two members from family became Members of Legislative Assembly in Kerala Assembly, Abdullah Kutty Kurikkal and Ishaq Kurikkal.

Kiliyammannil of Malappuram

This family originally belongs to Chemmankadavu, near Malappuram. The glory of family started from the time of Moideen who was the Manager of

154. W. Logan, op.cit., Vol. III, para. CXIII, p.252.

155. R.E. Miller, op.cit., p.110.

British owned estate of Palapully near Cochin. Sitting in this post he amassed many lands here and there, as a result at the time of his death his son Unneen inherited a huge wealth. British bestowed the title *Khan Bahdur* for his loyalty to the regime. It was estimated that Unneen had harvested 1,25,000 *para* paddy annually. He had 700 Acres rubber plantations in Padaparambu and his annual coconut producing was 65 lakhs. Thus Kiliyamannil Unneen was the biggest land lord of Malabar. He was a man of extra ordinary personal abilities and his very appearance was appealing. He possessed a well built body with fair complexion having a round beard, wore a white cap with white full sleeve shirt and white dhoti with socks and shoes. Khan Bahadur Unneen was especially famous for his unequalled charity and generosity. In Rabi awwal, the Arabic month, in connection with *Milād-al-Nabi* (Birth anniversary of Prophet), he organized a feast with 350 sacks of rice and meat of 250 buffaloes. Likewise on the 27th day of Ramzan, (Day of *Lailat-al-Qadr*) he distributed Rupees worth 2.5 lakhs. In the month of *Karkidakam*, (Kollam era) a month of heavy rain and famine, he distributed *Kanhi* (porridge) daily to thousands of people.¹⁵⁶ Just before *Perunnāl* (*Idulfitr*) he disbursed one full lorry of dresses to about thousand families. He tremendously contributed to religious patronization that he paid the salary of 5 *Mudarris* of neighbouring mosques and more over he had given the food to 150 Musliyar students of the *Dars* continuously for 11 years.

156. Family history has been narrated by A.P. Muhammadali Musliyar, who at the 1940's was a Musliyar teacher at Malappuram Dars, in an Interview on 2-1-2003.

Unneen had married the daughter of another Khan Bahadur Kalladi Unnikannu of Mannarghat in which he had three sons and one daughter. His wealth was estimated worth Rupees 50 lakhs in 1940's. He had a magnificent house at Chemmankadavu. More over he possessed a Bungalow at Malaparamba estate. He had two younger brothers, Ali Bappu and Kunhamed who also possessed wealth, of their own. Unneen had possessed a Chaverlet car himself and had possessed 5 guns which he used for safety at the estate as the surrounding areas were without human living.

Such a noble, generous and influential person of the Mappila community converted to Hindu religion to the surprise of the whole Mappila community of Malabar. It was considered as a great shame to the community that every Hindu took proud of the event.¹⁵⁷ He joined the Arya samaj on 1st June 1944 with the help of Ramayyar, a lawyer of Manjeri judicial court. They went to the Arya Samaj office at Calicut and had signed a written declaration that he wished to join Hinduism. Priests of Arya Samaj then performed the *Agnihotra puja*, the purification ceremony.¹⁵⁸ After the ceremonies were over, a certificate of Arya Samaj was issued to him. He had been given the book *Satyrtha Prakāsham*, the manifesto of *Aryasamāj* written by its founder Dayananta Saraswati. He was renamed as Ramasimhan and this

157. This was narrated by K.P. Ahamad Master, father of the present writer. When he was a boy of 12 years, his Hindu classmates boasted of this event. in an interview on 10.8.2001.

158. Budda Singh, secretary Arya Samaj narrated when he was questioned as a witness at the time of argument of 'Ramasimham Murder case', Reported by Mathrubhumi Daily Newspaper, Calicut on 7th July 1948.

matter was advertised in the news papers.¹⁵⁹ He was then sent to Travancore for more rituals where he lived in the office of “Hindu Seva Sangh” for two and half months. This matter was published in the official St. Fort. George Gazetteer that kilimanur Ramasimhan officially joined in the Hindu religion. After his return home, Ramasimhan was more enthusiastic for the conversion of his family into the fold of Hinduism. His brother Ali Bappu followed him and joined Arya Samaj and received the name Daya Simhan. His wife was reluctant to join with him and her father Khan Bahadur Unnikammu irritated by this event took home his daughter with young grand daughter. But the eldest sons obeyed their father and they were sent to Birla College of Delhi for higher studies in Hinduism. They were named Udaya Simhan and Satya Simhan respectively. Young son Suryasimhan was studying in CMS School Trichur. During these days Ramasimhan was keen to follow Hinduism in minute aspects. He assumed the dress of a typical Brahmin. In the front verandha of his Bunglow, there were exhibited the photos of Naramsimha Murti and Mahavishnu. The small mosque (*srāmbi*) in front of his Bunglow had been converted into visitor’s room for Hindu saints and priests. Brahmin priests came regularly to his house and performed *pujās*. He had a great aversion to all Muslims upto the extent that he even did not allow any Muslim to enter ^{to} ~~to~~ ^{the} premises of his Bunglow.¹⁶⁰ He generally contributed to Hindu temples and needy Brahmins. It is said that in order to ridicule the belief of

159. Reporter, ‘Ramasimhan family history’, Mathrubhumi Daily News Paper, 21 August, 1947.

160. Adhikari Kesavatharakan, Statement given at the Manjery magistrate court at the cross – question time of “Ramasimhan Murder case” on July 5th 1948. Reported by Chandrika Daily on 16.7.1948.

heaven of Muslims, he arranged automatic revolving chairs, gardens with fine carpets, dishes and such attracting wonders and named it *Jannāt-ul-Firdouse* (Paradise).¹⁶¹ Ramasimhan surrendered 4 guns, which he kept for personal safety, to the police, on the ground that as he was a Hindu he believed in Ahimsa.

The reason why Ramsimhan converted to Hinduism is still a mystery. Some attribute that he happened to find the idol of Naramsimha Murti and a temple nearby one of the portions of his estate and this made him believe firmly in this deity.¹⁶² Most people of the Mappila community believed that he became insane. However the Mappilas made an attempt to reconvert Ramsimhan back into their religion. Thus a meeting was held in his house in 1946. This was organized by the young brother Kunhamed who was converted to Hinduism but remained only 3 months after which reconverted to Islam. In the meeting held at his bungalow, there were about 50 Mappilas gathered including eminent Musliyers. A serious debate on religion took place. Ramsimhan who thoroughly studied Hinduism by that time argued himself to the Musliyers. All the attempts of Musliyers were in vain. But they attributed that Ramsimhan was possessed with *Kāfir Jinn* (evil spirit) and in order to evacuate this spirit 14 chanted oranges to be consumed. Accordingly 14 oranges had been given to him¹⁶³, but no change appeared in Ramasimhan.

161. A.P Mohammedali Musliyar in an interview on 5.11.2003.

162. Adv. Kunharaman, "Autobiography", *Chandrika Weekly*, 22.8.1998, p.24.

163. Adhikar Kesavatharakan, op.cit.

The failure of the attempt increased the wrath of Mappilas. They made a secrete meeting in several places in which the Musliyers declared him a *murtad* (apostate) and the punishment ascribed in Islamic *Sharia* laws, the capital punishment should be inflicted on him. Thus the organization *Issatul Islām*, an organization to help the neo-converts of Islam, took up the matter and a murder squad was selected.¹⁶⁴ Meanwhile an incident happened in the Bunglow of Ramasimhan which quickened the process of murder plot. Dayasimhan brother of Ramasimhan decided to marry a Brahmin girl. But he had to under go an *Upanayana* ceremony in order to absorb into Brahmin community. This ceremony was held with pomp and pleasure in which so many Brahmins of Malabar attended on the occasion.¹⁶⁵ Dayasimhan thus was known by a new name, Narasimhan. There followed the wedding ceremony. The bride was Komalam, 14 year old girl and daughter of Mangalath Manakkal Narayanan Namboodiri. It was Narasimhan Namboodiri who performed all *pujās* in the newly constructed Narasimha temple. After marriage Narasimhan with his wife remained in Malaparamba Bunglow while Ramasimhan lived in old house at Chemmankadavu. But he occasionally visited Malaparamabu.

The marriage and upanayana ceremony of Dayasimhan got wide publicity among Mappilas. Thus the murder squad had to carry out their plan immediately. Thus 7 persons, most of whom were from Pookotur, held a

164. Reporter, *Chandrika Daily*, Calicut, 2.8.1947.

165. Adhikari Kesavatharakan, Statement in Muder case in 5th day 1948 at Calicut District court.

meeting at Kottappadi Maidan.¹⁶⁶ They were parambam Mammed, Kuriyat Kalathial Moideen kúttý, Pulian Muhammed, Muttayikkaran Ayamutty, Muttayikkaran Ayamu, Kalathingal Kunhamu and Illikkappadi Ayamutti. These persons assembled in the estate of Abu Baker Haji. They had with them a gun and 20 bullets. On the way to Malaparambu they performed the prayers. They reached in front of the bungalow at 2.00 clock night. They halted before the house and filled the gun. All of them had long knife with them. They broke the front door with heavy stones and entered inside. In the fore front of the Bungalow was lying Vasudevan Namboodiri, who came to teach Narasimhan about *Geetha*. Seeing the on rushing gang he hid behind one almirah almost breathless. The gang members were searching Ramasimhan and Narasimhan. They reached through the corridor in the southern room where Narasimhan and his newly wedded wife had been sleeping. First they struck the young lady, seeing this Narasimhan ran away. Two or three chased him and struck him from back. Meanwhile the other 4 reached in the room of Ramasimhan and struck him hard. He tried to resist with his pillow but hard strike from back almost put an end and Ramasimhan breathed his last. The cook Rama pisharadi was shot from back and seriously wounded and died in the hospital.¹⁶⁷

The Ramasimhan murder case made a hue and cry in the already tensioned atmosphere after the partition and independence of India. The

166. Ad. K. Kunhirama, op.cit.

167. Reporter, Mathruhoomi Daily, Calicut, 5.8.1947.

communal wave was in its zenith. The Malabar District court at Calicut sentenced 3 persons. But upon an appeal at High court Madras, the convicted 3 were let free in the absence of evidence. However, the family later maintained their tradition that the three sons reconverted to Islam. The elder two sons were brought from Birla College, Delhi by their relatives. Their progeny still maintains the affluence and richness once exhibited by their fore fathers.

Mooppans of Kalpakancherry

The beginning of Mooppans was from a Nair Hindu family. Two sisters of Mandayappuram Nair family who belonged to Mulliakurissi, a village of Walluvanad had been married by two Menon brothers of Achipra a village of Ponnani Taluk. The house where the sisters dwelled was called *Mandayappuram*. The two sisters had a son each. The elder one was called Govindan and younger one was called Krishnan. The boys were grown as experts in education and martial arts. Bettatu Raja, on his visit to Achipra happened to see these two boys and had ^{been} very much impressed. The Raja had the wish to bring the younger one Krishna Menon to his court. In the court, the boy was appointed *Kāryastan* (Secretary), but in few months he won the heart of Raja with his prudence and vigour. The Raja had no hesitation to appoint him as his minister and after few years he was raised as his *Sachivan* (prime minister).¹⁶⁸

168. Diwan Bahadur C. Gopalan Nair, "Mandyappurath Moopannar". Malayalathile Mappilamar. Manglore, 1917, p.57.

The Raja had wished to honour the family of his Prime Minister and offered a house. The site was selected as Kalpakancherry where the grass was available abundantly for the construction of house. Thus the house built by Raja was named *Mandagappuram*. The elder brother Govindan Menon, their mothers, sisters and relatives lived in the house¹⁶⁹ Krishna Menon lived in the *Kovilkam* (court of raja) and often visited his family house Krishna Menon from childhood had an aversion towards idolotary.¹⁷⁰ Once, when he was roaming the country on his *pallak* he happened to see a group of people, Mappilas performing the prayer by kneeling and prostrating. The uniformity and the extreme devotion exhibited by the people attracted him very much. Then he declared that it was the belief and way of Mappilas which is true and he was determined to accept the faith.¹⁷¹ This declaration of Krishna Menon reached the ears of raja. When this was asked to him by raja, Krishan Menon again confirmed it. The raja bewildered in the answer but he was not in a position to discard Krishna Menon. Thus he arranged all sets for his conversion. The Ponnani Maqдум was called to the court, but by this time Krishnamenon approached his brother and family at Kalpakancherry and said his intention. All the family members welcomed the idea. Thus all the family members reached the court of raja where the Ponnani Maqдум^{was} presented himself and he uttered the *Kalima* to all of them and thus joined the fold of Islam.

169. Ibid., p.58.

170. Ibid.

171. Ibid., p.57.

Krishna Menon was renamed as Moideen and Govinda Menon was renamed as Muhammed. Later raja bestowed the title *Mooppan* to both of them. The later generation retained this title and even today they are known by the same title. When Moideen Moopan was thus in charge Prime Minister of Bettatu Raja had been supervising all revenue matters, the raja deceased without any heir. This virtually placed the Bettatu nadu devoid of any administration. It was in this critical juncture, Tipu sultan, on his Malabar invasion annexed the territory, but entrusted Moideen Moopan to collect all revenue taxes for all taluks of south Malabar. The agreement with Tipu was to hand over him a fixed amount annually. But Moideen Moopn violated the agreement by making a default of three years revenue payment. Tipu ordered his soldiers to arrest Moopan. When the soldiers approached him, Moopan eluded from the arrest saying that he had arranged a *panapayatt* (a get together to collect money) and after collecting the amount he would repay the whole amount due to sultan. But after the *payatt* was over, with bulk of money the Moopan brothers, left to Trvancore Raja who already promised them protection.¹⁷² The infuriated soldiers demolished the house of Moopans. Again Tipu demanded to Trvancore Raja to hand over Moopans, but Travancore Raja refused that both were his refugees. There upon Tipu declared war on Travancore raja but before completing the war, he had to go back to Mysore on account of the death of his father.¹⁷³ After some years Tipu fought with British and died and

172. Ibid., 59.

173. Ibid., 60.

threat to Trvancore had been avoided. Then the raja sent Moopan back to Malabar. But Moideen Moopan settled at Eloor, near Ernakulam. The Elder brother Muhammed Moopan returned back home at Kalpakanchery. Later the progenies of the two brothers lived independently in these areas. In both branches, there came so many dignitaries who contributed to the social, political and economic field.

Kochunni Moopan was an important personality among the Moopans. He was appointed as an *adhikāri* by British but he refused to collect tax from people and to remit it to British. Gradually he became an opponent of British and joined the nationalist stream. He was a generous man having helped poor and needy distributing free land and houses. He also donated tremendously to religious institutions. He was elected to Taluk and District Board administration. Another dignitary was Ahamed Kutty Moopan who was a revenue inspector under British. But he resigned from post and became a congress leader. He was elected as secretary of Malabar Pradesh Congress Committee. He was also extremely generous.

The great reformist leader Bava Master Moopan of Chembra was the senior Deputy Inspector of education. He contributed much for the progress of Mappila education. But he was credited with the foundation of Maunathul Islam Sabha of Ponnani, an institution founded for the service of neo-converts to Islam.

Erasutti Mooppan was accused of helping Mappila rebels of 1921. rebellion and was imprisoned in Bellary jail for long 14 years and also had been persecuted in the jail.¹⁷⁴ M.A. Mooppan was another nationalist leader of this family. From childhood he inherited anti British feelings. He was the Khilafat leader of Kalpakanchery. Later he participated in all congress meetings. He was an efficient businessman and more than humanist who contributed all his wealth for the poor and needy. He tremendously contributed to religious institutions. In 1940, he became Judiciary of panchayat (court of Hall of fame).¹⁷⁵

Nahas of Parappanangadi

Naha family is one of the oldest Mappila families of Malabar. Traditionally they were big landowners. Originally the *Naha* family belonged to Tanur. The legend, about the origin of the family is attributed to an incident in connection with Bettatu Raja. An Arab captain of a great *Pathemāri* named Hassan Nehuda came to the court of Battetu Raja where he received as guest and stayed in the court for few days. On that time, a lady of the raja's house was a very much impressed by the personality of Hassan Nehuda and she insisted that she should be given in marriage to the Arab Captian. The raja had no alternative except to yield to this demand and thus she was married to Hassan Nehuda. Battatu raja had given the whole area of Tanur to this lady as

174. K.K.A. Bari, Deshiya Prasthanavum M.A. Mooppanum (Mal), Calicut, 2003, p.88.

175. Ibid.

dowry. The lady and Hasan Nehuda thus settled at Tanur by constructing a big house. It was from the name of these two, the oldest *Tarawād* (joint family house) of Tanur originated namely *Assam Makkithānakam*, perhaps the name of lady was Makki or some other version of the name. But the captain left after some years to Arabia and his sons known in his name. The short form of *Nehūda*, (captain of ship) *Naha* was suffixed to the name.¹⁷⁶ Thus the fore fathers of Naha's were Moideen Kutty Naha, Abdurahiman Naha and Koyakutty Naha.¹⁷⁷ They had one sister Pathakutty Naha and she was married to Kammukutty Marakkar of Parappanagadi. This was how the Nahas had established at Parappanagadi as their base. Another story narrated about the origin of Naha family ^{had} given by Diwan Bahadur Gopalan Nair, is like this. A Mappila merchant used to visit the court of Bettatu Raja with his textile items. One day when he visited the court the raja was out of the court for some purpose. When he tried to return, two ladies of royal family, the nieces of raja aged 10 and 12 asked the Mappila to show the boxes of dresses. The elder lady wanted a silk dress from Merchant which he had given. When this was informed to the raja, as the custom of Brahmins, to receive a dress from man symbolises a marriage custom, and as she was received this from a man of another lower caste, she out casted and married to the Mappila. A grand house was built at Tanur with lot of land property which was given to

176. Family history has been narrated by Prof. E.P. Muhammadali, who has been writing the family history of 'Nahas', interview with him on 15.11.2002.

177. Reporter, Malayala Manorama, Calicut, 27.12.1998.

the couple. The Mappila was given the title Naha and had appointed Changampalli Kurikkal an expert in martial art as their body guard.¹⁷⁸

Later we can see a close linkage with these two families, ie, Marikkar and Naha matrimonial alliances, while these two families were endogamous themselves and exogamous each other. Kunhikoyamutty Naha was the son of Kammukutty Marikkar, the fore father of *Naha's* at Parappanangadi. Kunhikoyamutty had two wives and it was in the line of his first wife Achambattu Thithumma the veteran communist leader, Koyakunhi Naha was born. He was inspired from Muhammed Abdurahiman Sahib and worked as a congress volunteer. In 30's he took a leading role in the workers' agitation at Karuvarakundu estate of the British. As a result he was imprisoned at Vellore for one year. In 1935 he was elected to the Madras Assembly. But the policy of congress without considering due importance to peasants and workers alienated him from congress and in 1940's he joined with communist activities.¹⁷⁹ EMS Nampoodiripad was his contemporary. In the Independent India he was an activist and contested many elections. Mammutty Naha and Kunhikoyamutti Naha were Khilafat activists from the family. Later Avukader Kutty Naha rose into Muslim League politics and became Minister of Kerala for several years. The Nahas of Tanur had the honour in the absence of Bettatu Rajas, as the progeny of them had the privilege to bless the high priest Kurumba Bagavati Temple by handing over the sword at the time of his

178. Diwan Bahadur C. Gopalan Nair, "Nahamar", Malayalathile Mappilamar, Manglore. 1917. p.56.

179. This is narrated by Koyakunhi Naha himself aged 94 years in an interview 15.11.2003.

accession with the title *Azhvan*.¹⁸⁰ Kammukutty Marakkar son of Kunhalankutty Naha was a famous Mappilapattu poet from the family.

Kalladis of Mananarghat

Among the few land lords of Malabar, the Kalladi family of Mannarghat in the erstwhile Walluvanad taluk of British India, occupied a position of importance. The origin of Kalladi can be traced from Pullisseri, a village 8 kilometers away from Mannarghat. According to the known history from the elder members of the family the fore father of Kalladis was a labourer namely Kamappappa¹⁸¹ as they called out of respect. He had 3 sons, the eldest being Unnikammu. He had also 3 sons the eldest being Moidutty. He migrated to the nearby area Mannarghat. He was considered the architect of the family being a man of ability and enterprising character. He started his career through bamboo business, which he collected from local merchants and exported to Kallayi and other places. Out of the earnings he purchased lands in the near by areas. When he grew powerful as a land owner, there came so many people as his servants, *Mestiris* and labourers. The land he occupied were the unclaimed lands and so many lands belonged to Zamorin.¹⁸² The Mooppil Nairs of Mannarghat were the *Samantaran* (custodians) of Zamorin in Mannarghat area. The Mooppil Nairs could not supervise a vast area as a

180. Reporter, Malayala Manorama, Calicut, 27 Dec. 1998.

181. Mr. Moideen Kutty alias Kutty, Merchant of Mannarghat and a family member. In an interview on 2.11.2003.

182. Mr. Moidutty (aged 76) the senior most member living in the family in an interview on 5.11.2003.

result they lost the control of lot of areas and such areas with a menial value purchased by the Kalladi chief, Moidutty.

Moidutty was in amicable terms with British. There was no instance when he turned against them. This pro-British attitude of Moidutty earned him the title *Khan Bahadur*. He was very generous and patronized religious scholars and education. He invited the reformist ulama, Chalilakath Kunhamad to conduct *Dars* at Mannarghat Mosque, a mosque which had been built by him.¹⁸³ Chalilakath had even planned to establish an Arabic College at the site but before fulfilling the object he passed away. *Khan Bahadur* Moidutty had 9 sons and 6 daughters. The eldest was Unnikammu.

Unnikammu was equally competent like his father. It was he who revitalised the timber trade. He had timber Depots at Olavakkode and Nilambur. Khan Bahadur Unnikammu was the supplier of Railway sleepers that British required for the construction of Railway through out South India. He had so many elephants with him to draw the timber from forests. In his house there had been a shed for elephants namely *Anapanthi*. Like his father he had also owned many lorries to carry over the loads of timber to Kallai or Olavakkod which he gathered from the nearby forests of Mannarghat. Unnikammu also earned the title *Khan Bahadur* on account of his loyalty to British regime. He was the President of Malabar District Board. Besides he played an important role in establishing the first Muslim College, Farook

183. C.N. Ahamed Moulavi and K.K. Muhammed Abdul Kareem, op.cit., p.486.

College at Feroke. He had been the founder President of the College Committee.¹⁸⁴ Later his two sons Muhammed and Moideenkutty entered into politics and became Indian National Congress Members in Kerala. In the later period 1968 A.D., the brother of Unnikammu, Cheriya Kunhahammed took a leading role in the establishment of the first MES College at Mannarghat. It was the descendants of the *Khan Bahadur* Unnikammu still maintain the tradition of Kalladis, being the affluent group amongst wide spread families of Mannarghat and nearby places.

Koyappathodi of Vazhakkad

The Koyappathodis are very old family having immense land and wealth. The foundation of the family was laid by Muhammed Sildar. His son Muhammed Kutty was an officer under British and known as *Adhikari*, and later *Khan Bahadur*. He had amassed immense wealth by his efforts and possessed 1600 Acres of Hill area and had been fostered 90 elephants. He was elected to Malabar District Board.¹⁸⁵ He himself contributed 4½ lakhs rupees as *Waqf* for the Darul Uloom Arabic College which he constructed at Vazhakkad.¹⁸⁶ His son Ahamed Kutty was a great personality of Malabar. Ahammed Kutty became a timber merchant following the foot steps of his father. Later he himself became a contractor to supply clay to the tile factories in and around Feroke area. He was the propounder of 'Malabar Timber Supply

184. P.P. Mammed Koya Parappil, op.cit., p.178.

185. P.P.Mammed Koya Parappil, op.cit., p.359.

186. Narrated by A.P Muhammadali Musliyar, Nellikuth in an interview on 17.11.2003.

Corporation'. He was arrested during 1921 Mappila rebellion suspicious grounds. But the District Court freed him finding innocent¹⁸⁷ He was elected to Calicut Taluk Board and twice to Malabar District Board. In 1943 he became vice chairman of Calicut Municipal Council and became the president of Malabar chamber of commerce. In 1946 he was elected to the Assembly of Madras presidency from Mala ppuram constituency. He tremendously contributed to M.M High School, Muslim girls High school and Farook College. Besides he was the Member of various socio-economic organization of Calicut. He died in 1950 His descendants still maintain the age old affluence.

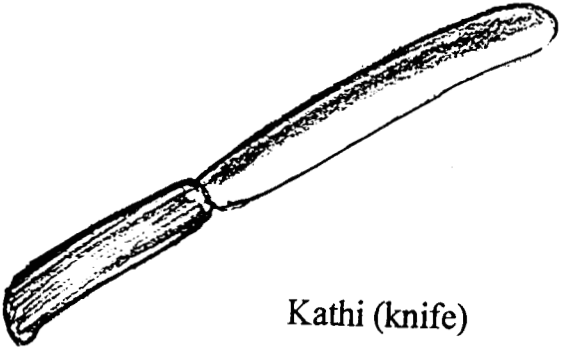
Ossans: The Barber Class

Among the lowest in prestige among the Mappilas of Malabar, is the occupational community, the *ossān*. They are spread through out the state, and have Malayalam as their mother tongue.

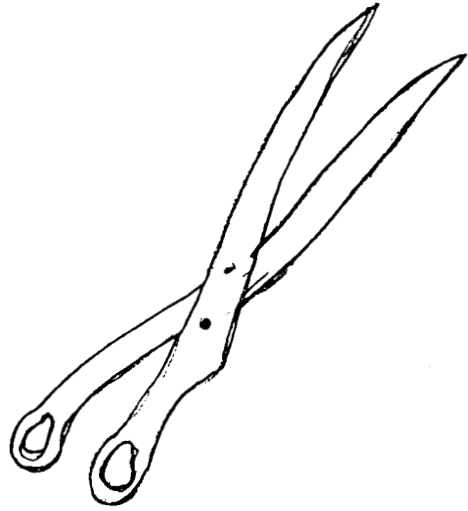
Traditionally they have served as the barbers for the rest of the community. Since their job is hair removing, mustache cutting and beard dressing considered as an inferior job the people engaged in such activities were also looked down upon. So the ossans were treated as the lowest among the Mappila communities and were endogamous. They also performed circumcision operation in young boys. In Malabar, their women folk served as

187. P.P. Mammed Koya Parappil, op.cit., p.359.

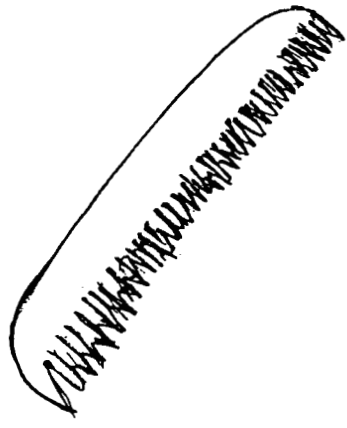
TOOLS USED BY AN OSSAN



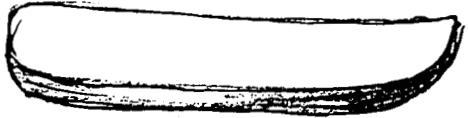
Kathi (knife)



Kathri (Scissors)



Cheerp (comb)



Urakallu (Sharpening stone)



Kinnam (Vessel)

mid wives. It is possible that they were barbers by profession among the Hindus and continued their profession after conversion.¹⁸⁸ In olden times, every rich family has their own barbers. The barbers used to visit the houses occasionally. The elders used the service of an *ossan* every Friday before the noon-prayer. It was a custom of the Mappilas to shave their head periodically. Hair growth was considered as almost against the practice of Islam, although Islamic literature is favouring hair growth. This practice of the Mappilas, from boy to old man, shaven head was considered the symbol of Islam, it had given ample opportunity for the barbers to practice their profession. They always carried a knife, a mirror, water cup and stone to sharpen the blade of knife. They carried it in a leather or cloth bag. When people saw him, he was called to the house for the purpose. For the other public, they used to sit in public places and practised their profession. The income of a barber was menial. They were satisfied what the people had given them. The rich had given food items, especially corns annually for their service. Thus the *Ossāns* were the poorest individuals among the Mappila society.¹⁸⁹

In the religious and social matters, they adhere to the Islamic code, so also in the matter of life cycles, rituals, marriage and divorce. They are intermingled with all others of the community and there is no untouchability against them although they are on the lowest strata. But matrimonial relations

188. P.R.G. Mathur and Singh, Hand Book of Kerala, Vol II, Trivandrum, p.807.

189. Ibrahim Kunju, Mappila Muslims of Kerala, Thiruvananthapuram., 1989, p.176.

are restricted with other people. Thus the ossans have to marry from other ossan groups and they became endogamous. With modern education the status of ossans has some what raised. The traditional way of practice, that is on the house premises and public places are vanished. Modern youths are opening fine decorated "saloons". More over so many youths of ossans are abandoning their profession out of humiliation and have been selecting other professions. However their inferior status and family name have not disappeared so far.

From the above descriptions of Mappila social classes, we can reach to the conclusion that there has been an apparent social distinction among the people of the Mappila community. But these distinctions are for mutual cooperation and for peaceful interactions. These divisions are not a hindrance for social mingling or community living. In the matter of religious observances they are under one common roof that is Islam.

OCCUPATIONAL CLASSES OF MAPPILAS

Abdurahiman.K.P “Mappila heritage: A study in their social and cultural life”
Thesis. Department of History, University of Calicut, 2004

CHAPTER - 5

OCCUPATIONAL CLASSES OF MAPPILAS

Among the Mappila Community, there are several groups of people engaged in traditional occupations from very early period. Through out the years these groups are systematically following the occupations for their livelihood. They have become the masters of their own field of activities. Throughout the generations, these people developed such craftsmanship that other people could not emulate easily. Many of them earned fame and name in their own occupations as best representatives of the respective fields.

Following chapter deals with various groups of people engaged in trade, business, agriculture, boat pulling, fishing, weaving, timber industry, tile industry etc. These people with their diversity in occupation have expressed their identity in religion and politics of the day where as socially and culturally each class is different from one another. But as the followers of Islam, they follow the same mode of worship, attend the same *Juma* prayer and obeyed the same priests. The standard of living varied according to their income. When the rich trade class dined finely and dressed attractively, the labour class had to be contented with menial food and rough clothes.

Among these classes, a limited endogamy has prevailed in the sense that rich trade class families usually did not marry from the socially inferior labour class. Some of these classes closely associated with their

occupations. The Baramis were great ship builders of Beypore who are closely associated with Khalasis, the labour class but they never intermarried or interdined.

The trade class, since they are socially well placed, always contributed to the political and educational uplift of the community. Keyis, the trade class of Tellicherry, exhibited high spirit of secularism by opposing Tipu's invasion and helping the British. Likewise, Koyas, the traders of Calicut played a great role in the nationalist and *khilāfat* movements. Baramis, traders of Calicut are great educationists.

In British period peasant classes as well as labour classes became the victims of their inferior social status. They are not in a position to oppose the injustices inflicted upon them by the ruling class, where as the upper trading class never suffered such humiliations. As a result, these labour classes have to under go the social discrimination for a long period and it even resulted in revolts and outbreaks as in the case of Ernad and Walluvanad Mappila peasants. It is a well convinced fact that each class has their own conspicuous roles to play within the community.

Trade Class

Mappila trade had its roots in Arab-links of the coastal towns of Malabar. From time immemorial Arabs established a settlement of their own at Calicut which developed as a great port and trading centre of medieval world. The Arabs made Calicut their home, assisting the Zamorin and drew

his support for the commercial expansion.¹ Their progeny, the Mappilas became the agents of the Arabs. The Muslim community as stated above was confined to coastal towns. Their leadership was in the hands of the Arab merchant princes who had established themselves at Calicut and Cannanore.² Their influence was mainly with the rulers of these two states, whose property depended mostly on the export trade in pepper and spices. Malabar Coast had the thickest forest, a number of canals, rivers, backwaters, natural harbour etc. These natural facilities for anchoring ships attracted Arab traders from ancient time.³

The foreign Muslim merchants were a semi autonomous community. They remained socially and culturally distinct from the people of Malabar. But they imparted their trading experience to the locals. The local Muslim merchants also carried on considerable business. The Chinese Muslim, Ma Huan was convinced that the majority of the people in the Kingdom of the Zamorin belonged to this group.⁴ On account of the excellence in trade, the Arab merchants enjoyed, a predominant position. Many became rich but they did not interfere in the political affairs of Malabar.⁵ Ibn Batutah declared that

1. Ashwin Das Gupta, Malabar in Asian Trade, (1740-1800), London, 1987, p.5.

2. K.M. Panickar, History of Kerala, Annamalai Nagar, 1969, p.15.

3. Dravidian Encyclopaedia, Vol I, New Delhi, 1975, p.478.

4. Barbosa, the Book of Durrate Barbosa, London, 1821, p.75.

5. K.M Panickar, op.cit., p.75.

Moors of Malabar were extremely rich that their leading merchants could purchase the whole freightage of such vessels as put in there and fit out other like them. The Mamalis and Khoja Musa, whom the Portuguese encountered on the coast were merchant princes to whom Cairo and Damascus were as familiar as Calicut and Cannanore. The two leading merchants of Cochin who were importing rice to Kerala and exporting spices, were Ismail Marakkar and Kunjipakki, each of whom possessed 50 vessels. Preparing for an attack against Cochin in 1503 AD, the Zamorin asked these two Muslim merchants not to import rice to Cochin and thus starve out the cochin Militia.⁶ Such was the connection of Arab merchants and the Zamorin. It was the construction of *machwas* (big boat) which gave a great impetus to the hectic trade between Arabia and Kerala. The largest vessel built in those days was the *Fathey Moombarak* (success and good luck). It was built for Haji Zakaria Noor Mohamed, a merchant of Cochin. Haji Ebrahim Sulki Muhammed, Jessob Alauddin were others big ship owners.⁷ Beypore was the seat of *Machwa* building. *Machwa* was the cherished possession of the Arabs. There were hundreds of *Machwas* built at Beypore. Beypore had its attraction for sailors and adventures from all over the world.⁸

This tradition in trade has been inherited by the predecessors of Arabs, in the coastal areas. The immediate descendants of the Arabs, the Koyas of

6. K.L. Bernard, *Flashes of Kerala History*, Cochin, 1977, p.91.

7. K.V. Kunhamed, 'Malabar Machwas', *Malabar Mahotsava Sovenir*, Calicut, 1988, p.173.

8. Ibid.

Calicut were the first among Mappilas to enter in to the business arena. From the time of the Zamorin, the Calicut raja, they rose in to prominence as a trading community and held the monopoly of trade in Calicut city. They handled almost all business firms. Rice, millets, coffee, tea, coconut, spices, timber and coir, fish etc., were their main items of trade as well as export to foreign lands.

Keyis of Tellicherry are another prominent family among the Mappilas who became the leading merchants not only of Malabar but also in Travancore. The *Pandikasāla*⁹ they built all over the country eloquently speaks of the supremacy they held in business. They also played an important role in the politics of Malabar.

Baramis are the descendants of Arabs who inherited the same tradition of trade and acquired great proficiency of indigenous trade. They earned name and fame as great *machwa* builders. They played an important role in the socio-educational development of Mappilas of Calicut city.

Some of the Muslim communities migrated to Malabar from other parts of India and tried their fortune and become succeeded as great traders. Among them the Batkals, Dakhnis, Bohras and Memons were prominent. These trading groups later absorbed to the Mappila community and hence can be considered as Mappila trading classes. All of these groups had strongholds in Calicut city

 9. Pandikasala: The word is used in wide connotation. This was referred to factories, trade centre working yards, godowns of storage etc. 'Mara pandikasala' is saw mill. 'Copra Pandikasla' is coconut drying units and its storage house.

and other towns of Malabar. They lived in residential colonies of their own and had maintained their own culture and customs. Most of these groups had their own mosques and burial grounds. Each group was specialised in different trade and business. The Batkals specialised in hotel and textile business whereas the Dakhnis specialised in pottery and leather business. The Bohras monopolised the coir business of Malabar. Memons, the biggest merchant group had the overall supremacy of rice business all over India.

In the following pages there is a brief and concise history of the trading classes such as Koyas, Keyis, Baramis, Batkals, Dakhnis, Bohras and Memons and their political and social life have been given..

Koyas

The development of Calicut city gave birth to so many trading classes in and around the city. The first among such classes were the Koyas, a trading community among the Mappilas. The word koya is derived from the Persian word *Khawaja*, which was later accepted by Arabs. This Arabic word has its Malayalam transformation into simply 'Koya'. The descendants of 'Arab Koyas' also came to be known as Mappila Koyas, a unique group of Mappila community by heritage and lifestyle.

The origin of Koyas is closely connected with the Calicut city. So many Arabs belonging to Muscat, Bahrain and Hadramaut had settled in Calicut city. Ibn Batuta reports that during his visit he saw two flourishing Arab businessmen namely Ibrahim Shabandur from Bahrain and Nakhuda

Mithkal of Arabia.¹⁰ He built the Mithqal mosque of Kuttichira 800 years ago.¹¹ Wealthy Arabs married from high Nair families. Zamorin, the ruler had made special provisions for this because he needed the service of Arabs for his economic stability. This led to the growth of a new trading class in and around Calicut who were known as Koyas.¹² *Keralolpathi* says that the forefather of Koyas was an Arab from Muscat. According to a legend about the origin of Koyas, an Arab named *Bava* had two sons. These two sons had no unity, so *Bava* sent his eldest son in a ship with a box full of gold. He visited every country with this box and used, to gave presents to each ruler 'a box of pickles', hiding the fact that it was actually a box of gold. None of them revealed the truth of gold. This was given to test the honesty and integrity of the ruler. If the ruler was honest, *Bava* would have decided to live in his dominion. At last he reached Malabar and presented a "box of pickles" to the Zamorin. On his return he met the Zomorin and revealed the truth, and the Arab was very much delighted and he decided to live in the country of this trust worthy king. Thus he settled down at Calicut and he is the first Koya of Calicut.¹³ The Koya who was very much satisfied with the gesture of *Poonthirakon* (Zamorin) presented so much gold to him. It was then in the month of *Kumba*, the great festival of the time *Mamakam* came, the koya in order to see the event' reached Tirunavaya and having seen it returned and

10. Velayudan Panikkasseri, Ibn Batuta Kanda India, Kottayam, 1965, p.320.

11. Qazi Nalakath Mohammed Koya, 'Tekkepuravum Kuttichirayum' Ciesco Souvenir, Calicut, 1996, p.107.

12. M.G.S. Narayanan, Cultural Symbiosis in Kerala, Thiruvananthapuram, 1972, p.6.

13. E. Kunhan Pillai, Prachina Keralam, Kottayam, 1970, p.50.

reported to the Zamorin. There upon the Zamorin, with great grief, explained that the temple of Tirunavaya and right of *Mamākam*, had been his privilege but then it was lost to him. Then the Koya declared that he would help the Zamorin to regain his lost privilege. The Zamorin then declared, if he could do this he would place him in his right side during *Mamākam*.¹⁴ The Koya sent troops to Tirunavaya and his army seized and expanded the territory of temple. Pleased by this act the Zamorin kept his words and placed the Koya on his right side in the next *Mamākam* conducted in the end of 13th century. The Shah Bandar or Port Commissioner of Calicut was a Muslim, the incumbent being known as Sabantra Koya or Koya of the port.¹⁵ The Calicut Koya was given not only the title Sabantra Koya, but all privileges and dignities of a Nair chief, the right to receive a small present from *Iluvas*, *Kammalans* and *Mukkuvans*. The Zamorin had given 'Marakkan kadavu' and 'Thura' to Kozhikotu Koya, besides giving him the honour 'Sabantra Koya' with an honourable turban.¹⁶ Thus 'Sabantra Koya' had held the complete power for importing and exporting goods in Calicut port.

In Calicut city, the Koyas are confined to a distinct locality known as Tekkepuram, the northern bank of Kallai river. The Tekkepuram had earned its name from the fact that it lies to South of big bazar in Calicut city. The centre of Tekkepuram as marked by a big pond namely 'Kuttichira', around

14. VelayudanPanikkasari, Kerala Charitra Padangal, Kottayam, 1980, p.202.

15. K.V. Krishna Ayyar, Zamorins of Calicut, Ernakulam, 1966, p. 16.

16. N.M. Namboodiri, Samoodiri Charithrathile Kanapurangal, Sukapuram, 1987.

which a new culture developed through the years.¹⁷ Kuttichira, Idiyangara, Parappil, Kundungal, Mugadar and Ennappadam are the main streets which are thickly populated. The 98% of the Koya families reside here. This is a world of business, the traditional and known occupation of Koyas. As a trade linkage with the Koyas, alien people like Gujaratis, Persians and Batkals live in between Tekkepuram and big bazar. The Koyas, who migrated from Tekkepuram has lost their identity, but the typical Koyas of Tekkepuram still maintain their identity. Men among Koyas add the suffix Koya and women add the suffix Beebi to their names.

Tekkepuram, the unique world of Koyas is replete with adjoining, *Tarawads*, the two or three storied houses (*Mālikappura*), slum of workers near by it, the scattered mosques, busy streets, the ever sounding saw mills, the elementary religious schools (*Madrassahs*), the copra drying units (*Pāndikasāla*) and the grave yards near mosques.¹⁸

The Koya distinctiveness from other factions of the Mappila community is due to a special custom called 'matrilocality'¹⁹ As Koyas adopted the Islamic system of inheritance of their parental property, it could no way compare to the matriliney (*Marumakkatāyam*) of Nair class of Hindus. The matrilocality is only confined to a system of men living in the house of

17. Hafiz Mohammed N.P, "Satyatinte Turamukham", Kalakaumudi Weekly, Nov.1983,Calicut, p.15.

18. Ibid., p.36.

19. S.M. Mohamed Koya, Mappilas of Malabar, Calicut. 1983. p.70.

wife, and the wife remains in her natal house permanently. It was from this practice the commonly known surname *puthiyāpla* (the bride groom through out life) originated. This phenomenon could easily be explained in connection with the occupation of Koyas, who through out the day spent their time in bazar, and visit wife in the night.²⁰ Koya could not live alone with his family. He always needs a support for his family which was provided by the in-laws always.

The houses were generally in the quadraplex pattern of high caste Hindus residence in Kerala, but modified to suit the need for greater seclusion of the women. A special feature was the several bedrooms (Aras) in the upper floor each reserved for one of the girls of the family where her husband could visit her in privacy. The household would be under the command of the eldest woman of the matri lineage who was known as *Karanavatti*.²¹ They retain a few unique lifecycle rituals different from those of the rest of the Muslims. Because they were matrilocal, most of the pre-birth and birth rituals were observed in women's natal house hold. A detailed account of their social customs has been given in the preceding chapter.

The two prominent groups that existed in the British period among Koyas were those with claps (*Muttullavar*) and those without claps (*Muttillāthavar*). This striking of hand (claps) while singing *oppana* songs

20. Ibid.

21. T. Madhava Menon (Ed.), *Hand Book of Kerala*, Vol II, Thiruvananthapuram, 2000, p.719.

during marriage occasions divided the community into two rival groups. About 150 years back the two sons of Kunhitheenkutty Qazi, the high religious priest of Koyas, quarreled on the question of Qazi post, the dispute resulted in the combined succession to the post, the former came to be known as big Qazi and the latter small Qazi.²² Those persons associated with *Jumua* Mosque of Kuttichira sided with big Qazi and those persons associated with *Mithqual* mosque favoured small Qazi. In course of time those factions differed in all socio-economic matters. This was how the big Qazi faction dropped the clapping at the time of *oppana* songs. The small Qazi faction strongly practised it and even marriage alliances were fixed within the factions. This rivalry prolonged for two generations. As 'Madrasathul Muhammadiya' High School was started by the small Qazi faction, the big Qazi faction started *Himāyathul Islām* School.²³ With modern education and civilized life, the custom of *oppana* songs has almost vanished and thus the clapping issue has lost its importance. In the modern times a religious rivalry has raised its head in the form of *sunnis* (the orthodox section) and *Mujāhids* (the reformist section). But both the Qazis are still leading the orthodox section of the community.

Koyas by birth are businessmen. They have neither any skill nor have any interest in other occupations. They played a prominent role from 12th century to 19th century in the sea trade. The rise and growth of Calicut port is largely indebted to the commercial contributions of Koyas. The two play

22. P.P. Mammed Koya Parappail, *Kozhikotte Muslingulude Charithram* (Mal). Calicut. 1994. p.124.

23. B.V. Abdullakoya, 'Bhagangal Tammilulla Kidamalsaram' *Ciesco Sovencir*. Calicut. 1996. p.113.

grounds of Koyas were the big bazar of Calicut city and the shores of Kallayi. Big bazar controlled the business of general provisions from where it was distributed throughout Malabar. In the glorious period of Arab trade, the Koyas made preparation to receive the Arabs months before by erecting *pandals* on both sides of the road and exhibited all articles manufactured by them for sale.²⁴

The coconut industry was one time the monopoly of Koyas²⁵ who were also the wholesale exporters of *copra* (dried Kernel of coconut) from which oil is extracted. *Pāndikasāla*, the big yards for copra drying was existed throughout the coastal areas of Malabar. The oil trade took the first place among the industries of Malabar. The oil was extracted in traditional way using *chakku* by *Vāniyars* or *Vattakkādans*,²⁶ low Nair classes. Another trade in which Koyas excelled was timber trade. Beypore and Kallai were the main centres of this trade. Timber was brought through the Beypore river from the forests of Nilambur valley which was later exported to Madras, Kolar, Bombay and Cochin from where it was again sent to foreign countries. Koyas also indulged in spice, rice, grocery, oil and fish trade.

The streets connected with spice trade were 'copra bazaar,' *Thengātheruvu*, *Pukayila Vanibhatheruvu* and *Adakkātheruvu*. Mr. Kunhammad and Company, Hussan Kasam Dada, Malabar Exporting

24. A.P. Abdurahiman, 'Polinhupoya Prathapam' *Ciesco Souvenir*, Calicut, 1996, p.125.

25. K.V. Kunhammad, 'Purogathiyude Takkolvachu Marannavar', *Ciesco Souvenir*, Calicut, 1996, p.133.

26. C.A. Innes, *Malabar Gazetteer*, Madras, 1917, p.250.

Company, Ahammed Koya and Company, Mulla Jivaji and Company, Bafaqi and Company were famous spice traders of British period²⁷.

The umbrella manufacturing was once led by the Koyas. The handle was made out of bamboo from forest of North Malabar and such manufacturing units functioned at Kuttichira and exported to all over India. With the introduction steel rods these bamboo units disappeared and Colombia works became the leaders among the steel rod manufacturers. Ibrahim Karim and Company were leading umbrella manufactures whose brand was 'Man Mark'.²⁸ From 1927, 'Colombia works' began to manufacture umbrellas and these umbrellas were exported to Burma, Ceylone and Malaysia. Besides this wholesale and major manufacture, Koyas engaged in small retail business like bakery, printing, stationary, plastic, crockery, electric and ornaments.²⁹

Koyas entered into the threshold of modern education by 1920's with the establishment of *Madrasathul Muhammadiya*. There after the road to higher education was opened before them which resulted in an influx of graduates in law, medicine, education and engineering. So many of them entered in government jobs.³⁰ There arose so many dignitaries amongst them both in the national politics and regional politics. B.V. Abdulla Koya became

27. P.P. Mammed Koya Parappil, op.cit., p.295.

28. S.M. Mohammed Koya, "Pythrikathinte Kannikal". *Ciesco Sūvenir*. Calicut. 1996, p.78.

29. P.P. Mammed Koya Parappil, op.cit., p.297

30. S.M. Mohammed Koya, op.cit., p.87.

the Member of Parliament and P.P Ummer Koya became the Education Minister of Kerala, Later C.H. Muhammed Koya became the Chief Minister of Kerala. Another Minister from among the Koyas was P.M. Abubacker.

Thus Koyas of Calicut not only acclaimed as great merchant of the past but also a class of distinct social religious and political identity who deserves more study and exposure.

Keyis

Keyis of Tellicherry are a prominent family of Mappila community who tremendously contributed in the field of trade, education and politics for the last three centuries. Keyis originally belonged to Chovva near Cannanore, later migrated to Tellicherry for the convenience of foreign trade, which is a better port.³¹ About thousand Keyi families remain today at Tellicherry. The House who once monopolized the trade of Malabar has almost lost its tradition and some families have even fallen to poverty.

The family was founded by Aluppikakka who started his life from simple beginnings. He had dealt with coconut, coffee, pepper, sandal, cardamom and timber that had been exported to abroad. The pepper was known in American Market as "Tellicherry black pepper".³² The first building that belonged to the Keyis at Tellicherry was a *copra* mill that was bought

31. K.P Kunhi Moosa, Talasserry – "Eedutta Samskarika Paramparyam", Chandrika Weekend Edition, Calicut, 16.1.1988, p.1.

32. Ibid.

from Kottayam Raja. When the influential family of Tellicherry, Vaniyambalam, prohibited Aluppikakka from praying in *chalil mosque*, desperate Aluppikakka built a mosque within one month known as *thozhayil palli*.³³ Musakakka, the nephew of Aluppikakkaka, then carried out the trade of Keyis and became a flourishing business man. He extended his activities to Aleppy, the Venice of East for more business prospects where he helped the Travancore Raja in several business transactions. At Aleppy, Musakakka laid foundation of a resounding business world buying so many *machwas* (big boat) to run his business mean while he acted as the mediator in the transaction of Laccadives between Arakkal Beebi and East India Company.³⁴

There is a legend existing among the people of Tellicherry of the timely help rendered by Musakakka to the British government (East India Company). It was on the onset of the invasion of Tipu Sultan. Having conquered the Konkan and Manglore the soldiers of Tipu were approaching towards Tellicherry. The British made a severe resistance to the attack of Tipu, but they were upset of having exhausted all their bullets. It was a tense situation, the army officers made a hectic discussion to overcome the situation. Tipu's soldiers were almost entering the city. The commander of British sought the help of the noble and business giant of Tellicherry, Musakakka. Musakakka offered his help to the British. He brought 20 lakhs of *Sicca* coins which could be used as bullets and those were used in their guns and resisted the

 33. Rasheed Panackal, "Talasherryile Keyimar" Chandrika Weekend Edition, Calicut, 18.4.1992, p.I.

34. W. Logan, op.cit., Vol. III, p.177.

soldiers of Tipu from entering the city. Thus British owed to the Keyis worth 20 lakhs *siccas* which they have not re-paid. It is said that, the East India Company made a contract with Musakakka to repay the coins through a written bond. Musakakka also served the East India Company by supplying food provisions to their officials and soldiers. From this transaction Musakakka earned a huge amount annually.

Another memorable service of Musakakka in the contemporary political affairs was his role as a mediator between the East India Company and the Arakkal dynasty of Cannanore. When East India Company was trying to subjugate the power of Arakkal sultan, they asked Musakakka to be a mediator between them and the Arakkal Sultan in avoiding any military intervention and to subjugate peacefully before them. But the Arakkal Sultan declined the demand and began to shoot against the two ships of company anchored in the sea. Sultan was exhausted by shooting from Cannanore fort. The company then retaliated and succeeded in crushing the walls of Cannanore fort. At last they captured the fort and the Arakkal Sultan then decided to make an agreement with company and employed Musakakka as a mediator. The company demanded 10 lakh rupees as compensation, but Arakkal Sultan expressed his inability to pay it in bulk and asked for more time. But the company declined this demand, there upon Musakakka, himself agreed to pay this amount on behalf of Arakkal Sultan for which the company agreed.³⁵

35. W. Logan, op.cit., Vol. III, p.248.

The sultan was very much pleased with the act of Musakakka and gave him the right to levy the tax from his territory until the loan amount was completely recovered. Arakkal Sultan also expressed a wish to have a matrimonial relation with his house and the family of Musakakka. As per the wish, the nephew of Musakakka, Ussankutty married a lady from Arakkal house. On so many other occasions also the Arakkal House had financial dealing with Musakakka. Arakkal Beebi had mortgaged the coir of Laccadive Islands to Chovvakkaran Musa on account of the expense of former wars.

Another everlasting contribution of the architect of Keyi family, Mussakakka, was the *Ōdathil palli*. He took much pain in the construction of the mosque. The site of this mosque originally was a Dutch garden of sugarcane which was later inherited by the British.³⁶ As a faithful friend and benefactor of the East India Company, the authorities decided to reward Musakakka. But Musakakka denied any such presents and requested the company to treat him as a citizen as such he would be liable to pay the same tax as others. Impressed by the humility of Musakakka, company asked him whether he would like to construct any building in the city. There upon Musakakka expressed his wish to own the *ōda* (garden of sugar cane) of the Dutch that the company without hesitation granted the request. Musakakka wished to construct a mosque on the site, but on religious grounds the company objected the demand, but was ready to sell the site and he could do

 36. E.M. Ashraf, 'Keyimarude Katha', *Kalakaumudi Daily, Calicut*, dt. 2-4-1987, p.5

as per his wish. Musakakka then paid the money of the land and began to construct the mosque. Teak woods worthy of lakhs of rupees were used in the construction of the mosque which he owned from the Travancore Maharaja. The event alluding to how he inherited the teak wood from Maharaja goes like this. Having suffered heavy loss in his business, Musakakka went to Travancore to test his luck there. He had heard much about the generosity of the then Maharaja and met with him and narrated about his sad plight. Feeling pity of *kakka's* condition, Maharaja had given as much amount he needed to make his business prosper. Musakakka thanked Maharaja and started his business at Aleppy. Within a short period Musakakka made a thumbing profit out of his business. Then he again met Maharaja with valuable presents and was ready to repay his loans from Maharaja, but Maharaja did not accept the money and advised him to make business in the Travancore area. Musakakka demanded to Maharaja to provide him with teak woods which was granted and he brought this wood to Tellicherry by which he constructed a *Pandikasāla* and remaining wood was utilized for the construction of *Odathil mosque*. Musakakka had planned to install three domes, two out of gold and one out of silver on the roof of *Odathil mosque*, but before installing it he passed away. His successors fulfilled his wish by installing it on the roof. These domes were installed on a very pompous occasion by inviting all rulers of Malabar and other dignitaries to witness the event. These domes were placed on the back of elephants and encircled the city and installed on the mosque in a jubilant situation, when the British battalion of Cannanore played the flutes

and drums. The *Odathil palli* was exclusively used by Keyis,³⁷ but they allow all others to pray in the mosque. They also appointed special *Qazi* in the mosque. The tomb of Musakakka is in the compound of this mosque. After Musakakka, Makkikaka succeeded as the leader of family who built the *Muqadar mosque* of Tellicherry.

The two ancestors of Keyis, Aluppikakka and Musakakka were not known as Keyis, but had the suffix *Kakka*, a honourable title in Gujarati language. The Gujarati merchants called Mappila merchants by this surname and later every elder person among Mappilas was known by this title. The title Keyi was first used by Kunhippakki who was known among the Maratha ship workers in this title which means 'owner of the ship'.³⁸ This is how the suffix Keyi became common to all descendants of Musakakka. After cheriya Mammikkeyi, the Keyi family stood divided into several branches namely *Orkkateri*, *Valiyapura*, *Puthiya pura* and *Koloth*. The first elder in the *Orkkateri* branch was Bappan Kutti Keyi. He had an accidental death at Bombay and after him *Orkkateri* branch was again divided into four sub branches namely *Valiya Orkkateri*, *Cheriya Orkkateri*, *Thazhath* and *parakkat*. Moideenkutty Keyi Kuttiali Keyi, Thazhe Kunhammad Keyi and Assan kutty Keyi were the prominent personalities of this branch. *Puthiyapurayil* branch had so many important personalities namely Mammali, Cheriya Bappan,

37. Ibrahim Kunju. Mappila Muslims of Kerala. Trivandrum, 1989. p.79.

38. Vasudevan churia. Keyis of Malabar. Tellicherry, 1945, p.3.

Kunhi Kalanthan and Alippi. In Valiya purakkal, Makki and Kakkachi Umma were the great personalities of the family.

Socially, Keyis followed endogamy in the sense that most of them preferred to make matrimonial relations within their family. If they marry outside, they made relations either Arakkal dynasty or Koyas of Calicut. Another social custom followed by them was matriliney, as a result the title Keyi was transferred to nephews only, not to sons or daughters. Keyis were generally known as *Chovakkār*, since they originally belonged to Chovva, near Cannanore, a village of Chirakkal Taluk. In a period when the petty *nāduvāzhis* were struggling to pay the annual tribute to British, Musakakka and his nephews helped them with huge amount of money.³⁹

Keyis were not only flourishing businessmen, but great agriculturists also. They were the big land owners of Malabar. Lakhs of acres of land were owned by them in the various parts of Cannanore, Payyanur, Pazhayangadi Ramantali and Kurvayi. Keyis relation with tenants was so cordial that they remitted the land tax of their tenants. The *Chovvakkāran Valiyapurakkal* house was the major land owners of their time. With the land reforms of Kerala government in 1970's Keyis lost most of their land.

Keyi family contributed so many outstanding personalities. Mayinkutty Elaya, a member of the family married from Arakkal dynasty, was credited

39. Ad. C.O.T. Ummar. "Malabarile Keyimar" Chandrika Weekend Edition, Calicut, 21.1.2001, p.III.

with the construction of *Musafar Khana* (pilgrims abode) at Makkah. This inn known as *Keyi Rubath*,⁴⁰ rendered great service to pilgrims providing accommodation and food. This inn for several years benefited pilgrims but later it was demolished for expansion of the courtyard of the *holy Kaba*. Mayinkutty Elaya was an educationist and reformist of his time. He was the first translator of Holy Quran into Malayalam language but in Arabi-Malayalam script. He faced a violent opposition from orthodox ulama of the community, but he stood boldly and published six volumes of the translation. He promoted *Madrassa* education and strongly opposed the evil practices of Muslim community who also opposed the matriliney followed by Muslim *Tarawads*.

Another great personality of Keyis was C.O.T Allupi Keyi the first judge among Mappila Community. When he was a student of Madras Law College, he bagged the Sir Bashyam Ayyangar Hindu Law gold medal, which was a mile stone in the history of the college.⁴¹ He became a judge of Madras High Court. His son T.T.P Abdulla was the ambassador of India to Saudi Arabia. Abdulla Keyi was another judge. C.O.T Kunhipakki was the Head Master of Mappila School at Malappuram, he later became Deputy Director of Muslim Education and PSC Member. Later T.M. Savankutty became the chairman of Public Service Commission of Kerala. C.K. Mammad Keyi was bestowed with the title of *Khan Bahadur* by the British government. C.K.P Cheriya Mammu Keyi was a well known politician of north Malabar.

40. T.M Sulaiman, "Keyi Rubath" Chandriak Weekend Edition, Calicut, 12.11.1988 p.3.

41. T.M. Savankutty. "Aluppi Keyi". Marikkatha Mahanunar, Calicut, 2003, p.68.

The Keyis excelled in the field of education and sports. Several Engineering and Medical graduate sprang up from the family. Being in close association with British officials, Keyis very much inherited the games of Tennis and Cricket. Keyi team played Cricket matches with the team of Lord Wellesly during the British period.

Keyis extended their business circle all over the country. After Tellicherry, Aleppy was another important centre of the Keyis. Later centres were established at Bombay, Calcutta and other Indian cities. Coconut oil, pepper, coffee, sandal, cardamom, wood etc., were the main items of export to foreign countries.

Still the Keyis of Tellicherry are well known merchants and land lords. The new generation has been contributing immensely to politics, education culture and sports of the state.

Baramis

Baramis are other prominent traders of Calicut city, like the Koyas. Baramis originally belong to Mukhalla of Yaman who came along with Jiffri family the missionaries who came to Malabar. Other groups of Baramis settled in Indonesia and Egypt. In Indonesia the Baramis held high posts of the government.

Shaikh Ali Barami was the first to reach Calicut city in 1797 AD who was considered as the founder of the family. Baramis were also known as

Mukhallans following the name of their native place. Actually Sheikh Jiffri on his return journey from Makkah, brought Ali Barami with him to Malabar. Ali Barami was much affectionate to Sheikh Jiffri and always sought advice from *Jiffri* for the prospects of his business. Ali Barami married a lady of Quilandy. As the business prospered Ali Barami purchased some land on lease from the Zamorin at South beach of the city and erected a *pandikasala* (copra pressing centre) and adjacent to this, he built a house which later known as *Baramintakam*.⁴² This house has been reconstructed several times afterwards. Sheikh Ali Barami, in his marriage from Quilandy got the son Muhammed Barami who became a flourishing businessman. He was a social worker of Quilandy, but all his sons settled at Calicut and the *Baramintakam* of Quilandy had been demolished.

The first son of Shaik Ali Barami, by his second wife, was Hassan Barami who was a reputed business man. But his son Moosa Barami earned more reputation as a great timber merchant and *Uru* (Big boats) owner. Besides he owned so many coconut gardens at parappil beach and built the large house *Moosa Baramintakam*. Ali Barami's second son Abdurahiman Barami was concentrated in maintaining coconut gardens. Third son Umar Barami was a renowned businessman who was rather specialised in foreign export business. Tea, pepper, coir were the main items of export to Aden and

42. P.P Mamunad Koya Parappil. op.cit., p.97.

Muscat. He imported rice from South Canara by *Urus* to Calicut city and his grand son Mammed Barami was highly educated and became the Honorary Magistrate under the British. Another grand son Muhammed Barami laid foundation to *Madrasathul Muhammadiya* at Parappil and acted as Manager.⁴³

Ali Barami's fourth son Ahamed Barami continued the exporting business who was also a social reformer. Ahamed Barami constructed the *Sabha Hall* and *Sabha mosque* of South beach. He acted as the secretary of *Himayatul Islam Sabha* and fostered so many students of *Dars* (religious class of mosques). His son Khan Bahadur Ali Barami started his business from his young age and became a great export agent. He was one of the founders of *Madrasathul Muhammadiya*. The grand son of Ahamed Barami, especially Muhammed Barami was the President of Madrasathul Muhammadiya School, Patron of Muslim Educational Society and Calicut Muslim Association. The present generation of Baramis are still flourishing business men of the city and so many of them are well educated.

Emigrant Trade Classes

Batkals

Batkals of Calicut are an important trading group among the Muslims of Malabar who through centuries of association with Mappilas became a part of community. The Mappilas prefer to call them *Vattakkolis*. Ibn Batuta had

43. Ibid., p.98.

reported to have seen some Hanover (Batkal) shop owners in Calicut in 1342 AD. The people by their family name are known as *Navayats*. The city of *Navayats*, Batkal earned its name from Abadaqilla (fort on a hill top),⁴⁴ which had become the seat of Muslim Sultans.

The descendants of Batkal shop owners later turned to great merchant class and reached every part of India. As firm believers in God, honesty and integrity were the key features of their character. They were warmly received wherever they went. The Batkals specialised in cloth business as well as hotel business. Reaching Calicut, they opened shops of textiles in heart of the city. Badsha store and Colombo store are the famous textile shops of Batkals who owned a line of shops in big bazaar of Calicut city.⁴⁵ Behind the shops they made dwelling houses and this area is known as Batkal line.⁴⁶ Adjacent to the street there is a mosque which is once managed by mostly by Batkals.

All the cloth items, especially of ladies of the Mappilas of Malabar in the British period were supplied by this group which had been imported from Kanchipuram, Banaras and Bombay. They had branches in every small bazars of Malabar and the people accustomed to cloth items through their service.

Batkals excelled in hotel business who introduced so many of their native dishes to the Malabar people. *Badam Sarbath*, *Kaskas*, lemon juice,

44 Victor S. D'souza. The Navayats of Kanara. Dharwar. 1955. p.53.

45. P.P. Mammed Koya Parappil, op.cit., p.203.

46. S.M. Mohamed Koya. Ciesco 40th year Sovenier. Calicut. 1996. p.78.

wheat porridge, *Kitchdi*, *Godān*, *Mālpori*, *Biriyāni* etc. are such dishes which became the favourite items of the people of Malabar. Batkal hotels were renowned for their quality and punctuality. They opened the shops in the early morning and closed very late in the night and thus rendered valuable service to the people. Even the British officials enjoyed the Batkal dishes. Later so many Mappilas attracted to this textile and hotel Business of Batkals and was inspired to start new shops in the city.

The Batkals followed their own social customs in Malabar also. The marriage ceremonies, held in the house of bride groom are witnessed by the Qazi (Priest) *Mahr* is given as cash and not in kind. After marriage, bride groom gives a presentation namely *Jahās*⁴⁷ to bride and her house holds. Commonly *Jahās* is dresses, perfumes and clothes. The bride lives in the house of groom. Among the Batkals divorce is very rare. Ladies usually wear *pardah*. Men and women are fair in colour and possessed attractive personality.

Batkals follow the tenets of Islam closely who belongs to shafi school of thought.⁴⁸ They have been given much importance to religious education especially to learn Quran by heart for which they formed an association namely *Anjuman Talimul Qurān*. They have also conducted All India competition in *Adhān*. (Call for prayer). They have formed another

47. Mammed Koya Parappil, op.cit., p.203.

48. S.M. Mohammed Koya, op.cit., p.77.

association for their own progress and welfare namely *Malabar Batak Muslim Jamaat*.⁴⁹ There were about 100 families upto the late 50's and after so many families migrated to various parts of India and Arabian gulf countries and their number has reduced to 30 families presently. The new generation has left the traditional textile business and entered to new business fields.

Dakhnis

Tipus invasion of Malabar opened the door to the people of Deccan and some people settled in various parts of Malabar. Some merchants came to Calicut and settled here and they were known by the name of Dakhnis.⁵⁰ Since most of them belonged to the Pathan race, who were the soldiers of Golkanda Sultans, then Dakhnis were also known as 'Pattanis'.

But according to traditions, the first Dakhni migration to Malabar is said to have occurred in the 18th century when Sheikh Mahmud and his group of Golkanda after performing Hajj at Makkah were returning to their land but on the return journey they lost their way and the ship anchored at Tellicherry. These groups were considered to be the first Dakhni settlers of Malabar. Sheikh Mahmud later became the *khatib* of Ali Haji mosque of Tellicherry.⁵¹

Dakhnis have their own native social customs. In marriages they have been giving dowry to the girls. They celebrated *Halnti* in the previous night of

49. Mammed Koya Parappil, op.cit., p.203.

50. Dakhnis – The people of Deccan in general. But specifically Urdu speaking Muslims of Golkanda, Bijapur, Mysore etc.

51. P.P. Mammed Koya Parappil, op.cit., p.204.

marriage. This is henna laying ceremony, the same as that of *Mylandhi Kalyanam* of *Koyas*.⁵² Among the Dakhnis, it is the privilege of bride to present all wedding dress of bride groom. Except for scattered households in the rural areas, they live in linear exclusive settlements of raw houses, arranged in a congested manner in urban areas. They had no traditional occupations, but practised as merchants, farmers, business brokers etc., Many of them are highly educated and hold high posts in the government. Many Pattanis serve in the educational institutions in and around Calicut city.⁵³ The District educational officer, Gafoorsha, a Pattani, wrote a book on Prophet Muhammed's life history in the old *Manipravalam* style of Malayalam language.⁵⁴

The famous *Pattala Palli* of Calicut city was constructed by the Pattani soldiers of Tipu sultan, as it is said that, the first name *Pattani Palli* was later modified as *Pattala Palli*.

Dakhnis belonged to *Hanafi* school of thought and have retained Urdu as mother tongue. They have exclusive settlements and with their own mosques. Their number is said to have two thousand now. They have been amalgamated to the stream of Mappilas and were enrolled in the school records as Mappilas. They had formed an organization, *Dakhni Muslim Jamat* for their welfare. The association had its own building in which they run a

52. Ibid.

53. S.M. Mohammed Koya, op.cit., p.77.

54. P.P. Mammed Koya Parappil, op.cit., p.203.

Madrasah. For the promotion of Urdu language they associated themselves with *Anjuman Tarq Urdu* of Delhi. The Dakhnis are the most amalgamated migrant group to merge with the Mappila community.

Memons

Upto 1750 AD the Alayi Memons who came from Surat and Cutch were settled at Calicut, became the leading merchants of the city. Memons were by export and import businessmen who monopolized the rice trade of the whole Malabar. They imported rice from Burma, Thailand and Malaya. It is estimated that, one of the ships of Memons carried twenty to thirty thousand sacks of rice from abroad.

The Memons exhibited extraordinary capability in handling the business. They possessed extreme honesty and punctuality in business matters who also encouraged small businessmen and helped them at the time of necessity. They really monopolized the rice market to the extent that that they fixed the market price of rice of that period.⁵⁵ During the second world war when a severe famine struck the Malabar area, the efficiency of Memons in importing rice saved the people from great suffering. They had not only established big network of business firms throughout India but those business firms were efficiently controlled by their faithful managers where as the owners visited the firms once in a year.

55. Ibid., p.207.

Adam Pir Mohammed, Hussan Kasam Dada, Haji Habib, Ibrahim Kasim and Pir Muhammed were big businessmen of the city.⁵⁶ The Memons were generous and contributed rice to the poor and needy during the days of *Ramzan*. Memons reconstructed the *Mudakkara mosque* of big bazaar in Indo-Saracenic style.

Memons played an important role in the politics of the country obeying their national leader, Muhammed Ali Jinnah, since the Memons were the followers of All India Muslim League. They helped the Muslim League Committee of the city by means of financial support. Sattar Sait was a prominent leader of Muslim League in South India who contested in elections of 1934. The Memons supported the formation of Pakistan and after independence they disposed off the properties and migrated to Pakistan.

Bohras

Bohras came to Calicut city about two hundred years ago and settled here who originally belonged to the Kutch province of Gujarat. They held a supreme position in the trade and business of the city from their advent. They specialised in exporting business, mainly of indigenous productions of sea coral, salty fish, ginger, coir and spices. These articles were exported to Karachi, Bombay, Maldives and Ceylone. Ibrahim Jivaji, Hassanal Kathrak,

56. S.M. Mohammed Koya, op.cit., p.77.

Akbarali and Tayyib Ali were famous businessmen of the city in the early period. Later Gulam Hussan, Mamuji, Davud Bai and Tayyib Ali became the leading export businessmen. Bohras monopolized the coir business of the city as they built coir factories known as *Alāth* offices in which the coir required for the cargos in big ships were manufactured.⁵⁷

By 1900 AD, the emigrated Bohras constructed *Jamā'at* office at South Beach which later developed as Bohra complex with a mosque, *madrakah* and *Jama'at Khāna*. Bohras are Shias belong to *Dāwūdi* branch and led by their spiritual leader Sayyidina who appointed *Qāzis* and *Muallims*. they were trained in his academy, *Al Jamyyatul Saifiya*,⁵⁸ at Surat.

Bohras closely follow the Islamic system of inheritance and are liberal and progressive. Their customs in social life are simple and inexpensive. Since they are not believing in extravaganza, even the amount of *Mahr* is usually fixed as hundred and one rupees. The *Qazi* performs the *Nikāh* while the ladies are watching it behind a curtain. Before marriage ceremonies, the mother-in-law would visit the house of bride with sweets and tied a knot, *Imam Samim*, in her hand.⁵⁹ After marriage the girl lives in the house of man and he would present the bride with dress and ornaments. The ladies wear the dresses of Egyptians. Even in marriage occasions the bride would be dressed

57. Mammed Koya Parappil, op.cit., p.206.

58. Ibid.

59. T. Jamal Muhammed, "Bohras", Chandrika Weekend Edition, Calicut, 29.10.1995, p.II.

in *pardāh*. The marriage feast is arranged by the groom and his family. Divorce is rare in the community. In olden days, *Muḥarram* was celebrated in a festive manner. Ladies also took part in *Jamāt* prayers.

Bohras excelled in exporting business especially of timber, coir, coconut and spices. Some of them owned big boats. Presently, the Bohras are about 150 in number. They are giving much importance to religious education. Most of the boys and girls study in Gujarati School started by Bohra leaders. The Bohras also patronize Urdu language and culture like the other migrant groups.

Labour Classes

The Mappilas of Malabar are a distinct community having manifold variations in culture and life styles. They are undertaking such an occupation which is suited to their conditions. In the long course of centuries, certain groups of people specialised in specific and skilled works and had acquired mastery over some occupations. The following generations would continue the jobs and these groups became almost a synonym of their jobs.

The Khalasis, boat pullers of Byepore near Calicut city are traditionally handling this labour work. With the experience in labour, khalasis were widely employed in construction of Indian Railway by the British.

Puislans, the fishing community has also acquired great skill in their jobs. The job requires high courage as they were struggling with the roaring

sea, and through hard work and they earned great name as skilled labourers of Arabian Sea.

Kammalis another working group of Kallai timber depots are traditionally trained in hard working. They also are working in the big bazaar and *copra bazaar* as head-load workers and rikshaw pullers.

Besides the various working groups scattered through out Malabar who have been trained in their respective trade constitute a big working force of Mappila community. The two things commonly experienced by all working groups are that all of them have led a low standard of life on account of their menial wages and secondly all of them have been considered socially inferior regarding their lineage and social status.

Khalasis

Khalasis are the workers of a ship or boat doing the jobs like launching the boat to sea, pulling the boat to sea shore, loading the cargo into the boat, unloading the cargos, shifting goods from harbour to wagons etc., Khalasis mainly concentrated at Beypore, Chaliyam and shores of Chaliyar. The word Khalasi has its root from Arabic which means black and white mixed from the fact that they were born to a white father (Arab) and black mother (native woman of Malabar).⁶⁰

60. Sayyid Sulaiman Nadvi, Arabikalude Kappalottam (Mal), (Tr. K.K. Mohamed Abdul Karceem). Angadippuram, 1973, pp.73-74.

The Arabs employed their sons as workers of ship. Later the progeny of these workers was known by the name of Khalasi. The Khalasi chiefs are called *Moopans*. The British employed Khalasis in the construction of Railway lines. They also took a leading role in the construction of bridges of British period. The expert Khalasi chiefs are called *srank*s.⁶¹ Some *Srank*s of Chaliyam undertook works all over India.

The Khalasis have special techniques to launch or draw a boat. The ground below the boat is first levelled and wooden planks of two inch thickness are paved. Above these planks, wooden rollers are put and the boat which is supported on either side by two heavy logs of *poovam* wood, which kept the boat above the ground slowly placed over rollers and then the boat is tied on to the *dovar* (lever) as the *kazhas* (handle) of *dovar* are rotated the boat moved on to water.⁶²

This technology in fact forms part of a much broader navigational technology which was still vibrant in Beypore even in the 1960's. Beypore port had a unique place in the Arab Indian navigation and trade. Even during the 1960's sailing ships were built and exported from Beypore to the Persian gulf. The techniques which the Khalasis put to use were the one used for launching and pulling ashore the large sailing ships at Beypore. These sailing ships had to be ground every year to re-fasten the planks which were stitched

61. Nicholson Paulose, "Anyamakunna Khalasikal", Chandrika Weekend Edition, Calicut, 28.1.1990.

62. Reporter, "Khalasigal Thirichetti" Mathrubhoomi Daily, Calicut, 24 July 1988.

together with coir ropes. The annual grounding to repair and subsequent launching necessitated a technological device for both these operations and thus arose the technology which the Khalasis has been using.⁶³

Besides loading and unloading boats and cargo, a Khalasi works on a ship as a porter. Navigational terminology of Lakshadweep with which the Kerala coast had trade relations or the Khalasis were less skilled set of labourers in the sailing ships compared to the *Malmis*, who were the real navigators who had the complex knowledge of the techniques of skill of navigation, and knew how to handle the various instruments used in traditional navigation.⁶⁴ On the sailing ships the Khalasis did the relatively less skilled labours such as raising and lowering the sails, bailing out water from the ship when leaks developed and were also in charge of the loading and unloading of cargo. An additional task undertaken by Khalasis in Beypore is the salvaging of sunken sailing ships and large boats. Thus though they stand one step lower in the technocratic hierarchy of traditional navigation, their very name Khalasi stands testimony to the fact that their services were socially recognized during the period of sailing ships.

The Khalasis of Malabar have taken part in the construction of railway bridges far out of Kerala, during the British period itself.⁶⁵ Their main task

63. Alex George. "Traditional Technology of Malabar Khalasis", Malabar Maholsava Souvenir. Calicut. 1998, p.168.

64. *Ibid.*, p.169.

65. Moorkothu Kunhappa, "Mappila Khalasikal", 40th Anniversary Souvenir. Farook College. 1988. p.200.

was of rail bridge construction to fix the girds or to replace them wherever repair was needed. In addition to girder, fixing and replacement, they also engaged in various heavy tasks associated with bridge building such as digging wells deep into the earth until it touched the rock in which the pillars of the bridge were created. Khalasis were also to take up the task of installing heavy machinery in industrial plant construction. Khalasis were involved in the major British construction like Shivnath and Mahanadhi bridges in Orissa, the Manganese factory at Goa and India's first launching bridge at Jarbad, Khalasis have even crossed the national boundaries to take part in the railway work which was started during the British period could have resulted from the links they could establish with the British Railway authorities who were having their terminal for Malabar, at Chaliyam ceased to be the terminal only when lines were extended to Calicut.

Khalasi touch could be seen also in the construction of Hardi Bridge of Bengal, Peranellur in Madras and Thondiyarpetta near Madras. The then Orissa minister Nithyakananda had given full credit to Mappila Khalasis for the fast completion of Hirackud Project.⁶⁶

At present the Khalasis, most of them are known as Kammali workers in Beypore, engaged in launching and drawing ashore large boats mainly fishing boats are having a difficult time. The decline of sailing ship building in Beypore due to the impact of steam navigation and the slackening of sailing

66. Ibid., p.200.

ship based trade has hit them hard. It is significant to note that the skills which the Khalasis possess are indeed valuable though they use relatively simple and limited equipment, traditional to the indigenous technological environment, the Khalasis of Malabar proudly and rightfully claim the tradition of Kunhali Marakkars.

Kammalis

The timber labourers of Kallai, known as Kammalis, worked in timber *Pāndikasāla*, the modern saw mill, from morning to night in this area where timber saw mills are seen in large numbers, in an area spreading about six kilometers, exactly from Pallikandi to Mankavu. Hundreds of saw mills had been operated on the banks of Kallai river and thousands of labourers worked here day and night. Kallai held this unique position by which it was hailed as the second biggest timber business centre of the world. Kallai rose to this position simply because of the fact that the river which is a bifurcation of Beypore river, originated from the forests of Eranad where immense qualities of magnificent timber⁶⁷ are thickly grown. The timber thus could easily be portable through the Chaliyar to the banks of Kallai, where it can be exported to foreign countries. The Arabs and later Mappila merchants who monopolized timber industry bought the trees of forest on payment of

67. C. A. Innes. op.cit.. p.252

68. Ibid.. p.252.

Kuttikānam (stump fee)⁶⁸ from *Namboodiri jenmis* and later brought it to the river shore using elephants. It was later efficiently floated by Kammalis by tying the woods together to form *Changādam* and controlling it by a long stick and singing, 'Elelam'⁶⁹ through the rivers, induced was a beautiful sight. In the season, the river at Kallai is a wonderful sight, the water being scarcely visible for thousands of logs floating on surface. The logs are left in the water until they are sold.

The Kammali skillness could be seen in the saw mills. It is quite easy for them to lift the timber for splitting and removing it from the table and after this splitting process, it then loading in ships, in railway coaches and lorries. Kammalis also efficiently work as loading and unloading labourers in the big bazar in the port of Calicut to unload loads of sacks from ships and loading it again in *Pāndikasālas*. Usually the Kammalis have been controlled by Mooppan (leaders) and there existed close Mooppan – Kammali relations. The Mooppan Kammalis thus are a major working group of Malabar area. Kammalis have very low level of living standards by the menial income they earned. Many of the youths of younger generation have migrated to gulf countries for better living prospects. Some of the youths turned to illegal means to earn and became anti-social elements from this group. By mechanization, the loading process at the port has been reduced but in bazaars still they continue their hard work.

69. P.P. Mammad Koya Parappil, op.cit., p.295.

Puyslans (Fisher Folk)

The Mappila fisher folk (Puyslans) form a distinct social group within the Muslim community. These fisher folk have constant contact with their Hindu and Christian counterparts who live on the contiguous coastal regions of Kerala. The Mappila fisher folk of coastal regions of the entire Malabar have been converted from Hindu *Mukkuvans*. These converts are called *Puyslān* (neophytes or *Puthiya Islam*). The Puyslans have retained their original *Mukkuvā* clan names though they do not observe clan exogamy.⁷⁰ They occupy the lowest position in the social hierarchy of the Muslim community. Puyslans work side by side with other Mappilas both at the fishing ground and in the curing yards. It is said that in former times, Puyslans were allowed to contract alliances with *Mukkuvā* women and that a male child born as a result there of on Friday was handed over to the Mappila community.⁷¹ It is recorded in the Madras census report of 1891 A.D. that conversion to Islam is common among the caste. All Puyslans follow the occupation of fishing. In North Kerala *Mukkuvā* females during their mensural period cannot remain in their house, but they occupy the house of a Mappila fisherman, which shows that the two castes live on very close terms.⁷² Puyslans will not go for fishing on Friday in respect of the holiness of the day.

70. P.R.G. Mathur, Mappila fisher folk of Kerala, Trivandrum, 1978, p.11.

71. Francis Day Land of Perumals, Madras 1863, p.325.

72. Edgar Thurstan, The castes and tribes of South India, Vol. IV, Madras, 1909, p.112

Fishing is one of the oldest occupations of mankind. This fishermen folk live in thatched huts on the beach and are subjected to floods. The Mappilas fishermen who inhabit the Malabar coast are reputed to be experts in detecting the fish shoal in the changing conditions of the sea. They possess extensive knowledge of the species of the fish, their habits and various weeds which serve on the food of fish and breeding seasons of the different species. They make use of specialised nets and techniques for fishing different species of fish. They launch the nets and boats at the most opportune time and initiate the young people into the profession on auspicious occasions.

The Hindu and Mappila fishermen of Kerala classify the fishing grounds on the basis of the depth of the sea, which is measured in terms of *Ālku Azhem*⁷³ or *Māru*. These fall into 5 types (1) *Kārakadal*, 3 *Mārus* (2) *Idakadal*, 8 *Mārus* (3) *Padi Kadal*, 8 *Marus* (4) *Vayyakadal*, 8 *Mārus* (5) *Puramkadal*, 10 *Mārus*. From one kadal to another nets, fishing techniques and seasons had to be changed. Types of fish vary from *kadal* to *kadal*. The main fish items are *Chemmeen*, *Tirandi*, *Ētta*, *Kōra*, *Mathi*, *Ayla*, *Aykkora*, *Nemmīn*, *Akōla*, *Nettal*, *Sura*, *Mullan* etc. The common fishing boats are Catamaran, Canoes, plank built boats and traditional boats (*Toṇi*).⁷⁴ The usual net used for the operations are gill nets, *Ayilacalavala*, *Olukkuvāla*, *Tirandi vala*, *Nettal vala*, *Oncuvāla*, *Baminvala*, *Sravuvāla*, *Chinese vala*, *Peyittam vala* and *Mattikolli vala*. All these show that Puisseans have great knowledge

73. P.R.G. Mathur, op.cit., p.27

74. Ibid., pp.146-169.

of the types of fishes and superior craftsmanship and excellent marketing system.

The *Puyslans* of Malabar perform a number of rituals and observe numerous magico-religious practices in the cause of fishing. They believe that sorcerers can cause not only illness but also death by performing black magic. These beliefs and magico-religious practices help fill gaps in their technology of fishing and thus narrow the areas of doubt and uncertainty. Ritual activity coordinates and regulates the corporate behaviour of the Mappila fishermen in a large numbers of social situations. The complex body of rituals among *Puyslans* may be classified into 8 main types.⁷⁵ (1) *Maulid* recitation of the birth, life history, sayings and glory of Prophet Muhammed his predecessors and descendants, (2) *Madhu* Songs in Arabi-Malayalam in praise of the Prophet, (3) *Khattam otikkal*, reading of the full text of holy Quran, (4) Bait singing by the clergy in honour of the grand sons of the prophet, (5) *Rattib* observance of the special rituals in honour of Sheikh Riffai and Shaikh Muhiuddin (6) The usual Islamic festivals *Id al Fitr*, and *Id al Azha*. (7) Rituals in connection with life cycle of birth, marriage and death. Besides these rituals, *Puyslans* also perform the Islamic rites like 5 day Prayer, fasting during the month of *Ramzan*, *Hajj to Makkah* etc., Islamic festivals are also performed as usual.

The *Puyslans* are highly superstitious. They employ local *Mantravadis* to cure their diseases, to fulfil their wishes and to destroy their enemies. The

75. P.R.G. Mathur. op.cit., p.304.

two sections of the Mappilas who indulge in this sorcery are Thangals and Musliyar. This black magic (*Sihr* in Arabic)⁷⁶ is quite common among the *Puyslans*. Besides they would approach Hindu *Mantravadis* like *Kaniyars*, *Panans*, *Parayans* etc. for this purpose.

In social rites the *Puyslans* more or less are following the prescription of Quran and *Hadith*. But in their economic pursuits as well as rituals connected with diseases and curing they fall back very substantially on the Hindu folk medicines. The Mappila social system is highly flexible. The *Puyslans* are also known as *Kadappurakkār* or those who live in sea coast. They occupy the lowest position in the social hierarchy of the Muslim community in the village. The *Kadappurathukār* are divided into two endogamous groups on the basis of their traditional occupations, the *Valakkar* and *Beppukar* (the hook and line fishermen).⁷⁷ Members of these sections observe endogamy. *Beppukar* claim a superior status than the *Valakkar*, *Beppukar* traces their origin to high caste Hindus. The Mappilas living closer to these *Puyslans* were termed *Angadikkār*, possibly converts from high class Hindus. They are mostly landlords, peasants and traders. Although they intermingle in public places and in mosques they seldom interdine. The *Angadikkār* have monopolized the fish trade.

76. Sihr – It is a type of black magic performed by ‘Mullas’ for gaining private ends for other parties.

77. P.R.G. Mathur, op.cit., p.20

Sundry labourers

Besides the major class of labourers, there had been so many sundry labourers in various parts of Malabar. But they were not known as a separate class since they were not a work force of big firms or establishments. The Rikshaw pullers of Calicut city led a miserable life because it was indeed a labour of slavery.⁷⁸ Later cycle rikshaws came to the scene for their relief. But it was the advent of motor rikshaws that really saved the bondage of these labourers.

Another group of labourers are the fish-selling group. At the sea beach the puislans sold it to the small merchants and they carried it on heads and sold it through houses from morning to evening walking miles and miles of distance until it finished. Presently brokers purchased it in bulk and employ workers to sell it.

The *Beedi* workers of so many companies that produced *beedi* in Calicut city, Tellichery and Cannanore and other small bazars of Malabar were mostly Mappila labourers. They also worked day and night and a less paid group among the labourers. The *Shahinsha*, *Mayin* and *Chavi* were the famous *beedi* brands of Calicut. *Sadhu beedi* was another famous brand of Cannanore. So many labourers worked in connection with the company in the production, packing and selling of *beedis*. By the introduction of cigarette, *beedi* industry is on the verge of decline.

78. P.C. Abdul Latheef, 'Manushyare Chumakunna Manushyar', Chandrika Weekly, dtd. 10.8.1985, p.18

The British owned so many estates and big lands in various parts of Malabar. They employed so many workers in their estates of Wynad, Cannanore, Calicut and Ernad taluks. These labourers known as 'coolies' led a miserable life on account of their low income. Presently these labourers are working under the rich estate owners.

In the extreme South of Malabar, in the Palakkattucheri taluk, there were so many weavers who came from Madras Presidency and settled in Palakkad and near by places. They belonged to the *Hanafi* sect of *Sunnis* and were commonly known as *Rawther*. Later they mingled with Mappilas of Malabar and became a part of them.

Peasant Class

The Mappilas were wide spread in the South Malabar region, the erstwhile Eranad and Valluvanad taluks of British Malabar, had been by profession farmers or cultivators of the land. When the Arabs were replaced by the Portuguese and the Dutch in the Arabian Sea and its trade, Mappilas lost their monopoly of trade. The dejected and despaired Mappilas gradually withdrew to the interior of Malabar for livelihood and assumed agriculture as their profession.

Agriculture had been the backbone of south Malabar economy. The areas following under South Malabar, the Ernad, Walluvanad, Ponnani taluks of British Malabar were geographically framed to suit various types of agricultural crops. The low lying wet paddy fields, *pādam*, the semi cultivable

land *Karinkara* and arid land *parambu* were the main divisions of agricultural lands. In each land suitable crops had been cultivated.

Mappila peasants traditionally were industrious and hard working. Most of them were devoid of self owned lands. So they were labourers of the rich *jenmis* especially *Namboodiri* or *Nair* Hindu classes. Quite few of Mappilas owned some land of their own to cultivate during the British period. In the cultivation of paddy, the staple grain of the people of Malabar, the Mappila peasants had undertaken all farming works independently. The wet land cultivation was in three seasons. The first crop harvested in *Kanni*, the Malayalam month, and is known as *Kannivila* or *Virippu*, the second crop harvested in *Magaram* is known as *Magarvila* or *Mundagan*. The summer crop is *Meda punja*. The dry land crop called *Moden* was most common.⁷⁹ The method of cultivation was of primitive manner. Oxen or buffaloes were employed for ploughing the field with a *Kalappa*⁸⁰ and levelling the wet ground with *Urichamaram*. The levelling of ground was some times raised to the standard of 'sport' or pastime among the peasant class. The sport is known as *Kalapoott* (Cattle race) and has been described elaborately in preceding chapter. The young seedlings of the paddy *Nharu* were planted in the field by peasant class ladies. Usually the paddy seeds has 90 days growth.

79. C.A. Innes, op.cit., p.215.

80. Kalappa (a 'T' shaped wooden plank one end is sharp razor, the other end a handle, the long pole tied to the nukam (shaft) of the oxen).

In the summer season⁸¹ the field has been irrigated by drawing water from pond or checkdams temporarily constructed in the canals or small rivers. Where there was no such facility water was drawn from wells made for the purpose, near by the paddy fields using a special device known as *Eatham*.⁸² Buchanan describes the device like this. "It is a type of lever of bamboo. In the one end there is a long pole tied to the lever. In the other end of the lever, there is a *Thekkukotta* (Wooden bucket). The man drawing water with *Eatham* would stand in two pillars. The man would at first pull the pole down and fill the *Thekkukotta* with water. Then he lifts this easily by the weight of the stone hanged and pour water to the paddy field. Probably a man could draw 178 gallons of water in one hour."⁸³ After harvesting the crop with an *arrival* (sickle) usually ladies had done this job, it was carried to a *Kalam* (yard) for processing. The grain was thus separated from the paddy. Various species of paddy had been used during British period in Malabar. A list is given in appendix- 7.

Besides paddy, commercial crops were also cultivated by Mappilas. Important crops were coconut, Arecanut, Pepper and Cashewnut. Unlike food crops which were produced only for home consumption these crops were meant only for external markets. Coconut was the main cash crop of British Malabar. The tree thrived well in salty and sandy alluvial soil of the coastal

81. Francis Buchanan, A journey through Malabar, Canara and Mysore (Mal Tr. C.K. Kareem). Thiruvananthapuram, 1981, p.70.

82. *Ibid.*, p.126.

83. Manual of Madras Administration. Part-3, Tamil Nadu Archives, Chennai, p.637.

regions. In the inland laterite soil also it produces fine yields. Malabar produced coconuts of superior quality compared to other countries which produced the same.⁸⁴ Every Mappila planted coconut trees in the garden around his house. Coconut Kernal is used by Mappilas as an ingredient of curry. Matured seeds of coconut are used for extracting oil. The oil is produced from dried kernels using traditional device called *chakku*. The remaining cake *pinnakku* has been used as a cattlefeed. So many persons had worked in the coconut yielding gardens. Persons were specialised in climbing the trees, splitting the coconuts and drying the kernels known as *copra*. Coconut dominated in *parambu* crops up to the extent that there were big coconut farms (*Thengin thoppu*) through out Malabar.⁸⁵

Arecanut is a long tree planted by the Mappilas of South Malabar as garden crops. This crop should be periodically watered unlike coconut tree. The matured seed is used as an ingredient for pan chewing, a habit of Mappila community. After the nut is removed from the seed by boiling or drying or decaying of the outer shell, it was exported to various parts of the country or to foreign countries by the merchants.⁸⁶ Dried nut of areca, is used in the preparation of medicine, dye, tooth powder and confectionaries. The wood of areca is very useful for making huts for the poor peasant Mappilas.

84. Torn Pires as quoted by Johnsy Mathews, Economy and Society in Medieval Malabar. (1500-1600), Chengannur, 1996, p.86.

85. C.A. Innes, op.cit., p.219.

86. Johnsy Mathews, op.cit., p.88.

Betel, was the most important by product of Arecanut garden. The betel known in Malayalam as *Tāmbool* is a vine crop, the leaf of this vine, betel leaf is the most important commercial product. This vine is a climber on arecanut tree, as a supporting plant. Periodic watering is necessary for the growth of betel vines.⁸⁷ The matured leafs are plucked which is the necessary ingredient in pan chewing. The Mappila peasants depended on this crop for their livelihood. In each week they sold the betel leaf in the neighbouring town. In British period; Tirur of South Malabar was famous as a center for betel exporting. The *Pān Bazar* of Tirur town controlled the betel trade from where it was exported to North India and foreign countries.⁸⁸

Pepper, the 'black gold' of Malabar as it was called, was in fact the magnet that attracted merchants from abroad in to the coast of Malabar. The pepper known in Malabar as *Kurumulaku* was *filfil* to the Arabs. Mappila of North Malabar mostly engaged in pepper cultivation and business. Pepper was abundantly grown in the hilly sides. Pepper is a vine like betel, which needs support of a parent tree. The most common parent tree is *murikku*, besides other light wood trees were also grown for this purpose. In the month of June, small pepper chord is formed and gradually it develops and will ripe in the month of January. Then it is plucked by persons climbing on the tree which is then spread in the hot sun. Within few days the green seeds would

87. C.A. Innes, op.cit., p.224.

88. E. Sadiq Ali, "Vettila", Chandrika Weekend Edition, Calicut, 17-4-1994, p.I

turn to black colour, ready for delivery. Sometimes the ripe seeds would be boiled and the upper cover would be removed to form white pepper. There was a steady demand for pepper in Europe because in the absence of fodder during winter large numbers of cattles had to be slaughtered and the meat was salted. A large amount of spice was needed for adding taste to the meat. Pepper was the most sought-after commodity.⁸⁹

Cashewnut, originally a Brazilian had been brought by the Portuguese sailors to Malabar. There after this tree was grown in the laterite soil abundantly which requires no maintenance. During the summer season the cashew fruit with nut could be plucked from the tree. The kernal of the nut is enclosed in a hard covering. Oil can extract from the thick covering which is sweet edible and much superior to ground nut oil. The kernel nut can be roasted and eaten. The juice of the apple is a good drink and can be converted to vinegar by some process. Mappila peasants were engaged in the collection of cashewnut from big gardens and were exporting it to big factories for processing.

Besides the cultivation of the above cash crops, the Mappilas worked as labourers in the big garden of some other crops like coffee, tea and rubber in Wynad and other parts of Malabar. In the summer season, the Mappila peasants actively engaged in cultivating various vegetables in the harvested

89. Johnsy Mathews, op.cit., p.49.

paddy fields. In the *parambu*, Elephant Yam, Colocasia, Ginger, Turmeric, Tapioca, Banana Chilli, Brinjal etc., were planted. The Mappila peasants struggled with soil to earn their livelihood. Since they heavily depended on agricultural crops, they had suffered unemployment in between planting and harvesting season. During these days they had hardly taken food items. They were under the mercy of their *jenmis* to get any normal food provisions.

The living conditions of the peasant Mappilas were pitiable. As house was concerned only very few managed tiled roofs, but most of them lived in thatched roof sheds. These small huts should require periodic repair during summer season in order to be safe on the days of severe rainfall. The peasants had also been lagging behind in cloth items, so badly that only in the days of festivals, they managed to get some new clothing.

The poor living conditions, oppression of the *jenmis*, small wages they incurred, the rent or tax they had to pay to the *jenmis* for allowing them land on lease (*Kanam*), unemployment and starvation, all these made their life difficult. This situation of the peasants had to be looked in detail in the light of the socio-political atmosphere that prevailed in the British era which culminated in great out burst of the period, creating an ever lasting headache to British authorities which could not be crushed easily by their mighty military power.

The Mappila peasant had been victimized by the then existed land ownership system of Malabar. The *jennum* (ownership) right in Malabar was

originally in the hands of a limited aristocracy. The Brahmins possessed land of their own (*Brahmaswam*), *Nāduvāzhis* had their own land. (*Chērikkal*) and temples were the owners of the land (*Dewaswam*).⁹⁰ There is also the effect of the economic contrast between the hard living of the Moplah and the life of the stately houses belonging to Namboodiri landlords called *Jenmis* who are mostly Namboodiri Brahmins. By Namboodiri custom, only the eldest son may contract legal marriage and the property descends from father to elder son. Hence Namboodiri properties are not subject to division on the other hand they found continually grow wherever there are other properties adjoining them and not owned by them, it is the custom of Namboodiris to be eager to buy land, but very unwilling to sell it.⁹¹

The ownership right of the *Jenmis* or land lords was quite different from that in any other part of India. Rulers all over India had absolute ownership of all lands in the country but rulers of Kerala had no right to receive the annual land revenue. The Brahmin whom the Hindu law declared free from tax was the owner of the soil. By the ancient custom of Malabar the *Nairs*, held their lands free, they paid no revenue to any one.⁹²

This was the condition that prevailed among the Mappila peasants, a major section of the cultivating tenants in South Malabar. The poor Mappilas

90. Malabar Land Tenures, File No. 319, Tamil Nadu Archives, Chennai, p.16.

91. Sukhbir Chaudary, Moplah uprising (1921-23) New Delhi, 1977, p.15.

92. Malabar Land Tenure, Charles Turner Minute – Chapter II, Tamil Nadu Archives, Chennai.

were an industrious and frugal class labouring hard to provide a sufficiency of food for their wives and children.⁹³ The land lords and intermediaries rack rented this class of cultivators and evicted them frequently from their holdings in South Malabar. The agents of the land owning class also used to evict the poor tenants at their instance for making profits.

When the Mysore Sultans occupied Malabar, the condition of Mappila peasants had been improved. The Mysore rule resulted in a temporary release from the shackles of that feudalistic system for the Mappilas. But the existing law of the land could not be broken which prevented Mappilas from becoming land owners. Since the Mappilas were late comers, they had little place in this arrangement Mysore kings brought the first challenge to the traditional system that those who worked the land in Malabar should pay land tax directly to the sultans representative allowing the traditional receivers of land income only that portion which might be left over the new system weakened the firm hold of the *jenmis* over the land. The policy of the Mysore rulers only partially alleviated the Mappilas problems. The loosening of the hold of the *jenmi* over the land, opened a new vision for the Mappilas.⁹⁴

After the disruption of the Mysore period, the British the new masters who occupied the entire Malabar adopted the principles of reversal of the policy of Mysoreans. With respect to land revenue, they modified the position

 93. Malabar Tenancy Report, Letter from Major Fred Hole 159 (1), Tamil Nadu Archives, Chennai.

94. R.E. Miller, Mappila Muslims of Kerala, Madras, 1976. p.98.

to restore the traditional authority of the land owner. They determined to utilize the rajas as the land revenue agents in their old territories. An example for this new policy had been adopted by them was the incident of so many of the *jenmīs* both *Nambudirīs* and *Nairs*, who fled away to Travancore in fear of Tippu's new land revenue policy, had been restored to their former ownership.⁹⁵ Although the Mappila peasants, *Kaṇamdārs*, temporarily occupied the lands of *jenmīs* who fled away to Travancore it was not on a permanent basis. Mappilas did not usurp the *jenmi* right at the time of the Hindu flight to Travancore. All they did was to take advantage of their Hindu neighbours when they were anxious to realize as much ready money as possible from their lands. The Mappilas advanced small sums of money and got deeds assigning to them large rights in *Kāṇam* tenure, but they nowhere exorted the *jenmīs* right from any of the *jenmis* even at such a time.⁹⁶

The British accepted the Mysorean concept of state as the owner of all land and fixed the state as the owner of all land. They also fixed the state's share of revenues from land at the same level as that fixed by the Mysorean rulers.⁹⁷

Mysoreans had directly dealt with the tenants to levy the tax. Tipu's officers were obliged to settle for land revenue with *kāṇamdārs*⁹⁸ The middle

95. Report of joint Commissioner of 1792-1993, Vol. II. Tamil Nadu Archives, Chennai, p.4.

96. Malabar Special Commission (1881-82), Malabar land Tenure Report – Malabar, Vol I. 1896. Tamil Nadu Archives, Chennai, p.xvi.

97. K.M. Bahavuddin. Kerala Muslims – The long struggle, Kottayam, 1992. p.95

98. Conrad wood. Mappila Rebellion and its genesis, New Delhi, 1987, p.100.

men, to collect the tax, were eliminated by the Mysore rulers but were brought back by the British who gave the land lord liberty to demand any rent in different ways, to increase the rent at will and if the peasants fail to pay they could be evicted. One of the chief form of oppression to which the *jenmīs* had recourse was their power of eviction recognized by the British administration and the courts. They were also vested with the authority of *Polychezhuthu* (revision of agreement demanding high rent) and *melchārth* (leasing the land to another tenant at high rent in preference to the existing tenant) such rights had never been enjoyed by the *jenmīs* and time in history.⁹⁹

Enquiring about the case of the problem between Kolathur Variyar and his tenants Mr. Strange, special commissioner appointed to look the tenancy problem, writes in his letter to Mr. Conolly, the Malabar collector, thus, "Here is a land lord, simply from a motive of revenge, seeking to eject enmasse his substantial tenants. That *Jenmi*, has I conceive, no right to ask to eject his *Kānam* tenants on simply returning, the amount of their *kānam*, unless he can prove default in their part."¹⁰⁰

The policy of the British and extortions by the middlemen under their rule resulted in agrarian tensions. The peasant Mappilas who were resisting the exorbitant revenue demands were considered as enemies by the British. The landlords were given new powers of coercion and eviction over their

99. K.M. Bahavuddin, op.cit., p.95

100. File of correspondence regarding the relation of land lord and tenants in Malabar, 1882-56. Tamil Nadu Archives, Chennai, p.33.

tenants in the rulings of the courts to regulate the land tenure. The British courts were made an adjunct of the revenue administration by giving them powers to attach or sell land for default of revenue. Numerous complaints were filed against prominent Mappilas in the courts of murder, robbery etc., and many were ousted from their land. Moreover, when a *Jenmi* evicted his tenant, the sub leases under the latter were also liable to be turned out.¹⁰¹

Of the pitiable condition of Mappila peasants, Major Tred Hole, superintendent of police writes.¹⁰² “The very large increase in the number of evictions of late years accounts, to a great extent, for the increase of crime, but there seem to be other reasons also for the increase, and the chief of these are the increase of poor classes, the difficulty of obtaining employment and the low rate of wages prevailing especially in Eranad and Walluvanad taluks. In most parts of these taluks the daily hire of a labourer is about 2 annas and a feed of rice. Upon this small pittance it is difficult to imagine a labourer who has a large family living honestly and it is surprising that he seeing some of his neighbours proceed, for plunder should also be taken himself of dishonest pursuits. In these two taluks, there must be hundreds, say thousand cases especially among Mappilas. In time of famine prices, the labour wages are not raised and it is no wonder that such poor creatures should take to theft, to say nothing of the large number. Moplah peasants might have been economically

101. Conred wood, op.cit., p.73.

102. Major Tred Hole, in correspondence of Mappila outrages, Vol. I, Tamil Nadu Archives. Chennai. p.125.

oppressed, socially tyrannised and provoked to revolt by exasperating him under intolerable eviction and imposition of humiliating conditions'. Some British administrators like Fred Hole and Major Dav, struggled against the anti-Mappila tendency in official policy. The joint commission appointed to look after Malabar affairs also stated that it was very desirable object to reconcile and attach as far as possible with Mappilas. They expressed admiration for the great and respectable body of the Mappilas. Some convicts who sided with Tipu had given pardon in order to tame and win their confidence. These conciliatory gestures towards the Mappilas whether genuine or politically motivated, fell before the major direction of British policy of hatredness towards the unruly Mappilas altogether.¹⁰³

The detrimental results of the reversion to the traditional system of land control became quickly evident. The Mappila tenants bitterly resisted the efforts of *jenmis* to resume control over their properties, but those who fought the revival of feudal order stood in constant danger of retaliation, "assassination being the certain follower of complaint." The revival of feudal ancient institution of military service by Nairs attending chiefs, chiefs attending rajas, intensified the tension further. It was evident that the friendships of the past were lost in a new bitterness as Hindus took the opportunity to wreak their vengeance on the Mappilas. The joint commission

103. R.E. Miller, *op.cit.*, p.105

noted with dismay that from the beginning of 1791 AD the members of the Zamorin's family thought only attacking and subduing Mappilas.¹⁰⁴

Likewise Kottayam raja not only allowed but seemed to encourage the Nairs to oppress and maltreat the Mappilas. The British tried a variety of ways to halt the persecution of the Mappilas. They tried to redress their fear of loss of livelihood in the face of awful demands of the *rājās* and *jenmīs*. They issued decree in favour of Kondotti Muslims who had been oppressed by Nair landlords.¹⁰⁵ They formed a Mappila corps to carry out only one in North Malabar. The company appealed both Hindus and Mappilas to live peacefully.

But the Mappilas retained high respect of Tipu's memory, considering him as a martyr, bitter opposition for reinstating old order of landlordism suffering from *jenmīs*, the Mappilas were unlikely to hear the appeal of company, and rather began to express their resentments by agitations. Serious troubles first broke out in the Walluvanad area and the disturbance soon extended to the neighbouring area of Ernad, with land territory of the Zamorin. The Zamorin realised that his future lay with British and the former Hindu. Mappila alliance could not be restored. The Zamorin turned against his erstwhile Mappila supporters of Ernad.¹⁰⁶

104. Joint Commission Report 1, Tamil Nadu Archives, Chennai. p.87.

105. W. Logan, Malabar Manual, Madras. Vol. III.

106. *Ibid.*, p.332.

As far as the poor Mappila peasants were concerned it was a struggle for life and death. The land and homestead were dearer thing for him. He challenged the eviction by blood-shed. The landless condition of Mappila peasantry, the help rendered by the British East India Company officers, the British judicial policy of anti Mappila attitude culminated in serious outbreaks known as Mappila outbreaks against British regime. The uprising followed no set patterns, and quite often appeared to be spontaneous. As a boosting to the severe attacks on *jenmīs*, the theory of *Shahīd*, to die in the fight with a non-Muslim group to get a meritorious place after death, had developed within the community which had been fed by the priest class of Mappila society. Thus attack on Hindu landowner and family attack on Hindu temple, attack on British soldiers were considered permissible ways of operation. Later the movement *Hāl ilakkum* (ecstatic shaking) developed among a group of Mappilas who plunged into rebellion only to sacrifice themselves.¹⁰⁷

The series of outbreaks that occurred throughout Malabar from 1802 – 1921 against Hindu landlords as well as British soldiers are beyond the scope of this chapter. However in all these riots Mappila peasants took a leading role. Altogether, there were 32 outbreaks between 1836 and 1919. The Malabar Rebellion of 1921 is the culmination and climax of these riots of the 32 outbreaks 22 occurred during the period of 18 years from 1836 to 1853. The attacks on two collectors of Malabar, H.V. Canolly who was murdered in

107. R.E. Miller op.cit., p.106.

1855 and C.A. Innes, who narrowly escaped the same fate in 1915 have not been treated as outbreaks. The bloodiest out breaks were those of Manjeri and Angadipuram in 1849. In other out breaks leading *jenmis* like Komu Menon, Kalathil Kesavan and Kolathur Variyar were murdered. The rest of 1836 at Pandalur, 1852 at Mattanur, 1884 at Chembrasserri and 1919 at Malappuram were some major riots of the period.¹⁰⁸

The depth of Mappila alienation revealed in the record of the period 1792-1921, requires more evaluation. The causes of the outbreaks have been variously described as hatred toward the British, agrarian suffering and poverty, religious fervour, lack of education and unleading priest class. Fixing on any social phenomenon as the product of any single cause must be an error.¹⁰⁹

The peasant struggle was moving toward an event which marked a close to the development that had begun with the advent of the British power. The Rebellion of 1921 was both a turning point and point in the Mappila outbreaks. The Mappila Rebellion was not entirely a peasant struggle, but the whole community directly or indirectly participated or co-operated with this. The Mappila Rebellion began on August 20, 1921 and continued at an intensive level for six months. There after a further period of six months was required before peace was established. The Rebellion was largely confined to

108. C.A. Innes. op.cit., pp. 78-84.

109. R.E. Miller. op.cit., p.115.

South Malabar and within it to half of its area covering 220 amsoms in Ernad, Walluvanad and parts of the Calicut and Ponnani taluks. But it directly involved over one million people, and indirectly touched lives of many more in Malabar. It's influence moreover was felt far beyond the immediate area of impact, extending to the whole of India.

The rural Muslim peasants were the worst sufferers of the rebellion, having lost so many lives of kith and kin, homesteads destroyed by British army, so many of them departed and increased number of orphans and widows had led a miserable life. After the revolt they were at the mercy of British administration. They were depicted as *jungle Mapla* and troublesome race¹¹⁰ by the authorities. Agriculture was badly affected. Food was scarce thousands of Mappila women who had undergone extreme suffering and so many of them were departed to Andamans. In order to redress the grievances of Mappila tenants the British government passed Tenants Improvement Act of 1927. But these Acts could not make any improvement in the life of Mappila tenants that was actually envisaged by the authorities. This worsened condition continued unaltered till the British quit the country offering independence to the land.

In the independent India, the condition of Mappila peasants some what improved but still they were under the yoke of their landlords. But in 1970's with the land reform Act of Kerala government so many of them owned lands

110. R.E. Miller, op.cit., p.107.

of their landlords. With modernization Mappila peasants are accustomed to new technology methods in cultivation like tractor, power - tiller and fertilizers. But the gulf impact alienated them again from the tradition of agriculture.

The above study of the occupational classes among Mappilas reveals that, the Mappilas were such a community who fostered all kinds of skilled professions on various fields for their livelihood. In this regard, there was no field of activity that they were untouched. In all these fields, they proved their efficiency and earned special names on account of the nature of profession. All these occupational groups were complementary to one another, that is, without the assistance of others they could not thrive alone.

MAPPILA FOLK CULTURE

Abdurahiman.K.P “Mappila heritage: A study in their social and cultural life”
Thesis. Department of History, University of Calicut, 2004

CHAPTER - 6

MAPPILA FOLK CULTURE

Folk culture offers a rich and fertile field for studies. Folk culture as the product of oral as well as written traditions handed down from generation to generation. The word 'Folk' denotes generally the ordinary and non-literate people like the village farmers, the labourers, tribals, the backward class and so on. Folk culture could be regarded as the product of the past. It is also the outcome of creative ideas of people expressed through verbal arts as well as material forms.¹ It may originate from a community or an individual, it is transmitted orally or through one written process from one generation to another, without any bookish knowledge, a person may create folk culture which may create folklore and in course of time could be accepted by the people. Folk culture has a wide connotation, it includes folk tales, ballads, folk songs, folk festivals, folk traditions, folk beliefs etc. Thus folk culture of a generation is the admixture of community living, religious beliefs, agricultural traditions, tribal practices, enjoyments, habits and customs.

The Mappila Folk culture has its tradition from their age old practices and deep-rooted beliefs in religion. Being a converted class, their transformation as the followers of the new religion was quick and amazing. They easily imbibed the tenets of Islam. But at the same time they have to

1. Mazharul Islam, Folk lore, the pulse of the people, New Delhi, 1980, p.5.

cope with the culture of their brethren Hindus in social living. But when the new generation came through centuries, this cultural alienation increased. From the time of Mappila community formation, these cultural elements became quite distinctive. They had the inner feeling in their mind that they belong to another culture and belief and they could no longer follow the folk ways of others. This inherent need to express themselves culminated in the formation of new folk ways. The folk culture of Mappilas has both indigenous and foreign influence. Closely examining the folk culture one could understand that these cultural elements are a combination of Arab and Indian cultural influences and by uniting each other had developed to a genuine Mappila culture has been evolved through the combination of the two.

In the folk culture of Mappilas, whether it is songs, tales, festivals, beliefs or superstitions, they share some common features with others but maintain their own identity. The folk songs of Mappilas, the *Mappila pāttu* are in Malayalam or native dialect but composed in Arabic rhymes with most of the words in Arabic, Persian and the old form of Malayalam namely *Chenthamizh*. Likewise in festivals, although the object and aim of festivals are entirely different from other festivals, they share some common features like *varavu*, decorated elephants, fire works etc. The folk traditions are surrounded on the advent of Islam and heroes who defended the faith. Hindus believe in *parashurama legend*, correspondingly the Mappilas have the *Cheraman Perumal legend*, some Folk tales are shared by both community. For example the belief in *Mānikyakallu*, that snakes often carries diamonds in

their mouth and flies into distant lands. Such folk stories are cosmopolitan beliefs. But Mappilas have their own folk tales. Likewise in folk beliefs and in superstitions so many Hindu beliefs are identical with those of Mappilas. But still Mappilas maintain peculiar beliefs. The age-long cultural alienation and political hostility resulted in the formation of a separate dialect which can be clearly demarcated from other sections of the community. Not only the Mappilas formulated their own dialectical form but even in script they coined a new alphabetical system by modifying Arabic letters. Thus in every sphere of life, the Mappila culture is distinguishable from others. In the following pages is given a detailed account of the main features of Folk culture among Mappilas.

Folk Songs

The Mappila Folk songs are called *Māppila pāttu*. Every culture has its origin from folk songs, as such the origin of Mappila culture might have been from folk songs. Initially the folk songs might have been composed by any talented poet was later accepted by the people as their popular song. Usually the composer of such poems would be a man with instant capacity to compose songs but these songs were not subjected to black and white and had been transferred from lips to lips. The Arabs had a passion for folk songs which they expressed during the days when they rested in their camps in expectation of goods to fill their shops they had spent their time in singing songs and playing *Duff*. Their tradition of Arabic folk songs and their rhythms and styles were gradually imbibed by their progeny that is Mappilas. Later the styles and

rhythm of Arabian folk songs had been applied to local dialect of that time which was the beginning of Mappila folk songs. Mappila folk songs thus were the admixture of Arabic, *Maṇipravālam*, *Chenthamizh*, Persian and later Malayalam. Thus the first progeny of Mappila folk songs had been 600 years old.² The Mappila folk songs thus had a parallel growth with other communities. Mappilas had their own harvest songs, sea voyage songs, boat pulling songs and songs suited to many situations, needless to say that all folk songs were familiarized by the working class.

The Mappila folk songs following the Arabic songs had more or less stressed on their style rather than the beauty of words. For the sake of this style they even broke the laws of composition of songs. The Arabic songs had given due importance to rhymes and this style influenced Mappila folk songs. The early compositions had vanished beyond revival and so many such songs were either destroyed or deported by the Portuguese. The inherent difficulty to preserve the songs in written form mainly in the underdeveloped Malayalam script which was the monopoly of the Brahmin class, prompted the Mappilas to invent Arabi-Malayalam a language in similar tune with Urdu. The Malayalam was used to write in Arabic script with addition of some new letters to cope with pronunciation. Among such written compositions the first was the *Mohiyyudheen māla*, composed by Qazi Muhammad of Calicut. This is considered as the first book of verse in Arabi Malayalam and this book

2. Ullur. S. Parameshwara Ayyar, Kerala Sahitya Charitram. Vol.I. Trivandrum, 1970, p.228.

actually had been written 5 years before the *Adyātma Rāmāyaṇam*, the first book of verses in Malayalam written by Ezhuthachan.³ Following the example of Qazi Muhammad so many had tried to write through Arabi-Malayalam script since Arabi-Malayalam is simply the Malayalam language written in Arabic script. Traditionally Mappilas were speaking the local dialect Malayalam and had also inherited the Arabic culture, as the followers of an Arab religion but not the Arabic language. At the same time they were unapproachable to Malayalam script in the form of *Vattezhuthu* and *Kolezhuthu* which had been mastered by the higher caste Hindus. Thus Arabi-Malayalam was an excellent solution for the inherent difficulty for a written medium and thereby a bridge for conversation and communication. It was this Arabi-Malayalam which acted as the medium of Mappila folk songs.

Arabi-Malayalam songs can be divided into various branches considering their contents, they are *Mālappāttu* (Necklace songs), *Padappāttu* (War songs), *Qissapāttu* (songs of stories), *Kalliyaṇapāttu*, (Marriage songs) *Madhpattu* (praising songs) and *Kathupāttu* (letter songs).

Malapattu

Mālapāttu are many in number which celebrates the virtues of heroes, recalling their greatness and merits. The important among them are *Muhyudheen māla*, *Rifai māla*, *Mampuram māla*, *Manjakulam māla* etc.

3. C.N Ahamed Moulavi and K.K Mohammed Abdul Kareem. Mahathaya Mappila Sahitya paramparayam, Calicut, 1978, p.152.

These songs are also known as *Nerchapattu* and they are recited for invoking the blessings of God through saints or sheikhs for curing epidemics. These ceremonies used to be performed at night in the company of more than one person which was followed by a sumptuous meal.

Muhyudheen māla is important as the first available work in Arabi-Malayalam literature. Its author, Qazi Muhammad ibn Abd al Aziz of Calicut was a celebrated scholar. *Muhyudheen māla* begins with praise of God and then the author describes the important events in the life of his hero Muhyudheen Abdul Qadir Jilani of Bagdad an outstanding mystic who lived in 6th century AH. The poet describes the sacred and miraculous events in the life of the hero, his admonitions and advice in a spirit of piety and devotion. Some descriptions are very often exaggerated.⁴ The *māla* ends with a prayer invoking the blessing of God through the concerned hero. Another well known *Malappattu* is *Rifaimāla* describing the life of Shaykh Rifai. This song was recited in the houses especially to avert the threats of snakes from the premises of houses.

Badar māla is another popular *Mālappāt*, it commemorates the historic battle of *Badr* which took place during the life time of Prophet Muhammad. The heroic exploits of Muslims in the battle field of *Badr* made an everlasting reverence in the mind of people towards these heroes. Since this poem was

 4. Qadi Muhammed, "Muhayiddeen Mala", 32 vaka Moulid Kitab (Arabi-Malayalam), Tirurangadi, p.84.

recited in their homesteads, boys in their early years developed heroism and courage.⁵

Another beautiful *Mālapātt* is *Nafeesathmāla*. The words are very beautifully selected so as to make the *māla* sweet in its recitation. When a mother suffered labour pain, in order to relieve her pain and for easy delivery, this *māla* was recited.

Apart from these, *Mamburam māla* is the praise and miracles of Mamburam Tangals and *Manjakulam māla* is in praise of the Sayyid Khaja Hussain and *Nūlmāla* is another *Mālappāttu* of distinction written by Kunhayam Musliar. It is a song of rare type that the whole poetry is full of deep devotion and love of Prophet. *Safalamāla* is also a *mālapāttu* having philosophical base. Besides these there are hundreds of *mālas* of various events and personalities. Thus the *Mālappāttu* is a branch of Mappila folk songs which had been devotionally sung by the disciples who had given more importance to it than their original religious scriptures.

Padapattu (War Songs)

The most popular songs among the *Mappilapāttu* are the *padapāttu*, describing the holy wars waged in the early days of Islam. It was the renowned poet, Moyin Kutty Vaidyar who popularised the *padapāttu* with a series of poetical compositions. The most celebrated one in these lines is,

5. Abud Jasim, Arabi Malayalathile Athulya Prathibakal, Calicut, 1999, p.19.

Badr padapāttu, the historic battle at *Badr* which was contested between the Prophet and companions on one side and their bitter enemies, the *Quraysh* on the other. This long poem has more than 2000 lines in its composition. The use of words, the styles of actions and the high poetic imagination are exemplary due to which *Badr padapāttu* has been considered as his masterpiece. He used as much as 120 *Ishal* (metres) in this poetry. The recitation of this poems helped in the rejuvenation and revitalization of Mappila community against the colonial powers and led them to the historic fightings with those powers.⁶ Besides he has written *padapāttu* about battle of *Uhud*. *Malappuram padapātt* is another renowned work of Vaidyar in which he had exhibited keen historical sense. He narrated the advent of Islam in Kerala up to the historic fight between Mappilas and Nair soldiers of *Paranambi*, the local ruler. As this *Padapāttu* inspired the Mappilas for outrages, the British banned this poetry.⁷ He had also written the less known *saliqat padapāttu*. Another famous *padappāttu* was written by Mammad kutty and Muhyuddin known as *Cherur padapāttu*. This was the event of a Mappila outrage at Cherur against the British regime. *Fath-ash-shām* (victory over Syria) is another *padapatt* written by Chetuvai Pareekutty in simple language. *Ghazvath, Fath Makka* (Victory of Makkah), another noteworthy *padapatt* was written by Tanur Moideenkutty Mullah and *Khandaq padapātt*,

6. C.N. Ahamed Moulavi and Mohammed Abdul Kareem. op.cit., p.347.

7. K.M. Mohammed, "Influence of Arabic on Mappila songs". *Journal of Kerala Studies*. Vol VI. Trivandrum. 1979. p.593.

a battle between Prophet and *Quraysh*, was written by Kunhiseethi Koyathangal. He had also written another war song on prophetic battle, *Futūhal-Taif*, Vallancheira Moideen Haji had written *Fathul Burra* or *Mutta* battle between Muslims and *ghassanid* Christians, Chakkeri Moideen Kutty had written *Badr padapātt* in pure Malayalam without any influence of Arabi-Malayalam. Besides *Hunayn padapātt* and *Khyber padapātt* were written by famous Mappila poets.

There are more than fifty songs composed in this respect. They are free from hyperbole and are the true narration of the wars. War songs are noted for the mastery of the poet over the resources of the language particularly its sound effects. The thrill of heroic fights is created by the use of selected words and expressions. These songs could prepare the Mappilas of Malabar for a revolt against the foreign rulers to save the mother country.⁸ They could be read even by the common man including the working class since they were in Arabi-Malayalam, a language known to all Mappilas in those days.

Qissapattu (Story songs)

This is a branch of Mappila songs dealing with the biography of ancient prophets, companions of Prophet Muhammad and other historic persons.⁹ The oldest among these were *Daniel Nabi Qissapāttu* and *Isā Nabi Qissapāttu* of anonymous authors. *Ibrahim Nabi Qissapāttu* is another one in this category.

8. C.N Ahamed Moulavi and Mohammed. Abdul Kareem. op.cit., p.351.

9. C.N. Ahamad. Moulavi & K.K.Muhammed. Abdul Kareem. op.cit., pp. 240-264

Among the *qissapattu* of the companions of Prophet, the *Qissapāttu* of Abdu Rahman Ibn Auf stood first. The *Qissapāttu* of Shaikh Ahmadul Kabir *Rifat* is about the biography of this *sufi* saint and his miracles. *Malik ibn Dinar Qissapātt* is about the first saint and missionary to Malabar. *Uswatwāla* is the story of a boy of *Banu-Israel*. *Madinatumalba* is the story of the exploits of Umayyad Caliph Abdul Malik to seize the city of Makkah. *Tājul Umr* is the story of Queen Balkis who lived during the period of King Solaman. Besides there are enormous story songs such as *Tamimuddari Qissapātt*, *Vaffat pātt*, *Ibrahim ibn Adham Yusuf Qissa*, *Adam Nabi Qissa* etc., Almost all the stories of Prophets had been used for this *Qissapātt* composition. The *Qissapātt* themes were exclusively of Islamic subjects. The *Qissapāttu* got a wide popularity through the art form namely *pādiparachil* (Sing and explain). Throughout Malabar, the teams trained in the art performed their programmes in various places and thrilled the people through their recitation. Usually for the *Qissapāttu* recitation, *Badr padapātt* is preferred and after it *Malappuram Padapāttu* and so on.

Kallianapattu (Marriage songs)

There are separate songs for the different occasions of marriage. They are *Mailānchipātt*, *Oppaṇapāttu*, *Ammayipāttu* etc. Among the *Kallianapāttu* the oldest is 'Adi Muthal puranam' describing the early days of Prophetic life. *Triklyānpatt* another one in this line closely followed by *puthiya trikalyānpātt*.¹⁰ *Mylānchipātt* is another type of *Kallianapāttu*. This was

10. Ibid., pp. 228-233.

sung at the occasion of marriage, when the bride have been applied henna on her hands and legs on the previous day of marriage. These songs are full illustration regarding henna (*mailānchi*) and its applications. The *Oppanapāttu* is sung on the day of marriage, when the bride would be seated fully decorated. *Oppana* songs have 3 styles, that is the prolonged style, *oppanachāyal*, the quick style, *oppana murukkam* and the fast style, *oppana ida murukkam*.¹¹ There are numerous Mappila songs in this style. Another type of *Kallianapāttu* is *Ammayipāttu* which depicted the various customs in connection with marriage, especially the treatment given to the bridegroom by his mother-in-law and also describing the large number of dishes served at the marriage functions and the ornaments worn by the bride. No aspect of Mappila social life, customs and manners had been left undescribed in Mappilas songs.

Kessupattu

Kessupāttu deals with fictitious stories that have no historical base. The celebrated song in this line is *Badarul Munīr Husnul Jamāl*,¹² written by the famous poet Moyinkutty Vaidyar. Actually it was the story from a Persian novel of the same name, a romantic story of princess and son of Minister, written by Khajha Muinuddheen Shirazi and explained to the poet by

11. V.M. Kutty, "Oppana", Mappilakalal, Manjeri. 1995. p.16.

12. Moyinkutty Vaidyar, Badrul Munir Husnul Jamal (Mal. Translation by K.T. Mohammed). Ashrafi Book stall, Tirurangadi, no date.,p.5

Nizamuddin of Kondotti. The poet explained vividly about the romance in elegant and beautiful style. Vaidyar had used 85 metres to write this long poem. This has been sung and appreciated by generations after generations.

Another celebrated *Kessupāttu* is *Valiya Jin padapātt*. This is an imaginary story of the fight between Hazrat Ali and *Jinns*. This was written by Mohiyuddin of Calicut. Although the *Ulama* condemned the song, it was widely circulated. Following this *Cheriyā Jin padapatt* was written by Kunhamad of Tellicherry having the same theme of former. *Saqeelath padapatt* of Moyinkutty Vaidyar is also a fictitious story about Prophet and companions, which has been opposed by *Ulama* of that time.

Of the several *Kessupattus*, *Pakshipātt* and *Kuruthipātt* are important ones. *Pakshipātt* is a fictitious story about the heroic exploits of Hazrat Ali with *Ifrit*, the leader of *Jinns*.¹³ *Kuruthipātt* dealt with palmistry of Fathima, daughter of prophet having recited by a lady well versed in this art. Besides, there are innumerable *Kesspāttu* of different events especially calamities, accidents, hunting, Cattle race and such socially relevant topics.

Kathupattu and Sarkeet pattu

Kathupātt or letter in poetry is an interesting branch of Mappila Songs. In a period when the composition of Mappila songs were in its zenith, poets

13. Naduthoppil Abdullah. Akbar Sadaka Paishipatt (Mal). Tirurangadi. 1990.

had written letters in poetry style. The veteran poet Moyinkutty Vaidyar had written the first *Kathupātt* namely *Mullabeevikkoru Kunikath* which put a trend to such lettes.¹⁴ But it was the *Kathupātt* of Pulikkottil Hyder namely *Mariyakuttiyude kath* which became widely popular.

Sarkeet pāttu (Journey songs) deal with the details of Journey and the experiences are met in the course. So many songs are composed in this style. Allu Sahib had written *Sriranga Yatrapātt*. Later Beerankutty Moulavi written *Hajj Yathrapātt* K. Mammadkutty had written *Kolarkhanippātt* and *Ottakath Attakoyathangal* composed *Bhadravathi Sarkeet māla*. Pulikkottil Hyder had written *Kolar Yāthra*, *Tirur Yāthra* and *Shornur Yāthra*. So many others had also written such songs which is an interesting branch of Mappila songs.

Madh Songs

These songs were written in praise of great men such as Prophets, Companions, caliphs and Sufi saints. Sometimes local dignitaries were also included in these songs. These songs are shorter ones but having many decorative words in order to embellish the personality of the man concerned.

Mappilappāttu thus having a great literary base can be considered as a literature of common people. There would be no generation like the Mappilas who are so deeply immersed in this song culture, that even a layman enjoyed the song and if possible composed a song. This is how the common usage

14. Hassan Nediyanad, "Mappilappatt", Chandrika Weekend Edition, Calicut, 20.6.87. p.I.

pāttu kettuka has originated among the Mappilas. The poor farmers, working class, trolley pullers, boat rowers and wood cutters were found consolation in singing songs rhythmically which redressed the gravity of their work.

The *lingua-franca* of *Mappilapāttu* that is Arabi-Malayalam, the language originated from the combination of Arabic ^{and} Malayalam has given such an impetus to the development of these songs, that it was widely popularized among the people who were literate in this script. The Arabs had the practice of writing the languages of other countries they visited in Arabic script.¹⁵ In the early years, Malayalam script had not been fully developed. It was from the handicap of Malayalam language script that Arabi-Malayalam originated. Arabic words were been freely used in the conversation of the Mappilas in Malabar. So the natural reflection of these had been applied to the songs also. The people's literature should be a portrait of their language and culture.

Another aspect that made the songs more popular is its use in various folk arts such as *Duff*, *oppana*, *Arabana*, *Kolkali* etc. The song and play went side by side. The *Qissapāttu* is recited by singers and explained in specially arranged gatherings and this is developed as an art among Mappilas in the name of *Padipparachil*. In short *Mappilapāttu* has been a part and parcel of the day-to-day life of Mappilas.

15. K.M. Mohammed, "Influence of Arabic on Mappila songs", Journal of Kerala studies. (March/June), Trivandrum, 1997, p.59.

Folk Festivals

Folk festivals of Mappilas are centred on the tombs of Sayyids, saints and martyrs. These festivals are celebrated as a part of *nērchas* (vows) to the concerned holy man who had been buried in the spot. Generally these festivals are held on the death anniversary of the holy man, hence came to be known as *Āndunērcha*. Although the *nērcha* or vow is some rituals in the tomb by the devotees, actually it has taken the form of elaborate festivals lasting many days and attracting large crowds of participants and on lookers. The *Andu nērcha* of Malabar has its counterparts, *Urūz* in carnatic regions and *Chandanakudam* in Travancore areas.

The word *nercha* means the act of taking a vow which clearly expressed the concept of commitment to worship and making offerings in the name of God if prayers are granted. It can also be made unconditionally, without any wish fulfilled.¹⁶

The ceremonies of *nērcha* vary from tomb to tomb, but basic ceremony of the *nērcha* festival is presentation of offerings. In grand *nērchas* these offerings are accompanied by grand procession, entertainments, parade of elephants etc., Devotees from each area carrying their offer as cash or kind would come in great procession displaying many folk plays known in local terminology as *Pettivaravu*. In some other *nercha* festivals *Ānnadānam*

16. Sheikh Zainuddin Makhdum, Fathul Muin (Mal. Tr. by Kurhi Bava Musliyar, Amina Book Stall, Trichur, 1967. pp.264-700)

(supply of food) to devotees is also performed. In the following festival all types of marketable goods are sold, various entertainments displayed, many eatables are exhibited and fires are cracked.

Nērchas can be classified in two groups depending upon the purpose for which it is being conducted. Some of them are associated with tombs of saints and others with tombs of martyrs. This saint martyr veneration reveals the popularity of saints and the heroic exploits of the fore-fathers for the cause of religion, deep rooted in the mind of the Mappilas of Malabar. The miraculous deeds and cure of ailments which have been performed by the saints during their life time made an ever lasting impression upon the mind of common folk. They expected the same deeds even after his death, no wonder why people would be ready for venerating his tomb. These saints with their devotional activities attracted their co-religionists who also visited his tomb in expectation of his blessings. The *Makhdum Thangal* family of Ponnani ranked first among these saints in Malabar. They claimed the religious leadership of Muslim community until the arrival of *Mamburam Thangals*, another group of Sayyid origin. But on account of the Portuguese invasion and later the British conquest of Malabar, inspite of their religious teachings these saints were compelled to profess an organised war or 'jihad' against the European powers to safeguard Islam and its followers. Sheikh Zainuddin instigated the Mappilas for Jihad against the Portuguese who perpetuated several atrocities against Mappilas.¹⁷ Likewise Umar Qazi of Veliyancode. Sayyid Alawi

17. Shaikh Zainuddin Maqdum, *Tuhfatul Mujahideen* (Mal.Tr. by C.Hamza), Calicut, 1998, pp39-49

Thangal and Sayyid Fazal Pookoya Thangal of Mamburam played an important role in regenerating anti-British feelings in the mind of the Mappilas. The call for martyrdom and the benefits of bliss of martyrdoms propagated by *ulama* gave birth to number of *Shaheeds* in Malabar. The tomb of these *shaheeds* found through out Malabar, became centres of popular devotees.¹⁸

Among the folk festivals, the Appavanibha Nercha, Kondotti Nercha, Pattambi Nerch and Theruvath Palli Nercha are still vibrant and active. Many of the nerchas are extinct and some others are celebrated less elaborative. Some of the major and noteworthy folk festivals of Malabar are the following.

Appa Vanibha Nercha

Appa Vānibha Nercha is associated with saint Abu Wafa Shamsuddin Mohammed popularly known by the name Shaikh Mamukoya. The nercha is celebrated every year on the 15th Rajab, the death anniversary of the Sheikh. The festival got its name *Appa Vānibham* (trade in bread) from the fact that a very brisk trade is also carried on these rice cakes which are largely brought by the charitable for distribution among the people.¹⁹ The Sheikh is believed to have mystical powers and he blessed the devotees who approached him for personal problems. It was in commemoration of the reverence paid to the

18. Stephen F. Dale and M. Gangadhara Menon, "Nercca: Saint Martyr Worship Among Muslims of Kerala", *Kerala Muslims - A Historical Perspective*, Asghar Ali Engineer (Ed.), New Delhi, 1995, p.188.

19. E. Thurston, *Castes and Tribes of Southern India*, Vol. IV, Madras, 1909, pp. 445-46.

Sheikh, that the annual *nērchā* had been celebrated. Thousands of people from different parts of Malabar participate in the *Appa Vānibha nērchā*, which is famous for communal harmony.²⁰ The participants offer *appam* in the shape of certain organs of the body from the belief that by blessing of the saint the injured organs will be cured. Devotees bring not only *appams* but coconut, arecanut, salt, fowls etc., to the shrine. Devotees feel blessed when Imam covers their body for a few seconds with Quran - inscribed cloth which covered the *Maqbara* (tomb). Thousands of people with ten or fifteen elephants were present in the procession with a variety of entertainments. Appavanibham became a festival of Calicut city participated by people irrespective of caste and creed. The *Varavu* of Imbichu Mooppan and Rarichan, Hindu land lords were famous with 50 baskets of vegetables. The temporary sheds erected on either side of the street of Idiyangara is a marvelous sight on the days of *nercha*.

Kondotti Nercha

Kondotti nērchā is celebrated in honour of saint Kondotti Thangal, Sheikh Muhammad Shah who settled at Kondotty as per the advice of Tippu Sultan. But during the life time of the Thangal, he started the *nercha* in the name of Sheikh Muhinuddin Chisti. The Mappila peasants had presented agricultural products to the Thangal, but after his death they continued it and offered this to his tomb which developed into a *nērchā*. The four day *nercha*

 20 Stephan F. Dale and Gangadhara Menon. op.cit, p.182

has become a festival for the people of Eranadu. The nercha has no fixed date, probably after harvest, the senior Thangal of the *Maqbara* would fix the date. As a herald of *nērcha*, a white flag is hoisted in front of the tomb. Flag hoisting, *Kodiyēttu* had been the privilege of *Tiyya* community and had been conducted in a festive mood of distributing sweets among people. Most of the ceremonies at *Kondotti nērcha* are similar to those held in other festivals. A special feature of *Kondotti nērcha* is the ceremony, *Thokkedukal* on the opening day with firing of 3 guns. The guns are oiled by devotees as part of cleaning and cleaned oils are considered sacred to cure diseases. The main attraction of the nercha is *pettivaravu*, bringing money box as *nercha* to the tomb. *Varavus* are colourful and interesting with various entertainments like, *Duff*, *Arabana*, *Kolkali*, band etc. These *varavus* are welcomed by the Thangal sitting on a horse. The last item of the nercha is a set of rituals known *chandaname dukkal*. The sandal wood and *Tulsi* are grinded and filled in a pot which is covered with white cloth decorated with peacock feathers. The paste is then rubbed on the *jāram* and remains are distributed to the devotees. The fair that followed nercha prolong for days.

Pattambi Nercha

Pattāmbi Nercha possesses a unique position among the various nercha festivals in Malabar. It is a great symbol of communal harmony since all castes and creeds are participating in this nercha. A large number of decorated elephants are the major attraction. The nercha is in honour of saint Aloor Valiya Pookunhikoya Thangal. It is believed that Aloor Thangal rescued so

many soldiers of Tippu Sultan who were deserted after his death. Later the helpless people accepted the profession of weaving as per advice of the Thangal and became affluent. After his death, the weavers began to celebrate his death anniversary by conducting nercha. *Grāma Kāzhcha* is an important ceremony, collecting as offerings from all houses of village *Kathīna vedi*, fire work marks the beginning and thereafter so many *pettivaravu* are taken to the *jāram* with various entertainments. In the afternoon the procession with many elephants proceed to the bank of Bharathapuzha called *Nagara Pradakshanam*. The elephants arranged on the bank of river are a marvelous sight. The last ceremony is *Appakotta Rawther* families carry them to the *Jāram* on elephant's back. The fire work marks the end of the ceremony.

Theruvath palli Nercha

Theruvath is a village in extreme South Malabar 12 kilometers from Palghat. This celebration is associated with the *Jāram* of saint named Sayyid Muhammad Awli, who came from Deccan for propagating Islam 275 years ago. The *Kānjiram*, a tree with bitter tasting leaf, is said to have grown from a stick which was installed by Sayyid Aulia, a miraculous feat which still now can be seen near his tomb. The nercha followed in the tomb lasted for 3 days. The functions of the nercha start from 1st of the particular month and end with death anniversary of the saint. Religious discourse for 5 days, Quran recitation, *Moulīd* and group *Ziārath* are main religious ceremonies. One *Nilavilakku* is lighted every evening for the devotees *Poomannu* powdered soil is distributed to devotees as sign of *barkath* (blessings). The *Kanjiram* leaves

in the nearby tomb is said to possess miraculous power that it will taste sweet in mid night of the nercha and devotees are rushed to pluck the leaves and to consume it in expectation of curative powers. The Tamil devotees would bring box full of sweets, grains, coconut, fruits and vegetables in bullock carts. *Varavus* are accompanied by beating drums, *theepantham*, *kalaripayattu* etc. The fair in connection with the festival is a great annual fair for peasant class to purchase agricultural implements. The *nērchā* ends with *annadānam* in which both Muslim and non-Muslim people take part. *Theruvath pallinērchā* is considered a symbol of communal harmony.

Malappuram Nercha

This nercha celebrates in memory of 44 martyrs who were killed in a battle against Paranambi, a local chieftain under Zamorin. Mappilas were the loyal subjects of Paranambi. Mappila warriors defeated the soldiers of Kottakkal raja for Paranambi. But this friendship ended when the tax collector of Paranambi, Parakkalkutty had been suspected and ousted from service.²¹ This made Mappilas enimical to Paranambi. Paranambi ordered his Nair soldiers to seize the property of Mappilas. Mappilas sought asylum in Malappuram mosque. There took place a bitter encounter in which 44 Mappilas fell before the large Nair troops and mosque was burnt.²² The 44 martyrs were buried nearby the mosque. The *Malappuram nērchā* thus

 21. Moyinkutty Vaidyar, *Malappuram Quissapattu* (Mal. Tr. by K.K. Mohamad Abdul Kareem), Aluva, 1995.

22. Innes. op.cit., p.444.

celebrated in commemoration of 44 martyrs who sacrificed their life for the protection of mosque. In the outset of nercha, *nagāra* is sounded at the *Jāram* and celebrations are held for 40 days. The *varavu* are in the same pattern of other *nērchas*. *Nattukallingalkar*, *Podiyāttukar*, *Ettutharakkār*, *Manjerikkār* and last is *Thattār* were the main parties of *Varavu*. The *podiyattupetti* proved fatal because the ten *pettis* in their *varavu* had ^{been} completed to get priority. Sometimes this resulted in stabbing and cause death of one or two persons who had been considered as *Shahīds*. *Pathirikotta* (bread basket) covered with white cloth are carried by *Harijans*. Elephants and entertainments accompany the *Varavu*. The fair is conducted in association with the annual fair of the people of Eranadu. A special *jaggery* sweet called *nērcha muttai* the most sold out item among the articles for sale.

Manathala nērcha had conducted in commemoration of Hydrosekutty Mooppan in the 15th, 16th and 17th of Malayalam month *Makaram*. Hydrosekutty Mooppan was a Muslim chieftain of 18th century, when Haider Ali, the Mysorean ruler invaded Malabar, Chavakkad and the nearby village were entrusted to Mooppan. But later some misunderstanding aroused between Tipu and Hydrosekutty Mooppan and the latter was killed by soldiers of Tipu. He was buried in Manathala mosque. His devotees celebrated a 3 day *nērcha* festival in his tomb, *Pettiyedukkal* ceremony is a special high light of the *nērcha*. An elephant decorated would wander through the village, upon reaching in front of the house, the house holders after giving some eatables would hand over the *pettis* that they vowed for the completion of their wishes.

Usually more than 50 decorated elephants participated in the *nercha* celebrations. The *nercha* had been considered a festival of fishermen folk, because they had a special devotion to Hydrosekutty Moopan whose power is considered helpful from possible sea dangers.

Omānur nercha is conducted in the month of *Dhul Hajj* in commemoration of *Omānur Shaheeds*, who died in a battle against Hindus. *Annadānam* (supply of food) is the most important item of this *nercha*. This celebration is now conducted in the name of communal harmony.

Kunhi Marakkar was a hero in the annals of Portuguese history of Malabar.²³ Just after his marriage he was informed by a man that a girl had been kidnapped by the Portuguese and had taken to their ship. He immediately rushed to the ship and killed a number of Portuguese soldiers and rescued the girl. But he had been killed in the process by Portuguese. His body was cut into seven pieces and threw them into the sea. Miracles are said to have happened that at each of the places where his remains were washed ashore, tombs were constructed by the devotees in these seven places and he began to be revered as *shaheed*. *Nercha* began to be conducted in his tombs which became famous as *Kottur palli nērcha*.

Mamburam is one of the most distinguished Islamic shrines in Malabar.²⁴ The Mamburam thangal was a *sufi* saint whose spiritual greatness

23. K.K.N. Kurup *Mappila Parampariyam*, Tirurangadi, 1998, p.29.

24. *22 vaka Moulid Kitab*, Tirurangadi, no date, p.5.

attracted large number of people. In course of time the residence became a centre of devotion. Sayyid Alawi Thangal was a champion against British atrocities and throughout his life he led the innocent Mappila peasants. It was believed that Sayyid Alawi Thangal fought in disguise in cherur fight against British and was fatally wounded. He was buried in Mamburam. The *nercha* is held in Muharam of every year without pomp and splendour.

Ullal Urūz is associated with a saint named Sharif-ul-Madani. The *Uruz* is conducted once in 5 years. Likewise *Malik Dinar Urūz* was conducted at Malik Dinar mosque. Religious discourse and *Mouliḍ* recitation are the important specialities of these *nērchas*.

Besides these major *nerchas*, small and local *nerchas* are celebrated and so many new *nerchas* have sprung up in recent times.

Cultural symbiosis in Folk Festivals

Islam teaches monotheism and equality of human beings. The converts of Islam in Malabar belong to a society which revered gods, goddesses, warrior heroes and saints. The result of then interaction was the origin of saint – cult, tomb-shrine and folk festivals. This new tradition is actually local or indigenous not a result of influence from West Asia. Such interaction might have taken place because of the nature of conversion in Malabar. The uneducated lower class of people after embracing Islam did not give up their own old and peculiar observances. Instead of giving up they integrated their old Hindu beliefs and practices with that of Islamic traditions.²⁵ The *nērchas*

25. P.R.G. Mathur, Mappila fisher Folk of Kerala, Trivandrum, 1978, p.350.

that sprang out through Malabar had few Islamic elements and more features of local festivals. The focal point of each *nercha* is the reverence shown to a *Pīr*, *Sheikh* or *shaheed*. All festivals conducted within the ritual framework derived from the worship of folk deities in Kerala.²⁶

There were a bulk of stories evolved around every *Awliya* (saint), most of these were miraculous and superhuman that kept the tempo of saint worship from generations to generations. The concept that the dead body of saints would not decompose had often prompted the people to attribute divinity to such bodies and to start saint worship by constructing a *dargah* (tomb) for the body could clearly be seen in the *Kūttāyi nercha* and *Perumbadappu nērcha* which is a later origin.

Another aspect that the people were so fond of *nercha* had originated from some myths with the *barkath* (blessing) of the saint. In the *Theruvath palli nērcha*, the *kāñjiram* tree is considered sacred during midnight with its sweet nature and curative powers. The well near by Malappuram mosque, at the time of *nērcha* is believed to boil in blood colour. In both instances devotees rushed to taste or witness such events. In *Kondotti nērcha*, the oil that used to clean the guns considered sacred and have curative powers. These are akin to Hindu tradition of worshipping trees near by the temples or *kāvus*. If trees are venerated by Hindus not only for their life sustaining powers but also for their being the seats of either divine or evil spirits.²⁷

26. Stephen F. Dale and Gangadharan Menon, *op.cit.*, p.174.

27. Kavalam Narayana Panicker, *Folklore of Kerala*, New Delhi, 1991, p.44.

Nērchas do not appear in Islamic religious calendars probably because, as the Dravidian title implies, they represent a Mappila adaptation of indigenous religious traditions. The *nērchas* probably modelled on purely Hindu celebrations known as *velas* or *purams*.²⁸ *Nērchas* like *pūrams* are seasonal and have the common ceremonial practice like that of *velas*.

The *nērchas* often do not follow the date specified that is the death Anniversary of the saint or martyr, but held according to the convenience. Most of the *nērchas* held during January to May, eventhough the term *andunercha* denotes the death anniversary of the saint. Some *nērchas* tuned to agrarian cycle, that is *Kundotti nērcha* always arranged after harvest for the convenience of assembling devotees. Likewise *Kodiyettu* (flag – hoisting) ceremony at the starting of *nērcha* reflects the influence of local Hindu festivals. The *varavus* (arrival) and their associated performance which have been borrowed directly from the Hindu festivals are resulted in the two most obvious and dramatic use of elephants and fire works. The resemblance is so striking that any visitor to both festivals is tempted to label the *Kūttayi nērcha* as an Islamic puram.²⁹ The variety entertainments that follows every *varavu* resembles the *varavu* of *pūrams*. The festivals are not manifestations of piety and religious fervour, but they serve as an occasion for the exhibition of Hindu arts and Crafts such as sword play, rope dancing, kathakali etc.³⁰

28. Stephen F. Dale and Gangadhara Menon, op.cit., p.178.

29. Ibid., p.181.

30. L.A. Krishna Iyer, Social History of Kerala, Ernakulam, 1996.

In Kundotti and Ullal, a special highlight of *nercha* is a set of rituals known as *Chandanakkudam*. This ceremony is seen in the *jaram* having connection with *Hanafi* tradition. In *Kundotti nērchā*, the sandal paste anoints the *jāram* and took it home as *barkath* which in turn use to cure of disease and for other purposes. The significance of the *chandanakudam* ritual will be clear to anyone with experiences of Hindu ritual activity because sandal wood is a sacred substance. Other aspects of the *nercha* such as the parade of elephants, fire works and the use of musical instruments are borrowed from local festivals. *Pattambi nērchā* is famous for the parading elephants. The fight for flags, banners and other tokens of ceremonial honour common in *nercha* is a feature of the local festivals.

Another notable feature of the *nērchā* is the participation of different occupational and caste groups like Gold smith, Blacksmith, Harijans and Tiyyas. Thattan (gold smith) is the last *varavu* of both Kondotti and Malappuram nerchas.

It is difficult to relate the saint cults and martyr worship to fundamental principles of Islam. The development of saint veneration was probably the resulting the interaction with indigenous culture and the reminiscence of converts from Hinduism. Over centuries, the faith and practice of the Muslims have been changed and developed into different forms according to regional cultures and by changing political and social context. Un-educated farmers, and fisher folk, accepted saint worship because their religious life is narrow and localized. If only proper religious education could be imparted and uplift

of socio-economic status, they may lose attachment to their rigid saint-cult and tomb worship.

Folk traditions

The Cheraman Perumal tradition is an age long belief in the mind of Mappila community. He had been considered as the father of Mappila community. The Cheraman Perumal tradition maintains that this final representative of the ruling line was converted to another faith and at that time he distributed his jurisdiction to adjacent rajas. The tradition attributes the change into Buddhism or Christianity but the major tradition maintains that the king was converted to Islam. It is this view that is naturally espoused by the Mappilas themselves.

According to the first of the two Mappila forms of tradition, the conversion process began with Cheraman Perumal, who was reigning at Kodungallur, experienced an un-usual dream. The new moon of Makkah split into two, and after remaining in the state for some time soon recovered into the usual form. Some months later a party of Muslim pilgrims on their way to visit the foot print shrine at Adams peak in Ceylone (present Srilanka), stopped at Kodungallur.³¹ There they narrated to the Perumal the story of miracle. Prophet Muhammed had performed the miraculous act to convince the un believers. Having heard this Cheraman made up his mind that as the

31. R.E Miller. Mappila Muslim of Kerala, Madras. 1976, p.47.

dream was considered with the incident it is a call for him to convert to Prophet's religion. He asked the pilgrims to stay at Kodungallur on their return journey. Meanwhile Cheraman Perumal made all arrangements for his journey. His territory was divided among local chieftains; thus recording the assignments in a written deed,³² He travelled to Arabia and reached Shahar Muqalla with Arab pilgrims and later travelled to Madina where he met with Prophet and embraced the faith. After a few years he decided to return to his land in order to establish mosques for new religion. But he fell ill suddenly and thus entrusted written authorization to the various Malabar chiefs, to provide land for the construction of mosque in the hands of a group of missionaries. Soon he died and buried at Shahar Muqalla.³³

This is the tradition of Cheraman Perumal we inherited from the explanation of *Tuhfat al Mujāhideen*. But another tradition based on *Keralolpathi* is entirely different from the above version. Accordingly, the Perumal who went to Arabia after seeing the miracle of splitting the moon was not Cheraman, but his predecessor, Pallibana Perumal. He personally met with Prophet, who recited *Kalima* from the mouth of Prophet who bestowed him the name Tajuddin (crown of religion). He stayed with Prophet for 17 days as a guest of Prophet. Later he travelled throughout Arabia and fell ill and died at Hadramouth.³⁴

32. Shaikh Zainuddin Maqum, op.cit., p.51.

33. Ibid., p.51.

34. Gundurt quoted by P.K. Mohamad Kunhi, *Muslimingalum Kerala Samsakaravum*. Trichur 1982. p.38.

Another tradition accounts that the person who had gone to Makka was a Zamorin, from the fact that an inscription on a grave at Zaphar reads this grave belongs to Abdul Rahman Samuri.³⁵ Likewise as per the narration of Ibn Batuta a *Kolathiri* raja of Chirakkal embraced Islam, is another tradition prudent in North Malabar.

The conversion story of Cheruman Perumal is a persistent legend that has aroused considerable debate. Several historians argued about the authenticity and chronology of the event. Those who are arguing in favour of Cheraman Perumal tradition uphold the fact of the dismemberment of Chera Kingdom into several principalities. After his exit, the empire was divided into principalities and the last prince being the Zamorin to whom he had given a small village where the sound of the cock can be heard. The rest is left to the power of his sword.³⁶ The tradition had its base in Arabic book *Firdousul Hikmath* by al-Tabri, the prominent historian of 9th century who described that Cheraman Perumal visited Prophet and lived 17 days with him. So many other Arab and Urdu writers affirm the tradition. The date of Perumal's acceptance has aroused more controversy than his acceptance of the faith of Islam. Sheik Zainuddin Maqdum attributes it to AD 822 (9th Century), MGS Narayana to 12th century, Ilamkulam Kunhan Pillai to 11th century, C.A Innes and Tarachand to 9th century. Those who are favouring Pallibana Perumal as

35. R.E. Miller op.cit., p.47.

36. C A Innes, Malabar Gazetteer, Trivandrum, 1997, p.39

the legendry figure has more reasons to present. *Keralolpathi* mentions that the Perumal who converted to Islam was not Cheraman, he was only the fifth descendant of the Perumal.³⁷ Examining the old Brahmanical records and history of Chera dynasty, it can be seen that the fifth ancestor of cheraman was Pallibana Perumal, as per the narration in Madras Journal of literature. Mr. Logan also confirms this tradition. He sums up the issue in the following words.

“The chief event was the termination of the origin of the last of the Kerala or Chera Perumals, who for centuries had been kings of the land; for it may be assumed, until evidence to the contrary is forth coming, that Muhammadan tradition is correct and that the Hindu king of Malabar, who lies buried at Zapher in Arabia was indeed Cheraman Perumal. The data on the grave which however still required verification place the event as closely contemporaneous with the inauguration of the new era.”³⁸

C.A. Innes, also thinks on this line. He writes “The story in its present form may possibly be a confusion of two distinct traditions, one relating to the extinction of the rule of the Perumals and the other to the conversion of any Malabar King of Islam. According to *Keralolpathi*, the converted Perumal was not Cheraman Perumal the last of the line, but Bana Perumal from Banparuam; after him came Kulasekhara Perumal a Pandyan, and many

37. P.K. Mohammed. Kunhi, op.cit., p.34.

38. W. Logan, op.cit. Vol. II, p.243.

others, the last of whom Cheraman Perumal retained the throne for 36 years and defeated Pandyan king with the help of two *Sāmantans*, Manikan and Vikraman, Eradis of Punthura, whom as a reward he made his heirs". Innes concludes, "we may perhaps infer from this account that one dynasty came to an end with the abdication of a Perumal who was converted to Muhammadanism, possibly in the ninth century."³⁹

Whatever may be the controversy among historians regarding the tradition of Cheraman Perumal it can be summed up that the legend had its base in the age long belief of Mappilas that one or more rulers of Kerala accepted the religion and had gone to Arabia had been vividly pictured in their ballads, proverbs and legends of past that was transferred from generation to generations. Veteran Mappila poet Moyinkutty Vaidyer in his *Malappuram Quissapatt* vividly explains the tradition of Cheraman Perumal.

Another tradition prevalent among the Mappila society is regarding the origin of Arakkal dynasty. The most popular version is that the dynasty was founded by the son of Sridevi, the sister of Cheraman Peurmal, who had given the Dharmadam area to his sister on account of his journey to Makkah. Her son *Mahābali* accepted Islam and changed his name to Mammali or Mohammed Ali and became the first Ali-Raja. Another tradition describes that this son was Sayfuddin Muhammadali who had gone with his uncle Cheraman Perumal to Makkah for accepting Islam; Saifuddin returned back to

39. C. A. Innes. op.cit., p.40.

Dharmadam and established the kingdom. Another tradition was that Arayan Kulangara Nair, minister of Kolathiri accepted Islam and married a lady from the royal family. Later they shifted to Cannanore and founded a dynasty.⁴⁰ A different version of the tradition is that a lady from Kolathiri fell in love with a Nair and both of them in fear of excommunication accepted Islam, they founded the dynasty. Another story goes like this, a lady from Kolathiri family while bathing in a river was drowning. When she cried for help a Mappila rescued her and she insisted to marry him. The story takes another turn when it was related to a love story between the princess of Kolathiri family and a low caste youth. In order to hide the dishonour the raja married her to an Arab youth to whom he had given the whole territory of Cannanore, who founded a rule namely Arakkal.⁴¹ The tradition related to Arakkal dynasty is the different version of the same theme. It has a triangular connection having a lady of Kolathiri family or the nephew of Perumal on one side, and a Mappila or an Arab on the other side, and a matrimonial alliance joining the two. Similar tradition also can be seen in various parts of Malabar behind the origin of so many prominent *tarawāds* (joint families).

Among the heroic traditions of Mappilas there is no exception to the valiant exploits of Kunhali Marakkars. The Marakkars were great heroes among Mappilas who made a relentless fight against Portuguese power. They

40. P.K. Mohamad Kunhi, op.cit., p.103.

41. K.M. Panikar, Keralathile Swatantrya Samaram, Quilon. 1951. p.25.

are supposed to be migrated from North Africa from the group of warrior class, Berbers and settled in the coast of Malabar.⁴² With the advent of the Portuguese, the supremacy of the Arabs in the Arabian sea lost and the Arab trade began to decline. The Portuguese launched severe attacks against Arab merchants which prompted the Marakkars to take arms against these powers. The extra ordinary courage and naval efficiency of Marakkars incited the Zamorin to appoint Kunhi Ahamad Kunhali as his commander. He defeated the Portuguese fleet in a fierce fight near Calicut. His son Kunhali second defeated the Portuguese several times. Kunhali third alias Pattu Marikkar was in the forefront to demolish the Portuguese fort at Chaliyam.⁴³ But his nephew, Kunhali fourth was the legendary figure among Kunhalis. His appearance itself was like a heroic figure. His well built athletic body, round beard, shaven head and piercing eyes befitted to a real admiral.⁴⁴ He prevented all atrocities of the Portuguese in the streets of Malabar. The heroic actions of Kunhali Marakkar infuriated the Portuguese who made secret alliance with the Zamorin. In the meantime Kunhali had made a fort at Kotakkal and made a strong hold against the Portuguese. The ears of Zamorin was poisoned by some beneficiaries of the Portuguese that Kunhali is making a parallel administration. Thus a fierce attack was launched against Kunhali by

 42. P.P. Mammad Koya Parappil, Kozhikkotte Muslingalude Charithram. Calicut, 1994. op.cit., p.61.

43. V. Kunhali "Origin of Kunhali Marakkars and organization of their fighters" Indias Naval Traditions, New Delhi, 1997, p.44.

44. P.K. Muhamad Kunhi, op.cit., p.101

the Zamorin's soldiers assisted by Portuguese. Kunhali made a great retaliation and repelled the attacks. The despaired Zamorin again made a fierce fight in which so many of the soldiers of Kunhali fought and died. At last Kunhali was ready to subdue before the Zamorin on the condition that he would be treated justly. But Zamorin broke the words and handed over Kunhali to the Portuguese. The Portuguese victoriously took him to Goa. There he was imprisoned to death. All requests to subdue before the Portuguese general, in order to rescue his life was turned down. At last the hero was cut down to pieces before thousands of people. Zamorin later repented on his act. The Mappilas of Malabar mourned the death of their valiant hero. The memories of the Marakkar are still fresh in the minds of the innocent and poor Mappilas. They uphold the saga of Marakkar as a great tradition in their mind. Later the Indian government perpetuated his memory by naming a warship and building a naval academy.⁴⁵

The tradition of Kunhi Marakkar Shaheed is another saga of Mappila community. The Portuguese soldiers kidnapped a Mappila woman from Ponnani beach. This created great chaos and confusion in the beach that the elders lamented that whether there was any one among the community to reply this hooliganism. The reply was from Kunhi Marakkar, a youth of 24 who was just married. He rowed in a boat in the direction of the Portuguese ship where the drunken soldiers were celebrating the event. Kunhi Marakkar

45. Murkot Ramunny "Perpetuating the Memory of Kunhali Marakkars", Indian Naval Traditions, New Delhi, 1997, p.59.

jumped into the boat and slashed his sword in all directions. The bewildered soldiers fell one by one. Having finished his task, and sending the woman in a boat to the shore, he was resting in the ship. But a soldier ambushed struck him from behind and cut into pieces. It is said that the parts of his dead body were driven ashore in 7 different places, thus in each place his tomb was erected. The heroic epic is depicted in, a Mappila songs namely *Kotturpalli Nerchapatt*.⁴⁶

Folk Tales

There are a number of folk tales among Mappilas which deal with certain interesting personalities and their lives. One of the tales on this line is known as *Mangattachanum Kunhayin Musliyarum*. This story is transferred from generation to generation, from lips to lips. The two character of the story were the living legends of old Malabar. *Mangattachan* was the Brahmin minister of Zamorin and Kunhayin was a religious scholar and joker of the time. These two persons were close friends. The tales spread around them are humorous ones. There were so many stories spread around Kunhayin Musliyar himself exactly from the period of his studentship in the Ponnani Dars.

One story of that period was that in order to play a trick on the clever Kunhayin, his *Ustad* (teacher) asked the other students, without his notice, to bring an egg in the next day and after the class the *Ustad* would demand one egg from each one next day, Kunhayin not known about the idea bewildered

46. K.K.N. Kurup, Mappila Parambaryam (Mal.), Calicut, 1998, p.32.

when all of the students handed over the eggs as per their conspiracy in the previous night. But the clever Kunhayin suddenly played another trick that he produced the sound of a cock and remarked that he was the only cock among the m while all others were hens and as such he could not give an egg to the ustad.⁴⁷

Another story in connection with the minister of the Zamorin, Mangattachan and Kunhayin Musaliyar could be narrated like this: One day Kunhayin Musaliyar and Mangattachan were going on a trip. On the way Mangattachan saw a *Tulsi* (*Oscimum sanctum*) plant and in great respect bowed the plant and plucked some leaves and placed above his ear. Kunhayin in order to dishonour the plant, took the leaves and rubbed it on his back. This was considered an act of humiliation towards the sacred plant of Mangattachan. Another day when they were on another trip, Kunhayin Musaliyar keeping in mind the above incident saw *Kodithuvva*, (*Tragia involucrata*) an itching plant and respected the plant. Mangattachan rushed to the plant and snatched it and rubbed it on his back parts, in revenge of former incident. Suddenly he felt itching and its intensity increased. Thereupon Kunhayin Musaliyar mocked that it was a punishment to disrespect the plant that he was respecting.⁴⁸

So many such folk tales are spread around the personality of Kunhayin Musaliyar. His timely wisdom, wits and jokes were enjoyed through such

47. Pakker Pannoor, Kunhayin Musliyaraum Mangattachanum (Mal.), Tirurangadi, 1996, pp 14-16.

48. Ibid., p.50.

stories.⁴⁹ In later years so many stories of wits are attributed in his name. In this respect he could be compared to the Afghan joker Mullah Nasiruddin.⁵⁰ So many of the writers are identified the legendary figure Kunhayin Musaliyar as a Mappila poet with the same name and the author of the famous *Kappapāttu* and *Nool māla*. He was a great scholar and poet of excellence. These two works are philosophical in approach.

Other folk tales are related to the miraculous act of *Awliyas* (saints). Most of them are widely popularized as the great *karāmath* (Power to perform miracles) of the saints. A story related to Mamburam Thangal is that he fought with the British troops at in Cherur riot in disguise. Sheik Jiffri is said to have given a grand feast to thousands with a small amount of rice. But in South Malabar the most popular stories are related to Beeran Auliya who is said to have been appeared in different places at the sametime.

Folk Beliefs in Superstitions, taboos and Omens

There are several peculiar beliefs, taboos and superstitions prevalent among the Mappilas and they have become a part of their social behaviour. In fact the tenets of Islam do not allow any type of beliefs in superstitions and omens. Islam considers all such beliefs as the work of devil in the mind of man. But Mappilas being converted from Hindu classes brought such beliefs and practices into the fabric of Islam.

49. P.P. Mammad Koya Parappil, op.cit., p.92

50. M.N. Karasseri, "Kunhayin Musliyar, Sathyavum Mithyayum" (Mal.), Mathrubhumi Ramzan Edition, Calicut, 1995.

There was a popular belief among Mappilas that Earth is placed in the horn of a cow and earth is flat and has an edge from where one should fall to space. The lunar and solar eclipses happen when a snake swallows these celestial bodies. Sighting of the newmoon should not be through leaves of trees. The common superstitious belief was that Tuesday is not good for any worthy action or journey. Likewise the morning session of Friday before the Friday sermon, one should not prepare for a good job. It is believed that there are some good days suited for ceremonies of human life.⁵¹ These days are usually fixed by a *Thangal* or *Mulla* who is an expert in *Abjad* (number science). Likewise, the first ten days of Arabic Month *Muharram* are the days of *Nahs*⁵² (taboo). Certain houses are considered haunted and people avoid staying in them. If any member of family is affected by constant diseases, it is considered as the curse of the house in which they are staying and such houses are avoided.

There are several superstitions and taboos associated with pregnancy and child birth. Pregnant women should not stir out of their houses in the evening time because they are easily possessed of evil spirits. She should not wear new clothes or ornaments or use *Suruma* or henna because such things attract the evil eye. There are so many taboos prevalent related to small children. Children should not play with white stones (*Vellaran kallu*) and

51. K. Hussain, "Social and Cultural life of Mappila Muslims of Malabar (1800-1921)" (Unpublished Ph.D Thesis), Calicut University, 1997, p.338.

52. Ibid., p.375.

should not play with own shadows because such actions are indication of impending illness.⁵³ Children sitting on high platform are not allowed to move their legs freely because such actions would bring danger to parents. Looking into mirrors and combing hairs in nights are some other taboos. Taboos also existed in connection with some food items. Eating a twin fruit should be avoided as it may lead to the delivery of twins. Eating during the time of eclipse would cause serious illness. Return immediately after a journey had been started is considered as a taboo.

Belief in omens is also widespread among Mappilas. The cries of birds and the directions of their flights indicated the future success or failure of human ventures.⁵⁴ A cry of crow is considered as an invitation for guests. The Hindus considered so many things as good omens and so many others are bad ones. This belief is not accepted by Mappilas as such. The widespread belief regarding omen is related to two birds. The cry of 'yellow bird' in one's compound is considered as a herald for death of close relatives. The people often throw stones to drive the bird from their compound. Likewise if a *pullu*, big owl, in the local dialect, *kuttichoolān* cries, a death would happen surely.

Another superstitious belief of Mappilas is that of black tongue or *Karīnākkū* or *navēr* (throwing of tongue). It is believed that if a man with *Karīnākkū* utters anything, it happens with immediate effect. If such thing

53. A. Sreedhara Menon, *Social and Culturistics of Kerala*. New Delhi, 1979. op.cit., p. 152.

54. Sayyid Khairayat Ahamad, *Indian Antiquary* (ed.) JAS Burgess, Vol. XXI. New Delhi. 1984. p.168.

happens periodically the man is depicted as dangerous and people will hide their children from his sight. For a person who possesses *karināḱku*, some believe that he would have so many blackpots underneath of his tongue and if he opines about gardens, pet animals and houses all these would perish in due course. There was a custom that prevailed among the people to employ *kurathis* (ladies who know astrology) to sing *naverupāttu* (songs to ward off *karināḱku*). Mappilas used to wear *Elassu*, Quranic verses written on paper and covered in copper foils, as a defence against evil eye and *karināḱku*.⁵⁵

Besides several superstitious beliefs, sorcery and black magic (*Sih*r) occupy an important place in the life of Mappilas. Commonly these were practiced by Mullas or thangals in order to cause misery by disease or death on others and also defend persons from the evils of such things. The *Sih*r has been severely criticized by the Quran (114:4-5),⁵⁶ but Mullas in order to gain monetary motives practised this. They use Quranic verses, other number columns and letter columns and also *urukku* (writing a porcelain pots in ink) to perform the black magic. Some times bottles, eggs and other articles would be used to dig underneath of house plots of the person to whom the evil should happen. There were people who spent their money, energy and time to these type of sorcery through out their life.

The belief in the *Karinkannu* or evil eye like black tongue is rather widespread. Certain persons are believed to be born with evil potency in their

55. A. Abdussalam Sullami, *Musingalile Anacharangal*, Calicut, 1998, p.314.

56. M.M. Pickthal (Quran: Tr), p.720.

eyes and they exert some evil influence on the persons or objects they see.⁵⁷ When this happens in the case of healthy people they are believed to fall ill. If the food materials are affected by this 'evil eye', the person consume it would get indigestion. The loss of appetite (*kothi*) and sudden illness in children are attributed to the evil eye. As a cure for this mysterious illness the mothers mix chillies and salt, wave it three times in front of the baby and throw it into the fire. It is with a view to avert the evil eye on babies that mothers put a black mark on their forehead, or a black thread on their waste or a black bangle on the hand. The vegetables in the garden and the paddy in the fields are also susceptible to the influence of evil eye. It is customary therefore to suspend pots smeared with designs on wooden poles namely *nōkkukuthi* with a view to warding off the evil eye.⁵⁸ A doll like hideous creature is hung at the corner of the upper story of all houses so that the eyes of viewer may rest on it and the building itself be secure from the effects of 'evil eye'. This belief in evil eye has centuries old that even in the *Muqaddima* of Ibn Khaldun it is prescribed that the person responsible for the death of another person with the effects of his evil eye should not be punished.⁵⁹

Folk Festivities

There were certain typical festivities associated with social living of Mappila which enable us to have an insight into the folk ways. *Kurikallyanam*

57. Encyclopaedia Britannica, Vol, 1967. p.9

58. A. Sreedhara Menon, op.cit., p.160.

59. Ibn Khaldun. *Muqaddima* (Mal), Calicut, 1967, p.171.

was a such a festivity and gathering of the people of village.⁶⁰ This was usually held at the village teashops which was known in the name of *Makkānis*, which are thatched huts on the sides of village pathways where the villagers were used to assemble in the morning and evening.⁶¹ *Makkānis* provided tea in the early morning and villagers smoke their *beedies* and exchanged their news each other. When news papers began to publish the paper reading also became a part of the *Makkāni* culture. These type of *Makkānis* became a hallmark of Mappila community that even foreign lands like Burma, Singapore, Malaysia, the migrated Mappilas established *Makkānis*. It was in these *Makkānis* the *Kurikalyanam* was held. This was a means for monetary help to the needy by the contribution of others. But every one benefited when their turns came. The invitees to *Kurikalyanam* were given a tea with some snacks. *Kurikalyanam* was arranged in connection with marriage and house warming. With the establishment of rural banks and other financing agencies the system of *Kurikalyanam* has almost vanished.

Another festivity in connection with religion is the night religious sermons (*wa'z*). The Musliyers would recite *Moulid* in the beginning of the speeches. The speech on any general subject of Islam would prolong so many hours. The people assembled usually sit on the ground in the mattresses. A

60. K.P. Krishnan, "Kurikkalayanathinte Kurimanum", Chandrika Weekend Edition, Calicut, dtd. 20.12.1986, p.III.

61. Musthafa Kondotti, "Marayunna Makkānikal", Chandrika Weekend Edition, Calicut, 8.3.92. p.I.

fund has been also raised from public for paying to the speakers. This festivity still continuing in Mappila centers.⁶²

Another occasion of gathering was at the time of *padi pparachil* a form of present *kathāprasangam* in the form of appreciation of Mappila songs especially *Qissapāttu*, which was developed to the form of an art. The famous *Qissapāttus* of Mappila poetry like *Badr padapāttu*, *Yusuf Qissa*, *Fatuhu Shām*, *Malappuram pada* and so many other illustrious *Qissapāttus* are recited and explained. Since there are many Arabic, Persian and Tamil terminologies in Mappila songs, common people could not grasp the theme of the songs. This is overcome by the explanation of efficient speakers. Usually there are two persons for this *pādipparachil*. One is an expert in singing and other is mastered in the explanation of the *Qissa* (story). It is a common sight through out Malabar in the summer season that in the harvested fields, so many such *pādipparachil* gatherings are held, a festivity still foster by the Mappilas.

Folk Dialect

Mappilas being *Malayalis* have been speaking the language Malayalam since many centuries. But as they are the progeny of Arabs and the followers of an Arab religion, Islam, their dialect has been influenced by the Arab culture. Besides these there are so many local variations have been derived from the Mappila cultural life. So many of the words are the diversified

62. P.K. Muhamad Kunhi, op.cit., p.261.

form of Malayalam words and so many others came from Arabic, Persian or Hindustani. In Malayalam language 60% words belong to Sanskrit. In the rest 30% came from Mappilas.⁶³ Thus the Mappila Malayalam can be seen in court languages, official languages in the names of food, dress, drinks instruments and customs. In the coastal areas the Mappilas are pronouncing 'ba' instead of 'Va' in every word. Likewise long words are shortened and it appears entirely another word to hear. For example *Puthiya Mappila* is shortened to *Puthiyapla*. Since the Mappilas have their communal gatherings, religiously and socially, these words are in constant practice among themselves. The people of other community found it difficult to grasp such words. ~~It is difficult to give a list of such words here, but a list has been given in the appendix (See Appendix-8).~~

Like the Mappila dialects, Mappila names are also peculiar, Basically Mappilas accepted Arabic names. These Arabic names used throughout centuries have undergone many changes. One name has been given to so many people of the same family which again made it difficult to recognize each one, hence a modification had been given to that name with result a new name came to practice. For example Muhammed had been modified as *Mammad, Māmad, Mayamad, Mammu, Mammi, Māmu* et al. A list of such original names and their local variations has been given in the appendix (See Appendix- 8). Besides, some short names are prefixed and suffixed and added

63. V.T. Sukumaran, "Malayalathile Mappila padangalum Shylikalum" Chandrika Weekend Edition, Calicut, 1986, p.II.

to the original names. The common suffix is *kutty*. Some are both suffixed and prefixed eg. *Kunhi*, *Unni* etc., these Malayalam words are added to Arabic names again shortened or modified to get several other names. ^(See Appendix-9) The Sayyid class have their own local names certain names are both suffixed and prefixed. Sayyid is prefixed and Thangal is suffixed. So many of them had shorter names like *Pookoya*, *Mullakoya*, *Nallakoya* et al. The women have often suffixed their names with *Beevi*. The Mappilas have also the practice to give surnames and pet names to persons. For eg. *Bava*, *Kunhāva*, *Bāppu*, *Bāpputty*, *Kunhippa*, *Kunhāppa*, *Kuttippa*, *Nāni*, et.al. are the most used surnames. Among the females surnames such as *Ummu*, *Ummutty*, *Kunhimmu*, *Kunheema*, *Kunhimōl*, *Pennumma*, *Malu*, *Malumma* et al. are the commonly used surnames. So many persons are known throughout their life time by such surnames as a result actual names are almost forgotten by others. Thus the folk dialect has paved the way to form diversified names peculiar to Mappilas of Malabar.

In short the Mappila folk culture is the true reflection of the community to the outer world. These folk culture is the outward manifestations of their social and community living. In so many of the cultural fields such as songs, festivals, traditions, beliefs and dialects, they may or may not be influenced by an alien culture, but it is noticeable that they have maintained their typical 'Mappila character' in all these spheres.

MAPPILA TRADITION IN FOLK ARTS

Abdurahiman.K.P “Mappila heritage: A study in their social and cultural life”
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CHAPTER - 7

MAPPILA TRADITION IN FOLK ARTS

Folk Arts are a branch of Folk culture but the tradition of Folk arts among Mappilas deserves special study due to its vibrant and variant nature. Mappila Folk arts are the blend of Arab cultural elements and the indigenous cultural aspects. But in some aspects of the art forms, resemblance can be seen with Hindu art forms. The rhyme of songs used in the art and the rhythm of recitation of such songs is closer to Arabian tradition but the performance of art forms is closer to local arts. The *Ayāla* performed by Arabs have closer similarity with *Duffmutt* of Mappilas. But more is the indebtedness of Mappilas Folk arts to local art forms practised by various Hindu classes.

The Hindu Muslim cultural symbiosis is also evident in the Mappila art. The Mappilas followed the indigenous art form with slight variations. Mappila folk art called *Kōlkalī* is the Muslim version of the indigenous art known as *Kolāttam* or *Rājasūya*. Mappilas Islamised this art by replacing the Hindu devotional songs to Mappila songs. Mappilas start their *Kōlkalī* with prayers to Allah, Prophet Muhammed and Sufi saints. The martial art called *Kalaripayatt* is directly adopted and practised and made their own art by Mappilas. *Māppila Kalaris* were started in Mappila centres in par with *Nair Kalaris*. The *parichakali* is an adaptation of *kalaripayatt* and the Mappilas have developed their own tradition in this art which is known as

Parichamuttu. The *Oppana* dance of Mappilas resembles the *Kaikottikali* and *Tiruvathirakali* as practised by Hindu women.

Among the Mappila Folk Arts, we can see three categories. One is only the oral forms in which no musical instruments or body movements are used like *Vattapāttu*, *pādipparachil* etc. The second category includes songs and physical, movements combined together like the fine arts *oppana*, *kōlkali*, *Duff* and *Arabana*. The third category is martial arts in which physical exercises are the only aspect. *Kalaripayatt*, *Parichamutt* and *Padkali* belong to this group. Whatever may be the art form, the Mappila songs are an integral part of arts. This is the soul of all folk art forms. Thus the Mappila folk arts are a combination of songs and play which make it pleasing and enjoyable. Not only the peasants, labourers and workers enjoy it, but people in the all walks of life enjoy the folk art forms.

Vattapatt

Vattapātt is a folk art which was an essential part of Mappila marriages in the early years of 20th century. In some areas of Malabar it was also known as *Kalyanapātt*, *puthiyapātt* and *Kolāmbipātt*. In those days marriages were conducted at night and *Vattapātt* was the major attraction of the event. A marriage without this art form was unthinkable. The *Vattapāttukār* were professional troops of Mappila marriages.

The date of *Vattapāttukār* was fixed one or two weeks earlier. Usually there were 8 or 10 singers in a troop. They had reached the house of

bridegroom in the evening. After prayer and light food, the singers would seat in a circle on mattress spread in the *pandal* or on *padāppuram* (high platform). Small drum, *kaimāni*, wooden clappers, *kōlāmbi* etc., were used as musical instruments. With the permission of the house *kāranavar*, the team started the programme.¹ The *Vattapātt* started with *Virutham*, (*Bismi*, *hamd* and *salāth*), *Munajath* and *Mangala gana*. After this, clappings and musical instruments were used according to the songs.

The songs for *Vattapāttu* were mostly taken from the compositions of Tamil poets namely Pulavar, Shahul Hameed, Gundevedi, Hassanali, Alim Labba et.al. Late K.T. Muhammed and V.K.S. Moulavi composed good songs especially in the Hindi film tunes.²

The singers accompanied the bridegroom procession and sang on the way *Baineelam songs* as they reached the bride's house. These songs got rid off the boredom and difficulties of journey in the night and delighted the people especially when they had to walk 10 or 15 miles. Through out the procession the singers sang *pallavi*, i.e. *Thana Thana Thana, Thanani, Puthumāranum Sodararum Etha Pokunne* As the party reached about 50 yards away from bride's residence, they would wait till the *kāranavar* and singers of the bride's side welcomed them. These two groups of singers competed each

1. V.T. Alavikutty. Pookkottur, "Ormayile Thollapattukal". *Chandrika Weekend Edition*. Calicut. 25.10.98, p.3.

2. Eqbal Kallingal, 'Vattapatt sangam'. *Chandrika Daily*. Calicut. dtd. 13.4.1999.

other with songs until the *Kāranavar* interfered to stop it and invited them to the *pandal*. Then the two groups of singers would sit face to face. After light refreshment the competition would start. After the usual *virutham* and *Munājāth* one party would sing two or three songs from any famous composition. The other party should sing from the same composition otherwise they would be considered incompetent. Such a high competitive spirit existed among the singers. Even at the time of fixing the date, they would enquire about the opposite party and would make preparations accordingly. Some professional troops participated in 25 marriages within one week. With the shifting of marriage ceremonies to day time and with the introduction of modern musical instruments *vattapāttu* has almost vanished.

Padipparachil

This is a form of art fostered by Mappilas of Malabar which is also known as *Qissapāttu recitation*. A similar art exists among the Hindu class namely *Harikathā Kalakshepa* or *pādakam*.³ It is a primitive form of the modern *Kathāprasangam*. *Pādipparachil* (to sing and explain) is not entirely an art form for amusement but it has close affinity to religious devotion and piety, because this art is performed by learned scholars of religion. Among the two persons participated in the art, one is a good singer and the other is a

 3. P.K. Mohamad Kunhi, *Muslimingalum Kerala Samskaravum*. Trichur, 1982, p.314.

good speaker well-versed in religious books, history and culture. This art is conducted during the night and venue is a public place of gatherings or near a mosque or othupalli. In early days, petromax or *rāntal* used to lighten the area and the *pādipparachil* started with *Salāth* and *Madh* songs. The *Qissa* or story is completely based on Islamic literature. The old stories of Prophet's, events in the life of Prophet Muhammad and the wars during Caliphs are the theme of *Qissapāttu*. The works of Moyinkutty Vaidyar are widely used. His famous works like *Badr padapātt*, *Uhud padapātt*, *Badr-ul-Muneer Husnul Jamal*, *Malappuram Qissapātt* are the favourite ones. The old poetical compositions like *Yusuf Qissa*, *Futuhushām*, *Gulzanober*, *Karbala Qissa*, *Khybar Qissa* etc., are also used for this art. The singer beautifully recites the songs and speaker explains its meaning, circumstances and back ground. While explaining he often refers to contemporary events and makes the presentation enjoyable. On some parts of story both singer and speaker jointly recite the song to get more emphasis to the story. But never the singer explains the story. Usually one *Qissapātt* prolongs to 7 to 10 days to finish. Often the *Qissapātt* is extended to late night meanwhile the audience patiently enjoy the songs and story. Thus it is a grand art form which the Mappilas are still enjoying enthusiastically.

Cheenimutt

This is a three fold musical instrument with one *cheeni* (musical pipe), *otta* (Drum) and one *Murash* (small drum). *Cheeni* is in close resemblance with Persian instrument called *Shahnai*, thus *cheeni* came to be known as *Muttum vilīyum*. When beautiful musical tones would be played through

cheeni the *otta* and *Murash* would be beaten to match the tunes. The tune played through *cheeni* is mostly from *mappilapattu*, especially the songs of Moyinkutty Vaidyar.⁴ *Cheenimutt* has some resemblance with *Panchavadya* used in temple festivals. If one pipe and *Elathalam* is omitted from *Panchavadya* it becomes *cheenimutt*. As *Panchavadya* is closely associated with Hindu festivals, *cheenimutt* is closely associated with Mappila festivals known as *nērchas*. The *Cheenimutt* is an integral part of all *nērchās* of Malabar. Besides *Mappilapattu*, popular songs from Malayalam, Hindi and Tamil films are also tuned through *cheenimutt*. With the extinct of so many *nerchas*, this beautiful art form almost vanished from the scene. The only living legend of this art form is V. Kuttiyali of Kondotti.

Rammadi

This is another form of the art *Cheenimutt*. In place of small drums, big round shaped drums are used. As per the tunes from *Cheeni* one expert acrobat will jump, lay and stand over the drum and beat the drum with a ball of cloth tied on a rope.⁵ The acrobat will beat the drum in several body postures to the enjoyment of viewers. This art is also associated with *nercha* festivals. This is an important item of *pettivaravu* in connection with *nerchas*.

4. Valiyakath Kuttiyali, "Cheenimutt", *Mappilakala Darpanam*, Kottayam, 1998, p.124.

5. Abdulla Perambra, "Anyam Nilkunna Mappilakalal", *Poonkavanam Monthly*, Calicut, Aug. 1998, p.27.

Duff Muttu

History: *Duff* is an instrument which has an historical past. Before BC, 2000 itself, Israelites used the instrument called *Duff* at the worship of tribal gods in order to raise their devotion to the extreme.⁶ Later Europeans used this in the festivals connected with churches during the procession of high priests as a part of Christianisation of young children.⁷ The Egyptians, called it *Twara* and the Arabs called it *Dubb* and the Persians, *Duff*. It was later commonly used by all. The *kufans* called it *Dafik* Albania, Bosnians as *Duff Asbani*, Bulgarians as *Udūf* and Serbians as *Deera*.⁸ During the time of prophet, *Duff* was used by the Muslims especially in Madeena. Prophet was welcomed to Madina by *Ansari* girls singing songs and playing *Duff*. In the first century *Hijra*, *Duff* had been widely used as an instrument for entertainment. In India, *Duff* had been introduced by the Persians. When the renowned poet Amir Khusrau, came to India, his disciples popularized this instrument in North India. In Kerala, *Duff* had been used by Jews and Christians in their festivals.⁹ When the first Muslim missionary to Kerala, Malik Ibn Dinar came, his followers practised it. But *Duff* really became popular among the Kerala Muslims through the contact with Lakshadweep Muslims. The *Qādiriyya Sufis* who migrated to Kerala, popularized it.

6. Abdulla Karuvarakundu, "Duff Muttu", *Mappila kalakal*, Manjeri, 1995, p.78.

7. Mohamad Koothali, "Duff Muttu", *Mappilakala Darpanam*, op.cit., 1998, p.108.

8. Adullah, Karuvarakundu, op.cit., p.79.

9. Ibid., p.79.

The instrument: The *Duff* used by the Mappila Muslims of Malabar is round in shape. A round wooden frame, which is covered by the leather (skin of ox) stretched over it. The wooden frame is 6 inches height. To tighten the leather, strings are used in the sides. To maintain the tone of *Duff*, it is frequently warmed. Strings of *Duff* are to be adjusted in order to maintain uniform sound.

Performance: *Duff Mutt* is started with *Salāth* and *Hamd*. At least 10 persons participate at a time in which one will be *ustād* (leader). After *Salāth*, the players start to sound *Duff* in low voice. Then the players stand in two rows holding the *Duff* in one hand and striking the *Duff* periodically in accordance with the tune of *Bayth* (Arabic poems). When the play progress the players rotate the *Duff* through shoulder and above the head. Some times they use elbow to strike the *Duff*. All the movements are done simultaneously with systematic order from *ustad*. But in *Duff Mutt* the actual stress has been given to recitation of *Bayth*. The *Ustād* would loudly recite which will be repeated by other members.¹⁰ Devotional songs and *Madh* (praising) songs are also sung along with *Bayth*.

Occasions: *Duff Mutt* is closely associated with *Rātīb*¹¹ which is performed in *Nerchas*, devotion to dead saints. In *Rātīb*, *Duff Mutt* is performed in the dim light of lamps, either in the premises of mosque or in the houses. *Rātīb*, a rite

10. C.K. Kareem, *Kerala Muslim Directory*, Cochin, 1997, Vol. I, p.66.

11. Ratib – A devotional rite in the name of dead saints.

performed to get the blessing of saints, popularized *Duff Mutt*. The *Duff Muttu* in connection with *Rātīb* named *Rātīb Muttu*, started with *fathiha*, prayer to Prophet, Pious caliphs, Mohiyuddin shaikh, Rifai shaikh and other *Auliyas*. In Arabia girls used to perform *Duff* but in Kerala girls do not perform this art forms. Due to its association with religious occasions, girls keep completely aloof from this art. The intermingled sound of *Bayth* and *Duff* give a spiritual ecstasy to the devotees. *Duff* later became a common item of *nerchas* in the procession called *varavu*. In Calicut city, there were professional *Duff Muttu* teams who roamed the city on the eve of Friday. Kappat Syed Musliyar, Chekutty of Idiyangara, Imbichi Ahamad Musliyar of Chemancherry were the famous *Duff Muttu ustāds* in and around Calicut.¹² In the past years, Today Ratib is abandoned by the people and Duffmutt also been dropped off. Only in stage shows, this cultural form can be seen.

Arabana Muttu

Arabana was the name of a village in old Babylonia and the popular musical instrument of that village came to be known as *Arabana*. Later this instrument had been used by Arabs in their tribal festivals with songs and dances. *Arabana* had been beaten to declare battle-cry for the intertribal battles. During the period of Abbasids, court musicians of Al-Mansur used *Arabana* in their music programmes. During the reign of Harun-al-Rashid, *Arabana* had been widely popularized. Later *Shias* inherited this instrument.

12. P.P. Mammad Koya Parappil, Kozhikkotte Muslimkalude Charitram, Calicut 1994, pp.233.

When Adilshahi sultans ruled Deccan, some *Shias* came to Kerala and they brought *Arabana* with them. Later *Rifai Tariqat* introduced this *Arabana* in worshipping form of *Ratib*, to distinguish themselves from ‘Qadiri Tariqat who accepted *Duff*’ at the time of *Ratib*. Mappilas of Malabar had fallen to so many superstitions. It was believed that small pox, an epidemic, could be averted by beating *Arabana* up to the border of their village and like wise in order to purify those who recovered from small pox, *Rifai Ratib* with *Arabana* beating was performed.¹³ There were so many groups who specialized in this art throughout Malabar.

Instrument: *Arabana* is a larger form of *Duff* but in the construction there is some difference. In a round wooden frame of 8 to 12 inches diameter and 5 inches height, leather (skin of ox) is tied over one side which is tightened into the sides by metal strips. In the sides of wooden frame there will be 4 to 5 sets of metal rings attached to get bell sound. The thick root of *Chembaka* tree is most suitable to make wooden frame.¹⁴ The leather of *Arabana* is usually made out of the skin of goat or ox. The skin of one ox is sufficient to 4 to 5 *Arabanas* while the skin of one goat is enough to make 2 *Arabanas*. The ox’s skin is lesser in sound but greater in life span but goat’s skin is greater in sound but lesser in life-span. First the leather is spread on four wooden wedges to let it to complete drying. Then it is processed till the hair is completely removed and is put in the water and softened and is cut into proper

13. Bakkar Edakkazhiyur, “Arabana”, Mappila Kala Darpanam. Calicut, 1998, p.112.

14. Ibid., p.113

size sufficient for an *Arabana*. When the leather is tightening to the sides using a paste called *panachipasa*¹⁵ maximum stretching is given in order to maintain elasticity. The leather is also tightened to the sides using ropes and metal strips after which metal rings are also provided around it. Then the *Arabana* is ready for use and beating should be moderate to prolong the life-span.

Performance: Usually 8 to 10 persons participate in *Arabana Muttu*. The *Arabana muttu* has two styles, that with *Rātīb* and without *Rātīb*. The former is called *Rātīb muttu* and latter is called *Kalimuttu*.

The Ratib Muttu: It starts with *Āchalmuttu* with *Bayth Murādiyā Murādiyā Murādee....*¹⁶ In *Āchal muttu* players are sitting on the ground holding their legs to rightside, lifting *Arabana* to left side in tune with *Bayth* and brought to right with speed striking *Arabana* one-strike. Then they lift *Arabana* to right side and it is brought to left with two-strikes and the sides of striking changes periodically. While striking, their body is leaned to the side of striking and look is to the opposite side. At the end of *Bayth*, *Arabana* striking get faster. When *ustād* (leader) say aloud *sey....* Or strikes in the ground to note the end, a turn or *Adakkam* is over. Before the beginning of every turn, *ustad* would recite lines which will be repeated by others. If all members have studied the lines well, *ustād* says *Mutt* and then all of them start *Murādiyā Murādiyā...*

15. Ibid.

16. Ibid.

After each turn *Arabana* is warmed over fire to increase its temper. The next stage is 'Korimutt', a tough item.¹⁷ In this item players will kneel on the ground, lift and *Arabana* above the head, and lowering it to sides striking the *Arabana*. According to the tune of *Bayth*, players have to rise and bend and perform this which needs high physical flexibility.

In *Kuttu Rātīb*, that is *Rātīb* performed by physical torturing, the *Āchilmuttu* is performed by standing. When the *Bayth* reached in high pitch, the performer struck a *Dabbūs*,¹⁸ a sharp weapon of one feet length and one inch thickness into his chest and splits his chest. The players should concentrate on *Araban Muttu* and a silly mistake of *Muttu* would endanger the performer. It is in the climax of *Bayth* and *Muttu*, in a magical spell, the performer makes miraculous feat. When the performer calls *ya-shaikh*,¹⁹ it is very tough to strike *Arabana* without any fault.

Kalimuttu: In *Rātīb Muttu*, *Bayth* is important and *Arabana* is only a back ground instrument. Later *Arabana* is freed from *Rātīb* and became an independent art form known as *Kalimuttu* and start with *Bayth* and *ustad* says *sey* to begin the play. In *Kalimuttu* there is no restriction in striking the *Arabana* as in *Rātīb Muttu*. One can strike with elbow, backside of palm, fore head, jaw and shoulder on *Arbana* and on others body also. *Ashtadwani* (8 strikes)²⁰ is the core of *Kalimuttu*. The first strike is inside the *Arabana*, 2nd,

17. Ibid., p.115.

18. Ibid., p.113.

19. Ibid., p.115.

20. Ibid., p.116.

3rd, 4th and 5th strikes are outside. 6th is inside, 7th is outside, 8th again inside. *Arabana* can rotate itself and over shoulder. Shorter songs and quick movements are the main attraction of *Kalimuttu*. *Bayth* and Tamil songs of *Pulavar* are often used. The players themselves sing, and no back singers are allowed.

Oppana

Among the folk Arts of Mappilas, *Oppana* has a supreme position. The exact period of the origin of *Oppana* is difficult to trace. About the name *Oppana* various hypothesis exists among Mappila scholars. One major opinion is, *Oppana* means together and *Pāna* means song. Thus *Oppapana* means “singing together”. Later *Oppapāna* is reduced to *Oppana*.²¹ Another opinion is that *Oppana* is the name of one of the *Ishals* (styles) of Mappila songs. Since *oppana* songs are used in the art form, it is known as *Oppana*.²² The Arabic word *Hafna* means two hands are stretched to one side and closing the palms together and since most of the postures of this art resembles this style *Hafna* became *Oppana* in Malayalam.²³ The veteran Mappila writer O. Abu suggests that *Oppana* derived its name from the Tamil word *Oppana*.²⁴ Another prominent argument is that the word came from Sanskrit word

21. V.M. Kutty, “Oppana”, *Mappilakalalal*, Manjeri, 1995, p.16.

22. P.A.B, “Oppana”, *Mappilakalalal*, Manjeri, 1995, p.44.

23. Ibid., p.44.

24. O. Abu, “Oppana”, Kerala *Mappila song lovers Association Souvenir*, Calicut, 1991, p.134.

Oppana mean to decorate, because in Hindu festivals, idols are decorated known as *Thiru oppana*²⁵, so the decoration of bride during marriage is commonly known as *oppana*.

History: The Arab ladies of ancient time had a special type of play in connection with marriage. Holding the two ends of their dress they would lean to left and right shaking their heads. *Oppana* has been derived from the symbiosis of Arabian and native cultural elements. Though the songs recited are Islamic in theme, the performance has close affinity with some art forms of Malabar like *Pānakali*, *Kaikottikali* etc.²⁶ The *Kaimuttikali* has been replaced by *oppana* 35 years ago. Instead of the elder women *Kalikkarathikal*, young girls performed the *Kaimuttikali* by dancing steps in the marriage occasion in the house of *Puthiya Nalakath* of Kuttichira. This has been appreciated by people which later paved the way for the new art called *Oppana*²⁷ The old form of *Oppana* had been practised since the formation of Mappila community into a distinct entity from other religious factions. Whether *oppana* is the offshoot of ancient *Vattapattu* is a matter of debate.²⁸

Occasions: Among the Malabar Muslims, *Oppana* is closely associated with social occasions which are quite festive relating to personal or family

25. Balkrishnan Vallikunnu, "Oppana ennakalaroopam", Mappilakalal, Manjeri, 1995, p.34.

26. Ibid., p.35.

27. P.P. Mammad Koya Parappil, op.cit, p.227.

28. Ibid., p.35.

enjoyments. Earboring (*Kāthukuth*), circumcision (*Sunnat Kalyānam*) and Marriage (*Kalyānam*) are such personally associated social occasions of get together. *Oppana* is an art performed both by men and women on such occasions. *Oppana* performed by men is called *Tashrif oppana* and that of women is called *Mailanchipāttu*. *Tashrif oppana* is derived from the ancient *Kaikottipāttu* performed by men in the *Kalyānapandal*.²⁹

The art form of *oppana* has two parts. One is the recital of songs rhythmically and another is with body movements according to the tune of the songs.

Songs: The songs for *Oppana* are selected from *Mappilapāttu* compositions. The earliest among the *Oppana* songs are *Ādimuthal purānam*. The content of this song is the birth of holy Prophet and his early life.³⁰ Other songs are *Trikalyānapāttu*, *Ammayipāttu*, *Appapāttu*, *Vettilapāttu* and *Tālipāttu*. Besides this, historical songs, devotional songs, Tamil *pulavar* songs are also recited. Other songs are Payyal khayyat's *Tirutarumāla*, P.K. Halima Beevi's *Chandirachundiramāla*. P.K. Koya's *Mangalyappongāra sangeetham*, K.T. Amina's *Mangalālankārm*, C.A. Hassankutty's *Panchakankaratnamāla*, Oliyil Kunhi Mohammed's *Suryakumārimāla*, Chettuva Parikkutti's *Soubagyasundari* Nallalam Beeran's '*Badar Oppanapāttu*', Moyinkutty Vaidyar's *Kilathimāla* etc.³¹

29. Ibid., p.226.

30. C.N. Ahamed Moulavi and K.K. Muhammad Abdul Kareem, Mahathaya Mappila Sahitya-paramparayam, Calicut, 1978, p.228.

31. V.M. Kutty, 'Oppanathanima', Mappila Kala Darpanam, Kottayam, 1998, p. 45.

Tashrif Oppana: This *oppana* is performed by men in the house of bridegroom to enthuse him and his family. Till the bride groom dress up his wedding costume, the *oppana* singers sing in the *Pandal*. After the bride groom (*Puthiyāppila*) is brought in the *pandal*, properly dressed sit on high pedestal, singers will sit around him and start *Thashrif Oppana*. A group of such singers constituted 5 to 20 in numbers. In course of time these groups became professional groups and were invited to perform at the occasion of marriages. In such *oppana* troops there were two types of singers ie, the front singers (*Munpāttukar*) and those in back (*pinpāttukar*).³² The group is led by a leader (*Mooppan*) who leads *Munpāttukar*. *Mooppan* starts the songs with the *Munajat* (salutation to audiences) followed by *Kavi*, *Virutham* and *Mangalam* (welcome) to audience. The *Mooppan* then starts singing *oppanachayal* which is repeated by others. During *oppanachāyal* there will be no clapping of hands. Then the front singers start *Oppana Murukkam*. Clapping starts and back singers repeat the same. Then the cycle of *chayal* and *Murukkam* repeats periodically to enjoy the participants of marriage function. During this recitation and clapping they lean to sides rhythmically. Some time they use to stand on knee and lean to sides. Some singers used *Kuzhithalam* or *Kinnaram* to give musical sound to the songs. *Ammayipāttu* is recited in the second *chayal Murukkam* and *Vettilapāttu* was recited in the last³³ and the singers are supplied with betel leaf which puts an end to the

 32. P.A.B "Oppana", Mapiplakalaka, Manjeri, 1995, p.45.

33. V.M. Kutty, op.cit., p.44.

oppana performance. There is no special dress for the *Oppana* singers and they are dressed in their usual clothes.

Mylanchipattu

In early days, when the bride is dressed up in her bridal costumes, ladies used to sing and these songs are called *Mylānchipāttu*. Later this kind of singing developed into clapping of hands by circling the bride and leaning to sides. Two or three ladies standing in front of the bride sing beautifully while others play around the bride. This is the origin of the art *oppana* and the players usually known as *Kalikkārathikāl*³⁴. *Oppana* as an art form can be performed without the bride in some functions like earboring ceremony. The *Kalikkārathikal* of olden days were the relatives of the bride, but later professional groups appeared who were invited to perform *oppana*. These *oppana* troops were held in such an esteem that, marriages were fixed according to their convenience.³⁵ In *Oppana* there is no element of dance movements. O. Abu defines *oppana* thus: “*Oppana* is only performed by sitting, standing, leaning to sides and circling the bride and changing positions by singing and clapping their hands and any other movement is out of *oppana* art.”³⁶

34. P.A.B. “Oppana”, Mappilakalalal, Manjeri, 1995, p.45.

35 V.M. Kutty. op.cit., p.45.

36. O. Abu, op.cit., p.134.

The songs are the same as that of *Tashrif oppana*. But on the bridal procession, ladies did not recite *Bainqalam* songs as in men's *oppana*. In Kannur and Valapattanam areas the *Oppana* was known as *vilakkiniirukkal*.³⁷ The fully decorated bride is seated in front of *Nilavilakku* where women perform *Oppana*. In Kasargod area noble ladies were welcomed by *Pattukārathikal* from the gate of the house up to the inner circle.³⁸ In South Malabar it was compulsory that those who came to take the bride into bride groom's house, should be received by *Pattukārathikal*. In North Malabar, the previous night of marriage was known as *Mylānchirāvu*. *Oppana* was performed also when bride was applied *Mylānchi* on her hands and legs by her relatives.³⁹ There were no strict rules regarding the dress of oppana players. In North Malabar it was *Vellakāchi* commonly used and in south it was *Karuppu soop* which was a common dress of these days. These were the dresses of players also. Beside loose or tight jackets with scarf (*Thattam*) were used. The players also used common ornaments of the day. Thus before 1970, *Oppana* a fine art performed in connection with marriages and happy occasions of Mappilas. Many of the people devoted their time and energy for the perfection of this art. Now-a-days, *Oppana* can be seen only in stage shows.

37. V.M. Kutty, "Oppana", *Mappila Kalakal*, Manjeri, 1995, p.22

38. Ibid., p.26.

39. Ibid., p.26.

Kurukurumacham

This is an art form performed by girls on the occasion of Id festivals. The girls would split into two groups. One group starts the play by asking questions and other answer this question. One group pretended to be the group of bridegroom and other those of bride. To the enquiry about bride the group answers all the questions raised by the group of groom through songs.⁴⁰ The party of bride also enquires about groom and the opposite party replies. This would continue for hours. There is no written songs used in this but traditional and quickly made songs are used. The name *Kurukurumacham* came from the first line of the song and it is an interesting art form among women.

Koladikali

Among the rural folk arts, *Koladikali* has been an important item which still exists among the labour class of Kerala. It was popular both in Malabar and Travancore areas under the British. It has some similarity with *kolkali* on the ground that it requires great physical fitness because both the arts need quick body movements. The Hindus played this art during the festival season of *Onam* and *Tiruvāthira*. But as a rural folk art, *Koladikali*, has gained an important name and fame at the hands of Mappilas. They made systematic changes in dress, steps and songs. This art has been made very colourful and attractive by Mappilas by which it got wide popularity.⁴¹

40. C.K. Kareem. *Kerala Muslim Directory*, Vol.I, Cochin, 1997, p.663.

41. Perimbalam Ravi, "Koladikali Oru gaminakal", *Chandriaka Weekend Edition*, Calicut. 16.1.82

Mode of play: 8 to 16 persons are needed to play this art. All of them stand in a circle with a stick of 2 feet length in their hands. The songs are started and the players would step to left and right sides, striking the sticks accordingly. The players also move backward and forward, and the circle would enlarge and shrink. They sometimes sit and strike, and lean right and left making the movements quick. In the initial stage only men played this art, but later women also performed. In course of time men concentrated on *kōlkalī* and *kōladikalī* became an art of women.

Among the Mappilas, they used to sing *Mappilapāttu*, especially by Moyinkutty Vaidyar who have written special songs for this. Later folk songs which had anonymous origin had also been used. Besides *Vaythārikal*, like *Thanna thana .. thennana*, was also sung to get rhythm to the movements, *Koladikal* was thus exclusively the art of labourers who spent their leisure time for their enjoyment and amusement.

Kolkali

History: Among the Mappila folk Arts, *Kolkali* is exclusively originated indigenously. The name is derived from *Kambakali* which was prevalent among the low caste Hindus. (Harijan)⁴². Later the soldiers of Hindu Rajas, Nairs also practised this. In *Harijan Kōlkalī*, there are no rules regarding dress of the players but has only *mundu* and a turban. The players stand in a circle

42. K. Mohamad. "Kolkali". *Mappilakaladarpanam*. Kottayam. 1998, p.102.

and strike each other by dancing steps. The leader recites and others repeat. Towards the end striking and dancing reach its climax. *Kōlkali* is often performed in connection with *Onam* festival.

Rajasūyam is the name of *Kōlkali* performed by Nairs and its origin from *Kalari* (martial art) of *Kadathanad* area.⁴³ This was practised in order to get physical viability essential for *Kalari*. Since *Kalari* art was mastered by *Thacholi* family the *Kolkali* practised by them was known as *Thacholikali*. *Rajasuyam kolkali* starts with *ganapatistotra*. Players stand around a litten *Nilavilakku* holding sticks and strike a single-strike (*Ottapina*). They move forward and backward rotating the *Nilavilakku*. In back ground they used drums to make the play more attractive.

But the *Māppila kōlkali* is entirely different from the *Harijan* and Nair styles. There are two different styles in the Mappila *Kōlkali*. The *Kōlkali* prevalent among the fishermen of coastal regions of Malabar is known as *Tālakkali*. *Kōlkali* in interior regions of Malabar was known as *Kurikkalum Kuttikalum*⁴⁴

Kurikkalum Kuttikalum: In this style of play, the players tie a hand kerchief around the neck, a *mundu* and *kanniprak* with *Urakku* around their waste. The players had a leader known as *Kurikkal* shouting the word *orma* to bring the attention of players. Historic and heroic songs are sung.

43. Ibid., p.102.

44. Ibid., p.104

Talakali: In *Tālakali*, the *vaythārikal* are abundant and movements are quick with periodical striking and beautiful songs. Since *Thālakali* has acquired great speed its origin might have been from *Mappilakalari*.⁴⁵ The leader of *Kolkali* is *Kurikkal* a word derived from *gurikkal* (Plural of guru, teacher).

Performance: The sticks (*kol*) used for play are made from palm or arecanut stem. This stick is thickening to the tip. In the holding part, some rings of metal (*chilamb*) are inserted. Though 8 persons to 16 persons can play the art, 16 persons are suitable to exhibit all rounds of the play. Every stage of the play is known as *adakkam*. *Adakkam* has opening and closing *vaytharikal*. Each *vaythārikal* is the meaningful command of *kurikkal*. Each player changes his position or change strikes according to the commands or *vaytharikal*. The important *adakkams* are *cherukali*, *cheriya tālamkali*, *cheriya ozhichilmuttu*, *valiya ozhichil muttu*, *Kudukuthai* and *Anakkali*. Each *adakkam* starts with *vattapatt*. The players are standing in a round form and one man starts the song and the others make 3 strikes two times and repeats the song. Towards the end of that song the *Pallavi* repeats and speed up the strikes to complete an '*adakkam*'.⁴⁶

Cherukali: It starts with *Thudakkathālam* name by *Thikratha tha kritha thikritha Billathai*; which is recited by *kurikkal* and all the players strike their

45. Ibid.

46. Alikutty Gurukkal, "Kolkali", *Mappilakalal*, Manjeri, 1995, p.73.

own sticks (*Thettukōl*) and other sticks (*Marukōl*) and when *kurikkal* commands *Mimukkali* half of the players withdraw to inside and form a small circle and play to their respective partners. Each *vaythārikal* and as well as *Kōlmuttukali* are framed according to '8 tones aditala' of classical music. Then the players strike his neighbours stick (*Churanhadi*) and his third or fourth neighbour (*chānhadi*). Another *Adakkam* of *cherukali* is *Kabāth*. In this *adakkam* 16 persons divide into 4 lines each and move forward and backward. In another *adakkam* all 16 persons sit around and strike each other. Then they divide into 8 persons forming two groups and strike each other, then they divide to 4 person forming 4 groups and strike each other, a beautiful style of *cherukali*. There are two types of *Tālamkali*, *Cheriyā Tālamkali* and *Valiyā Tālam Kali*. The difference lies in the length of *Vaythārikal*. *Ozhichilmuttu*, *Moonnadi*, *kudukaduthai*, *Aṇakali* are different *adakkam* of *Tālakali*.

Songs are essential throughout the play except the players repeat the *vaythārikal* recited by *gurukkal*. The sound of the players should be in a high pitch to overcome the sound of the sticks. Thus *kōlkali* is a fine art form which has been fostered by Mappila Muslims. It has no connection with religious occasions but entirely for entertainment.

Kalaripayatt

History: *Kalaripayatt* is a martial art which has a long traditional history. *Kalaripayatt* was mentioned in Vedas which reveals that it had existed as early

as BC 1000. Later Buddha monks practised this to achieve physical fitness as a part of their meditation. In Kerala *Kalaripayattu* was closely associated with the Nair soldiers. It is believed that it was from the Sanskrit term *Khloorika* that the word *Kalari* came into use in Malayalam for similar institutions imparting training in martial arts. The system of physical and weapon training imparted within the *Kalari* came to be called *Kalaripayattu* (*Kalari*, the institution where *payattu*, the exercises for martial training are practised).⁴⁷ Barbosa writes, “The more part of these Nair’s when they are 7 years of age are sent to schools where they are taught many tricks of physical training. First they taught leaps and steps when they are fully accomplished they were taught the practice with weapons.”⁴⁸ In the 16th century *Kalaripayattu* almost became synonymous with the Nair family of Kadathanad namely *Thacholi Tharavad*. The northern Ballads refer to Mappila trained in *Kalaripayattu*, even though number was few relatively to the Nairs, such trained Mappila were a significant part of the medieval picture in Kerala. Some of the Mappila trained in *Kalaripayattu* received training in Nair and *chekar Kalari*s while other Mappila *gurukkals* maintained their own *Kalari*s.⁴⁹

47. P. Balakrishnan, “Kalaripayattu”, The ancient Martial Art of Kerala, C.V.G. Kurikkal(Ed.), Trivandrum, 1995, p.13.

48. Barbosa, Book of Durrate Barbosa, Vol.II, Hacklyut Society, London, 1821, pp.39-40

49. Phillip Bary Zorilli, “Kalaripayattu and performing artists”, Malabar Mahotsava Souvenir, Calicut, 1998, p.99.

Kalaripayatt, a martial art, in order to achieve physical fitness as well as for resistance against attacks of enemies, had been taught by Mappilas to their young boys of 7 or 8 years. A *gurikkal* (teacher) used to teach this in *Kalari* (Gymnasium to train). The boys of *kalari* had undergone severe restriction in their behaviour, body movements and diet in order to mould the body to cope with tough competitions. *Gurikkal* used to massage the body of disciples thoroughly. The *Kalari* was practised in the early morning hours as well as evening hours *Gurikkal* prepared various types of *Kuzhamb* or *Thailam* (medicinal oils) to be massaged before the starting of *Kalari* exercise.

Stages of Kalari training

For mastering *kalaripayattu* one has to undergo mainly three stages.⁵⁰ The first stage is known as *Meythāri*. In this stage various physical exercises especially the movements of leg (*chuvad*) and body postures (*Ozhinhumāral*) are done so as to enable the boy to fight his enemy as well as to save himself from the attacks. The boy also taught the fighting method of lion, cat, elephant, snake, fish, horse, bear and cock. This is known as *Ashtamārga* (8 movements). The boy should also master different types of jumping. Four months continuous learning enables him to jump 3 meters height.

The second stage is known as *Kōlthāri* in which the use of sticks for fighting is taught. To have a complete mastery of this art, one has to spend

50. Amanulla, "Verattupokunna Kalaripayatt", *Chandrika weekend edition*, Calicut. 12.06.94. p.I & II.

years of time. A master of this art can rotate a stick at least ten times in a second.

The third stage is *Anthāri* or *Ankathāri*. This is the stage in which the use of weapons such as dagger lance, sword etc, is being taught⁵¹. Side by side fighting by wearing anchor (*Padachatta*) is also taught in order to prevent any wound to the body from these weapons. The topmost stage of the weapon fighting is *Puliyankam*. Every disciple of *Kalari* used to practice together. *Gurikkal* will teach special fighting methods to best disciples. To the last of *Kalari* training, *gurikkal* teaches the *Marma fighting* (without any weapon). There are *108 marmās* (special spots on body) where the body responses quickly. This is the last resort to defeat an enemy. *Gurikkal* also teaches *Marma chikitsa* (curing methods of body injuries) to his disciples. Through out Malabar Mappila *gurukkals* were famous for *Marma chikitsa*.

Parichamuttu

This is a martial folk art which has resemblance with *Parichakali* of Hindus During the British period the government feared that the training with sword and shield would be a dangerous one to peace and order and they prohibited these type of training.⁵² Thus the original swords and shields were replaced by wooden swords and shields. This is a combination of both *kalari*

51. E.D. Nayar. "Kalarikal Vadakkan Puttukalil", Chandrika Weekend Edition, Calicut. 12.06.94, p.1.

52. C.K. Kareem. op.cit , 1997, p.665.

steps and *kōlkali*. The *Kalari* trainees during their leisure time dressed like soldiers and practised fighting which later developed into an art form namely *parichamuttu*.

Mode of play: There may be 12 to 20 persons participating in this play. They will stand in a circle holding the shield in one hand and sword in the other. The *gurukkal* (leader) will recite the song and the players steps according to the time while striking with the sword each other on shield, remembering the actual fighting with shield and sword. There are five types of styles of play like *Ampatheeradi*, *Nalpatheeradi*, *Muppatheeradi*, *Patheetheeradi* and *Pantheeradi*.⁵³ The play starts with *Virutham*. *Gurikkal* will stand in the centre and will sing songs using a *Kaimani* and the players will repeat the songs.⁵⁴ The steps of *Parichamutt* is known as *Chavidikett* and *Mukkanna*. The dress of players are green shirt and green scarf with red tie on heads.

Occasions: The *Parichamuttu* is often displayed during festivals. In marriage occasions also this was an item of exhibition. But as already stated this was practised in leisure time of *Kalari* trainees.

The *parichamutt* of Mappilas and *Parichakali* of Hindus differ in some aspects. Hindus sing socially relevant songs and war songs especially *Vadakkan pāttukal*. Mappilas used to sing *Mālapāttu* and other *Madh* songs. The Hindus may use drums to make the play more attractive. The

53. P.K. Mohamed Kunhi, op.cit., p.130.

54. Kathirikoya "Mapilakalal", *Mappila Kaladarpanam*, Kottayam, 1998, p.130.

rhythmic movement in the inner and outer circles as in *kolkali* is the attractive item of *parichamutt*.

Padakali

Padakali is an ancient martial art that the Mappilas inherited from their fore-fathers. It is the primitive form of modern wrestling. This is also known as *Padayali*, *Padayani*, *gusthi*⁵⁵ etc., Mappilas imbibed inspiration from Islamic tradition that Caliph Umar was a good wrestler. Among the Hindus, the Nair soldiers practised *Padakali* as a part of their battle preparation. There was *padakali* competition regularly held in the courts of rajas. Among the Mappilas of Malabar there were many famous wrestlers. They were tightly dressed with their lower garments and without any upper garments. They applied oil in their whole body. The dual fighters sometimes fight for hours for supremacy. Their supporters gather around and shout for victory. The competition ends till one man folk completely tired and admitted his failure.

The above briefings of the art forms of the community clearly reveals that, the Mappilas were once the great custodians of cultural and traditional values which had been reflected through such performing art forms. One could not deny the influence of the other religions and cultures in the formation of such art forms, but once it had been established, they put their heart and soul for the perfection of such arts which became the part of the Mappila heritage.

55. Kathirikoya. op.cit., p.131.

CONCLUSION

Abdurahiman.K.P “Mappila heritage: A study in their social and cultural life”
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CONCLUSION

In the preceding chapters, the social and cultural aspects of Mappila's life, with their ethnic individuality, have been depicted. The sum total of their life activities in the social, political, economic educational, religious and cultural spheres altogether constitute their past heritage. Although the social and cultural life have been more focused, a partial description of their political, religious and educational life has also been incorporated through this study which vividly explains the glorious legacy and rich cultural heritage of the Mappilas.

Mappilas being a living community have rendered yeoman service to the history and culture of this land. Despite the fact that Mappilas have been the people of the land who accepted an alien ideology and faith and have practised it in their day to day life, they are devoted to this dogma unflinchingly, better than their counterparts in the different parts of the country. Not only they became the spokesmen of the new faith, that is Islam, but they became the masters of their new religion by acquiring knowledge. There were scholars of par excellence in Mappila community who excelled in Islamic Knowledge as well as in Arabic language who were comparable to the Scholars of Arab World. In the spiritual field also the community was far ahead, having so many sufi saints who marked their presence in Mappila history.

The Mappila history is replete with heroic exploits against powers who transgressed the territories of the country. Mappilas love their motherland and have fought for it risking everything of their own. It was a fact that they had been the faithful citizens under the local Hindu rajas, especially the Zamorins Calicut, but this loyalty and tolerance was never shown towards the foreign powers like the Portuguese, the Dutch and the English. On one side, the colonial powers hampered the trade prospects of Mappila community and wounded their religious fervour on the other, their inherent desire for freedom of their mother country was the cause behind their bitter rivalry with those alien powers. There had been a series of skirmishes conducted by Kunhali Marakkars against the Portuguese, eventually sacrificing their life for this cause. Not only the Marakkars but hundred of other Mappilas lost their lives in this anti-colonial struggle. The same spirit and vigour was once again repeated in the long struggle against British. If it was the Coastal Mappilas who fought against the Portuguese and Dutch, it was the turn of the inland Mappilas of Ernad and Walluvanad to fight against the British. Throughout the period of British supremacy the Mappilas made an untiring opposition though several of them were unorganized and unplanned. In these struggles, they had to face three-pronged opposition. The first was from own community who were against the revolts and pro-British in their attitude. The other opponents were the high caste Hindus, who totally followed a non co-operation policy towards the revolts led by Mappilas. The low Caste Hindus, to whom the Mappilas never fought, hesitated to join in the struggle. Thirdly the tyrannical and oppressive British force whose ultimate aim was the power

of the land. The sacrifice of thousands of Mappila lives never opened the eyes of the British as a beacon for freedom. On the other hand, their opposition became more and more vulnerable. The anti colonial struggle for freedom of this country has marked a heroic episode in Mappila History.

Mappilas constitute a distinctive Muslim community with so many features of its own. The distinct features of the community with its own customs and culture have been depicted as the cause of the backwardness it acquired through centuries. The community is alleged of possessing medieval characters due to its peculiar socio- economic system that existed during the last so many years. It took long years to change the tradition and mind of Mappilas to which they were accustomed, the accused medieval characters are gradually disappearing and the community is on the path of transformation. Modern secular education has been accepted by the community. In social sphere, so many customs prevailed in the society which were both time and money consuming had gradually abandoned, thanks to the reformist activities by a group of ulama.

The social change undergone by the community can be attributed to the awakening in the educational field. Hitherto, Mappilas have maintained a defensive attitude against the changes that had been taking place in society and have remained essentially pre-modern out look. Mappila attitude is also changed by the interaction with other communities, who have largely embraced a modern approach to life. Educational advancement and religious reformist movements jointly resulted in many social changes. There is a

change in outlook and many superstitious and blind beliefs are being given up. Ear-boring Ceremony (Kathukuthu Kalyanam) and circumcision (Marga Kalyanam) have reduced to mere rites giving up the celebrations. Like wise, so many customs woven around marriages are given up. Even the time scheduled or marriage has been changed from night to day time. The marriage ceremonious is no more attended with pomp and festivity. The process of modernization has made impact on social life and condition of the people. Women have come out of Kitchen and have been actively participating in public life. Their traditional reserved style has changed tremendously. The 'Katchi', 'Soori' and 'Soop', the dress items of Mappila women have varnished beyond revival. The educated ladies accepted the cosmopolitan dress 'Saree'. The 'penkuppayam' of olden days has been replaced by blouse. But with the boom of gulf money, in 1990's a new trend has emerged, that is the use of Purdah or burqah in the Arabian style especially by young ladies. The use of head scarf, 'Maftah' also has been widely used replacing the old 'thattam'. The old ladies of present day except some aristocratic families are using coloured lungies. The young girls have abandoned their old fashioned skirt and, jacket and instead have been using 'Churidar', a North Indian dress. The men of educated class usually wear pants and shirt. The dressing style has been undergoing tremendous change day by day. The age old ornaments used by Mappila ladies have also been out dated. With the help of modern technologies new fashioned ornaments are designed and the style is changed day by day to cater the need of women. The trade of gold ornaments has become an affluent business of the present day. As far^{as} the food items are

concerned, a revolutionary change has occurred. People have almost abandoned the old 'appams' and its varieties, instead these are replaced by the baked food items. 'Like Jewellery shops', 'Bakery shop's' are another establishment of modern days. More use of animal food, fish items, sweets and soft drinks has become the part of food culture of the daily life. With modernization, the culture of 'fast food' (baked and cooked and ready to use) have become the order of the day. The old habits of Mappilas, panchewing and smoking, have almost been abandoned by young men, as a result of more awareness about health problems. With the on rush of modern life the old amusements like cattle rare, hunting and fishing have given way to modern amusements like music, drama, cinema, video, television and both indoor and outdoor games. The house pattern has undergone utter change. The traditional roofing tiles have been replaced by real concrete roofs. Like wise furniture has become more decorative and comfortable with the use of cushions. Thus the life style of present day Mappilas is being moulded according to modern way of life.

The Mappila society is heterogeneous in its complexion. In the outset, they were a progeny born out of the union of the Arabs and natives. The next generation was a combination of these Arab blooded Mappilas and local people. To this society so formed came so many pure blooded Arabs in the name of 'Sayyids'. But they kept their identity and purity without mingling with local people, yet became a part of Mappila society. The next was the converted sections who came purely from Hindus, both high and low castes. The castes of Hindu religion were so divergent that there were untouchables

and unequal within their religion. But they have to shed out of all this caste rigidities and specifications once they absorbed to this faith of universal brotherhood. So many migrant groups outside the Malabar province that is from Konkan, Deccan and Tamil land are absorbed to Mappila community. Thus the present Mappila society is an amalgamated group of various types of people having so many ethnic, caste and creed diversities. But the umbrella of Islam is so wide enough to accommodate all of them under it in the same name and label.

The one time rulers among Mappila community, the Arakkal dynasty, lost their political sovereignty to the British and reduced to mere aristocratic family of Cannanore city. But still they symbolically nominate the eldest member of the family as Sultans and Bibis. The Sayyid class is holding same superiority as that of past years. They have been still considered as the spiritual leaders of the community. But so many of them have with drawn from their traditional spiritual duty to serve and bliss the devotees and have diverted to business and other high enterprising jobs. The descendants of Jiffris and Bafaqihs are the reputed businessmen of the various parts of the country. Only the Ibnshihab Qabila still maintains the 'Umara' (leadership) role of the society. With the popularity and accessibility of modern medicine, the traditional curing services of Sayyids have almost come to an end.

As far as the Musliyors, (Ulama Class) are concerned they still hold a supreme position in the Mappila Society. Their number has increased, their method of study and training have been improved and they have come under

different organizational labels. So many of the ulama groups have become affluent by the financial help from foreign countries and have established Arabic colleges, and residential English medium schools of grand style. The traditional 'Dars' system is gradually losing its grip and in this place Degree courses in Arabic colleges are being started. The traditional *Mullahs* have vanished from the scene and their progeny have now become even the teachers of government schools, some are professionals like doctors and advocates.

Among the 'Malabaris', the common class, the traditional land owners of Mappilas have lost bulk of their land due to land reform policy of Kerala Government. The Act of 1971 struck a death knell to their prospects. So much of their land was confiscated as 'excess land' and the same was distributed to the land less people. But remnants of their old richness can still be seen with some of them, on the contrary, some families of old zamindars are struggling with poverty. But with the new petro dollar boom, a new set of richmen emerged in the Mappila society who owned big business firms, hotels and estates known in the name of 'neo-richmen'. But for the common men among Malabaris, a bliss came in the form of gulf migration, most of them seeking jobs in Arabian gulf countries. Some of them are found better prospects there, with the result that their family conditions are improved to great extent. Their status is raised, educational standard is increased and health is improved and living conditions altogether have been drastically changed. The Oossan (barber) class had also undergone changes in the modern period, so many of them abandoned their profession in order to get rid of the inferior status that they acquired through ages. Those who stick to their

profession have set up modern 'saloons' to boost their profession. They have using the latest technologies of the profession and have boosted their profession incorporating latest trends such as beauty aids and modern methods. The mobile barber shops of yester years have been converted to permanent well decorated, furnished and air conditioned parlours.

The occupational class among Mappilas has undergone drastic changes that changed the whole complexion of the then established institutions for the last two centuries. The Koyas, leading business clan of Malabar, had almost shifted their business prospects as per the latest trends. In the past years they monopolized rice, coconut, spice and timber trade, but in tune with modern trends they have more concentrated on textiles, hotels, Jewelleries and furniture businesses. So also the case with Keyis of Tellichery, the leading traders, who have accepted jobs under government, abandoned their traditional trade. The migrated Muslims to Malabar like Batkals, Dakhnis, Bohras were struggling hard to maintain their business in competing with the local people.

The labour classes of the Mappila community are a vanishing lot due to the mechanization of industry. The Khaliasis of Beypore and Kammalis of Kallai have almost been reduced to a few in numbers. Due to the loss of traditional jobs, so many of these classes have migrated to Arabian Gulf countries to test their fortune and in the process some of them became affluent. Those who are still continuing their traditional jobs are struggling with life to meet both ends. The Puisseis have improved their traditional equipments in fisheries. Some of them became fish exporting agents and earned a good

social status. Most of them are still struggling under the yoke of poverty due to the exploitation from various circles. The peasants of erstwhile British South Malabar have undergone radical change by gradual withdrawal from agriculture and have sought new job prospects in and abroad. The peasants have abandoned traditional paddy cultivation mainly because of the production cost of agriculture, lack of man power and the introduction of more economical crops. The availability of rice of cheaper value from neighbouring states of Tamil Nadu and Karnataka also resulted in the renunciation of paddy cultivation. The youths of peasant class have migrated to West Asian countries in search of better prospects. In short, the age old concept of cultivation of land, irrigation of fields and fostering of cattles which had been practised by the old peasants of Malabar is a fore gone story and has become a part of the by gone heritage.

Mappilas are undoubtedly the custodians of rich cultural tradition. In the field of language literature and folklore their contributions are unique. The Mappilas being a class of people enthusiastic about their religious observances used the Arabic terms in connection with them. There are quite a large number of words used by the Mappilas in their daily life. So many common Arabic words have become part of the original Malayalam language especially in administrative records and judicial court records. The rich literature of Mappilas consists mostly of Mappila songs and Arabi-Malayalam literary works. The Arabi-Malayalam ^{is} a mixture of two languages, ^{that is,} the script belongs to Arabic and language belongs to Malayalam, was the lingua-franca of Mappilas of Malabar. The bulk of Mappila literature in Arabi Malayalam is

however in the form of Mappilapattu. The one time glorious language of Mappila heritage, Arabi-Malayalam has gradually loosing its grip with the advancement of Education among the Mappilas. The Mappilas are now more and more using Malayalam scripts to compose their literary works, including religious compositions. The 'Mappilapattus' are popularized with the coming of professional troops. The Mappila 'Kathaprasangam' is also the attraction of general public. The present day 'Mappilapattu' has shun out of traditional Tamil and Hindustani words and become more Malayalam friendly.

The Mappila festivals like 'nerchas' have lost their old glory and so many of them are either reduced to only ceremonial rites barring fairs, 'Pettivaravu' and other folk celebrations. This has been due to the increased violence and untoward events in the course of nerchas which led to problems of law and order and the interference of government authorities making so many restrictions in this regard. The `ulamas' restricted the celebrations such as fire work and anti-Islamic plays performed in the nerchas, so many of the folk beliefs and taboos have been lifted from the society due to the repeated propaganda of the reformist `ulamá. The folk dialect of Mappilas or 'Mappila Malayalam' is still prevalent through out the Mappila areas. The modern education has enabled the Mappilas to use polished Malayalam language but in common use they still prefer to use their own dialect

The folk arts performed by Mappilas have almost ^{become} extinct in the practicing level. The arts have lost its relevance as a folk play through which the common people have released their difficulties in life. But in the modern

period, these fine arts have been taken by professional troops as a means of their livelihood and the people are confined as mere spectators. Another incumbent change is that these fine arts are performed by students of schools as stage competitions. It is through this way now the common people are getting awareness about this performing fine arts of Mappilas. So is also the case of marital arts. People are more or less accepting the dictum to see and enjoy rather than to perform, is a tendency developed as a by product of modernization.

It has been rightly said that some elements in Mappila culture are evidently influenced by Hinduism. In the intermingling that has taken place between the followers of Islam, and the local Hindus many customs and practices of the Hindu society have crept in to Mappila society. An analysis of some of the Mappila social customs, especially those relating marriage and child birth, would properly show that Hindu customs has been influenced to a great extent. This is due to the fact that while the Mappilas are a part and parcel of the universal Islamic brotherhood, they are also locally rooted in age old cultural practices. In the process of the intermingling, both communities influenced each other resulting in cultural assimilation. Some elements of Mappila culture are evidently influenced the Hinduism in turn. The Islamic principles of equality and brother hood received a warm reception by the caste-ridden Hindu society of Kerala. The low caste Hindus found an asylum in Islam which provided them with equal treatment and assured them equal rights. The cultural contact of Islam also served the purpose of forbidding the

bad practices prevailing in the then Kerala society like the system of polyandry, half nakedness and intoxication.

Undoubtedly the community has changed visibly since the last fifty years. In spite of all changes the Mappilas have remained faithful Muslims and they are increasingly recognized as a symbol of hope for other Muslims, a fact which affirms the unique characteristic feature of this peculiar Muslim community that enables to face the trial and tribulations through centuries and survive as a living force without losing its individuality even while becoming a victim of external influences and pressures. Mappilas who possess a glorious past and who are endowed with a rich cultural heritage can look forward to a future of bright prospects.

GLOSSARY

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|---------------|---|
| 'Aqīqā | : Ceremony of sacrificing an animal for the sake of new born child. |
| Ādhān | : Call for Prayer five times daily from mosque. The colloquial term in Mappila Malayalam is banku, presumably derived from Persian language |
| Ammāyi | : Sisters of father commonly known |
| Āndu nēcha | : The nercha conducted in the death anniversary of a saint |
| 'Aqeeda | : The belief matters of Islam |
| Ara | : A well decorated, furnished chamber for bride groom in the house of bride. |
| Arakku | : Lac, resinous subject used in the making of ornaments |
| Aranjānam | : Gold or silver bracket worn around waste by Mappila ladies |
| Arapatta | : Leather belt with many pockets |
| Asmā' | : A type of black magic |
| Athar | : Perfume made out of certain herbs |
| Awliya | : A sufi saint commonly known |
| Barāth | : An auspicious day in the month of sha'ban |
| Barkath | : The blessing from a saint or from his tomb |
| Bayth | : Arabic poem in praise of Prophet or Saints |
| Beedi | : To bacco filled smoking material |
| Beevi | : Surname of Women among Sayyids and nobles |
| Burqā | : A black veil dress used by Beevis |
| Chakku | : A device to extract oil from coconut |
| Chandanakudam | : Festival in honour of a saint |
| Cheemi | : Mixture of coconut and snacks used in ceremonies |
| Chellam | : A small box to keep betel, money etc. |
| Choott | : Roll of coconut leaves used for lighting |
| Churutt | : A Cigar |

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| Copra | : Dried Coconut Kernal |
| Dargāh | : Tomb of saints |
| Dars | : System of teaching Islamic knowledge in mosques for training priests |
| Eatham | : A device to draw water from wells and ponds for irrigation |
| Ēlassu | : A cylindrical shaped talisman tied to arms |
| Erhāl | : An 'x' shaped wooden frame used to place the text of Quran open for the convenience of recitation |
| Fathiḥa | : Opening chapter of Quran |
| Fathwa | : Legal opinion of a Muslim scholar or jurist |
| Fiqh | : The science of religious law in Islamic Jurisprudence |
| Fitr | : Grains giving in arms on the eve of Id Festival |
| Ghusl | : Bathing of body to clean from major pollution |
| Gurikkal | : A teacher of any art |
| Hafna | : To clap hands |
| Halwa | : A special sweet of Calicut |
| Ḥamd | : Praise of Almighty God |
| Ithikāf | : Sitting in mosque in meditation in the last days of Ramzan |
| Illam | : House of Nair class of Hindus |
| Imām | : A person who leads prayers and other rites of Islam |
| Ishal | : Style of Mappilapattu Composition |
| Janāza | : The dead body shrouded ready for burial |
| Jāram | : Tomb of saint |
| Jilbāb | : A white veil used by ladies during prayer |
| Jumu'a | : Friday noon prayer |
| Kafan | : The white cloth used to wrap dead body |
| Kālāpott | : Cattle-race in paddy fields ready to plant |
| Kalappa | : A plough used for tilling fields |
| Kalari | : A school of martial arts |
| Kalari-payatt | : An exercise of martial arts |

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| Kalima | : | Formula of Islam to profess the faith |
| Kalyanam | : | Marriage Ceremonies and celebrations |
| Kāniyath | : | Nikah. Solemnization of marriage |
| Kanniprāk | : | A loose light upper garment of males |
| Karāmath | : | A miraculous incident performs by an Auliya |
| Kāranavar | : | Elder male member of a family who manages property in joint family. |
| Kāranavathi | : | Elder lady of a joint family |
| Kasavu | : | Golden colour threads used for decorative works in dresses |
| Kātchi | : | A rough coloured cloth with broad borders used by Mappila women. |
| Kavi | : | An Ishal of Mappilpattu |
| Kāvu | : | An empty corner of house compound for performing 'pujas' |
| Kayil | : | Wooden spoon |
| Khatham | : | A complete recitation of holy Quran |
| Khutuba | : | A Friday noon prayer sermon in religious matters |
| Kindi | : | A small tailed pot used for ablution |
| Kolāmbi | : | A pot with big mouth for spitting pay chewing wastes |
| Kottil | : | Inner circle of a house having so many entrances to other parts of house |
| Kuruthi | : | A trapping device to catch fish |
| Kuzhithalam | : | Two flat dices for clapping to make sounds |
| Lailathul Qadr | : | An auspicious day in the last days of Ramzan |
| Langōtti | : | A piece of cloth to cover the loins |
| Machwa | : | A big boat running with help of wind |
| Madhhab | : | School of Jurisprudence of Islam |
| Madrasah | : | Religious school run systematically |
| Mahr | : | The value payable to bride to solemnize the marriage |
| Mailānchi | : | Hema, dye to decorate body parts |
| Makkāni | : | A teashop in country side |
| Mamākam | : | The prestigious festival of the Zamorin at Tirunavaya |

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| Mandakam | : | Same as Ara and Maniyara |
| Maniyara | : | Same as Ara |
| Mannāthi | : | A low-caste Hindu women |
| Maqbara | : | Tomb of saint |
| Mathāv | : | Glittering dress of a bride with a combination of mundu, Kuppayam and thattam |
| Melchārth | : | A promissory Deed to a tenant by jenmi |
| Methiyadi | : | A Wooden Chappal |
| Mirāj | : | An auspicious day in memory of Prophet's heavenly journey |
| Mudarris | : | A teacher of Dars |
| Muharram | : | Name of first month of Hijra era and an auspicious day on 10 th Muhrram |
| Mukri | : | Muadhin, a general functionary in the Mappila mosque whose special task is the call to prayer |
| Mullakka | : | A teacher in Othupalli and helper of religious functions |
| Munājāth | : | Welcome song before an audience. |
| Musliyār | : | A religious priest |
| Muthavalli | : | A man managing a mosque |
| Nahs | : | Forbidden |
| Nahv | : | Arabic Grammar |
| Nhāru | : | Young Seedlings of Paddy |
| Nikāh | : | Ceremony of Solemnization of marriage |
| Nisāb | : | The limitation that require to pay Zakath |
| Nukam | : | Yoke, to tie two cattles for ploughing |
| Oppana | : | A fine art among Mappilas in the occasions of marriage |
| Ossān | : | A Mappila Barber commonly known as |
| Othupalli | : | Single teacher religious institution, elementary level |
| Padāppuram | : | The front part of malikaveedu with high platform to sit. |
| Pādasaram | : | The ornaments worn in ankles by women |
| Pandal | : | A temporary thatched roof made in the courtyard of house during marriage |

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| Pāndikashāla | : | Working yards with godowns connected with business |
| Panichipasa | : | A gum of a tree used to paste leather |
| Parichakali | : | An art form of the mixture of Kalari and Kolkali |
| Pathāyam | : | A wooden room or box to keep paddy |
| Penkuppāyam | : | Tight jacket of Mappila ladies with laces on borders |
| Penpanam | : | Dowry, amount given by the bride to bridegroom |
| Pettichi | : | A servant maid attending to the delivered Mappila women |
| Pinnākkū | : | The cake of coconut remained after extraction |
| Polichezhuthu | : | Cancellation of Deeds given to a tenant by 'jenmi' |
| Puislān | : | A Mappila fisherman |
| Pulpāya | : | Mattress made out of the fibre of herbs |
| Qāzi | : | A Muslim judge having the power to give ruling |
| Ramzān | : | An Arabic month when fasting is observed |
| Rāntal | : | A portable lamp with chimney |
| Rātīb | : | Ecstatic dance |
| Rawka | : | A tight jacket used by ladies of low class Hindu |
| Salāth | : | Blessing words towards Prophet |
| Sarbath | : | Soft drink |
| Sayyid | : | Descendant of Prophet's family |
| Shaheed | : | Martyr |
| Soori | : | Soft mundu with thin border |
| Stridhanam | : | Same as pen-panam |
| Surma | : | Eye-stainer made out of some herbs |
| Swarf | : | Etymology |
| Tariqat | : | Sufi way of living |
| Thajweed | : | Laws relating to recitation of Quran |
| Thakkiāve | : | A small mosque for prayer in public places |
| Thala | : | Round silver ornament used by girls in ankles |
| Thalappāvu | : | Along piece of cloth that tie around head |

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| Thāmbool | : | Betleaf, arecanut, tobacco and |
| Thanda | : | Round silver ornaments used by boys in ankles |
| Thangal | : | Member of a Sayyid family |
| Tharavādu | : | A joint family unit |
| Thasawwuf | : | Islamic Philosophy |
| Thattom | : | A piece of cloth to cover head |
| Urukku | : | 'Mantras' written on porcelain plate to be consumed for the cure of disease |
| Urūz | : | Same as nercha |
| Usthād | : | Teacher of Madrasa commonly known |
| Uz _u hiyyath | : | Animal sacrifice during Bakrid festival |
| Varavu | : | Procession in connection with 'nercha' bringing in offerings |
| Vayattātti | : | A mid wife to attend a delivery of a woman |
| Vellātti | : | Same as Vayattatti, a barber woman among Mappilas |
| Waaz | : | Religious sermon, especially in night |
| Wuzu | : | Ablution |
| Yāseen | : | An important chapter of Quran which is recited on important occasions |
| Zakāth | : | The legal alms from the property of a Muslim |
| Zamzam | : | The holy well near Kaaba at Makkah |

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APPENDICES

Appendix – 1

Kathukuthu Kalyanam (Ear-boring ceremony)

(song taken from old *Kalyanapatt* collections)

காடக்த-அய்யை சாயின

கே டுவின காடக்த அய்யை அந்த கீமர்
கேய மக்ச கலியா அகூ சக்சுவிமர்
அடி கவாயிரர் வாய் சபில குடிபி
அரமமுவன் கி கமரபி ச்சு தவிபி

அடி கை காடக்த தவிபி அந்நாயிர க்
அரு சூ சூ ககூ ககூ அந்நாயிர க்
தவிபி ச்சு ச்சு ச்சு ச்சு ச்சு ச்சு ச்சு ச்சு
நாமர் க் ச்சு ச்சு ச்சு ச்சு ச்சு ச்சு ச்சு ச்சு

Appendix - 2

Kathukuthumala (song of Ear-boring)

(song taken from the collections of Pulikkottil Hyder)

گاڈ کت ماٹ پِلِکُوڑِل صَیْدَر

چیتَم پَر تَنبُ کَیض گُوین اِکُجَم
 کَالِجَر پِیْل پِٹ کُڈِ کَجَن
 وِہ لَن صَچَن کِلَم پُو گُوین
 کُتِکُم چُوڈ مَکُض مَلِ دَمَر تُمَبِکُ د
 کَابُمبُوض تَجَن کُک دَی چَک اَبَر تَلُم
 پِچُچُو
 کُتُضُکُم اَسَانَم - وُڈ
 پِچُپِیَنر صُلا تُو لِبُ کُڈ
 پِیَنجُ نَارَه
 بَارَا کُم مَلِ لَن

ڈ کُتُم یَدَعَت کُتُڈِجَن
 تِیْتَا کَبَرَا گُوین
 وُلَم کُڈ تَا دِر گُوین اِنت
 اَدَا پِدا اِکُجِپِشَر کَجَن گَاڈ
 رُتَا کُ اِث وِجَن اِث کَیِنِدا مَر پِجَن
 تُم پِیَنجُو رَ کَا تُمَل
 تِنبُ دُو اَو سَانَم
 پِچُچُو دَن آ رَه پِر پِچُت
 تِکُم مَل کُم جُو رَا کُم وِیْدِن

Appendix - 3

Maniyara (Bridal chamber)

(song taken from old Kalyanappat collections)

چایپ - مہیہ

| | |
|--------------------|--------------------|
| نَل چچم مود د پم | پتم شرم منیل |
| نامم کرئی کتم | پلنگ گد لتم |
| چیر تبتد م ترپم | پدو سر رشر |
| کامبول ادم چر د | پنگشیم چید کل |
| سپار چیں تر تو م | چیر گد م پید جن |
| تینم کر بند کئل | سنورم چتم تر تل |
| چنم نور بتا کو د | چیرت بشی چیرم پون |
| کامنا چر تینی | پدمبتدا گاک میلی |
| تد چرم پار بتم | چیرم پید جھارم |
| کابم جدا رر کل | چر پید مٹر کل |
| پل بخت یو تی | پیرا سیر دت |
| پو مو صد پو رشک | پدتم پدا کد تی |
| پنگ میل پام پدا نم | پشجن پاسید پد کم |
| پو پد م اچتو نم | پادم تل کر کل |
| پچیم مچبم | پدی نامو میل ندانم |
| | نامو سن تد تیل |

Appendix - 4

Appatharam (Bread Items)

(song taken from old Ammayipat collections)

اَيِّرَم

اَرُو دُتَرَم اَيِّرَم كَه تَمَاي
 اَبْد بَسْتَرَم كِسْكِي
 يَنْيُو لِدِرَن مَدَّ مَرِحْت
 مَكِدَيْت كَلْتِيَم كَلْس اَيِّر
 مَر مَد يَتِر مَدَّ مَر ك
 اَرَم اِك يَصِيَا كَلَا شِج
 تَكَرَت كُوْر مَر بِيَم تَرُو كَيْتَل
 تَكْتِيَدِيَه جَلُو مَكِي
 جَلِك يَبِيَر كُوْر كَشِج
 حَمِيَه اَبْر كَشْر اَبْر اَيُوْر
 حَنْت مِسْتِيَه كُوْر سِرُو
 اَشْتِيَر مَر پَالُوْر مَر تَوَان
 حِنْمَجَن كُوْر مَدْنِيَج اَيِّر

اَيِّرَم كَم

اَدَن تَد مِد كِنْد مَهَبْتِيَم
 بِيَم يُوْض كَد مَر اِد يِيَم
 مِيْر يُوْل لَنْكَت مَسَار
 مَكُوْضَن كُوْر بِيَم مَد جَلِيَم
 اَبْر يَبْتِيَه يَنْجَسَار مَلَار
 تَر مَر كُوْر مَر وَنَمْر بَك كَسُوْمَر
 بَا كَد مَر يَنْج سَار سِر كَض اَبْر
 حَنْك مَس مَس مَض بِيَم يُوْض
 حَكْمَه اَبْر حَنْمَار اَبْر حِيْتِيَل
 يَبِيَل يَنْت نَلْتِيَم
 حَنْت تَد تَكِدُوَان مَد مال
 حِر حِيَه بَل اَيِّر مَد كَيْتَل

Appendix - 5

Abharanam (Ornaments)

(song taken from the *Oppanappat* collections)

اَبْرَبَمَ اَسِنِّيَا يَلِك

| | |
|-------------------------------|------------------------------|
| مِكُو ل ا ا ر كُم پُو ت مَال | مَال بَيْرَم رَشْنَمَال |
| مَد رَجَلِ اَت مَال | مَال چَكْر مِي مَال |
| كَا دِر رَج پُو ت مَال | كُو ك مِچِل كُنْمَال |
| چَر مَد جُم پَار مَال | چِيك بَر ت رَا كَمَال |
| پَنِي صِيكُم وَيَر مَال | پَار تِك كِر و مَال |
| ا مَد نَل كِد ر مَال | ا و ر م ر كُنْمَال |
| ا صِل كَا دِل مَنِي كَبَت | چَل تَكُم پَر شِي ل كَام |
| مُر تِنَادُم مِينُو كَا دِل | چَر چِل پُو د بَن ت مَوِ د |
| مِكُو ن نَامَم پِي ن كِي يَم | مِينُو كَا دِل مَد ر مَل پُو |
| پَنِي صِيكُم كَد و ن ا ر | مُنْكَر تِل پَكش مَنِي يَم |
| كَنبَد مَل كَه مَنَال م | كَب مَر تَكْتِي ت ا ر |
| كِد ر مِغ پَر شِي و لَه | كِي ر ت نَا كَم پِد و ن ا ر |
| ا نِي بِي تُم چِي تُم ا ر | ا ن بَر ت چَر صَد ت |
| ا ر د پِي ل چَر بَصِي يَم | ا ر و د د ت ر ت ر ت |
| مِكُو ل كُم تُو و ن بَصِي يَم | مَن مَد ت كُو و ن كُو تِل |
| مَد د ا ت نَامَم پِلِي يَم | مَانِي رِي پَرِي ش لَس ت |

Appendix - 6

Kalapott (cattle = race)

(song taken from the collections of Pulikkottil Hyder)

പുതു പുതു

കാല പുതു പുതു

| | |
|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| കാല പുതു പുതു - പലർമ്മേ | പുതു പുതു - അനു |
| കാലകുഴ കുണ്ടു ദിനം | ചാൻ ചുണ്ടു ചുവ - കാല |
| അൻ അൻ അനു ഉണ്ടു | അ, ഉറു, ഉറു, ഉറു |
| കിഴുവു ഉറു ഉറു ഉറു | കാലകുഴ മനു തുറു ഉറു - ക |
| അനു ചുവു തുറു ക | ഉറു ഉറു ഉറു ഉറു - ത |
| ഉറു അനു കിഴു തുറു | നീരൂ മൂലു തുറു ഉറു |
| ഉറു ഉറു കിഴു - കിഴു | നിൻ മൂലു തുറു ക |
| ചിറു കിഴു അനു ഉറു | പുറു ഉറു മൂലു തുറു |
| അനു ഉറു ഉറു ക | ക |
| അനു കിഴു അനു ഉറു | തുറു തുറു അനു |
| അനു ഉറു ഉറു തുറു | ക |

APPENDIX - 7
Varieties of paddy used in Malabar
during the British period
(Taken from Manual of Madras Administration Vol.67)

| Item of Paddy | Duration of Crop |
|----------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. Aryan | 4 months |
| 2. Aunaccanyan | 6 months |
| 3. Aunacudom | 6 months |
| 4. Auna Comban | 5 " |
| 5. Calama | 5 " |
| 6. Carim coora | 3 " |
| 7. Carippaly | 4 " |
| 8. Caroota Cadam | 4 " |
| 9. Carootta Chara | 4 " |
| 10. Caroottainy | 4 " |
| 11. Cauda Caloottan | 6 " |
| 12. Courany | 5 " |
| 13. Chembraun | 4 " |
| 14. Cheera | 6 " |
| 15. Chembily piriya | 5 " |
| 16. Chempaula | 4 " |
| 17. Chandaula | 4 " |
| 18. Chendaumany | 4 " |
| 19. Chittainy | 5 " |
| 20. Churnauly | 4 " |
| 21. Codavilootala | 9 " |
| 22. Cokkan | 4 " |
| 23. Colpunja | 4 " |
| 24. Coly | 5 " |
| 25. Coodivittu | 6 " |
| 26. Cunny | 4 " |
| 27. Jeeraca ary | 4 " |
| 28. Krishna leela | 5 " |
| 29. Macaran | 4 " |
| 30. Mayil Caloottan | 5 " |
| 31. Meshattory | 6 " |
| 32. Moondagampala | 5 " |
| 33. Moondagam | 5 " |

APPENDIX - 8
MAPPILA PERSONAL NAMES – DIVERSIFICATIONS

Abdu – Andu

Abdu Kutty – Abdutty, Addutty, Andukutty, Andrutty, Aythrutty

Abdullah – Aula, Avala

Abdullah Kutty – Avala Kutty

Abdurahiman – Andru, Andraman, Arman, Adrman, Aydrose, Aythraman

Abdurahiman Kutty – Andraman Kutty, Athrmaan Kutty, Armatty, Aythrman Kutty

AbuBakr – Avvakkar, Aukar, Avokar

AbuBakr Kutty – Avukkarutty, Abootty

Ahamad – Amu, Ayam, Ayamad, Ammad

Ahamad Kutty – Ayamutty, Ayamotti, Ammotti

Ali – Aliyar, Aali, Aalippu

Ali Muhammad – Aliyamu

Ayisha – Ayishamma, Ayshu, Ayichu

Ayisha Beevi – Ayshabi, Ayishambi, Aysheevi, Ayichu

Ayisha Ummu – Ayshammu, Ayichammu, Ayshamma

Ayisha Kutty – Ayshutty, Ayichutty

Bakkar – Pakkar, Pokkar, Pakki, Pokku

Bakkar Kutty – Bakrutti, Pakkrutty, Pokkarutty

Fathima – Pathu, Pathi, Pathayi, Patheyi

Fathima Umma – Pathumma, Pathummai, Pathuma, Pathoma

Fathima Kutty – Pathukutty, Pathikutty, Pathutty

Fathima Kunhi – Pathunhi

Fathima Kutty – Pathukutty, Pathikutty, Pathutty

Ibrahim – Ibrayi, Imbayi, Ibrain

Kinhi Ahamad Kutty – Kunhamutti

Koya Muhammad – Koyamu

Koya Muhammad Kutty – Koyamutty

Kunhi Ayisha – Kunhayisha, Kunheesha, Kochayisha
Kunhi Ahamad – Kunhahamed, Kunhamed, Kunhayammu, kunhamu,
Kunhi Ali –Kunhalan, Kunhali
Kunhi Alikutty – Kunhalikutty
Kunhi Bakkar – Kunhi Pokker
Kunhi Bakkar Kutty – Kunhi Pokkrutty
Kunhi Fathima – Kunhathu, Kunhathumma, Kunhi Pathu, Kunhi Pathuma
Kunhi Muhiyuddin – Kunhi Moideen, Kunhi Moidu, Kunhi Moyan, Kunhi Moyin,
Kunhi Moyitti, Kunhayi
Kunhikoya Muhammad – Kunhi Koyamu
Kunhikoya Muhammad Kutty – Kunhi Koyamutti
Kunhu Muhammad – Kunhutti, Kunhami
Kutty Ahamad – Kuttyamu
Kutty Ahamad Kutty – Kuttiamutti, Kuttiamutty
Kutty Ali - Kuttiali
Kutty Ali Kutty – Kuttialikutty
Muhammad – Mammad, Mamad, Mayamad, Mammu, Mamu, Mammi, Mayami,
Mammathu
Muhammad Koya – Mamukoya
Muhammad Kutty – Mammutti, Mayamutti, Maymotti, Mammotti
Mohammad Kunhi – Mammunhi
Muhammadali - Mayamali
Muhiyuddin – Moideen, Moidu, Maydi, Moyin, Mayin, Moyi, Mithiyan
Muhiyuddin Kutty – Moideen Kutty, Moidutty, Moyi Kutty, Moyin Kutty, Moyitti,
Metti
Shaikh – Chekku
Shaikh Ahamad – Chekkmad, Chekkamu
Shaikh Ahamad Kutty – Chekkamutty
Shaikh Kutty – Chekutty

APPENDIX - 9

MAPPILA LOCAL NAMES

Males

Beeran, Beeravu, Assu, Enu, Pariyayi, Kunhamu, Eramu, Enteen, Pari, Pareeth Enutty, Kunharamutty, Eni, Taruvayi, Kunhalu, Pareekutty, Beerali, Kunhimm, Kunhava, Kunhi Kammu, Kunhayan, Soopy, Kunhisooopy, BeeranKutty, Assainar, Assanarutty, Kareemutty, Alassan, AlassanKuty, Kunhassan Kutty, Yahu, Yahutty, Unnikkadar, Avukkadar, Avukkadarutty, Avulakoya, Kathirikkoya, Nallakoya, Imbichiali, Imbichiammad Antunhi, Rayu, Rayin, Rayin Kutty, Kunhikoya, Kunhi Rayin, Eramullan, Veerali, Veeravunni, Veerani, Antunhi, Pookunhi, Unnissan, Uluvan, Koyassan, Kunharu, Saidalu, Saidali, Mammadeesha, Avaran, Avaru, Kunhothi, Kunhessan Kutty, Pareekutty, Uneen, Unneen Kutty, Taha, Tahakutty, Koyatty, Kalanthan, Bava, Bavutty, Bavi, Bavan, Mammathu, Komu, Komukutty, Kuttiman, Bappu, Bapputty, Pookunhi.



Females

Ummaya, Ummayumma, Umaymath, Umayma, Umaiva, Ummachu, Unneema, Ummatha, Ummothi, Ummuram, Katheema, Kathiyumma, Katheesumma, Kunheema, Kunhurumma, Kunhathumma, Palleema, Iyyathu, Thitti, Tayumma, Tithikutty, Titheebi, Kathiya, Thitheema, Thitheerumma, Kunhikkathiya, Mariya, Mariyumma, Mariyama, Maryama, Kalmal, Bichumma, Bichutty, Biyyan, Biyya, Biyyathu, Biriyumma, Biyyutty, Koyyakutty, Amu, Kunhami, Mammathu, Kuttikoya, Sara, Sarumma, Saramma, Imbichutty, Imbicheevi, Imbichumma, Itheema, Ithirumma. Beevi, Beekutty, Beema, Maymoo, Sainabi, Saina, Sainu, Kaija, Khairoja Kaijakutty, Havvavumma.

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