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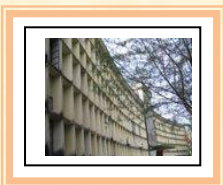
**Colonial Knowledge,**

**Nationalism and**

**Representations:**

**Readings from Malabar**

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# Colonial Knowledge, Nationalism and Representations: Readings from Malabar

*The social and cultural changes in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century in India took its shape in colonial situation. The colonial discourses and practices produced new forms knowledge that had telling impact on the cognitive domain of the colonized and influenced the latter's imagination of nation. This paper is an attempt to explain the formation of multiple subjectivities and selves in the context of colonialism and national culture in Malabar.*

From eighteenth century onwards, Europeans had developed a scientific temperament in all walks of their lives. Unlike earlier, Europe as states now began to manifest their power through a gradual extension of "officializing" procedures that established and extended their capacity in many areas. They took control by defining and classifying space, making separation between public and private spheres; by recording transactions such as the sale of property; by counting and classifying their populations replacing religious institutions as the registers of births, marriages and deaths; and by standardizing languages and scripts.<sup>1</sup> European also ascribed great significance to empirical methods. To the educated English men of late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, the world was knowable through the senses, which could record the experience of a natural world. This world was generally believed to be divinely created, knowable in an empirical fashion and constitutive of sciences through which would be revealed the laws of nature that governed the world and all that was in it.<sup>2</sup>

In India, British entered a new world that they tried to comprehend using their own forms of knowing and thinking and rendering the social world of India into a series of "facts." As "administrative power stemmed from the efficient use of these facts,"<sup>3</sup> its collection lay at the foundation of the modern state. On coming to India, the British invaded and conquered not only a territory but an epistemological space as well. Notwithstanding the "facts" of this space do not exactly correspond to those of the invaders, they could be explored and conquered through

various investigative modalities<sup>4</sup> which provided for the final form of the colonial knowledge about India.

The process of the cultural transformation of Malabar too had, in all ways, been linked with these macro processes on the go. From the very moment the British took hold of Malabar, they started intentional endeavours to render the social world of Malabar in easily manageable "facts." In 1792-93 onwards a Joint Commission was appointed to inspect the state and conditions of the province of Malabar. By 1800 Francis Buchanan makes "A journey from Madras through countries of Mysore, Canara and Malabar."<sup>5</sup> In 1824 we see Lt. Ward surveying Malabar published later as "A descriptive memoir of Malabar."<sup>6</sup> A number of commissions were appointed to enquire in to problems occasionally come to confront by the colonial governments.<sup>7</sup> By 1887 William Logan had completed his masterly history of Malabar in two volumes of his "Malabar Manual."<sup>8</sup> The final consolidation of all the above endeavours can be seen in the "Malabar Gazette" of Innes in 1915.<sup>9</sup> A detailed exposition of the working of these investigative modalities has not hitherto been done. This is an area that beckons the historical scholarship. The concerns of the present study prevent from going deeply into the avenues of this process. What we have to see here is that colonialism created its own geography constructed manageable categories and thereby formed boundaries and invented histories on the basis of the predilections of the empirical positivism which believed that the secrets of the working of the world is knowable through sensible experiences of man.

Such colonial attempts had produced some effects at the knowledge level first which percolated to the cognitive domain of colonial Malabar. One was a proclivity towards homogenisation. Consolidating elusive differences within the social materials of the area into administratively manageable "facts" by various investigative modalities, and the deployment of these "facts" into the administrative discourse produced its effect on the Malabar mind. For example, Nairs who were not at all a homogenous category in the pre-colonial period were fastened together and zipped up in to the colonial census category ie. Nayar. Now a hitherto heterogeneous jati groups got lost in the ontological violence of colonialism and in its stead an invented homogeneous category – as it was floated frequently in the colonial official discourse –

got its stake in the minds of the people. Colonialism thus possessed a great potential for the reconfiguration of Indian society and self.

The most important sites through which the western colonial modernity entered the Indian life were (1) The Administrative and legal sites and (2) The missionary sites (3) The market sites.<sup>10</sup> The first group of people who fell in the spell of modernity were those who happened to get spaces in these sites. The first two jatis who imbibed modern western ideas in Malabar were Nairs and Tiyyas. It has been made clear that Nairs manned the lower and middle rungs of administrative machinery of colonial Malabar by the middle of the nineteenth century onwards. By then it had become common among Nayers to send children to study English by Nairs. Generation after generation they were rising in to the higher rungs of administration. English education also enabled them to capture and to an extent influence the juridical apparatus of the colonial government. But the pattern was that Nairs formed a strong group in South Malabar where as Tiyyas were concentrated in the north Malabar. Tiyyas emerged themselves as a powerful group in the first two decades of twentieth century in Malabar.<sup>11</sup> Tiyyas lived so close to the European community settled around the Tellicherry Factory and the nearby plantations that their women shared their lives with Europeans.

## II

Thus, in the colonial situation of Malabar, the first generation among the colonized, at the face of the colonial subordination, tried to rescue themselves from colonial situation and tried to undo with their real self to merge with the subordinating self of colonizer. This required certain changes in the social and cultural practices that prevailed traditionally. It was this unconscious move that pushed the roller of reform into action. But here comes another problem. In Malabar Nayers alone could make any headway in reform. Why was it that the two groups who were treading same path in a colonized situation behaved differently? The first answer is that the behaviour of the colonial subject is limited by the colonial mind-set.

Colonizers in Malabar recognized the different existence of Nayars and Tiyyas as *jatis*. This naturally created boundaries between them in the colonial spaces. Actually at least in North Malabar Tiyyas got much more exposure to all the three sites of colonial modernity. But they could not make much headway as the Nayars of Malabar did in the field of education and official jobs. It has been said that the majority of the land revenue officials at the beginning of twentieth century were Nayars even though Tiyyas had equal economic and educational status.<sup>12</sup> British colonialism in Malabar never had attempted, in anyways, either to destroy or to debilitate the traditionally privileged classes. They always tried to favour them in all the possible ways with a view to maintaining a group loyal to the British power. In addition to this Nayars traditionally were soldiers, administrators and government officers. This naturally gave Nayars an additional attraction from the colonial masters. Tiyyas, being traditionally toddy tappers, might not have been getting that attraction of Nayars in the colonial administrative circle due to this fact. In relation to this, there is one more thing. This may be called a Tiyya's quandary born out of his double subordination. The colonized who possessed a privileged self in the traditional setting (and that the privilege being partially protected by colonialism) could only choose to remove the immediate barriers which were parts of his real self that directly come in to conflict with the colonial world. But, for Tiyyas, both tradition and modernity mean subordination. So whenever he found an opening in the colonial world he tried to escape from his traditional self. Many of them selected a path of complete departure from the tradition through conversions.<sup>13</sup> Thus, we see that Tiyyas primarily concerned about acquiring education beyond everything else.<sup>14</sup> The beginning of twentieth century witnessed mounting proclivity towards reform among Ezhavas though it was mainly concentrated in Travancore.

All other *jatis* including Mappilas chose otherwise. They kept themselves aloof from the cultural sites of modernity. Though British authorities protected their economic and social privileges and kept links with them, Nambutiri Brahmins too chose to live in the traditional way – a life of extreme purity, entrusting their Nair servants and assistants called *Karyasthan and Valiyakkarans* to deal with matters regarding income expenditure, tax paying, suits in the court etc. It was only after the revolt of 1921 that Nambutiri Brahmins showed inclination towards reforms. Mappilas who constituted the major part of South Malabar too showed a negative

approach to colonialism. It is not true to say that Mappilas detached themselves from the sphere of colonial culture. Mappilas could keep close relations with the British in the coastal areas. It was so common in north Malabar.<sup>15</sup> In South Malabar too the coastal area provided immense opportunities for Mappilas to get in touch with the modern ways. But they rarely cared for the English language which practically kept the colonial administrative spaces off from the Mappila life. Mappilas of South Malabar were so adamant in this attitude. It is proved that the Mappilas of South Malabar had weighed the unmanageable weight of colonial intervention in the land revenue administration.<sup>16</sup> The consequent poverty and loss of power probably lies at the root of the Mappila rejection of colonial spheres of culture. At the same time those who possessed material wealth and kept constant relation with the British too rarely cared for modern education and British jobs and an inclination towards reform. This is not to deny the fact that the first generation of Muslim who turned towards colonial ways and education hails from north Malabar especially Tellicherry. There was weak presence of missionary activities in the core of South Malabar which is characterized as the "fanatic zone".<sup>17</sup> The distance of Mappilas of coastal areas from the colonial things possibly was memories of anti-European struggle they led in the preceding centuries. It is less probable that Mappilas of South Malabar were proud in the anti-European struggle of coastal Mappilas. A study of popular memory of Mappilas of the area may lead us to a conclusion. Presently Mappila conscience of South Malabar has only a little space for pre-British anti-European struggle but it still celebrates many battles fought by the prophet and his companions in Arabia in addition to certain struggles that occurred in their territory like "Malappuram pada". At the same time anti-colonialism was being nurtured in the minds of Mappilas in South Malabar through the political practices in the context of the colonial impoverishment of Mappilas in South Malabar. Even in south Malabar we see pockets of colonial influence.<sup>18</sup> However, the acceptance of colonial modernity was largely an exceptional behaviour among the Mappilas in general.

The plight of the rest of the jati groups continued to be the same as before colonialism. The limited social agenda of taming the hierarchical society with least intervention of colonialism could not liberate the downtrodden castes of Malabar. The only channel, opened up by the colonial political economy possessed potentials for liberation of these castes, was

plantation industries. But here too the downtrodden castes could not avail the openings because they got only seasonal employment in the plantations.<sup>19</sup> Consequently tearing apart from his traditional master was suicidal for the downtrodden. Thus, many members of the lower caste were sent to the plantations because their masters willed so. Moreover they were treated so badly in the plantations that they felt almost no difference between the two positions. In short, they could not escape from the shackles of slavery. Though they were exposed to Christian missionary sites in Travancore and Cochin region, Malabar, especially south Malabar offered very little openings of this kind. They lived largely in the monotonous world of work, poverty and stench and their movement was restricted to the limited spaces where they were destined to work. The lower caste in general, and their women in particular lived a life oblivious of spatial difference and time sense as they lacked spatial comparison and markers of time. Many of them did not know even how old were their offspring.<sup>20</sup>

### III

The process of transformation of society in general and culture in particular is also closely linked with the Nationalism. Nationalism is a well debated phenomenon in the realm of various disciplines in social sciences. Among the various facets of nationalism the psychological and cultural ones will be useful for understanding the vicissitudes of the cultural changes in Malabar. Albert Memmi has explained the vicissitudes of colonial subject's mind. In colonial situations, the colonizer creates a portrait of the superior colonizer and an inferior colonized. The created image of the colonized as lazy, shabby, shy and with all bad traits is generally accepted by the colonized as they are in a colonial situation.<sup>21</sup> They could not escape from the colonial situation even as they tried to tear themselves apart from tradition with a view to entering the self of the colonizer.<sup>22</sup> Thus the closer he reaches the perimeter of the colonizer's self, the stronger was the sense of his subordination. This process of subordination is rather clear when we recognize that colonialism was as much a cultural project of control as an economic project of exploitation.

Finding the doors of the colonizer's world closed to him, the colonized realizes the fact that revolt is the only way out of the colonial situation. Moreover, he sees that his condition is



absolute and cries for a "solution" a break and not a compromise.<sup>23</sup> This break naturally led to the process of recovery and rediscovery of themselves. But even at the height of his revolt, the colonized still bears the traces and lessons he learnt out of prolonged habitation with the colonizer. The colonized fights in the name of the very values of the colonizer, uses the latter's techniques of thought and methods of combat.<sup>24</sup> To put it differently, the colonized at this stage become a man torn between the two domains. Having once imitated the ways of the colonizer, an uncompromising return to his real self does not seem possible. Partha Chatterjee's studies on Bengali *Badralok*, has brought out this dichotomous consciousness. Bengali *Badralok* had recognized the superiority of Western science and civilization in the material 'outer' domain and on the other the face was saved by retreating in to an 'inner' spiritual domain where they could keep themselves off the colonial power. And it is from this inner domain that they launched the project of fashioning a "modern" national culture that is not western.<sup>25</sup>

An important factor to be understood at this point is that the "inner" domain here is not free from the shackles of the 'outer' domain because the modalities of the rediscovery of the real self was largely determined by the vestiges of cohabitation of the colonized with the colonizer. In this way the 'inner' domain too was restricted by a kind of colonial mediation. It was through such mediation that the idea of 'Hindus' as a homogenous religious community found its way into the Indian mind.

It is appropriate here to look briefly at the way in which colonial endeavours constructed a unified Hindu religious community through official intervention. In ancient times Persians called the land of 'Sindh' as 'hind'. Arab Muslims followed by Turkish Muslims too used the same word to denote India. During ancient and medieval times "Hind" was largely used to denote the geographical unit. Romila Thapper has shown that 'Hindu' was not used to denote a homogenous religious community before the fifteenth century.<sup>26</sup> It is probable that 'Hindu' acquired religious connotation as the term was widely used for things Indian during the medieval period.

The European perception of the Indian people has been highly determined by their religious proclivities as well as their contempt for Muslims – a historically developed trait in

medieval European condition. Sushil Srivastava has brilliantly shown how the Portugues 'Gentile' travelled through spatio-temporal planes of the early phase of European colonialism with difference in form and meaning to become at last 'Gentoo's', signifying a homogenous religious community in the hands of Halhead, the author of "Code of Gentoo Laws."<sup>27</sup>

What is important here is that Europeans readily and hastily understood Indian people in terms of religion. The haste to define people in terms of religion is reflected in the fact that at the sight of a temple Vasco da Gama concluded in no time it to be a church.<sup>28</sup> In those years Europe generally classified people in to religious categories and placed them in a hierarchy of civilizations. In this sense Christians were placed superior to the moors and Jews and heathens were considered beyond the pale of civilization. This classification of the people of the world failed in India. People in India were far more civilized than the African heathens. This problem was solved when varied people of India other than Muslims were clubbed under the convenient terms 'Gentoo'.<sup>29</sup>

Gentoo's seems to have always existed in colonial discourse in dichotomous relations with the Moor. Table.1 shows a sample of the dichotomous characters – both real and imaginary – attributed to Moors and Gentoo's in the latter half of the seventeenth century.

Table.1

<b>Gentoo's</b>	<b>Moors</b>
Poor	Rich
Lived in thatched houses	Lived in brick houses
Poorly dressed/Scantily clothed	Properly attired
Walked and toiled in the field	Rode horses and traveled by carts
Women were free and came out freely from their homes	Never allowed to step out of their houses without escorts
Original inhabitants	Conqueror/invited

It was this perception that percolated all among the colonial administrative discourse. These perceptions got tangibility when British administrators codified the traditional laws. The attempt to codify laws largely drawn from religious books of the subject peoples at once fixed identities in religious and legal terms for the Indians. *Also the non-Muslim Indians were clubbed together under the single category of Gentoos and were found to be guided by a uniform code of law.*<sup>30</sup> The codification of Gentoos Laws and Muhammadan laws thus became highly instrumental in quashing multitudes of identities to relocate themselves in to either of the two, ie., Hindu<sup>31</sup> or Muslim.<sup>32</sup> Along with this tangible world British strategies of legitimizing their rule had furthered the unconscious distance between 'Hindus' and Muslims. Colonial literature – whether it is administrative records, histories or legal digest – always tends to represent "Muslims" as the oppressor from whom the 'Hindu' is rescued by the British. The fabrication of histories with a view to legitimizing the presence of colonialism in the issue of Somanath has been explicated brilliantly by erudite historical scholarship.<sup>33</sup> Moreover, the British manipulated the Tippu episode in Malabar to shore up legitimacy for their coercion and to buy an easier subordination of upper castes in Malabar.<sup>34</sup>

#### IV

Thus, colonial discourse and practices had produced new sensibilities among the colonized. Logically, nationalism too was not an exception. Firstly the concept that India was largely a land consisted of people belonged to two religious communities, ie, Hindus and Muslims. This is coupled with the notion that these two communities had for centuries stood in binary oppositions till the coming of the British. In addition to it the legitimizing strategies followed by the colonizer instilled that a more lenient policy of the colonial government towards the 'Hindu' subjects has liberated the 'Hindu' from the Mohammedan shackles. Nationalist culture, seems not have escaped from these notions in India. A reading of two novels written in the late Nineteenth century in Malabar gives vent to these sensibilities.

They are (1) *Indulekha* written by Chandu Menon who was an inhabitant of Parappanangadi in south Malabar, and (2) *Saraswathivijayam* written by Potheri Kunhambu

who is belonged to Cannanore in North Malabar. The reason for this selection is that both were written almost at the same time – *Indulekha* (1889) and *Saraswativijayam* (1892), a time which marked the completion of almost a century of colonial rule in Malabar. More over the two novels were written by the English educated ones. Chandu Menon, born in 1847 in a Nayar family of North Malabar, educated both in English and Sanskrit, entered the Civil service as the sixth clerk in a small court in 1864 to retire as a sub-judge.<sup>35</sup>

Pootheri Kunhambu, the author of *Saraswathivijayam* was a Tiyya vakkil. He was a social reformer and writer who took great interest in social services.<sup>36</sup> Attempts that have already done to read these novels had made our task very easy.<sup>37</sup> Considering these novels as social and cultural statements of the mileu in which they are written, it is concluded that they are the reflections of a condition at a point of time when the modern sensibilities began to replace the traditional sensibilities. Drawing from these works to a considerable extent an attempt is made to read these two with a comparative method to bring out the notions that came in to prevalence as a result of the colonial impact. Despite a difference between the open didacticism and reformism of Kunhambu and the realism and entertainmentism of Chandu Menon,<sup>38</sup> both novels attempt a critical introspection of the traditional society in the light of modern ideas, both capture almost the same imagined landscape, to be specific, a 'national' landscape, both highlights the liberatory potentials of English education.

A significant similarity of both these novels is that the imagination of a homogeneous 'Hindu' religious community, but with difference in details. As regards the *Indulekha*, what is dished out in 18<sup>th</sup> chapter is highly revealing of the tensions innate in the mind of the colonized. This chapter is basically "A conversation" - which takes place in Babu Keshab Chandrasen's huge moon-washed palatial house in Bombay – between govinda Panikkar (Madhavan's father), Madhavan and his young relative Govindankutty Menon. These three figures from different generations start by discussing God. As opposed to the atheist Govindankutty Menon and the traditional Govindapanikkar, Madhavan talks about a God divorced from the temple and the sandal wood paste,<sup>39</sup> thereby freeing God for the emerging middle class from the traditional Brahmanical fold. At the same time Madhavan argues about the great intellectual traditions of

'Brahmin's and 'Sanskrit' which could even promote atheism as it could be seen in *Samkhya* philosophy.<sup>40</sup> Reading on the success of the protagonists in convincing others of his argument (in the absence of authorial intervention) we can assume that this is reflexive of the middle class attempts to snatch away the textual possessions of the Brahmins in addition to imagining about a religion freed from the exclusive position of the latter. The 'inner' domain of nationalism was mainly constituted by this religion. Let us see how Govindankutty Menon the atheist in the conversation equates India with Hindu and Muslims – nothing more, nothing less. "How much has gone after many wonderful techniques like railway and telegraph reached India – won't *Hindu-Mussalman* [Indians?] try to learn to make and use these kinds of machines"?<sup>41</sup> Another thing to be seen here is the absence of the lower caste people in toto in the entire narration of *Indulekha*. Except one – the attendant of *Indulekha*, no one is present in the entire narration. This clearly shows that the sensibilities of modern – traditional growing middle class of the time lacked space for accommodating the presence of the downtrodden castes.

Mappilas, who constituted a dominant jati of the area from where *Indulekha* is written, are absent in the narration.<sup>42</sup> But in another way they are represented. When the narration reaches at an episode of deceit and robbery, the protagonist falls among men who were understood to be Muslims. The "handsome young man," styled himself as sub judge by profession and Sheer Ali Khan in Name,<sup>43</sup> though only seemingly a Muslim, is symbolically a real Muslim. Among the others involved the peon who was asked to keep the belonging of Madhavan when he and Sheer Ali Khan got down from the compartment to have food from the butler, and the policeman were pathan and Turks respectively. The picture is completed with the *Indulekha*'s dream in her palatial house. She wakes up suddenly, feverish and cries out. "Ayyo ! Ayyo ! Did this Muslim stab my husband to death? Alas My husband is dead. I don't want to live any longer."<sup>44</sup> Here what we see is the middle class Nayar of Malabar hoping to raise himself to the position of a national self – which is reflected in Madhavan's travel to the North and his making friendship with the most potential nationalist Middle class India, through reducing Pathan and Turks into a monolithic other that becoming to be a hurdle for his forward march. Chandu Menon, thus, in all probability was positing a fascinating and repulsive "other" which culturally should have been a Mappila from Malabar, since he and his hero

Madhavan are located in the cultural geography of Malabar. Let us also remind ourselves that Mappila were least initiated in to the modern culture and had a history of unrest at least from 1836 onwards especially in South Malabar.

*Saraswathivijayam* too follows the ways of imaging a homogeneous Hinduism the source of which lies in Sanskrit scholarship. In the preface to the first edition the author explicitly celebrates the great Sanskritic tradition. The entire text of the preface is hooked up on the saying *Vidyadhanam sarva dhanal Pradhanam* (Knowledge is the most precious kinds of wealth).

In connection with this saying, the author says: "Yet ought I not to ask whether the *Hindu*, who had reached a wonderful stage of civilization even before any others in the face of earth, had the knowledge of the sense of what is said in the saying. In addition to it as the saying itself is in Sanskrit, the original language of 'Hindus', there is no doubt about it."<sup>45</sup> What we see here is that the author imagines a romantic past to push temporal distance as farthest as possible and to recognize Sanskrit as the the source language of Hindu religion. The statements also allow us to infer the wisdom of Sanskrit scholarship. At the same time what is dished out in the novel run contrary to this. Pootheri Kunhambu is one with strong inclination towards social reform. In the preface itself he accuses caste system, the introduction of which maligned *Hindu* religion – the net result of which was negation of knowledge for the downtrodden castes. But in the novel the protagonist Marathan, a *pulaya* who has no other way for getting himself reached vistas of education and upward mobility than getting converted to Christianity. The paradox apparent here is that though the author explicitly says that the introduction of caste system has contaminated Hinduism and had sufficient veneration for Sanskritic sources, the *pulaya* protagonist in the novel never gets the contaminated part removed from Hinduism but goes to the Christian fold.

In Indulekha the absence of the downtrodden castes is conspicuous. But in *Saraswathivijayam* the novel itself is a story of the success of a *pulaya* who happens to be educated with the help of the Christian missionaries after he escapes from the tyranny of his master Brahmin. Even then Kunhambu's protagonist could not engage with the tradition which

detained him socially. This opens our eyes to a more significant problem. The down trodden class had no access to the traditional knowledge, a fact which the author recognizes in the preface itself.<sup>46</sup> To put it in another way, even if they had access to the Sanskritic tradition, they possessed almost a nonexistence in it as human beings. Kunhambu, for example has captivated readers with his knowledge of Sanskrit in the *Saraswathivijayam*. But instead of carving out spaces for themselves in the tradition, as has done in *Tiyyar* (1904), he unequivocally advocates conversions for Tiyyas as a means of emancipation.<sup>47</sup> This shows that as traditions provided little chance for their emancipation, the downtrodden always chose conversion. A glaring example is the attempts of conversion of C. Krishnan to Buddhism even after Narayanaguru had discovered a space in the tradition making brilliant use of the libratory potentials of Vedanta.

As regards the presence of Mappila characters, unlike in *Indulekha*, there is conspicuous presence of Mappilas. Here too the way Mappilas are represented is interesting. In the entire novel Mappilas come to the story as witnesses of Ramar Kutty Nambiar's killing of Marathan as he defied the jati rule. At two places they are referred to in conversations of other characters and only at one time we see a Mappila going into action. In the second chapter, Kotu-Nambiar the *adikari*, explains to the Nambutiri about the Mappila witness in the case. Hearing this, the furious Nambutiri responds: "Who are those rascal Mappilas? Dharma has gone wane after these bare-headed came." Kotu Nambiar plotted with the Nambutiri to remove the signed witness paper of Kuttiassan who is the Mappila witness. It is here that the 'Mappila' comes to action. Smelling something wrong about the movements, he managed to get the papers revealed from the court by way of bribing to see what Kotu Nambiar had done to his witness. Actually it was the letters sent to Mr. Joseph, under whom Marathan had been working, by the 'Mappila' that the case was further enquired and witnesses were collected. At last we see the judge Yesudas<sup>48</sup> gave the verdict that Mappilas were given punishment on account of themselves giving false witness. In the whole story Marathan was liberated through Christianity and education. Kuberan Nambutiri too in one sense was liberated from the shackles of traditional Malabar religion to accept a more changed Hindu religion as a result of his life in the streets in sacred cities and his relation with the reformist organizations like Aryasamaj and Brahmasamaj. Moreover, Nambutiri was acquitted, the punishment of Ramar Kutty Nayar was reduced but

'Mappilas' on the charge of being concocted witnesses were to be brought to trial at last. Thus what is done to 'Muslims' implicitly in *Induleka* was done explicitly to 'Mappilas' in *Saraswathivijayam*.

One more point to be remembered is that *Saraswathivijayam* never bring up the issue of nationalism in the story whereas in *Indulekha* nationalism is an important concern of the characters. This absence is highly revealing. Though not approving radicalism, the convincing arguments of Madhavan over the role of the Congress and the other's view over it shows that the rising middle class Nairs could make use of the Brahminic tradition which is the main source of the 'inner' domain of nationalist culture. Negating entry into this tradition, though as a class they reached middle class position, the down trodden, even Ezhavas could not realize nationalism as a thing to be considered in preference to social amelioration of the downtrodden.

In a sense what we have seen is how the first two groups who started moving towards the colonial modernity responded at the one and same time in two ways in a situation when the first glimpses of nationalistic tendencies began to raise their head. The point here is that nationalistic tendencies, when considered to be attempts of colonial self to catch back the traditional self, could not do away with the traits of 'colonial modern' as a result of which nationalism itself got mixed up as it waggled between tradition and modernity.

This was particularly so in India where colonialism was not as devastating as the French colonialism the context of which provided materials for the formulations on psychology of colonial subject by A. Memi. Probably this mild colonialism was made possible through a deliberate project of ideological conquest. Anyway nationalism in India was not as fierce as it was in the African world. As such Indian nationalists, in least at the early stages I believed in the liberatory potentials of colonial culture and apparatus in India.<sup>49</sup>



<sup>1</sup> Bernard S Cohn, *The Colonialism and its Forms of Knowledge*, Delhi, 1997, p.3.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., p.34.

<sup>3</sup> Antony D Smith, Quoted in Ibid., p.4.

<sup>4</sup> They are historiographic, observational, survey, enumerative, museological and the surveillance modalities. See Ibid., pp.3-15.

<sup>5</sup> Francis Buchanan, *A Journey from Madras through Countries of Mysore, Canara and Malabar*, 2 Vols., Madras, 1888.

<sup>6</sup> Ward and Conner, *A Descriptive Memoir of Malabar* [First Published in 1906], Thiruvananthapuram, 1995.

<sup>7</sup> A detailed picture of the where abouts of these commissions is available in C.A. Innes, *Malabar Gazetteer*, 2 Vols. [First published in 1908], Thiruvananthapuram, 1997.

<sup>8</sup> William Logan, *Malabar Manual*, 2 Vols.

<sup>9</sup> C.A. Innes, Op. cit.

<sup>10</sup> Bose, Sugata and Jala, Ayesha, *Modern South Asia – History, Culture and Political Economy*, Delhi, 1999, pp.77-80.

<sup>11</sup> Menon, M. Dilip, *Caste, Nationalism and Communism in Southern India – Malabar, 1900-1948*, Cambridge, 1994, pp.22-30.

<sup>12</sup> K.R. Achuthan, C. Krishnan, Kottayam, 1971, p.47.

<sup>13</sup> The best example is Samuel Aron. Tiyyas, under the leadership of C. Krishnan, had declared their intention to embrace Buddhism. See Achuthan K.R., Op. cit., pp.227-43; M.M. 23 January, 1923.

<sup>14</sup> For example see the slogan of Sree Narayana Dharma Paripalana Sangham. "Get free through education and get strong through organization".

<sup>15</sup> Chovvakkaran Moosa, for example, was a close collaborator of the company at Cannanore. See Zackariya, Skariya (ed.) *Talassery Rekhakal* (Mal.), Kottayam, 1995.

<sup>16</sup> See William Logan, Op. cit.

<sup>17</sup> Jose, Tony, K., "Missionarimar – Aksharathinte Velicham" (Mal.) in *Keralam Irupatham Noottandu, Special edition Samakalika Malayalam*, 7 January 2000, pp.126-138.

<sup>18</sup> For example, Hidayathul Muslimee Sabha, Manjeri, Maunathul Islam Sabha, Ponnani and Himayathul Islam Sabha, Calicut were forums for promoting modern and religious education always followed pro-British policies. See Koya, Parappil Muhammed, *Kozhikkotte Muslimkalude Charithram*, Kozhikkode, 1994, also see Samad, M. Abdul, *Islam in Kerala*, Kollam, 1998.

<sup>19</sup> K. Ravi Raman, "Bondage in Freedom: Colonial Plantation in Southern India – C.1797-1947". Working Papers No. 327, C.D.S. pp.4-6.

<sup>20</sup> Interview with Nadichi, Thiruvalli colony, Malappuram Dist.

<sup>21</sup> Albert Memmi, *The Colonizer and the Colonized*, Boston, 1965, pp.90-95.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid., pp.100-102.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid., p.127.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid., p.129.

<sup>25</sup> Partha Chatterjee, see *Nationalist thought and Colonial World – a Derivative Discourse?* OUP, 1986; also see his *Nation and its Fragments*.

<sup>26</sup> Romila Thapper, "Imagined Religious Communities? Ancient History and Modern Search for a Hindu Identity", MAS Vol. MAS Vol. XXIII, No.2, pp.209-31.

<sup>27</sup> Sushil Srivastava, "Situating the Gentoo in History –European Perception of India in the Early Phase of Colonialism", in *Economic and Political Weekly*, Feb. 17, 2001.

<sup>28</sup> Sushil Srivastava, "Constructing the Hindu Identity – European Moral and Intellectual Adventism in 18<sup>th</sup> century India" in *Economic and Political Weekly*, 16 May, 1998.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid.

<sup>30</sup> The President and Council's letter (Revenue Department) to the Court of Directors dated Fort William, March 25, 1973, Quoted in Sushil Srivastava, Ibid.

<sup>31</sup> Halhead has defined gentoos as those who knows and deals with the laws and Hindus as people come under the purview of the law, see Ibid.

<sup>32</sup> This perception was followed up by colonial apparatuses and many a communities who led rather vague and syncretic religious practices were made to choose either of the two religion. See Shail Mayaram, *Resisting Regime*.

<sup>33</sup> Romila Thapper, *Narratives and the Making of History*, Delhi, 2000, pp.24-50.

<sup>34</sup> Muhammedali.T, *Social Life in South Malabar(1921-1947): Relief, Reform and Nationalism*, Unpublished Ph D thesis, University of Calicut 2003, pp.11-13

<sup>35</sup> Chandu Menon, *Indulekha* (Mal.), 1998 Reprint. Trissur.

<sup>36</sup> George Irumbayam, (ed.), *Nalu Novelukal* (Mal.), Trissur, 1985, pp.11-12.

<sup>37</sup> See K.N. Panikkar, *Culture, Ideology and Hegemony*, New Delhi; Dilip, M. Menon, 'Caste and Colonial Modernity: Reading Sarawathivijayam' –in *Studies in History*, 13, 2, n.s. (1987) pp.291-312.

<sup>38</sup> Dilip M. Menon, *Ibid.*, p.298.

<sup>39</sup> See Chandu Menon, *Op. cit.*, pp.228-236.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*, p.239.

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*, p.250.

<sup>42</sup> Chandu Menon wrote the novel when he was working in Parappanangadi in South Malabar.

<sup>43</sup> The narratives in the novel nowhere portrays him as a real Muslim. See Chandu Menon, *Op. cit.*, pp.205-215.

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*, p.266.

<sup>45</sup> Potheri Kunhambu, *Saraswathivijayam* in Irumbayam George (ed.), *Op. cit.* p.52 (Italics my own).

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*, p.52.

<sup>47</sup> Dilip, M. Menon, Note 37, p.36.

<sup>48</sup> Yesudas formerly Marathan has been emancipated through missionary mediation and became a judge as a result.

<sup>49</sup> See Madhavan's view on Congress. This is close to the general attitude of early nationalists in India. See *Indulekha*, Chapter 3

