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Editor's Note

Unlike the earlier volumes of Social Orbit, this time we have given priority to the articles of budding scholars engaged in live research. They are selected mainly for their treatment of varied and interesting themes having contemporary importance. Ranging from social exclusion to gender equations, these articles present a vivid panorama of socially meaningful issues. As all the articles do not belong to a single or related theme, a survey encompassing each and every one of them has not been attempted here; it is not only not easy but would be obviously annoying too.

A very important question that has been upsetting us is the efficacy of our academic endeavour focusing on research. By posting the results of recent research, we hope to drive the academic community towards contemporary relevant themes. But the whole higher education sector presents a picture of steady decline in standards. Several of the reforms introduced in higher education turns out to be less and less productive. The recent academic measures aimed at achieving global standards have in fact not only failed to achieve the desired results but even reduced the existing quality of education. The case of research also is not much different. Interest in research and publication are growing steadily up but they count on quantitative gains than having a zeal for quality. Dependence on frivolous internet sources as study materials have reduced the quality of knowledge in recent times. Knowledge attained through published books and through the tedious process of library reference is getting less and less popular. Reliable materials available on the net are expensive and hence are often skipped. We are talking about serious research in circumstances like these.

This predicament is aggravated by the recent surge of irrationalism and the culture of aggressive masculinity. While in earlier times culture had a downward filtration, the current scene is to the opposite: the educated and the enlightened are being influenced by the abject aspects of popular culture. The concept of a society functioning on rationality and enlightenment has almost been given up. People are lured by the everyday and ordinary things of life. In the third world context of India where a major share of the population are set aside on

the margins of the society and who could only be emancipated through a movement combining rationality, enlightenment and radicalism, the politics of the possible, and unfortunately with the consent of the subalterns, has deterred the hopes of true emancipation.

The slow withdrawal of a rational community is reflected in the upsurge of medieval religiosity with its innumerable and obsolete customs and practices. Irrationality coupled with a spirit of crusade has generated a warring mentality among religions towards others. Despite medieval in their outlook, even the exponents of religion justify their own ideology with the help of modern science. On the other hand, modern science and technology, which are being controlled by market forces, compromises with institutional religion. While the role of science was instrumental in modernizing religious ideologies and institutions, and in bringing about enlightenment and the spirit of renaissance, the forces of postmodernity lead the world in a different direction by rejecting the very concept of enlightenment. Moreover, the importance modernity had given to the individual is being replaced by group identity of the postmodern times. Ethnicity, community, religion, gender, family, locality, everything get a facelift. Most of these segments, especially those of religion and community, take their energy from their medieval roots, a tendency which has been doing much harm to civil society in a third world context. Capitalism promotes science primarily for commercial interests and only very cautiously for social advantage.

The above situation reiterates he importance of social science research. To be silent is to compromise with the forces of reaction. It is important to bring forth the contradictions involved in social movements and processes and to expose the varied interests associated with the norms of social behaviour. That doesn't mean all research be oriented towards negative criticism; anything having progressive traits needs to be studied and interpreted.

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Contents

Modernity and Reform in Colonial Kerala: Revisiting the Contributions of Sayyid Sanaullah Makti Tangal, 1884-1912

Muhammed Niyas Ashraf
Doctoral Fellow
Berlin Graduate School Muslim Cultures and Societies
Freie Universität Berlin, Germany
E-mail: Muhammed-niyas@bgsmcs.fu-berlin.de

Abstract

This study mainly focuses on analyzing the contours of Islamic modernity in Kerala as articulated in the works of Sayyid Sanaullah Makti Tangal, reformer, thinker, writer, polemicist, printer and publisher. As the first Muslim reformer to emerge in the modern Malayalam arena, this paper offers an assessment of his reformist initiatives and writings between the closing decades of the nineteenth century and 1912, the year of Makti's death. Emphasizing his Hadrami Arab lineage and locating him as a central figure in the new public arena emerging around print in Kerala, this paper seeks to analyze Makti's contribution to the emergence of a Muslim reformist discourse in Malabar along three lines – firstly, his efforts relating to the realms of language and education; secondly his efforts to reform the Muslim community; and finally his efforts to challenge and refute the critique of Islam advanced in Missionary polemics.
Keywords: Islamic Reformism, Modern Muslim, Makti Tangal, Print culture, Malayali identity, Polemics.

Introduction

Modernism and reform amongst the Muslim societies have been the subject of much recent scholarship on nineteenth and twentieth century South Asia (Ahmad, 1967; Gellener, 1981; Robinson, 2007; Metcalf, 2009; Lapidus, 2012; Osella and Osella, 2013). Most work of this kind has focused on formal, organized movements, (Metcalf, 1982; Lelyveld, 1996; Sanyal, 1996; Robinson, 2001; Sikand, 2002; Pearson, 2008), but has paid little attention to regional or individual reformist ventures (Troll, 1978; Ahmed 1992; Abraham, 2014). In contrast, this study mainly focuses on an analysis of the works of a single reformer and explores the agenda for the vision of Islamic modernity articulated by Sayyid Sanaullah Makti Tangal in late nineteenth and

early twentieth century Kerala. This is an attempt to explore the extent to which Makti's modernist, reformist and polemist discourse influenced the life of Muslims in Colonial Kerala. Response of Makti to modernity was definitive and his role in the formation of modern Islamic reform movements in the twentieth century was unique. The particular concern of this paper is to understand his vision in the context of language and reform, which included both the exhortation for Islam to modernize as well as its defense often expressed regarding the superiority of Islam over the West and Christianity.

Makti Tangal, the earliest exponent of Islamic reform in Kerala was born in 1847 in Veliyancode. He was the son of Sayyid Ahmad Tangal, a religious leader and a disciple of famous Veliyancode Ummar Qazi and Shareefa Beevi who belonged to the Hamdani tribe famously known as Banu Hamdan, a well- known Yemeni clan.[1] His ancestors were from the Saqqaf tribe, originally from Hadhramaut, Yemen (Kareem, 1991:412). The members of the Saqqaf tribe are descendants of the Prophet Muhammad's paternal uncle, Al-'Abbas ibn 'Abd al-Muttalib.[2] People from this tribe are called Sayyids and have titles before their names like Sayyid/Sayyida, Al Habeeb/Shareefa, Sheikh/ Sheikha, etc. given to them because of their lineage. Makti's maternal grandfather Sayyid Ahmad Makti was from Mughal family and was a *munshi* (scribe) for the British government in Hosur (Moulavi, 1954; Kareem, 1997). Makti's paternal grandfather Muhammad Maqdoom Saqqaf Tangal was a famous religious intellectual, tutor and Sufi devotee who lived in Veliyancode in Ponnani taluk. Thus, Makti's lineage and intellectual influences were closely related to the Hadrami diaspora in the Malabar Coast.[3] The Hadramis who claimed to be descendants of the Prophet Muhammad played a pivotal role in the reformist movements and transformed the Indian Ocean world into a thriving intellectual space (Freitag & Smith, 1997). These Hadrami Arabs – Sayyids, scholars, Sufis, traders, commoners – created a trans-cultural space of Islamic ecumene as they traversed and settled in the trans-oceanic world that stretched from Cape Town on the southern tip of Africa to Timor at the limit of the Malay Archipelago. In fact, they played the major role in the spread and evolution of Islamic culture, religious ethos and social formation in all these regions. As the bearers of Islamic knowledge and prestige, Hadramis were everywhere potential creators of public spaces and institutions such as mosques, courts, schools, and pilgrimage shrines. The arrival of Hadramis connected the obscure backwaters of Malabar to the trans-regional networks of the Indian Ocean and contributed enormously towards the growth and

development of the Mappila community in Malabar (Ho, 2006).

The intellectual heritage of the Hadramis had an enormous impact on Makti's childhood and educational career. He received his early lessons of education from his father. After completing his elementary education from Chavakkad Higher elementary school, he joined Veliyancode, Marancheri, Ponnani for religious teaching and training in classical Islamic curriculum. He was literate in English, Malayalam, Arabic, Hindustani, Persian, Urdu, Tamil and Arabic- Malayalam.[4] In his younger days, he worked as an excise officer under the British government up to the age of 35. Even though his education was purely traditional, he received a good deal of exposure and experience in the colonial bureaucracy.

Makti as a Printer and Publisher

Recent works on Islam and the emergence of a modern Muslim identity in different parts of colonial South Asia have emphasized that print technology was key to their self-articulation as communities, politically, as well as in social and cultural terms.[5] The growth of the printing press made way for a new kind of Muslim public sphere that was dependent on publishing and public debate. There was a substantial increase of relatively inexpensive Muslim religious publications from the late nineteenth century in North India (Pearson, 2008: 67). The embrace of print became the essential feature of reformist activity at this time because the wide circulation of texts facilitated the oral presentation effortless to largely illiterate society (Metcalf, 1992: 19). Another important feature of the printed literature produced by Muslim reformers was that a substantial portion of it was in the form of pamphlets and directed against anti-Muslim propaganda of Hindu and Christian polemicists, particularly the latter in Southern India (Pearson, 2008: 210-211). Robinson argues that print was a necessary weapon for the defense of religion and the Muslims adopted print when they felt Islam was seriously under threat from outside (Robinson, 1993: 239). Pamphlet warfare was often combined with oral debates in public spaces like bazaars and fairs. Certainly, nineteenth century Kerala was testament to this phenomenon and the strongest articulation of Muslim identity was at the moment of encounter with Christian missionaries. Christian missionaries criticized Islam and Prophet Muhammad aggressively through printed tracts and small books that were published and distributed it freely in every nook and corner of Malabar (Ali, 1990).[6]

Makti realized the significance of print and published extremely wide. He seriously initiated his engagement with the domain of print after resigning from the British government service in 1892. But, his career began with the publication of *Kadora Kudoram* (Hardest Fortress), a polemical tract against Christianity in 1884 itself.[7] His journalistic activities started with his columns for the weekly '*Satyaprakasham*' (True light) in 1888 edited by Qadirshah Haji Bappu Sahib *alias* Kakka Sahib of Cochin, where he worked as sub-editor for nine months (Kareem 1997: 16). This journal was published from the press of Adamji Devji Bhimji in Cochin. In this journal, Makti communicated his major concerns about the Muslim community and suggested reformation through internal change. He then wrote for '*Paropakari*' (Benevolent), another Malayalam publication from Calicut and Kochi since 1898 that lasted for three years (ibid: 16). This magazine was particularly significant in that it was the forum where he published his important polemical writings in the form of responses defending Islam against missionary writing. In Saidali Kutty Master's journal *Salah-ul Iqvan*, he articulated his desire to publish another magazine *Nithya Jeevan* (Eternal existence) from 1902. In an advertisement in *Salah-ul Iqvan* journal, he talked about his fiscal difficulties and requested his Muslim brothers to donate generously to setting up this magazine to defend Islam (Kareem 1997: 16). Makti was a pioneer in that he was the first Muslim reformer to write in Malayalam. He extensively used Malayalam to spread his reformist messages to Muslims community of Kerala.

Nineteenth century India was marked by the proliferation of printed texts in a variety of languages; these sought to define the moral contours of religious and linguistic communities by delineating behavior, language, and texts appropriate for them. G. Arunima emphasized the centrality of the language and the emergence of print culture as two key elements to the development of 'modern' in Kerala, in terms of the public and in the social imaginary (Arunima, 2006: 47). Even more significantly, Makti was of the opinion that because Muslims were comfortable with neither English nor Malayalam, it was important that they had publications in Arabic-Malayalam. His endeavors in this direction began in through the fortnightly '*Tuhfath-ul Akhyar Va Hidayth-ul Ashrar*' (Precious gift and guidance to virtuous people). He got tremendous support from the newly emerging Muslim intelligentsia including Cheneth Valappil Sayyid Abdul Rahman Hydrose alias Adima Musliyaar, Arakkal Kunjahammad Haji of Kochi and An-

iyapurath Ammu Sahib of Thalassery who all ran presses in Kerala. The central message in all his publications was to reconcile religion and worldly affairs. His articles in the magazine fell under twelve headings - local and overseas news, interpretation of Quran, history, self-development, questions and answers, responses to queries. The magazines mentioned above form a small part of Makti's oeuvre, which included books, newspaper pieces, journals, and religious tracts. In all of these, the primary issue remained the question of how a Muslim could be modern within the bounds of Islam. Makti was self-conscious about the importance of print for Muslim identity formation; he held that print was crucial not just for the defense of the community but also for its reform.[8]

Makti as a Modernist

Scholars have argued that Islamic modernists asserted the need to reinterpret Islamic principles and ideals as a response to emerging European modernity and colonialism. They conceived 'Islamic modernism' as a constructive and feasible program to reform and revive a society in a changed socio-political environment. Modernists were eagerly waiting to introduce some of the best ideas and insights they got from this contact. Significant modern Muslim reformist thinkers of Egypt like Jamal ad-din al-Afghani (1839-1897), Muhammad Abduh (1849-1905), his disciple Rashid Rida (1865-1935) and Indian reformists like Sayyid Ahmad Khan (1817-1898) and Muhammad Iqbal (1877-1938) for example, were provoked by the European advance into the Muslim world and their encounter with colonial modernity. These modernists argued that Islam as a faith which is compatible with modernity, reason, rationality, progress and science. They also believed that a simple rejuvenation of the Islamic belief is not enough to create a generation of modern Muslims and something beyond revivalism is necessary to bring them in to the sphere of modernity. Robert Bellah defines modernism as a conscious plan and distinct idea by the participants of a particular religion in associating, accommodating, adopting and adapting certain aspects and elements from the emerging intellectual culture of the day to their religious tradition (Bellah, 1970). Within this notion of modernism, Makti Tangal should be located and studied.

Makti explores the issues of modernity in the particular context of education and language. Similar to the Muslim modernists in south Asia, he argued for a strict adherence to Islam even as they underlined the importance of modern education in order to ensure the develop-

ment of their community. Therefore, Makti emphasized the modern education as a crucial aspect for societal progress amongst Muslims.[9] Particularly important was the emphasis he placed on both English and Malayalam languages. He believed that popularization of Malayalam through his writings would insist to learn the language and eventually make them modern.[10] Such an effort became fundamental to the emergence of a modern Muslim identity in Kerala and was a crucial aspect of his demands for the greater presence of Muslims in the emerging public sphere of Kerala.[11] Insisting that language is a central and defining aspect of human identity, Makti argued that education and language not only brought modernity to Muslims but also made them closer to true Islam (Ashraf, 2015). He wanted them to learn, interpret and understand the essence of Islamic scriptures through their mother tongue Malayalam.

Makti's emphasis on learning languages - Malayalam and English - was a turning point in the history of Muslims as it laid the basis for a discussion of modern education as an integral part of embracing the truth of Islam. He encouraged the improvement of religious education and his advocacy of translations of Arabic lessons to Malayalam (*Makti Tangalude Sampoorna Krithikal*, 2006: 440-442, hereafter MTSK). He believed that strict compliance with the tenets of Islam was possible through an understanding of the language of Quran, i.e. Arabic. However, since most common Muslim folk were illiterate in the Arabic language, Makti opined that "one should be aware of themes expressed within the Quran in his/her own lingua franca for an enhanced understanding of the universality of its message". (MTSK 2006: 440). Advocating the translation of the Quran into Malayalam, he went against the prevailing notion by insisting that the message of Allah could be understood by the people in their own mother tongue. He wrote, 'As the Quran is in Arabic, a translated version which in this case would be in Malayalam is a possible method to understand its essence' (Ibid. 2006: 443). The translation of the Quran into local languages was an important feature of Muslim reform movements all over South Asia. Makti set himself the task of translation of the Quran into Malayalam and argued that people would understand the true essence of the Quran and Islam and abandon all un-Islamic and syncretic practices. His encouraged to translate every madrasa texts into Malayalam and observed that students can save their precious years if they learned *pathu-kithab* (collection of ten fikhi texts) in Malayalam. This intervention in the field of language learning thus became a critical

departure from the traditional system of madrasa education.

Mappila learning system was usually confined to religious education in madrasas and little secular education was imparted in traditional schools (Panikkar, 1989 :54; Lakshmi, 2012: 108). Even in religious education, Makti saw madrasa as inadequate. Rather than giving importance to teaching the quran and *Hadith*, they kept *fikh* (Islamic Jurisprudence) as the core of curriculum, which he condemned (MTSK, 2006: 438). The rote learning that took place in the madrasa was a great concern to Makti; he referred to it with disdain as "parrot learning" (Ibid, 712). He argued that "…the kind of Malayalam translated version that was used for teaching makes no sense to the students. The translations done by *ulema* would even make *Malavasikal* (hill tribes) laugh" (Ibid, 439). In marked contrast to the denunciation of modern education by the orthodox *ulema*, Makti and other reformers Sheikh Muhammad Maheen Hamdani Tangal[12], Vakkom Abdul Khadir Moulavi[13], Chalilakath Kunhammed Haji[14] and C. Saidalikutty Master[15] had articulated a very different view on Muslim and Mappila modernity. They called for open rebellion against traditional *ulema* and endeavored to ameliorate the social condition of Muslims that they saw as being worsened by new political and social circumstances. He criticized *ulema* regarding their position against modern secular education and language learning and argued that far from being antithetical to Islam, these two elements were an integral part of Islam. In the first issue of the fortnightly *Tuhfat-ul Akhyar Vahidayat-ul Asrar*, Makti criticized the *ulema*:

Adukkala Vittu poyilla
Arivullavare aarrum kandilla
Kithabonnum padichilla
Fatwakkonnum muttillaa

"He hasn't left the hearth or home
Nor has he met any learned person
He hasn't learnt any of the lores
But lo! Fatwas are not in dearth".[16]

For Makti, the traditional Muslim educational system was a serious obstacle to the growth and progress of their communities (Hasan, 2006: 57). He was keen on convincing the Muslims, and regularly wrote and advised them to pursue modern education for the further development of the community.[17] For him, there was no essential contradiction between Islam and modern education. Makti argued that modern education is vital to understand Islamic scriptures for Mappila

Muslims. To state this point, he penned '*Muslim Janavum Vidyabhyasavum*' (Muslim Community and Education), addressed the problems and dilemmas of Muslim education in Kerala in some detail and stated that the Malayali Muslim had become blind in their political and social existence and had to think of away forward to liberate themselves (MTSK, 2006: 44). Exposing what he considered those grave flaws in the system of religious education, he desired a structural change in the Mappila education. In his letter to *Kerala Patrika* on 11 March 1896, Makti condemned anti-British feelings among Mappilas and accused the conservative *ulema* of instigating these outbreaks. In this letter, he wrote, ― these outbreaks are due to the corruption of the true directives of Islam.[18] He suggests, as a remedial measure to start at least one theological school in each taluk for the purpose of giving lectures on true principles of Islam. In the same issue of this paper, he opined that in order to put an end to the Mappila risings the following steps should be adopted. 1) Education should be made compulsory among the Mappilas. 2) Special schools should not be established for Mappila education. 3) Secular modern education should be imparted to them in the ordinary course along with religious education. 4) The expense of Mappila education should be partly met by government and partly by an income tax collected from the Mappilas.[19]

Makti's articles appeared regularly in *Salah-ul Iqvan* discussing issues on schemes for primary education (Kareem &Moulavi 1978, 406). He argued that the rationale and the legitimacy for education for Muslims came from the Prophet himself who is said to have argued 'all Muslims should seek knowledge even if they have to go to the distant land of China' to acquire it (MTSK, 2006: 715). By underlining the importance of education in the Quran and the *Hadith* (traditions of Prophet Muhammad), Makti perceived that educational and social reform are completely in consonance with Islamic values. He encouraged the community to embrace modernity for which modern education was vital. He delivered speeches in various parts of Kerala about the importance of secular education (Kareem, 1997: 18).

Thus, the educational reform envisioned by Makti was one which envisaged a modern Muslim Mappila Malayali identity (Ashraf, 2016). In his view, modernity meant a return to 'true Islam' purely based on the Quran and the *Hadith* accessed directly without the interpretation of intermediaries. His refutation to accept popular and syncretic Islam that existed in nineteenth century Malabar and denigrated it as 'false Islam' launched the discourse of religious reform among Muslims for

the first time.

Makti as a Reformist

Scholars like Hisham Sharabi have distinguished Islamic modernism and Islamic reformism as two different intellectual categories and hold the view that the two should not be confused with each other. For him, Islamic reformism is more concerned with safeguarding Islamic faith by rejuvenating basic elements of Islamic tradition. On the other hand, Islamic modernism usually receives its intellectual force not only from Islamic tradition, but also from the western thought (Sharabi, 1999). In the above section we already explored modernist discourse of Makti as a deliberate and conscious effort to renew Islamic faith and reformulate Islamic values and principles in accordance with the situation, this part will locate Makti as an *islah* (reformist), one who wish to reform the Islamic faith by eliminating various accretions that led to moral deterioration of Muslims and bringing them close to Islam and its core beliefs.

Makti's reformist agenda was the reinterpretation of Islamic principle based on scriptures to return to true Islam. He drew a strict boundary between '*haram* and *halal*', 'scriptural Islam and popular Islam'. His reformist and rationalist ideas were marked by the emphasis on the rationality of Islamic belief and thought; any association with those practices and ideas which, according to Makti, would not stand the test of rationality, had to be summarily rejected. The Islam practiced by the Muslims, especially the Mappilas in the pre-reform era was also syncretic in nature. Several rituals like *Uruz* festival, *Nerccas*, reciting *Malas*, *Maulids* and *Ratibs* were practiced by the Mappilas along with some Hindu social customs like *marumakkathayam* (matrilineal system of inheritance) and beliefs in astrology (Miller 1976: 240-246).[20] Susan Bayly has observed that syncretic Islam practiced by the Muslim communities in south India was an example of their "strong link with the Hindu sacred landscape" (Bayly, 1989: 11).

In his writings, Makti emphasized on the eradication of what he felt to be accretions to Islam and argued for adherence to the authority of the Quran and the *Hadith*; in addition, he severely criticized *shirk* (practicing idolatry or polytheism), *bida-at* (innovations or heretical doctrine), superstitious beliefs as un-Islamic customs. He fought against practices such as *Muharram*, *Kodikuttu*, *Chandanakkudom*, *Nercha*, *Maulid* and *Malappattu* which Muslims ceremoniously mediate dead Sufi saints, martyrs and prophets in their everyday life (Sa-

mad, 1998: 44).The reason for his critique on these practices was very clear – it was only "pristine" Islam, according to him, could accommodate the concept of being modern. The Islamic modernists of nineteenth century India held the view that return to a "true", "pure" and "unadulterated" Islam could answer the questions posed by the modern age (Hasan, 159-186: 2014).

For the scripturalist reformers, the most egregious challenge to Islam was from Sufism particularly because of its immense popularity amongst the masses that often superseded religious boundaries. As Ahmad and Reifield point out, "most puritanical and orthodox Muslims see any form of Sufism or close interchange with other religions as a danger to true Islam" (Ahmad & Reifield, 2004). Given the prevalence of Sufi sects and *shaykhs* in Malabar,[21] Makti attacked Sufism as un-Islamic. While his writings concerning Sufism were mostly directed against the Sufi cults, he also attacked the silence of orthodox *ulema* and their toleration of these practices. Indeed, he points out that many of the *ulema* propagated Sufism and sold the *karamat* (miracles) of Sufi saints to mundane life. This may not have only been a fanciful statement. Pearson has pointed out that in Islamic communities around the littoral of Indian Ocean, one could not make a clear distinction between the Sufis and orthodox *ulema* because most *ulema* were also members of Sufi orders (Pearson, 2006, 158). Most of his speeches emphasized the Quranic teachings against idolatry and advocated that Muslims should stick to the principle of oneness of Allah, which meant that Muslims were not meant to seek help from anyone except Allah. He also campaigned against the practice of certain Muslim praying directly and seeking fortune and help from *shaykhs* (masters) and *awliyas* (saints) (Kareem, 1997: 23).[22] He argues that Sufi practices distracted the Mappilas from the basic teachings and principles of the Quran and Sunnah and led individuals to a stage of servitude. (MTSK, 2006: 451).

Makti's anti-Sufi polemics included a small tract titled '*La Maujuddin Law Point*' (the law point of philosophy of *La Maujud*/The Philosophical monism of Islam) (MTSK, 2006: 449-456). In this, Makti was influenced by a contemporary debate amongst religious scholars about whether a *dikr* (hymn) entitled *la Maujudilallah* (Nothing exists except Allah) is recital or not. The concept of *la Maujudilallah*, according to most of the Islamic reformers of the nineteenth and twentieth century was the opposition of *lailahaila Allah*, which means the unity of God. This concept expresses that 'no God other than Allah exists' which exemplifies the denial of polytheism in Islam. While the

lailahaila Allah denies all the polytheistic practices, the Sufi version of *la Maujudilallah* asserted emphasis on the immanence of God rather than his transcendence, according to Makti, is an un-Islamic practice (Ashraf, 2015: 71).

Makti realized that his reformist discourse never achieve the community needs until the incorporation of women into the reformist project. Modernists like Sayyid Ahmad Khan and traditional Muslim scholars like Maulana Ashraf Ali Thanawi, emphasized how a woman should be reformed (Metcalf, 1992). For them, the real strength of Islam lay in the private domain, rather that the public one which had been surrendered to the British (Hurley, 2003: 60).[23] Faced with the argument that Islam oppressed women by Christian missionaries, Orientalists and British government officials, Muslim reformers put forth a campaign for women's reform. Makti wrote a monograph *Naari Naraabhichaari* (Women always follow Men) to define the roles and social behavior of women.[24] A kind of *adab* or reform literature, we can situate this monograph as a part of larger adab discourse produced in South Asia, which attempted to define proper Muslim feminine etiquette and as a part of spiritual reform movements for the women. Advocating both religious and secular education for women, Makti aimed to train women to be pious and provided an idealpicture of how devoted Muslim women should be to their families and husbands and how she should act when faced with the challenges of modernity.

It can be argued that Makti, like other nineteenth and twentieth century Hindu and Sikh socio-religious reformers, also championed the idea of *pativrata* or wifely devotion. In the context of colonial Punjab, Anshu Malhotra shows that the discourse of *pativrata* ultimately resulted in the subordination of women which meant that the emancipatory aspects of the modernizing programs they were subject to was very limited (Malhotra, 2002). Makti reinforced the *pativrata* ideal in the Muslim community in Kerala. In his monograph *Naari Naraabhichaari*, he argued that education was in fact more essential for women than men. Like other reformers, the fact that women were considered the bearers and transmitters of tradition made it vital to educate and enlighten them. Thus he said, "Women should get both religious and material knowledge for their behavioral development. They should seek that kind of education that is appropriate for them naturally. While in the early stages of Islam, there were female poets, intellectuals, philosophers and even doctors, women should now concentrate more on

subjects which deal with homemaking, rearing children, etc." (MTSK, 2006: 662)

Therefore, we see the familiar worry in Makti's writings – that while education for women was essential for the moral well-being of the community, there was also the danger that they would over-step particular moral and social boundaries. The primary objective of Makti in women's education was to prepare them emotionally and biologically to satisfactorily perform their roles as mother and homemaker. Barbara Metcalf has meticulously illustrated how women's reform was another kind of instruction only meant to create a hierarchy within the domestic household (Metcalf, 1992: 2-12).We can see such an argument from Makti as he proclaimed that "Islam orders women always to follow men" (MTSK, 2006: 640). For him, men and women are fundamentally not equal because men are physically stronger than women. Therefore, he argued that the relationship between men and women was set up on the principle of division of labor - the man is meant to mainly carry tasks outside the home and to protect and maintain women, and women are intended to do domestic chores. Thus, as was the case for many social reformers, Makti cited and interpreted scripture to make arguments about male and female roles in Muslim society. This was a selective process and Makti, it can be argued, deliberately ignored those Quranic verses which dealt largely with women's equality and rights. Makti's modernization program as far as women was concerned reveals contradictory, and ultimately conservative notions of Muslim womanhood (Ashraf, 2015: 80). On the one hand, like other reformers of the time, Makti put a good deal of emphasis on the education of women. At the same time, he was quick to outline that their position was an essentially subordinate one.

An important practice borrowed from their Hindu counterparts by the Muslims of Kerala was the practice of *marumakkathayam* (the matrilineal system).[25] Scholars have considered the matrilineal system of inheritance and matrilocal residence as a distinguishing feature of Mappila society. Matriliny is a social system where relations are traced through the mother's family. Inheritance and ancestry were also traced through the mother, while in the household men had rights to a share of the family property only while he is residing there. Matrilocality amongst the Mappilas implied that the *puthiyapila* (husband) would visit his wife day or night in the *herara* (bridal chamber) without residing at her home permanently. (Moore, 1905; Schneider & Gough, 1974; Arunima, 2003). Many Muslim reformers considered matrilineal

inheritance and matrilocal residence as plainly in contradiction to the scriptural law of Islam (Lapidus, 2012). The reformist version of Islam considered these practices as a local intrusion which directly challenged Islamic teachings. In his part, Makti condemned the matrilineal practices of Mappilas as un-Islamic and demanded that property should be inherited through the patrilineal line. He wrote, "The *ummahs* of north Malayalam (north Malabar) did not leave behind the matrilineal system even after they accepted Islam 1000 years before" (MTSK, 2006:513). Criticizing this system as a strong remnant of Hindu culture, he wrote a small note in his tract *Parcaleetha Porkalam* (Battle field for Deciding the Comforter) and articles in *Salah-ul Iqvan* titled '*Muslimkalum Marumakathayavum*' (Muslims and Matriliny) with a strident critique of the practice. (Ibid, 2006:167-168 & 511-516).

Thus, Makti was the first Muslim reformer who argued, "Matrilineal system is against all natural laws and scriptural religious traditions" (Ibid, 2006:514). He observed that "all the religions have two eyes, spiritual and material. Wealth and children are two important aspects which the material world gives importance and respect to. But matriliny denies the right of a man to possess both of these". (Ibid, 2006: 515). In the context of wealth, he explained that

"If a person who does not possess any inherited or ancestral property spends his daily wages in a matrilineal joint family household where his wife and children reside, this amount is never taken seriously by anyone in that household. This money is like a payment to a concubine and her children because even though he is spending the money, his wife does not obey or honour him. He is forced to leave the *tharavad* (bigger household) if his wife or her *karanavar* (elderly maternal uncle) or her brother insisted him to do so. The essence of respect that a husband intends to obtain is absent in this system.... In this system the father can't love his children and children suffer at the hands of nieces and nephews and live like beggars in the joint family" (Ibid. 2006:167).

Thus, on the one hand, the argument against matriliny was made in terms of a worldly pragmatic argument, but which was based very strongly on a religious, scripture alone. Consequently, Makti mark the Muslim community as distinct from that of the Hindus and his arguments fed into a larger process of community formation (Ashraf, 2015: 92).

Makti emphasized scriptural Islam, intensified the perception of

boundaries around Islamic belief and practice and criticized what he considered accretions to Islam. The use of blanket phrase "*ummah*" to refer Kerala Muslims is more evidence of his intention to articulate a notion of a homogenous Malayali Muslim society. With his emphasis on correct Muslim behavior based on Islamic principles, Makti distinguished Muslims from non-Muslims and non-believers which articulated a sense of Muslim exclusiveness and Muslim self-awareness (Ashraf, 2015: 92).

Makti as a Polemist

Polemical encounters with Christian missionaries both about theology and about the nature of Islamic belief and practice was a significant feature of public life in nineteenth century Kerala (Arunima, 2006). Makti's religious encounters in colonial Kerala during the nineteenth century should be placed in the wider context of an age-old tradition of Muslim and Christian polemical writings against Christianity and Islam respectively. The aggressive missionary propaganda against Islam as elsewhere resulted in voluble reactions from various religious spokespersons in colonial Kerala. Makti was the first Muslim intellectual who both defended Islam against the charges against it, and who attacked Christianity in turn. He regularly published anti-Christian polemical literature in Malayalam, which was widely circulated. Defending Islam against those accusations that western critics had raised should be considered a part of Islamic modernism project. (Robinson, 1993; Rahman, 1984)

Beginning in 1882, the year when he resigned from his post as Excise officer, Makti strongly contested and confronted the missionary critique of Christianity. In this, Makti was a pioneer amongst Muslims and his prodigious writings was a crucial part of what could be termed as a Muslim "counter-public" (Ashraf, 2016: 108). Out of fifty, thirty monographs were published in his *Muhamadeeya* press. In his autobiographical monograph, he describes his agony of not finding financial support for bringing other works into print (MTSK, 2006: 697). This long tradition of the Muslim-Christian polemical encounters in South Asia revolved around three polemical themes – the questioning of the doctrine of the Trinity, the divinity of Jesus Christ and the accusation regarding the corruption and distortion of Christian scripture (Ibid, 2006:114). Exhaustive refutations of the Trinity, Incarnation and the nature of God were included in his monographs *Kadora Kudoram*, *Parkaleetha Porkalam*, *Makthi Tangalakosham* (Celebrating Makti Tangal), *Tangalakosham Mahakosham* (Celebrating Makti

Tangal's Legendary Victory), *Kadora Vajram* (Hardest Diamond), *Suvishesha Nasham* (Gospel's poison). He presented monotheism as fundamentally Islamic, and as the ultimate and perpetual solution to the Trinitarian controversy. His writings were an attempt to make clear that Christian scripture had been abrogated. The central theme of his polemics was of *tahrif*: the accusation that Christians had falsified, obscured, deleted, distorted, or rewritten their respective divine scriptures (Ibid, 2006: 689).

Makti was making a case for a rational, pure Islam as a polemicist and his adoption of new methods and conventions of debate is novel in colonial Kerala.[26] On the one hand, like the missionaries, his reach and popularity was connected to the use of print. In addition, Makti like other reformers in colonial South Asia at the time used western theological and historical work to marshal his arguments (Ashraf, 2015). In some ways, this echoed the work of missionaries in the region who underlined the importance of knowledge of the local language to spread their word. Written in Malayalam, Makti's polemical writings were basically aimed at Malayali audiences, especially Christians and Hindus who were unaware of Islamic theology and principles. His arguments were meant to convey an authentic understanding of Islam to non- Muslims as well as to address the missionary critique of the religion. These counter attacks according to Rafiuddin Ahmed, "were designed to destroy the effectiveness of Christian arguments and to assert Muslim superiority" (Ahmed, 1992: 93). Above all, the aim of these writings was to prevent conversions from Islam to Christianity. Thus, Makti's monograph titled '*Makti Samvada Vijayam Mukthi Vilambaram*' (Makti's Success in Debate and the Proclamation of Freedom) extensively dealt with the issue of missionaries – who were seen as detrimental to Islam and the Muslim community. He claimed, through his writing, to have permanently vanquished Christianity, and eventually, the west (MTSK, 2006: 322-336).

His intention behind these polemics was an attempt to refute the Christian claims to truth in their concepts of monotheism, prophecy, and scripture. Rather than taking his arguments from the Quran, he mentioned western critical sources on Christianity and included different verses from the Old and the New Testament to support his arguments. Makti's linguistic skills in English gave him an advantage for critically analyzing the Bible and other biblical critical literature published from Europe. Simultaneously, his knowledge of Urdu and Persian also helped him to assert the issue of the questionable textual

integrity of the Bible on the basis of critical commentaries and polemical literature published in other parts of India. Thus, a great deal of the scholarship that he cited was from nineteenth century critical commentaries on the Bible. This was a strategy developed by modern Muslim intelligentsia; they began to welcome those writings of western scholars that explicitly showed sympathy to Islam. Thus, what is particularly noteworthy about Makti's critique of Christianity was that it was done using western barometers. His defense of Islam therefore was one which could bear scrutiny not merely when looked at through the lens of Islamic tradition but through the so- called rational thought and argument of the west (Ashraf, 2015). The rationality of western theology and history was acknowledged therefore, even as Christianity was denounced as being antithetical to that spirit.

Conclusion

Makti, the first Muslim social reformer in Kerala envisioned a modern Muslim identity in colonial Kerala with an intention to reform the community socially, religiously and politically. His intellectual movement was neither a unified one nor did it leave an enduring organization. However, it contributed to a shifting paradigm as far as the perception of Muslims in Kerala was concerned both within the community, and in Malayali society at large. Like reformers elsewhere in colonial India, his attempt was to see rationality and reason as an integral part of the Islamic faith. The emergence of Islamic modernism in Kerala, as elsewhere, was the result of a deliberate attempt to interrogate the civilizational hegemony of the west that was created as an impact of colonialism. This crisis of cultural confidence instigated Muslim intelligentsia to reform, re-energize and reconstruct Islamic civilization. Reformers critically analyzed the changes within Muslim society and envisioned a project to counter the hegemony of the western modernity. Makti actively chose print as an essential weapon in his reformist program. Most of his writings were printed and published whether he was talking about the return to a pristine Islam, an inner reform through the removal of accretions in the Islamic faith, and an uncompromising devotion to the Quran and the Prophetic traditions. This engagement through print enabled the emergence of a Muslim public sphere. With its twin foci on Islamic modernism and print culture in Kerala, his contributions should be revisited to address major gaps within studies on colonial Malabar or modern Kerala and the his-

tory of Islam in South Asia.

Notes

1. The Banu Hamdan are a large Arab Tribe of Yemen since the 1st millennium BCE. Their territory lay to the north of San'a stretching eastwards to Ma'rib and Najran, northwards to Sa'sa and westwards to the coast (Abu Arish). The eastern half belonged to the sub-tribe of Bakil, the western to Hashid.

2. Abbas (c. 567 – c. 653 AD) was a paternal uncle and companion of Muhammad. A wealthy merchant during the early years of Islam he protected Muhammad while he was in Mecca, but only became a convert after the Battle of Badr in 624 AD.

3. Despite being part of the Indian Ocean world, the presence, spread and contributions of Hadrami Arabs in southern coasts of India, especially Malabar in Kerala, where Hadrami notables earned influence and played multiple roles was immense. For more details, see, Ho, 2004.

4. Malayalam written in Arabic Script.

5. For further details, see More, 2007; Orsini, 2009.

6. The tract comparing Jesus and Mohammad (*Muhammado Isa Nabiyo Aru Valiyavan*) a Basel Mission Press Publication. For further reference see Arunima, 2006.

7. For more details, see Muhammed Niyas Ashraf, *Islamic Modernity and Reform in Colonial Kerala: Reading Makti Tangal*, 94-130, Unpublished M.Phil thesis, University of Delhi, 2015.

8. Muhammed Niyas Ashraf, '*Muslim Print Sphere and New Public: Language and Identity in Colonial Kerala, South India*'. A paper presented in 24th European Conference on South Asian Studies, Warsaw, Poland, 27 to 30 July, 2016.

9. Emphasizing modern education was not a singular experience in South Asia. During the second half of the nineteenth century, two very diverse and important educational movements have emerged as a direct response to British colonialism. The establishment of *Dar ul-Uloom Deoband* in 1867 represented the desire of the Muslim population to articulate the modern Indian Islamic experience in a substantially new social and political context through the rejection of western institutions and ideas but emulated British style education which included the administrative set up and professional staff, classrooms, fixed syllabi, organized examinations and professionals to manage them (Metcalf, 1982). Sayyid Ahmad Khan firmly supported the establishment of

modern education amongst north Indian Muslims after 1857 in order to revitalize the community after the debacle of the Rebellion which rendered them traitors in the eyes of British administrators in India. The establishment of the Muhammadan Anglo Oriental College was a part and parcel of this schema which followed the Oxford-Cambridge model but made adequate room for the Islamic religion (Lelyveld, 1996).

10. Language is a traditional element within the cultural aspects of modernity. Language is the core of representation, configuration and communication which secures and propagates potential ethics and aesthetics. It permits us to be, provide access to what is happening (Ian Chambers, 2002: 29). Thus discussing modernity as a trend or a period, language emerged as its quintessential factor because it shaped our conceptions of modernity.

11. Muhammed Niyas Ashraf, '*Reading Makti Tangal: Language, Education and Identity in Colonial Kerala, 1884-1912*', A Paper presented in Muslim South Asia Graduate Conference, SOAS, University of London, October, 2015.

12. A scholar who worked among the Muslims for the spread of education and staunchly supported the integration of religious education with secular education. He urged the government to make provisions for the teaching of Arabic along with Malayalam and English. Through his book entitled *lrfat al-lslam* he condemned what he considered un-Islamic beliefs and practices among the Muslims. He continued his powerful writings in Vakkom Moulavi's newspaper, *Swadeshabhimani*, and the journal, *The Muslim*. He compiled an Arabic-Sanskrit-Malayalam dictionary, with the help of his disciple Sayyid Muhammad Tangal, although only a concise version of it was published.

13. A great humanist of that period, he is also acknowledged as the 'Father of the Muslim Renaissance'. He persuaded Kerala Muslims to embrace modernity through modern education. His journalistic ventures included the Muslim in 1906, the Arabic Malayalam monthly *Al-Islam* in 1918 and *Deepika* in 1931. His emphasis was on the authentic interpretation of the Quran and the prophetic tradition. He also criticized those un-Islamic practices among Muslim community. For more details on VakkomMoulavi's reformist activities, see Abraham, 2014.

14. Widely known as "the father of the modern Madrasa and Arabic Colleges of Kerala, he is remembered for the changes brought to the traditional educational system of the Muslims. He introduced new methods

and techniques in teaching in the institutions he was associated with.

15. He was the editor of *Salah-ul Iqvan*, an Arabi-Malayalam journal devoted to socio-religious reforms. Born in 1856 in Tirur, he was a teacher by profession and a well-known educationist, reformist, poet and editor. Because of his deep devotion and awareness of educational problems, especially of the community, the government appointed him as school inspector. He ran several presses and was the editor of several important Mappila journals and periodicals.

16. For details of attitude of orthodox *ulema* during the nineteenth century see Moulavi 1981.

17. Saidalikutty Master's *Salah-ul Iqvan* and *Rafiq-ul Islam* was a common platform where all these reformers could publish their articles on the importance of Muslim education.

18. Madras Native Newspaper Report, 1896, <u>*Kerala Patrika*</u>, 11 March 1896, 85, Tamil Nadu Archives Chennai.

19. Madras Native Newspaper Report, 1896, Kerala Patrika, 21 March 1896, Tamil Nadu Archives Chennai.

20. The *Uruz* is a festival that took place in the tombs of famous saints in connection with their death anniversaries. According to M. Abdul Samad, fireworks, using decorated elephants and other cultural programmes were the regular features in Muslim *Uruz*. Thousands of men and women gathered together and to pay floral tributes to the tomb of the saints. For more details, see, Samad, 1998. Most of these rituals have great resemblance to the Hindu festivals. *Nerccas* or commemoration ceremonies are the Mappilas' largest public festivals that combine nominally Islamic elements with certain features of indigenous folk festivals. These festivals were conducted to show reverence to a *pir*, *shaykh*, or *shahid*. All the festivals are conducted within a ritual framework derived from the worship of folk deities in Kerala. According to Stephan Dale and M. Gangadharan, "The *nerccas* provide examples of an especially complex variety of Islamic saint and martyr, worship". For more details, see, Randathani, 2007: 69; Dale and Menon, 1978: 523-538. *Ratib* is a litany that is sung by the devotee in the name of a saint usually prescribed by the *murshid* (guide) to his disciple to seek protection from evil and for the blessings of the family. *Maulid* or *Mawlud* is an antiphonal reading of the life of a prophet or a saint and *malas* are devotional songs praising glorious events of holy men. For reciting *ratib* and *moulid*, the devotees invite a group of reciters and a grand feast is served by the end of the ceremony. For details see,

Abu,1970: 62.

21. Sufi missionaries from various parts of Arabian Peninsula had been travelled to the Malabar coast due to trade networks in Indian ocean littoral network. Ibn Batutta in his travel narratives on Asia and Africa cited the existence of Kazeruni Sufi hospices and its followers in north Malabar and south Quilon during fourteenth century (Batuta 2004). The migration of Bukhara Tangals of Hamadan in the 16th century gave a stimulus to the Suhrawardi tariqah and arrival of the Zayn ud-din ibn Ali al- Mabari (Makhdhum of Ponnani) in 1521 prompted Chisti order. Several Sufi orders, particularly the Qadiriya, had a significant presence after the Hadrami sayyids became most active in Ponnani and Calicut. However, only during the eighteenth century after the second wave of Hadrami diaspora, Qadiriya order turned to flourish as Tariqah Qadiri al- Aydarisiyyahwa' l-alaviyyah. Mappila Muslims for centuries was bound to be connected with a Sufi order, mandatory to have a sheikh as his leader or reciting a special dhikr (prayer)' of an order. Sufis in Malabar attained respect as martyrs, teachers, mystics, theologians, *ulema* who represent the official religious classes and community leaders. (For more details, see, V. Kunhali, *Şufism in Kerala*, Calicut: University of Calicut, 2004).

22. As a part of seeking fortune and help from sheikhs /shaykhs and awliya, Mappila Muslims developed a genre of *malappattus*. These literatures were in Arabic-Malayalam, dealt extensively with Sufi saints, and praise their glorious life and admirable events. *Muhiyudeen Mala* was the first of this genre composed by Khazi Muhammad in 1607 that dealt with Sufi Saint Sheikh Abd al-Qadir al-Jilani. The *Rifai Mala* on Ahmad al Rifa'ʻI, the *Nafeesath Mala* on the Sufi woman saint Nafeesa who lived in Egypt during eighth century, the *Shaduli Mala* on Abul Hasan Ali ash-Shadhili, the *Shahul Hamid Mala* on Shahul Hamid of Nagur, the *Manjakkulam Mala* on Sufi saint Sayyid Khwaja Hussain who lived in Palakkad during eighteenth century, the *Farid Mala* of Fariduddin Awliya of Kanjiramittam and the *Ajmeer Mala* on Khawaja Moinuddin Chisti of Ajmer are other examples. For more details, see, Shaheen.K, "Domain of Orthodoxy: Sufi and Shari Tradition in Colonial Malabar" (Centre for Studies in Social Sciences, Kolkata, 2014), Unpublished Thesis.

23. For Partha Chatterjee's influential notion of the different domains of Indian nationalism, see Chatterjee, 1993.

24. *Adab* literatures were certain manuals which was produced during late

nineteenth and early twentieth century Muslim reformers to define appropriate bodily and social behavior for women as well as the methods for their inculcation. The primary objective of *adab* literatures emphasize women's role for the wellbeing of the community, but warned about their moral and social boundaries. For details see Metcalf, 1992.

25. For details, see Arunima, 2003; Lakshmi, 2012: 33-34.

26. Muhammed Niyas Ashraf, "Muslim- Christian Polemics and the Emergence of a "Rational" Muslim Discourse in Colonial South India", A paper presented in 30th Annual British Association of South Asian Studies (BASAS) Conference, Fitzwilliam College, University of Cambridge, 6-8th April.

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Making of the Rowther Empire:
Timber Hegemony on the Hills of Travancore

Sebastian Joseph
Assistant Professor & Head
PG Department & Research Centre in History
U.C. College, Aluva, Kerala
&
Lekha Pillai
Assistant Professor & Head
Department of History
N.S.S. College, Pandalam, Kerala

Abstract

Angoor Nynar Rowther, an influential timber trader had controlled the timber trade of the native state in the closing decades of the 19th and opening decades of the 20th century through a well organised network and a rapport effectively established with the native government officials and even European agents. Timber regulations, trade agreements and forest policies of the government were made subservient to the interests of this trader. The European companies never challenged his position but benefitted out of the monopoly established by him for effecting a continuous supply of superior quality timber for the British empire. Amazing was the personal relationship that Rowther maintained with top officials in the native state and even had access to the Maharaja of Travancore. Through the relationship that was built up by him, Rowther virtually controlled the timber trade of the native state. In due course we see the emergence of a timber trading zone in Travancore, where the word of Rowther became a reference point for any new comers to the area. The forest department leased out forest lands to the Rowthers and he became the King of timber trade in Travancore.
Keywords: timber trade, forest department, teakwood.

Introduction

Travancore state had maintained very close relation with private timber contractors in the early 19th century owing to reasons – political, economic and ecological. Amazing was the extent to which these contractors enjoyed royal patronage. This is revealed through a number of letters and other correspondences between them and the state authorities. Fixation of agreements relating to timber extraction and trade

were determined within this context of the rapport that these traders enjoyed with the native rulers. Construction of roads and other openings in the regions in and around Kumili, Peermade and adjoining areas was facilitated by the timber contractors. Opening up of these inaccessible areas was highly essential for the traders in maximising their extraction of commercially valuable timber like teak and ebony. Angoor Nynar Rowther and his timber trade operations in the area stand out as unique episodes to uncover the levels of influence a timber contractor enjoyed in deciding timber trade contracts and to a greater extent, even the forest policy of the native state.

Timber trade in Travancore had a long chequered history. Though the native state carried on timber trade from very early period, we have clear evidences of brisk timber trade only from 18thc onwards. The luxurious timber wealth of the princely state was mainly exploited for ship building, railway expansion, for making tea chests, and other domestic purposes. The main species of timber exported from Travancore were Teak, Black wood, Anjily, Ebony and various kinds of jungle woods and soft woods. These timbers were mainly worked from the forests of Konni, Ranni, Shendurney, High Ranges, Malayattur, Shencotta etc. The main channel of export of timber in the state, which has a splendid water resource, was of course rivers themselves.

Rowthers were an influential Muslim family who settled in Travancore and carried on trade in different forest produces. They hailed from Rajapalayam in Tamil Nadu[1]. The earliest known member of this family was Meeravoo Rowther, father of Angoor Nynar Rowther. As early as 1036 M E (1861) he carried on trade in Arecanut and pepper through Kumili and Peermade with the aim of settling himself with his family in Travancore. He also induced others to follow him and to settle themselves in those parts after clearing the jungles by rendering them all help in more than one way[2]. Meeravoo Rowther had four children. They were C. A. Mohammed Nynar Rowther, C. A. Asanuk Khani Rowther, C. A. Angoor Nynar Rowther, and Anumanthamkudi C. A. Meera Rowther. Among them the two younger brothers had actively carried on timber business in Travancore[3].

Angoor Nynar Rowther

Angoor Nynar Rowther was an influential timber contractor of Travancore who undertook the business from the middle of the 19th c. It is said that most of the lands in Kumili and Peermade belonged to him, which was handed over to him by the Raja of Travancore as reward for his services. The Raja also granted Pattas for these lands.

This is evident from the fact that most of the lands in these places have two pattas. One in the name of Angoor Rowther (Angoor Pattayam) and the other in the name of persons who got the land during the land reform act introduced in 1971[4]. The issue of 'Pattas' evidently points to the influence of Rowthers in Travancore state. Angoor Pattas are living data in providing evidence to the great extent that he decided the forest policy of the native state, which in turn put him in a comfortable situation wherein he extracted timber resources as if its legal custodian.

According to the heirs of Angoor Rowther, the Maharaja of Travancore had granted him 2500 acres of land for Cardamom cultivation and in their view the first organised cardamom cultivation was started in the 1880's by him[5]. According to the survey plan of central vernacular department, Trivandrum, it was found that the land was assigned to Angoor Rowther during the period of 1060-1087 M. E. and he was given pattas for the same land[6].

Even in issues like boundary disputes between the British and the Travancore state over the High Ranges, Rowthers played a crucial role in resolving them in favour of Travancore by producing critically relevant documents. The boundary dispute between the British government and Travancore regarding the inclusion of the High Ranges with the Kodaikanal hills was settled in favour of Travancore in 1845 because of the evidences produced by him and his family[7]. This proved to be an important evidence for legitimizing the claim of the native state. Thus he and his family acted as the revolving axis which connected the trade between North Travancore and the British territories of Madura and Tinnevelly[8].

He was a tax payer to the British government to the extent of Rs.1100/- yearly and Rs.600/- to the Travancore government[9]. With the opening of roads at Peermade in about 1050 M E (1875) he had taken the contract of supplying cardamom from the hills to the Alleppy Commercial department. Cardamom was also exported to London through Cochin[10]. As soon as the construction of public offices and buildings began he opened shops to supply daily necessities to the people including the coolies. He also brought large number of cows from Madurai to provide milk and meat. When he found that the government gained no profit from the jungle trees he put forward the idea to the then conservator of forest Mr. C. R Vernede to allow him to cut the timbers on the hills at his cost, and sell the same to himself on payment of the premium fixed by them. On the suggestion of the conservator the government approved the contract. Two depots were opened for the

purpose. By this the government began to realize a fair revenue of 10 lakhs of Rupees per annum without incurring any expense[11]. Since then he had been serving the Forest department and the government in different ways besides being a mere contractor. He carried his business in the high range division especially of the Ayyappancoil forest. He was a reliable contractor of the department and fulfilled the terms of his contracts to the full satisfaction of the department even during the period of Mr Vernede and that of Mr Bourdillion[12]. This is clear from the letter of the Supt: of the Cardamom Hills to the Chief Secretary to government, Travancore, which reads as follows:

> Angoor Nynar Rowther has been holding the timber contract at Kumili for the last 21 years both when the forest branch of this department was under the conservator and since. He has considerably explored the country and worked honestly and satisfactorily[13].

It is said that he had been instrumental in colonising the Peermade district and the present prosperity of the district can be owed to him[14].

He played an important role in the development of Peermade and Kumili. Besides opening the cart roads he was responsible for opening the Kumili- Kottayam Road, Cumbam- Cumbam mettu road upto Kattappana etc mainly for the transportation of timber[15] . Apart from this, it is said that he had played an important role in the construction of Mullaperiyar Dam in 1884. When the government decided to put an end to the construction of the dam owing to certain financial problems it was Angoor Rowther who organised a group of peasants in the Periyar region and moved a petition to the Madura collector for completing the dam work. Though the dam project was initially started as a work for Madura he was well aware of its benefits to the natives and it was due to his efforts that the construction of the dam was restarted[16].

He possessed lands in different parts of Travancore like Kottayam, Changanasserry, Kanjirappally, Peermade, Kumili, Chakkuvallam, Vandanmedu, Pampadumpara, Mlappara etc. In Kumili alone he possessed 510 acres of land[17]. He had established guest houses in Trivandrum, Peermade, and Kottayam for carrying his timber business. In Cumbam alone he used to store timber in four places. The place where timber was stored was known as 'Petta'[18]. From the forests the timber was brought to Kumili in Pothuvandies (The cart drawn by buffalo). According to Haji A. M. Sultan about 10-15 Pothuvandies came at a time to Kumili[19]. He worked the forests of Ayyappancoil, Cheruthuruthy, Upputhurai, Kakkathodu, Peermade etc[20]. It is said that he had donated 15 cents of land equally to a temple, a church and a

mosque in Kumili town. Donation of lands can be seen as a strategy in winning over those influential religious segments in Travancore state and effectively carrying forward timber trade without challenges from any groups. A village in the name of Angoor Rowther exists even today in Goodalloor known as 'Angoor Village'[21].

Angoor Nynar Rowther had submitted a petition to the government to grant him and his family 101 acres of land free of tax on Kudumba Poruthi tenure in the cardamom hills as a token of His highness appreciation of the loyal services rendered to the state by the petitioner and his father[22]. The Sarvadhikaryakar had written to the government that it was not a usual practice to give the land free of tax as requested by the petitioner. He added that 101 acres of waste land could be given to him, taxed at the rate of 8 chukrams per acre[23]. But the petitioner pointed out that His Highness the Aiyilliam Maharaja was pleased to grant 500 acres of land to Mr. Maltby the late commercial agent at Alleppey in consideration of his services rendered to the state by his father. His Highness the Raja had sanctioned 101 acres as applied by him. The letter from the Chief Secretary reveals this.

> As a token, His Highness the Maharaja on appreciation of the loyal services rendered to the state by Mr. Angoor Rowther of Kumili on several occasions, His Highness had been pleased to sanction a gold bangle being awarded to him and the grant of 101 acres of land[24].

Mr Rowther had developed a strong rapport with the government of Travancore which was evident from the testimonials provided to him by different personalities, especially the government guests like important officers of the state, the governors of Madras and several European and native officers from other parts who visited the high ranges. One of the testimonies given by Sankara Soobiyer, retired Dewan of Travancore on 1st February 1904 reads thus,

> …I have known for several years how he has been making himself useful to the Travancore government in matter of providing supplies and coolies in connection with the visits of Governors and other distinguished personages to the Peermade Hills. During my Dewanship when Lord Wenlock visited those hills as the guest of His Highness the Maharaja, this Rowther was employed to arrange the needful and he gave full satisfaction to the whole party. Last year during my journey to the high range he accommodated me at Vandy Periyar and Kumili and commands considerable local influence and resources, which he uses in a commendable way…[25]

Another testimonial given by O H Benseley, Superintendent of

police on 21st January 1904 was as follows:

> On three occasions upon which I have been entrusted with arranging shooting expeditions for governors of Madras, Mr Angoor Rowther has done all the work providing coolies and supplies and has done the business in a thoroughly satisfactory way. Also on several occasions when I have had to make similar arrangements for myself and friends he has undertaken the arrangements with equal success. His Excellency Lord Ampthill was pleased to mark his appreciation of Mr. Angoor Rowther's services by bestowing upon him a handsome souvenir.[26]

It seems that Rowther was making frequent arrangements for the visits of governors of Madras to shooting camps in Travancore which could be again seen from the words of O. H. Benseley which goes as follows:

> This is, I think, the fourth time you have assisted me in making arrangements for visits of governors of Madras to shooting camps in Travancore. The immense difficulties of providing coolies, supplies for both guests and camp followers and transport, have on all these occasions been overcome by you without a hitch, and I have always found you ready and able to cope with every emergency as it arose. In thanking you for your good work[27].

Rowther was sent gifts by the governors of Madras for the valuable services provided by him during their visits to the hills. This is evident from the letter sent by Benseley on 19th March 1907, Trivandrum. The matter of the letter was as follows:

> I am sending by registered post a Gold and Enamelled Charm which has been sent to me to be presented to you from His Excellency the Governor of Madras, as a souvenir of his visit to the Periyar. Please acknowledge receipt.[28]

The testimonial given by H. A. B. Vernan, Secretary, Board of Revenue, Madras was as follows:

> I have been on a shooting trip for the last six weeks and during that time C. A. Angoor Nynar Rowther of Kumili looked after my supplies, most satisfactorily. He is not only a good supplier but also exceedingly friendly and obliging and I have much pleasure in giving him this Testimonial.[29]

Roscoe Allan, Executive Engineer on Rowther,

Angoor Rowther Sahib of Kumili has taken under me one or two large contracts since I came here such as supplying firewood for the tunnel and timber for the works. He has done almost exceedingly well

and always given satisfaction. I always consider myself very fortunate in securing his services as he is a man of vast influence in Travancore and his position sufficiently attests his business capabilities.[30]

These testimonials reveal the vast resources and command which he enjoyed in the hill stations, and how he managed his relationship with the people of high office for getting concessions in the extraction of sylvan resources in the area. It seems that Rowther was running a parallel administration in the hills, like an uncrowned king.

As a contractor of the Kumili depot he had opened several forest roads leading to Kumili depot, which made the high range forest accessible to carts[31]. Between 1076 and 1078, M. E. (1901 and 1903 ACE) he had opened a new cart road from Kumili to Chengra and to Ayyappancoil, a distance of 25 miles, at the cost of Rs 12,000. This made the Kumili depot attractive now to bidders in auction[32]. Hence, the Travancore government had given great consideration in all the dealings with him and his family. In all the business he had actively engaged his brother C.A. Meera Rowther and both carried the business together till the death of Angoor Rowther. The government and the Forest department were actively engaging them by providing all facilities for the exploitation of the forest in the high range division.

One of the agreements entered into with Mr Angoor Rowther was for the collection ad delivery of Teak, Blackwood and other jungle wood from the forest of the Thodupuzha range, Kottayam division. The contract was given for an approximate amount of Rs 38,000.[33]

An agreement was entered into with Mr. Angoor Rowther, for the collection and removal of teak timber on payment of mel-labhom[34] for three years from 1088[35]. Even after the execution of the agreement it was evident that the government and the forest department were very eager to make changes in the agreement on demand of the contractor. Here in the above agreement Rowther made a demand on the change of the size of various timber parts which depends upon the local demand that regulate the business and profit of the contractor.[36]

Another example was the request made by the conservator of forest Rao Sahib M Rama Rao Garu to the government to approve the arrangements involving a deviation from the terms of the contract entered into with Mr. Angoor Rowther. Here the original agreement was for the delivery and purchase of 96,000 c.ft a year among which he had to supply and purchase the timber in proportion of 75% of Teak and Blackwood and 25% of jungle wood. But later the contractor had given a petition to the conservator requesting the conservator to allow

him to supply and purchase of Teak and Blackwood instead of 25% jungle wood as per the agreement. The reason he stated for the above was that the collection of jungle wood would be a loss to him due to the following reasons[37]:

1) There was a wide distance between the felling area and the consumption centre.

2) Lack of transport facility

3) Low price for jungle wood due to competition from Messer's Aspinwall and co.

Therefore the conservator begs to the government that Mr. Rowther was one of the most energetic of their contractors and he had not been known to shirk a work he had undertaken to perform, so that the approval for the above changes should be considered positively. He also stated that

> There are now lying in the forests about Ayyappancoil large quantities of Teak out in previous years which are getting deteriorated by exposure and is liable to be destroyed by fire. As it is more advantageous to government to work down this timber to the depot than felling green jungle wood, I have ordered the Divisional Forest Officer to allow the contractor to work down these old teak timbers to the depot in lieu of the jungle wood[38].

The total quantity of jungle wood timber he had to work down during the two years according to the original agreement was 16000 c.ft against which he had delivered only 4515c.ft in 1085. For the year 1086 1000 c.ft of jungle wood trees were marked for felling which will give a total of 5515 c.ft of timber leaving a deficit of 10485 c.ft for the 2 years. The conservator further states that if the old teak referred to above does not make up this deficiency the contractor would be allowed to fell fresh teak and Blackwood, though he pointed that cutting of valuable trees alone from a mixed forest is not desirable from a sylvicultural point of view[39].

Such favours could be seen in changing even the methods of extraction. During the time of Kadir Sheik Meera Rowther and his partner they had complained that coupe sale system proved to be a great loss to them while working in the High Ranges. On the petition from him, the government cancelled the coupe sale system and sanctioned the working on the previous Mel-labhom system. The contract was for three years and they were allowed to remove 25,000 c.ft of timber every year paying a Mel-labhom at annas 9 and pies 6 per c.ft for teak

and Blackwood sawn and Annas 3 and pies 9 for teak and Blackwood axed and Re 1 and anna 1 per dozen of teak felloes[40].

When Angoor Rowther complained about the hardship and heavy cost due to the levy of toll at Kumili frontier, the conservator had made a recommendation to the government for some concessions as a result of which the government allowed a deduction in the Mel-labhom due by the contractor, to the extent of toll paid by him[41]. But later during the time of his brother Mr. C. A. Meera Rowther the conservator requested the sanction for concession to the inhabitants of Kumili in the matter of payment of tolls, which was purely aimed at mitigating the sufferings of the contractors[42]. This can be understood from the words of the chief engineer, Kumili in response to the letter from government who enquired him about the need of the concession. He stated that Kumili was a small village with everything contained within the two gates and the residents of the village other than the timber contractors had no business or public avocation to conduct outside the gates. Timber contractors were the only men who suffer any hardship. The best way out of the difficulty was that the conservator of forest should give rebates to the contractors to whom it pressed hard[43]. If we analyse all the correspondence between the government and the forest department it is clear that conservators often make recommendations on behalf of the contractors to get sanction from the government on maters which make conditions favourable and profitable to the contractors.

In between the correspondence of the Forest department with the government regarding the issue, Angoor Rowther died on 27th May 1913[44] even before the first sanction for the reduction in the Mel-labhom came. So another letter was sent to the government by the conservator to sanction the amount of Rs. 220 being reduced from the Mel-labhom of the late contractor's legal heir Mr. Anumanthamkudi Meera Rowther[45]. Another example of the breach of agreement was that one document spoke of the contractor cutting more quantities than those prescribed in the agreement. As per the agreement the contractor could remove a minimum of 40,000 c.ft of timber and a maximum of 50,000 c.ft[46]. Contrary to the agreement the contractor and his agents had removed 56,108.396 cft of timber for which no action was seen to have taken in the records against the late contractor's brother, who had later taken over the contract of Angoor Rowther[47].

On 7th Kanny 1089 M. E. (23rd September 1913) a contract was entered into between Anumanthamkudi Meera Rowther and the conservator of forest on behalf of the Travancore government. According

to the agreement the contractor could collect from the Nagarampara and cardamom hills reserves in the high range division, 40,000 c.ft of teak axed and 50,000 c.ft of teak sawn annually for two years on payment of Mel-labhom rate at 7 annas 7 pies per c.ft for axed logs and 8 annas per c.ft for sawn materials[48].

Suggestion to change the Mel-labhom to coupe sale

This (1914, 1915) was the period of the First World War. During this period the conservator frequently wrote to the government for making changes in the existing timber trading system. A keen analysis shows that during this period there was a great demand for timber and the Forest department was very eager to get outside contracts and increase maximum profit. One suggestion from the part of the conservator was to change the existing Mel-labhom system of timber sales. He stated that this system was an antiquated and wasteful one. This should be withdrawn and introduce a more modern and popular system of selling tree-stands in coupe.[49] A letter from divisional forest officer showed the limitations of the system. The letter reads:

> I went and inspected his felling area as also the materials collected by him. The timber is felled from a place 6 miles from Ayyappancoil and 25 miles from Kumili. The forest here is very rich and abounds in teak, Blackwood, Venteak, Irul and other species. But at present teak alone is felled by the contractor as there is no demand for any other species in the British market. Even in the case of teak, as the contractor has only to pay the Mel-labhom at the depot, only the best portion of a tree is converted and taken to the depot. The top ends and other smaller or slightly unsound portions being in most case rejected.[50]

The contractor enjoys the monopoly of collection and purchase of timber under the Mel-labhom system. Under this system he had to pay only fixed rates of royalty to government on the timbers actually removed through the depot, either in logs or in materials[51]. The financial aspect of this system was not advantageous to the government. So its continuance could not be justified even on consideration of income or profit[52].

Coupe sale system

Under the coupe sale system, also called the Lump sum sale system, the contractors had to pay for the whole of the marked trees in a coupe. As the purchaser pay for the whole of the marked timber it was his interest and look out to attempt the maximum utility of the purchased timber[53]. In the words of the conservator "to secure fair competition and give petty contractors and small capitalists, a chance of

purchase, the coupe may be had in one or two small lots, and sold away"[57]. Until this time, the period of contract was for 2or 3 years. But now the conservator raised the objection for selling the coupe contracts for several years in advance. He states that "the whole world is in demand of timber and timber value is day by day increasing and if we bind ourselves at a fixed rate for so many years the government may be losing heavily"[55]. From analysing the documents, one can understand that other contractors were also coming into the business against which Meera Rowther had sent a long petition to the government along with a testimony of Angoor Rowther. In the petition he stated the services rendered by him and his family, especially his brother Angoor Rowther, to the government of Travancore[56].

In 1918 the Maharaja had sanctioned an agreement with Anumanthamkudi Meera Rowther for the purchase of 701 marked trees from a compact block opposite Thattathicooty in the Ayyappancoil forest for a lump sum of British Rupees 32,000[57]. In the same year another contract was sanctioned by the government regarding the sale of marked teak trees in the Ayyappancoil forest and at Perinjerikutty in the Vandanmedu range of the High range division to Anumanthamkudi Meera Rowther and Messer's Kadir Sheik Meera Rowther and Kala Rowther respectively for lump sum offers.[58] In 1915 His Highness the Maharaja of Travancore granted a contract for the purchase of 800 teak trees in a coupe in Ayyappancoil forest in the high range division to Meera Rowther at the rate of 15 annas and 9 pies per c.ft[59].

Conclusion

The paper explains how Angoor was able to establish his timber trade hegemony in the regions of Peermade and Kumili. It may be their involvement in the boundary dispute of Travancore that made the Raja of Travancore 'at their will'. From there onwards we can see the Raja of Travancore freely donating lands to the Rowthers which reached amazing proportions during the times of Angoor Rowther. How he maintained his relation with the government is evident from the testimonials provided to him by Governors of Madras and other officers and guests of the Travancore government. Rowther was making inroads in to the personal and private spaces of the powerful elites, native and foreign in building a rapport that was solid and unquestionable. It was through these relationships that he tried to penetrate into important government policies regarding timber extraction and thereby getting these policies manipulated according to his whims and fancies.

It is crucial in placing the activities of Rowther against the broad

contextual background of global trade in timber which was controlled by British administrative networks, western scientific notions and principles designed and conceived for catering demands from the colonial industry in the latter half of the nineteenth century and the opening decades of the twentieth century. The period when Rowther was operating his timber trade in Travancore coincides with the relentless search for timber in the colonies by the British. Travancore, the native state which was having a vast reserve of sylvan resources was very much revealed through the gaze of the colonial authorities and a system which was to serve the imperial interests was put in order there. Regulations were enacted by the native raja in the forest administration in tandem with the policies of the Empire. As we are aware, these regulations resulted in the consolidation of the authority of the state over forests and causated sever forest destruction purportedly aiming at progress. The whole Indian scenario was obviously moving in the direction of commercialisation of forest resources under the pretext of conservation. Angoor was able to tap this structural opportunity and turned the timber trade of the region as a personal domain with unconditional patronage from the raja.

Progress in the hills was cited as a reason by Rowther for getting more and more concessions in timber trade from the native state and these claims when certified by letters and other correspondence of the forest department won for him free and uncontrolled access to these pristine lands and complete sway over the extraction of valuable timber in the area. This idea of progress comes into the same line with claims of the British, who were also of the view that clearing of forests for plantations and other timber extractive activities were a sign of 'progress'. Maharaja of Travancore certainly was impressed with such claims, thereby facilitating brisk timber trade in the native state through contractors like the Rowthers in the Kumili- Peermade regions. What was emerging beneath these developments in the hills of Travancore was the *Rowther Empire* of timber trade.

Notes

1. Personal testimony with Haji A M Sultan, Kandathil Veedu, Kumili. Interview conducted on 09/07/2016

2. Humble petition of Angoor Nynar Rowther, Periyar Bungalow Kumili, to His Highness the Maharaja of Travancore..StateArchives ,Trivandrum. Here after SAT

3. Personal testimony, with Haji A M Sultan, op.cit.

4. Ibid.

5. Personal testimony with Mushtaq Ahmed, grandson of C. A. Meera Rowther. Interview conducted on 9/07/2016.

6. Personal testimony with Haji A M Sultan, op.cit.

7. They have shown the evidence that the cardamom in the high range were collected and handed over to the government of Travancore for the kudivila. This served as important evidence in the determination of the dispute in favour of Travancore.

8. Petition from C. A. Meera Rowther, op.cit.

9. Ibid.

10. Personal testimony with Mushtaq Ahmed, op.cit.

11. Ibid.

12. Petition from Angoor Nynar Rowther, timber depot contractor , Kmili, to the Maharaja. SAT

13. Letter from the Supt: of the Cardamom Hills, to the Chief Secretary to Government, Travancore, letter No.734 dtd 21st July 1908. SAT

14. Petition from C. A. Meera Rowther to the Maharaja. SAT

15. Personal testimony with P. H. M. Salim, Retired DFO, Rose Dale Kumili. Interview conducted on 9/07/2016.

16. Personal testimony with Mushtaq Ahmed, op.cit.

17. Personal testimony with Haji A. M. Sultan, op.cit.

18. Personal testimony with Mushtaq Ahmed, op.cit.

19. Haji A. M. Sultan op.cit.

20. Personal testimony with P. H. M. Salim, op.cit.

21. Personal testimony with Jaffar Khan. Interview conducted on 9/07/2016

22. Petition of C. A. Angoor Nynar Rowther, op.cit.

23. Letter from Ayyappan Pillai the Sarvadikaryakar, to the government No.6457/1907. SAT

24. Letter from the Chief Secretary to the government, to the superintendent and Magistrate of Cardamom hills No.6559, dated 28/10/1907. SAT

25. Testimonials on C. A. Angoor Nynar Rowther, Cumbam &Kumili, 1911, Sri Sarathambal press Madura. SAT

26. Ibid.

27. Ibid.

28. Ibid.

29. Ibid.

30. Ibid.

31. Petition of C. A. Angoor Nynar Rowther, op.cit.

32. Ibid.

33.   Letter from the conservator, to the chief secretary to government No: 882, dtd 22/11/1904. SAT

34. Mel-labhom is calculated as the tariff value minus the kole-vila due to the contractor.

35. Conservators letter to chief secretary to government, Trivandrum No: 2292/89 dtd 10-06-14. SAT

36. Ibid.

37. Letter from the conservator of forests, Rao Sahib M. Rama Rao Garu, to the Chief Secretary to Government Trivandrum. Letter No.5806/1086 dtd 29 May 1911. SAT

38. Ibid.

39. Ibid.

40. Conservators letter, Development file No:272/23 B No: 23..SAT

41. Conservators letter, op.cit., No: 2292/89

42. Conservators letter to the chief secretary to government Trivandrum No: 1327 of 1090 dtd 4-6-1915. SAT

43. Letter from the chief engineer, Kumili to the chief secretary to government No:879 dtd 15-5-1915, SAT

44. Conservators letter,op.cit.,No:2292/89

45. Conservators letter to chief secretary No:5349 of 1089 dtd 10-06-14. SAT

46. Conservators letter, op.cit., No:2292/89

47. Ibid.

48. Agreement between Meera Rowther and the conservator of forest, Travancore. SAT

49. Letter from the conservator, to the chief secretary to government, Trivandrum NO:3334 of 1090 dtd 4-10-1915.SAT

50. Letter from the DFO, High Range Division, to the conservator No: 5137 of 1090. SAT

51. Letter from the conservator, op.cit.,NO:3334of 1090. SAT

52. Ibid.

53. Ibid.

54. Ibid.

55. Letter from the conservator to the chief secretary to government TVM

Chola Inscription on a Menhir from Mepara, Rajakumari Panchayat, Idukki District, Kerala*

Ajit Kumar

Professor, Department of Archaeology
University of Kerala, Kariavattom, Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala
Email:ajitkumarku@gmail.com

Abstract

Some years back, at Mepara close to Rajakumari, an inscription was noticed on a menhir belonging to the Megalithic period. The contents of the inscription remained undeciphered till recently. Initial readings of the inscription indicate that it belongs to the 10th year of Rajendra Chola. This article tries to give a brief account of the inscription and its importance.

Keywords: Menhir, Chola, stampage, praśasti, trade-route, Roman coins, Ay-Venad.

Introduction

An inscription was noticed on a menhir belonging to the Megalithic period at Mepara by late Dr. John Ochanthuruth way back in the 1990s. He makes a reference about it in one of his articles but, he never appears to have deciphered the inscription or published an in depth account of it till his untimely demise (Ochanthuruth, 2003:15). The author had once accompanied him to the site and taken stampage and photographs of the inscription but due to reprographic issues, it did

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not yield the desired results. Hence, the site was revisited to evaluate its current status, to take pictures of the inscription and make attempts to decipher it. This article presents a brief account of the menhir and discusses the importance of the inscription based on the transcription provided by Dr. K. Rajan and Dr. S. Bala Murugan.

The menhir

The inscription bearing menhir is located in K.P.Tilagar Estate, Mepara (090.59710'N 770.086989'E), which is close to Kajanappara in Rajakumari panchayat, Nedumkandam block, Udumbanchola taluk of Idukki district. A road from Rajakumari leads south to Kajanappara which has a Government Higher Secondary School and a Post Office. 50m south from the school a small road running east and then turning south, leads to Shiva temple. The estate is to the west of the road. From the road, a pathway cut westwards through the lateritic hillock leads to the site.

This menhir is of Gneiss rock and erected atop a lateritic hillock that offers panoramic view of the surroundings. The area surrounding the menhir is currently overgrown with thick vegetation of grass and shrubs (Pl.1 and 2). This menhir is oriented in a north-south axis and roughly measures slightly over 6m in height, 5m in maximum width and has an average thickness of about 30 cm. It defies explanation how such a large stone came to be erected there.

In local myths, the erection of the stone is considered as an endeavour of Bhima, the strongest of Pandava brothers represented in the epic *Mahabharata*. Hence, some people also call it Bhimankallu. Some of the locals worship this menhir even today, as evident from the few stone lamps; a metal bell etc., kept close to it (Pl.3). There are many places in Kerala where local legends associate large menhirs to the Pandavas and Bhima in particular.

The inscription

The inscription is engraved towards the bottom of the stone's eastern surface (Pl.2 and 4). It is in a partly damaged state and some letters are totally lost. There are almost 13 lines in the inscription and it tentatively read as follows:

Text

1 ஸ்[ஹ]ஸ்ரீ. . . . . ஏழரை . . . . .

2 கொண்டு பெராற்றங்கரை கொட்டக் . . .

3 ஸ்லஉன அஞ்ச வித்து . . ஊனயுங் . . .

4 யும் வேண்டி . . . . . கைக் கொண்டு

5 வீர ஹிஉஹாஸனத்து வீற்றுந்தருளிணக் கொப்பர

6 கௌரிபன்ரான உடையார் ஸ்ரீ ராஜெந்

7 தெவற்கு யாண்டு [ய] ஆவது . .

8 . . . .

9 . . . .

10 . . . .

11 ட சொழ . . . .

12 பெதிமங்கலத்துடைய . . . . . .

13 ஒஉா[ஹாஜநொஉ]

Transliteration

1) *Swasti Śri....ezhari.....*
2) *Koṇdu Perāttankarai kottak.....*
3) *Llanai ancu vittu.....naiyun*
4) *Yum vendi....kaikkondu*
5) *Vīra Simhāśanattu Vīttuntarul inak ko para*
6) *Keśaripanmarān Udaiyār Sri Rājentya*
7) *Tevarkku yāndu āvatu* (10)
8) *….*
9) *….*
10) *…*
11) *Da Cozha*
12) *Petimankalattudaiya*
13) *Prama(hajanom)*

The inscription is a *praśasti* in Tamil language and alphabets interspersed with a few Grantha words and alphabets. It starts with the invocation *Swasti Sri*. It is apparently assignable to Rajendra-I (1012CE-1044 CE) the son of Raja Raja Chola. Line 1-5 of the *praśasti* recounts his appellations and achievements. He is referred to in the inscription as Ko-Parakesarivarman alias Udaiyar Sri Rajendra Chola-deva and dated to his 10th year of reign or 1022CE (as his regnal year com-

mences from 1012 CE) (Sastri, 1935: 231). Chera kings Rajasimha and Rajaraja who reigned from Makotai or Mahodayapuram are considered as his feudatories (Narayanan, 1996:70-71). In line 2 of the inscription there is apparently a reference to his tussle with the Chieftain of Perattankarai and of his being victorious. The place Perattankarai mentioned in the inscription may be a reference to Makodai, which was located on the banks of Periyar *Per = Periya – attan = river – karai* = banks or Periyaattinkarai = Makodai /Kodungallur.

Discussions

Rajendra-I who succeeded Raja Raja-I to the Chola throne, like his predecessor, invaded and annexed the Kerala region, somewhere between his 7th and 10th year of reign. An inscription of Rajendra from the south wall of Thanjavur temple dating to his 10th year vouches his conquest of Kerala. In this inscription, after his war with Chalukya king Jayasimha, he states of his conquering the "principal great mountains (which contained) nine treasures" (Hultzsch, 1916 vol. II-part-I: 93-95). This conquest of the mountains is also reiterated in his Tirumalai inscription dating to his 13th year (Hultzsch, 1907-08: 232-233). Sastri felt that meaning of the phrase '*Navanidillulap-perumali-galum*' offered by Hultzsch is unclear or unintelligible (Sastri, 1935: 245). The English transcript of the 6th line in Tirumalai inscription provided by Hultzsch reads "… *el-arai ilakkamu = nava-nedi-kkula-pperu-malaigalum vikkiram-virar*…" (Hultzsch 1907-08:232).

The phrase '*Nava-nedi-kkula*' possibly carries a connotation to the Yadava Kula or Vrsni race or the Ay-Venad kings. (*Navani* = (butter) *di* = (of) *kkula* = (lineage) = (perumal = king)-igalum (ruling/belonging to) Vikrama vira. The Vikrama Vira mentioned is possibly a reference to the Ay-King Vikramadita Varaguna, the most renowned king of the Ay *kula* who was defeated by Pandaya-Chola kings earlier. Hence, phrase '*el-arai ilakkamu = nava-nedi-kkula-pperu-malaigalum vikkiram-virar*' possibly implies to mean of 'the hill ranges that once belonged to the Ay sovereign Vikrama vira'.

Ancient Tamil literary work *Purananuru* mentions of the family of Yadava or Ay kings residing in the hilly regions. One of the earliest mentioned king of this family is Ay-Andiran and he is referred to as the 'lord of Podiya mountains ranges' (Podiya Mountains are synonymous with the Agasthiyar hill ranges, extending along the western fringes with Kerala along the Kanyakumari-Tirunelveli-Madurai districts). It is stated that Ay-Andiran was quite wealthy and is one of the

seven great philanthropists praised in Tamil literature (C.f. Rao, 1908: Vol.1.17, 275 and Narayanan, 191). Rajendra-I reiterates this view in his Thanjavur inscription and states that "the principal great mountains contained nine treasures".

The area of Nedumkandam - Munnar located on the hills now in Idukki district after the decline of the Ay supremacy, came under the clout of the Venad-Chera rulers. Apparently this area was part of the ancient territorial divisions called Kilmalainatu and Munninatu referred to in the inscriptions from Trikkoditanam and Perunna respectively. Narayanan is of the opinion that Kilmalainatu must have possibly incorporated parts of Devikulam, Todupuzha and Muvarrupula taluqs of Idukki district, and Munninatu was possibly located to the east of Tiruvalla (Narayanan 189-190). There is possibility that, Munninatu denotes the area around the upper-eastern reaches of Idukki district (Munnar-Marayur) regions. The area was possibly called Muninatu or Muninadu on account of the large number of *Muniara* or (dolmens) dotting the area.

Even if the usage 'high mountains' referred to in the Thanjavur inscriptions is contemplated, there is no denying the fact that the hill ranges of Idukki was an economically rich pocket and as it was essentially an important spice producing centre from ancient times. The arterial spice trade route connecting the ports of Kerala / Malabar Coast in the west to the Tamil heartland in the east, ran through the passes in the hills, now running across the districts of Idukki, Pathanamthitta and Kollam. The early historic antecedents of this trade route is vouched from the treasure-trove of Roman coins dating between 1st Century BCE and 2nd Century CE, discovered from the sites of Nedumkandam, Idamakuduru and Poonjar, all located in Idukki district. Interestingly Mepara is situated 30 km north of Nedumkandam by road (Sathyamurthy, 2009:117-118).

Chola kings Raja Raja and Rajendra-I had conquered the Pandya territories before entering the Kerala region. After the fall of the Cholas, the Pandyas and the Chera-Venad rulers appear to have regained their respective territories. The Munnar region was with the Punjar royal family. The Punjar royal family was apparently of Pandya decent or their vassals. Manavikrama Kulasekhara Perumal of this dynasty acquired sovereignty over the tracts around the high hill ranges. The Punjar family was annexed to Travancore dynasty by Marthanda Varma with the conquest of Tekkumkur and Vadakkumkur, in the 1749-50. John Daniel Munro took it on lease from the Kerala Varma Valia Raja

of the Punjar royal family by a deed dated July 11th 1877, and started extensive plantation in the region (Menon, 1967:166). Nothing much is known regarding the late medieval history of Munnar hill ranges till the advent of Munro.

Concluding observations

This inscription newly deciphered is important on two accounts. Till today, the entire array of reported Chola inscriptions has remained exclusive to the ancient south Travancore region, now comprising the Kanyakumari district in Tamil Nadu. In earlier reported Chola inscriptions, there are references to the coastal towns of Vizhinjam, Kollam,
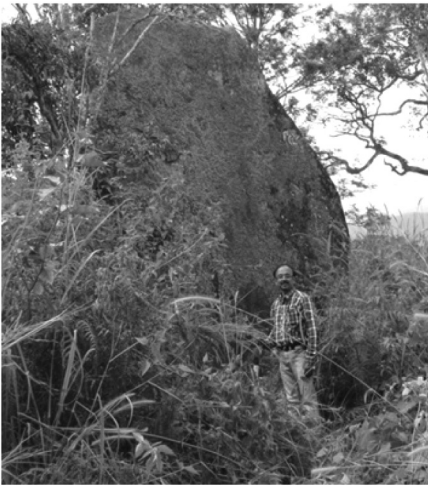
Pl.1.The mehir amdist thick vegetation

Pl.2.Inscription on the eastern face

Pl.3. stone lamps and a bell placed near the menhir.

Pl.4.The inscription of Sri Rajendra Chola-I

and Makoti/Kodungallur being conquered and devastated by Raja Raja, Rajendra-I, Kolotunga etc. For the first time, this inscription from Mepara brings to fore the hegemony of the Cholas in the hill ranges of Idukki district during early 11th century CE. The interest behind annexation of the hilly terrain around Munnar by the Cholas was possibly to gain hold of the spices and the arterial trade route that traversed the region. Cholas were great perpetrators of international maritime trade as vouched from several sources. To maintain their clout over trade the Cholas waged many battles and even sent diplomatic missions abroad (Sastri, 266-267).

Secondly, this is also for the first time, that a menhir belonging to the Megalithic cultural assemblage, possibly coeval to the times of the Roman coins discovered from Idukki district (1st Century BCE and 2nd Century CE), is found to be reused almost 1000 years later during Chola monarch Rajendra's 10 year of reign (1022 CE) to inscribe an inscription. This is a unique instance not reported earlier and hence the menhir needs to be protected for posterity.

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Embodied Pain and Politics of Palliative Care: A Sociological Study in Calicut District, Kerala

Afeeda K.T
Doctoral Fellow
Delhi School of Economics
Delhi University, Delhi
E-mail: afeedakt@gmail.com

Abstract

Palliative care is a biomedical initiative which offers a holistic approach by adding non-medical aspects of emotion, social, financial and spiritual. It proposes a new model of care against individualistic biomedical care with wider community participation. This study critically looks at the departing juncture of palliative care from biomedicine at both conceptual and practice level. This is a sociological enquiry to see whether Palliative Care is an alternative medical system in dealing with lived experience of pain and conceptualizing the idea of care. Detailed fieldwork is conducted with palliative care clinics in Calicut district, Kerala. It explores the practice of 'holistic care' at three delivery centers of care; clinic, in-patient and home care. Using embodiment as a theoretical framework, the study problematizes the perception and treatment of experience of pain from various networks of palliative care like doctors, nurses and community volunteers. The study finds a gap in the practice of palliative care in understanding the lived experience of pain where factors like language, caste, age, class etc. play crucial role. It also examines how palliative care slips into larger politics of care industry in the medical field.

Keywords: *Body, Pain, Palliative Care, Medical Sociology, Embodiment, Illness Narrative, Care Industry, Kerala Health Sector, Institute of Palliative Medicine.*

Introduction

We have learned, especially as men, to identify with our minds and segregate and disdain our bodily experiences. We have learned to value reason in a way that has estranged us from our emotional and spiritual lives. We have learned to identify progress with the domination of nature that we can no longer feel at home in. As we no longer feel home in our bodies, we can no longer feel at home with our natural selves (Siedler 1994:84)

Generally, pain is understood as the absence of pleasure. The meaning one connotes to the word pain in daily conversation is different for different people depending on the situation, ranging from physical pain, an expression of mental disturbances or a bad experience or as punishment. Along with differences in the cultural expressions signified by the word 'pain', one could also observe similarities in the usage. These generalized understandings of pain are produced discursively at various levels; mainly by the medical practice, religious disciplines and legal definitions.

Biomedical understanding of pain and body is based on Cartesian dualism where physical body is the focus of analysis. How does a patient express his/her physical pain to a doctor? What is the language used for that? How can an outsider who cannot feel the pain of the other person understand it? How this absence of the present pain is understood in a culture? Is physical pain only a feature of the body? These are some of the relevant questions that come to mind when we analyze the setting of a modern clinic where a doctor diagnoses the pain and suffering of a patient.

Studies in medical sociology have criticized the dominant biomedical characterization of pain in our society. Theorists like Foucault (1973) analyzed the historic development of biomedicine and shows with great precision the contingencies of the discipline and the institutional settings in which such knowledge is produced. Studies in medical Anthropology have addressed the lived experience of body and pain. Distinction between illness, disease and sickness (Klienman, 1988), presence of individual, social and body politics (Schepher and Huges, 1987), narrative representation of illness (Good, 1994) etc., are some of the important themes around which subjective experience of patients is theorized. In the discipline of Sociology, influenced by different traditions of post modernism, feminism, phenomenology, post structuralism etc., experiential level of body has risen to prominence in the recent decades. "Embodiment" as a conceptual tool is pivotal in sociological literature to understand the lived experience of pain.

Pain and Palliative care is a biomedical initiative which claims to offer a holistic understanding of patient's situation, and offers medical aid that is sensitive to the suffering of the body- seen in a larger social, economic, cultural and spiritual context. This trend in biomedicine apart from its socio-political background, informs some interesting questions that form the subject of this paper. The study asks if it is possible in a biomedical field to accommodate non-medical dimensions

like social, financial, spiritual and emotional concerns of the patient. If so, what are the forms and practices it adopts? The study examines whether Pain and Palliative care works as an alternative medical system within the medical field, and if so in what specific way. The study is located in Kerala where Palliative care medicine is popular along with other medical systems.

Conceptualization of care in a Palliative medicine is an important focus of this study. In biomedical field, with the profession of nursing, care as a concept is institutionalized, as a transfer of care from the private household to public hospitals. Palliative Care reverses this movement, where care as a concept returns to the sphere of community and home. Individualized approach of biomedicine is then incorporated with a communitarian approach in Palliative Care. This complex and interesting social process is explored in this study.

Understanding body

Modernity and its knowledge system was based on Cartesian dualism which is an indication of its emphasis on science and rationality over non-rational elements like emotions, religion, body etc. This represents an epistemic logic which subsequently came to be reflected in the entire domain of the social, cultural and political reasoning. It informed other sets of dualism like nature/culture, private/public, mind/reason, mind/body etc. It assumes a notion of an atomic individual capable of independent and objective reasoning. Within such framework, body is seen as a physical entity which is to be controlled, developed and put to productive use by the rational mind. Body as an analytical tool is recent in social science discipline. Sociology as a discipline from its classical period itself has avoided body as a focus of study instead dealt with rational man and his/her relationship with society. But later, body became the topic of discussion due to larger interventions in Anthropology, feminism, post modernism etc.

Largely, we can divide these studies into social constructionist and anti-constructionist theories. Social constructionist theories understood body as a product of society. These theories ranges from radical positions which claim that there is no body beyond the social discourse to the positions which discuss social categories which influence body but not necessarily dominate it. These theories tend to agree that body is significantly shaped and produced by society. The work of Foucault (1973) represents an important contribution to the social constructionist understanding of the body. According to him, the body is totally

contributed by discourse and subsequently a concrete site for the operation of knowledge/power in modern societies. Interactionist approach of Goffman (1969) explains how society shapes, classifies, influences and controls body. Feminism and post modernism also engage with how existing power discourse constructs gender bodies and critically deals with various modes of its operations. On the other hand, anti-constructionist theoriesunderstand body as independent of any forms of discourse. One category is biomedical perception of body as exclusively physical entity and another is phenomenological approach which addresses faces of embodiment like language, consciousness, emotions etc. which influence actions and process of interactions of social structures and institutions through the body. Merleau-Ponty (1962) uses the concept body-subject to explain how body is produced by society and at the same time society is created and modified by body.In these theories, body is understood either as a product of society or as a subject standing on its own detached from other social institutions and phenomenon.

Embodiment as a theoretical framework

Social constructionist theories outlined above failed to provide an account of the role of human embodiment and autonomy of the lived body. Social constructionist theories miss the complexities of embodiment in relation to the lived experience of the subject and wider cultural and social structures. In line with scholars emphasizing the autonomy of the body and its lived reality, I take the view that rather than looking at body through society/structure/discourse, body should be explored in itself as a sociological unit. In other words, if body is understood as having its own lived, affective, sensuous and tactile ontology that cannot be sufficiently explained within the logic of its social constitution, what kind of social terrain does it open up for investigation?

The body is a corporeal phenomenon which not only is affected by the social systems, but forms a basis for and shapes social relations (Shilling, 2003). Existing narratives on body like foundationalism, anti-foundationalism, phenomenology, social constructionism etc., have not fundamentally challenged the Cartesian legacy which distorts the understanding of reality. An interaction between these positions is required for the construction of sociology of embodiment which demands the recognition of phenomenological basis of a socially constructed body. It is only through the concept of embodiment that we can escape from Cartesian dualism. It is only through this idea that the body can be understood in terms of its corporality, its sensibility and

its objectivity (Turner, 1996). Focus on lived experience of body is not a denial of the role of power of social discourses on body but it gives wider ideas on life and body itself. Integration of mind and body is the starting point of such a theory of embodiment (Shillong, 2003; Turner, 1996). Csordas (1990) has clearly emphasized the scope of embodiment as a methodology which address body not as a subject or object but emphasizing its 'bodily-in-the-being'.

Like body, pain is also understood under the same framework; either as a social construct or as a subjective reality. In the former, the autonomy of the body is rejected and the latter does not deal with the physical explanations of pain. The dominant understanding of pain is influenced by biomedical definitions. The International Association for the Study of Pain (IASP)[1] provides a widely used definition of pain as "unpleasant sensory and emotional experience associated with actual or potential tissue damage or described in terms of such damage (1979:250).This biomedical definition of pain makes a clear distinction between physical pain and emotional pain. Bio-cultural model of pain, Morris (1998) tells us that pain is always biological and always cultural. Understanding of pain as a lived experience denies exclusive objectification of pain in body and subjectification of pain with self. Expression of pain and language used also needs attention. Painful body lives in a different world. Language is not always disembodied and exclusive of mind. At the same time, medical language is not the only mode of expression of pain. Multiple realities of a chronic pain are thus expressed in multiple ways.

Pain and Palliative Care

World Health Organisation (WHO) defines palliative care (as an approach)[2]:

> …that improves the quality of life of patients and their families facing the problems associated with life threatening illness, through the prevention and relief of suffering by means of early identification and impeccable assessment and treatment of pain and other problems; physical, psycho social and spiritual.

Palliative Care claims a deviation from institutionalized bio-medical health care and emphasises the concept of 'total care'. The term 'palliative' comes from the Latin word "*pallium*" meaning 'to cloak'. Symptoms are cloaked in palliative care treatment with the primary aim of providing comfort to the patients. Palliative care is part of the health care sector with a multi-disciplinary approach to patients with

chronic disease, incurable disease, old age health problems, mental disorders and patients at the end stage of life. The aim of palliative care is to help patients relieve themselves from pain, symptoms and sufferings, to ensure quality of life in the face of intolerable chronic ailments. It provides 'total care' to patients by addressing their physical, psychological, financial, spiritual and social aspects. This holistic care is delivered by both medical and non-medical personnel – doctors, nurses, volunteers and family members.

History of Palliative Care

Palliative Care began as a part of the Hospice movement. Hospice is a place for travelers to rest in the modern inn. This form of Hospice was initiated by Dame Cicely Saunders in 1948, in the United Kingdom[3]. In 1980, the first Palliative care clinics were established in United States in institutions like Cleveland clinic and Medical college of Wisconsin. The basic difference between Hospice care and Palliative care is that the former serves patients at the terminal stage, while Palliative care is provided to patients at all stages of the disease. However, this distinction is vague in practice in many countries.

The concept of Palliative care reached in India in the mi1980s. In India, Palliative care initiatives first began in cancer treatment, primarily based on in-patient medical service. The first Palliative centers were instituted in cancer centers in Ahmadabad, Trivandrum, Mumbai, Bangalore and Delhi. In the second phase, government medical services at various levels initiated palliative medicine. An out-patient clinic was opened in Regional cancer center in Trivandrum and later, with the incorporation of volunteers,the Institute of Palliative Medicine in Calicut enlarged the scope of the practice. Kidwai institute of Oncology in Bangalore is another early institution for Palliative Care. Community participation with medical professionals marked the third stage of Palliative medicine, which included home visits, significantly enlarging the outreach of this practice.

Palliative Care in Kerala

In India, national coverage of Palliative Care is only about 2% while Kerala stands as one of the highest contributors with two-thirds of the total Palliative Care. Palliative Care developed in Kerala with the formation of Pain and Palliative Care Society in Calicut district in 1993. Currently Kerala has more than 200 Palliative Clinics (Institute of Palliative Medicine, registerbook). Kerala is the only state where pain and Palliative Care functions in collaboration with National

Rural Health Mission (NRHM). *Arogyakeralam* Palliative care project in Kerala was initiated in 2008, and is the main implementing arm of the state government's 'Pain and Palliative Care policy'. Institute of Palliative Medicine (IPM) is the nodal agency for implementing this state level project. State policy of Palliative Care which brings together health services, local self-government institutions, Social Welfare Department and Community Based Organizations is implemented at three levels. At the basic level, *Panchayat* Palliative home care is provided by a trained nurse with the participation of health workers, volunteers and elected representatives. At the secondary level, specialist Palliative Care services are made available to a cluster of primary units. Tertiary level Palliative Care services focuses on consolidating activities of the secondary care units by providing training to improve the quality of the Palliative Care services.

Pain and Palliative Care is developed as community based care service in Kerala. The formation of Neighborhood Network in Palliative Care (NNPC) is a turning point in the growth of community based Palliative Care. NNPC is a program that attempts to develop a sustainable community led service capable of offering comprehensive long term care and Palliative Care to the needy in the developing world. It is based on the principle that it is the duty of the healthy in a community to provide care to the unhealthy, and fund raising is carried by the community itself. It aims at empowering local communities to look after the chronically ill and dying patients in that community. Community owned Palliative Care services working all over the state are known as NNPC. Within a decade, the NNPC initiatives have achieved an estimated coverage of 70 per cent in Palliative and long-term care in Kerala. More than 200 individual centers are active within this network. Resources for running these services are raised by the local community. Health care is provided by community volunteers and health professionals. There are of two types of community volunteers: trained volunteers who undergo intensive training to equip themselves to provide emotional support and basic nursing care for the patients; while untrained volunteers are a sensitized group who contribute to the social support system for an active and efficient functioning of Palliative Care. They are involved in fund raising, administrative work, conducting programs to increase the awareness on Palliative Care etc.

Calicut is a district of northern Kerala comprising of 75 Panchayats and one municipal corporation. There are 51 Palliative Clinics in this district.[4] This is larger in number compared to other districts of

Kerala. This trend is a result of an effective strategy and network used for the practice of Palliative Care. In 1993, Pain and Palliative Care Society (PPCS) was established and an outpatient clinic was opened in Calicut Medical College.In the initial stage it was clinic–based, and later expanded its functioning to forge links with various other Palliative initiatives in the surrounding region. Neighbourhood Network in Palliative Care (NNPC) was formed in 1996 in Malapuram district which covers local clinics. Institute of Palliative Medicine (IPM) is an autonomous institution instituted in 2003 with an objective to promote community participation in Palliative care and long term care. It is the nodal agency for Government of India's National Rural Health Mission to implement Palliative care programs in Kerala. The institute is supported by Department of Health and Family Welfare, and Department of Social Welfare of Government of Kerala. IPM is also the policy, research and training arm of the World Health Organization Demonstration Project in Palliative Care. IPM is the only Palliative institution which provides in-patient service.[5]

Study Universe

Out of 51 Palliative clinics in Calicut, 10 clinics have been chosen for this study. All the clinics are either Non-Government Organization (NGO) or Community Based Organization (CBO). The selection of clinics is based on the convenience of access to the clinics. They are Institute of Palliative Medicine, Pain and Palliative Care Society, Government Medical College Unit, Calicut City Pain and Palliative Clinic, Farook Palliative Clinic, Narikkuni Palliative Care Unit, Tanal Pain and Palliative Clinic, Abaya Pain and Palliative Care Society, Daya Pain and Palliative Care Clinic, Santhwanam Pain and Palliative Care Clinic and Nadapuram Pain and Palliative Clinic. Institute of Palliative Medicine is the only institution where in-patient care is provided. It accommodates 32 patients at a time. Patients with chronic or incurable disease get admitted for symptom relief, respite care or for terminal care. Patients who are refereed by health care professionals or community volunteers through community network are usually–admitted. City Pain and Palliative Care clinics provide home care service for patients who need regular care at home. All other clinics provide both home care and out-patient service.

Features of Palliative Care

➢ Accepting death:

Acceptance of the inevitability of death is an important concep-

tual category in Palliative Care process. Palliative Care is not to hasten or shorten death, but to provide quality of life to people in the final stage of their life. The focus hence is to affect an attitude change towards death. The attempt here is to transform medicalised death into a more natural and less painful process of death. Thus, the primary duty of Palliative Care is to alleviate suffering and to develop different ways to deliver care to the patients and his or her family to reduce the suffering. As a public health strategy, the aim of Palliative Care is to provide maximum care to the majority of the population in a society. It brings into question the general sympathetic or neglectful attitude of society towards patients. Confusion and anxiety are redressed in this mode of providing care by slowly attuning the patient to the reality of impending death. Over-institutionalisation in private medical sectors which alienate patient from his/her world is avoided in Palliative Care.

➢ Total Care:

The holistic approach of Pain and Palliative Care ensures total care for patients with uncured diseases, and in need of physical care to control symptoms of pain and to maintain a minimum quality of life during the ailment. It includes:

a) Physical care: Bio medical interventions predominates Palliative Care to address the physical problems of the patients. It provides minimum medical treatment to ensure a quality of life. Physical care is not to cure the disease but to reduce the pain and suffering. Physical care is provided by doctors and nurses trained in modern medicine. Palliative medicine stresses on the care and basic medical treatment with a personal and social approach. Alternative medicines are usually not encouraged at this stage.

b) Financial care: Patients reach palliative clinics at a stage where all the other treatments have failed, pushing them in to considerable financial crisis. As a respite in such circumstances, Palliative clinics provide treatment and medicine free of cost. Volunteers and nurses visit patients who have registered with palliative clinics and decide on whether the family is eligible for financial support. A decision is arrived at in the weekly meeting of the Palliative care unit. The registration form at the palliative care unit has a column for financial status in which the patients or relatives are required to mention their financial status. It is written as Above Poverty Level, Below Poverty Level and Middle Class, Upper Class or Lower class. The register of the inpatients shows that majority come from lower class.

Home visit also showed the same. Out patients who come for regular checkup express free medical service as a major factor for their choice of palliative Care. The patients from well of families mostly choose Palliative care because of the personal care provided by these clinics, which in their opinion is significantly absent in private or multi-specialty hospitals.

c) Spiritual care: In the beginning of the Hospice movement, spirituality is understood as different from religion. During the final stage of life, questions about the meaning of life, why they were inflicted by the disease and life after death become important existential questions for many patients. Hence addressing them is crucial for alleviating pain in chronically ill patient. The question of spirituality is addressed by developing awareness about patient's state of mind and his/her philosophical confusions about life. An open space for patients to express their mind is provided as a means to engage spiritual and philosophical dilemmas related to death.

d) Emotional care: The approach of Palliative care is based on developing a new, informed and emphatic relationship between the patient, his or her family, their communities and the wider society. Patients with chronic pain who are bedridden for several years suffer from emotional problems of varied nature and intensity. Financial burden of family, sever physical pain, reducing role in social life, fear of death etc produces emotional stress in the patients. Personal approach in Palliative care gives patients a space to talk freely with doctors, nurses and volunteers. Frequent home visits and training the family in basic techniques of redressing emotional trauma are an integral part of Palliative care. Community participation during home visit gives a space to patients for social interaction. In some clinics, psychologists assist patients to deal with their emotional problems. Family and community participation in which doctors or trained volunteers from IPM disseminate information and build awareness about issues related to emotional trauma.

➢ Palliative Care Network:

It is provided by a network of doctors, nurses and volunteers trained in Palliative medicine. Doctors with MBBS degree are required to obtain a Basic Certificate course in Palliative medicine (BCCPM). Basic Certificate Course in Auxiliary Nursing (BCCPAN) is a similar certification for nurses. Awareness and basic training programme are provided to the volunteers. Palliative courses, along with biomedical

aspects, stresses on non-medical dimensions. It emphasizes on communication skill as an important skill for providing total care.

a) Doctors: We find very less number of doctors in Palliative setting. Low payment scale compared to private sector is the major reason-behind this. Apart from government doctors comes under NRHM programme, where palliative service is compulsory, the rest of them consider this as a charity or social service. We can trace this trend to the history of missionary initiatives on social issues. The area of work for these doctors is to provide physical care and rest is compartmentalized as emotional and social pain which is to be dealt by psychiatric department and non-experts like family and community. Medical related decision making comes completely under these doctors.

b) Para medical staff: Minimum qualification required for this post is matriculation. This opens up job opportunity for many. Eventhough this is less paid, some nurses shift from private sector to Palliative due to both personal and professional reasons. The former is about night shifts, over work, difficulties in balancing with household worksetc. and later concern is regarding professional hierarchy.

c) Volunteers: They are the major work force for the effective functioning of Palliative care. Effective communication and fund raising are the major areas of their work. Volunteers are spread from retired officials, students, house wives, professionals etc. They consider it as a social work and reaching out to patients and community make this Palliative initiative active.

➢ Illness Narration and Patient's world:

Narration is a way of expression which gives meaning to the experience. I use narration as a theoretical tool to explore lived experience of pain. Clinical use of narratives for therapeutic purpose dates back to the psychoanalysis of Sigmund Freud. Later medical Anthropology made a clear distinction between disease and illness. Klienman (1988) explains illness as what patient experience from the symptoms and its sufferings and it is transformed in to disease when patient conveys it to a practitioner. Thus,illness narrative critiques the dominant practitioner-oriented biomedical definitions and explains patient's perspective. Illness narrative is the explanation and expression of patients about what they feel, how they understand their states of illness and all together about what they experience. Studies conducted by Young (1955) shows that illness narratives reflect the cultural and social structure and

institutionalized ideology and practices. Thus, narratives are used as a representation and a link between individual and society.

There are three kinds of patients in Palliative Care: in-patients who get admitted in IPM, out-patients who receive palliative treatment in clinics and patients who get home care.

a) In-patients:

Most of the patients are aware of their disease. The major concern about the patient is intensity of physical pain and non-medical worries like financial burden of the family, future of children etc. Lack of social role makes them vulnerable, introvert and passive. They keep talking about their pain and arrange their life cycle based before and after diagnosis of the disease.

b) Out-patients:

Patients who are referred by other hospitals can register in any of the nearest palliative clinics. Volunteers in a locality create a networking system between patients and doctors which reduce the gap between them. This creates an informal surrounding in these clinics. Free medical service is one of the major reasons for patients to consult these clinics.

c) Home care:

A team of doctors, nurses, and volunteers from the locality give visit to patients in their home. Most of the patients at terminal stage prefer to stay at home than in hospital setting. Along with that financial crisis, physical disabilities, lack of people to help, limited transport facilities, remoteness of residence etc. makes some patients to prefer be at home. Since these patients need continuous medical attention, family members are trained with basic medical care.

➢ Community Care:

Due to the over medicalization of treatment and cure to patients, health service provided by general clinics is not able to address the major problems. It is mostly affected by the chronic ill patients who requires more than medical intervention. Due to this limitation of existing medical services and the realization that primary care givers like family, friends and volunteers can do a major role for patients, Palliative Care incorporated community service. Thus, Palliative Care is an alternative health care initiative with people's participation. Palliative Care promotes active community participation at all stages of treatment and rehabilitation.

Patients with incurable and life shortening disease suffer problems other than physical issues. Some of them are anxious about the disease and death, financial crisis due to the large amount expended on treatment, difficulties of access to places where proper treatment is available, social negligence due to stay back from social roles, spiritual problems etc. Medical service usually address physical aspects of the patient's disease and Palliative Care tries to extend its service to social problems with the participation of community. Volunteers are trained to develop communication skills which include facial expression, body language, listening capacity etc., which aims to provide a comfortable space for patients to express what he/she feels about disease, chances to recovery, treatment with doctor, family issues etc.

In Palliative Care, fund is raised from the community. Micro finance model is used in Palliative Care, where donation from individual or institution or organization is collected. Palliative Care in Calicut has some project to collect donation. 'Track We Leave' is a program which aims to broaden the community participation in fund which collect at least Rs. 3/- per day from each person. In Palliative for Student Programme, student volunteers collect money from schools and colleges in any of the week days. Also, in every year, auditing committee discusses the income and expense. In Calicut, donation from the Gulf migrated people helps to meet the expenses of Palliative Care services. Participation of volunteers in fund raising is a remarkable feature in Kerala society.

Experience of pain

Now we need to critically evaluate the content of Palliative Care in practice and evaluates its understanding of embodied experience of pain. This is an attempt to critically evaluate the gap between the philosophical claims of Palliative Care and its practice. Also, it evaluates 'care' as a concept in the domain of Palliative medicine and reflects on the problems with the institutionalization of care in the context of Kerala society. This is an attempt to reflect on the politics of care industry in the commercialized medical scenario.

➢ Pain narration:

Palliative care uses a graduated scale from 0 to 10 to mark the intensity of pain and it ranges from no pain to maximum pain the patient can imagine. One's experience of pain may be influenced by many other factors like the intensity of earlier pain experienced in life, gender factor where tolerance of pain in life is socially determined, nature of

interaction with others suffering from pain etc. Thus, how much one's expression of no pain and maximum pain using this scale reflects subjective experience of patient's pain is problematic. Understanding of experience of pain is also influenced by social and emotional factors. Here, we can see that, Palliative care rests on the idea that physical pain causes social and emotional problems to patients. Subjective experience of pain and its narration will not be understood within this scientific pain scale.

➢ Cultural construction of pain:

Metaphors, local usages, social attitude towards disease etc., which are influenced by culture are some of the factors which contribute to the experience and expression of pain. Influence of social categories like caste, class, gender etc., in defining the experience of the embodied body and pain is not addressed from the patient point of view. The study however understands even though it provides a space for impersonal interaction, cultural influence in the pain expression and its experience of the patients are not addressed in Palliative Care. Use of biomedical tools and vocabulary in Palliative Care to denote the physical pain is a way the replication of biomedical model of disease.

➢ Total care:

Different dimensions of care delivered in Palliative care is analyzed here.

a) Spiritual and religious care:

Spirituality is often interchangeably used with religion. But religion is related with organized institutions under clergyman whereas spirituality is something which is shared between two people. During the formation of Palliative Care, spirituality was differentiated from religion. This secular understanding of spirituality based its engagement with the lived experiences of patients. Here, spirituality is not about one's religion or organized sects or rituals etc., but are a search for meaning to life. Later, religious dimension of the patients is also addressed under spiritual care. Now the practice of spiritual care in Palliative Care shows that religion and spirituality is used interchangeably. Also, spirituality is the least addressed aspect of Palliative Care.

Medical model of spirituality has many problems. Exclusion of religion from spirituality in practice creates problems to patients. This secular model of spirituality is not able to address many of the is-

sues a patient at end stage of life suffers from. For example, if a patient need a religious solace from a clergyman or a space to practice religious rituals etc., this model of spiritual care will not address. For a patient, it may not always need a search for meaning of life but seeks religious expressions. Non-religious spiritual dimension of Palliative Care engages with general views on the meaning of life and death. Here, some questions are raised like whether patients at their vulnerable stage and their family require these spiritual interventions. On the other hand, if religion is added to the spiritual care, the chance of religious bias of the care giver on patient's belief is higher. Miscommunication and unnecessary spiritual interference in to the lives of patients may create problems to them. Thus, the practice of spiritual care is a very problematic side of Palliative Care. Sometimes in practice, morality of the care givers may influence the delivery of spiritual care. Also, institutionalized training for the ways of delivering spiritual care makes the process mechanical which contrasts with the sensitive need of the patients at the end stage of life.

b) Physical care and emotional care:

In Palliative Care model, physical care is provided by the doctor who received Palliative training. Specialists in mental health like clinical psychologist and psychiatrist provides the emotional care to the patients. The division of physical and emotional care itself reflects the Cartesian philosophy. In practice, physical care is given to the patients with chronic illness and patients at terminal stage of disease and emotional care is provided by the specialists to the patients with mental illness. This compartmentalization of disease and specialization in medical profession misses the subjective experience of pain. Embodiment confirms that pain is not just a physical experience, different factors like emotions, socio-cultural and political factors also influence the experience. In practice, Palliative care functions like the biomedical approach to patients and disease.

c) Financial care:

It is very clear that free medicine and free treatment are the major factors which attract most of the people to Palliative Care. Social biography of the patients showed that majority are from lower class. Lack of effective medical care in public health system and unaffordable treatment in private hospitals made them to move to Palliative Care.

d) Problems in the delivery of palliative care:

In practice, Palliative Care is given to patients a terminal illness stage but it is required throughout the disease stage. Palliative Care act as a supporting system to patients but the larger view on disease and death is not changed. From the public health perspective, the ethical position of Palliative Care is to provide a proper health care to larger number of population than to provide best health care to everyone. This over emphasis on expanding to wider society has compromised the quality of care given to patients.

Existing health care systems are hierarchical in nature with knowledge as power. In Palliative Care, also we can see this tendency. The dominance of doctor in decision making and health care process is evident. The active involvement of volunteers in all stages of the process of health care provision can lead to possible loss of confidentiality, privacy, patient autonomy, quality of care etc. Role overlap in community based Palliative Care shows the tendency of volunteers attempting to even do medical professional job without training. This shows the tendency towards a position where medical knowledge gives power and status.

Politics of Palliative care

Care in Palliative care is service oriented. Public good was the intension behind services in health sector by many Government initiatives. In biomedical field, individual interest is the focus of the medical interventions. Palliative Care bridges the gap between these two and attempts to give individual attention to the patients at the cost of community participation which in practice comes out as a social good.

Community participation in Palliative Care provides a network of interacting people. Success story of Palliative Care in Kerala is because of this active community participation. The strategic implementation of Palliative Care service through this network made it a remarkable feature in Kerala context.

All the posters and brochures of palliative clinics introduce palliative care as a humanitarian attempt or as a charitable act. This social initiative can be viewed from two angles. State's withdrawal from the public services like health leads to movements like Palliative Care. Palliative Care proposes an idea that health is a social responsibility. In Kerala, we can see Government policy of Palliative clinics is opened. But this intervention does not mean that it pressurizes Government to increase public expenditure on health or improving infrastructure etc.

Thus, we can say that like many other NGOs, Palliative Care is used as a shield for Government to give up the public responsibilities. Active participation of large number of volunteers especially youth is a sign of people's withdrawal from the institutionalized political parties which reflects a new social consciousness from the public for new initiatives. Even though Palliative Care does not question the existing system both in medical field and social setup, it opens a wider way for social service.

Conclusion

The study examined the point where Palliative Care departs from biomedicine at its theoretical level. We can see the difference at three levels; one, the approach towards patients, second, understanding the disease and death and third, methods of delivering care. Total care in Palliative Care establishes an informal relationship with patients in order to build personal rapport in the doctor-patient relationship unlike biomedical approach. Disease as a social suffering opens the community participation in Palliative Care which extends the biomedical exclusiveness of doctor's role in treatment. Thus, Palliative model of care have a holistic approach to the patient. In this way, Palliative Care proposes an alternative idea of care and treatment within biomedical framework.

In contrast to the theoretical position, Palliative Care in practice complies with Biomedicine in many ways. Compartmentalization of profession in delivering physical and emotional care and the prioritizing physical care over other aspects of care is a replication of biomedicalmodel. Also, the present study points out that the subjective experience of the embodied pain of patients is not addressed as such in Palliative Care. The complexities of embodiment are not unveiled in Palliative Care. Thus, we can say that Palliative Care misses the experiential pain and suffering.

Notes

1. IASP is a Non-Governmental Organisation formed in 1973 with the purpose of scientific research on pain. It is involved in understanding pain and emphasis on policy interventions to prevent and control pain.

2. http://www.who.int/cancer/palliative/definition/en/

3. https://www.nhpco.org/history-hospice-care

4. Official data from Institute of Palliative medicine during the time period of my field work.

5. http://www.instituteofpalliativemedicine.org/index.php

Afeeda K.T

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Religious Ideologies, Confrontations and the Colonial Space: Syrian Catholics in Early Modern Kerala

Beena Paul
Associate Professor, Department of History
Henry Baker College, Melukavu
Kottayam, Kerala
E-mail: beena539@gmail.com

Abstract

Traditional Kerala society underwent drastic changes with the arrival of British colonial administrators and the Protestant missionaries. During the early phase of colonial administration, society was suspicious and reluctant to adapt to the ongoing changes. The traditional society had to confront with modern ideas and institutions, Protestant Christian doctrines and beliefs as well as western Christian morality. Each community had different challenges to face with. It is in this context, the study of Syrian Catholic community is taken up. Syrian Catholics are the traditional Christians of Kerala, who had acknowledged the papal jurisdiction and are also known as Romo-Syrians, Pazhayacoor or they themselves call Catholics. Here the attempt is to trace how the Protestant ideology confronted with the Catholic ideology in a colonial space, which was a continuum of the religious conflict in Europe. This paper also looks into the ideology of the Raj which club the colonial rule with religious activities. The Latin prelates in Kerala were also suspicious of the possible conversion to the other Syrian factions. In this background, the study of Syrian Catholics, under the Latin jurisdiction, till the fag end of 19th century is significant. Moreover the mechanisms employed by the ecclesiastical authorities to evade all sorts of other indoctrinations, especially through modern institutions like schools are quite interesting.

Keywords: *Catholic, Protestant, doctrines, indoctrination, Colonial modernity, Cultural construction.*

Missionary activities had a fresh start in the beginning of the 19th century. The Charter Act of 1813 granted permission to missionaries to work in India and began their proselytizing activities.[1] Although Christianisation was not in the colonial agenda, a nexus between government officials and missionaries came to be established during this period. Within the government a strong lobby favoured encouragement to missionary pursuits, not only as a religious enterprise but also as a

possible prop for the permanence of the empire, as they believed that evangelization would help ensure loyalty. The conduct of these officials gave the impression that the missionaries were acting in collaboration with the government (Panikkar, 2001:102).

The British brought with them new technology, institutions, knowledge, believes and values. They slowly laid the foundation of a modern state by surveying land, settling revenue, creating modern bureaucracy, army and police, instituting law courts, codifying the law; developing communications - railways, post and telegraph, roads and canals; and establishing schools and colleges (Srinivas, 2010:49). In fact the colonial state apparatus functioned as instruments of ideological dissemination and the institutions functioned as ideological instruments aiding political control. The ideological dissemination was inherent in every policy pursued by the British in India (Panikkar, 2001:71). It was a means to subjugate the Indian people to the colonial system. The cultural agency for the colonial consolidation was the new education system in schools, colleges and universities (Ganesh, 2004:155). In India, the rise of the Western knowledge, generally believed to be the crux of the modern civilization in the West, enabled Indians to access new knowledge and ideas of the West under the colonially shaped educational system. The colonial administrators and missionaries engaged in evangelisation and conversion, choose the same institution, the school as the instrument of spreading their culture and religion. Schools and colleges gradually acquired the status of agencies for modern education, learning English became a necessary means for upward social mobility and entry into echelons of power (Ganesh, 2004:155).

Under the colonial rule, Christian missionaries emerged as a notable agency to educate the people. The prominence of the mission were facilitated by three factors: first, Christian missions, a product of evangelistic movement of the West, functioned under the political suzerainty of colonialism; second, essentially as a welfare subject and thirdly, Christian missionaries always took Western education as an expedient tool for their missionary object (Bara,2010:25). In Kerala, London Missionary Society (1806), Church Missionary Society (1816), and Basel Evangelical Mission (1834) started its activities in the first half of the nineteenth century. A large number of schools were started in the first phase of British rule, i.e., up to 1850, which is also known as 'the age of mission schools". The schools started by them gave both secular and religious education. Admission to the schools was irrespective of

caste and creed, though it was not acceptable to many. The curriculum included, English literature, hygiene, health, family budget, child care, history, moral science and Bible. Secular education was seen as the best means to educate the other communities in Christian ways (Ganesh, 2004:168). Period after 1850, i.e., in the second half of the nineteenth century, state began to take initiative to start schools, especially English schools. Only later, Government paid attention to start Vernacular schools. Turning point occurred with the beginning of grant-in-aid to private schools. Grant-in-aid system provided the communities, opportunities to start educational institutions according to their need and they vied with each other to start schools.

With the coming of the British, the traditional Christians of Kerala, who came under the Roman Catholic Church through the Portuguese interlude, had to face challenges from the colonizers. British began to take so much interest in the case of separated Syrians or the Jacobite Syrians or *Pazhayakooru*, saying, "Latin Catholics and the Romo-Syrians had European missionaries to keep them up to the mark, but the separated Syrians had been under a series of hereditary rulers who let their church sink into apathy and ignorance" (Aiya, 1999:214). It is in this pretext, Colonel Munroe, asked clergyman of the Church of England to instruct the separated Syrians and in 1816 the Church Mission Society sent out Messrs. Bailey, Baker, Fenn and Norton to Travancore. According to Hough, the design was "to raise the prostrate Church from its degraded condition and weed it of the errors and superstitions which the Church of Rome has introduced into it" (Hough, 1831: 326). But soon differences arose over the Syrian believes and Protestant doctrines and their alliance broke up. The discord reached to such a height that the Travancore king had to interfere in it (Aiya, 1999:215). The explicit understanding of this plan drew away the Syrian Catholics from the Protestant missionaries and their accomplishments in Kerala, who were under the *Propaganda Fide*[2] at that time. But the main objective of the mission arrived at Travancore at the initiative of Col. Munroe was "to improve the spiritual condition of the Syrian Christian population" (Aiya, 1999:447) With the British support the Syrian Jacobite Christians were the earliest to facilitate modern education, educational institutions and job opportunities.

Improving the spiritual condition of a sect, separated from the Roman Church meant a stand against the Catholic Church and collaboration with a dissenting faction. P. Cherian has noted: "Though Munroe showed special favour to *Puthenkur* Syrians (i.e., the non-Roman

Syrian Christians), he seem to have done nothing of this kind for the Roman Syrians" (Cherian, 1935:62). This was deemed necessary to acquire the support of native Christians and to furnish a group always loyal to the British. Munroe looked forward for securing for the Raj, the support of a respectable body of Christian subjects, connected with the mass of the people, by a community of language, occupations and pursuits and united to the British government by the stronger ties of religion and mutual safety.[3] Intervention of the native Christian life for the sake of spiritual formation was actually the best way to communicate the Protestant Christian faith. Thus the Catholic-Protestant encounter in Europe had a follow up in colonies and this is illustrative of the Kerala church.

The ideology of the Raj to get the native support as well the dissemination of the protestant doctrines estranged the Syrian Catholics from the modern educational institutions started by the British and had least participation in the colonial administrative apparatus. This was in fact to maintain the Catholic belief and practices in Kerala, which was established by the *Padroado regime*[4] in the 16th century and later on continued by the *Propaganda Fide* till the end of the 19th century.

The religious life of the Syrian Christians underwent tremendous change by the sixteenth century. The Synod of Diamper was the first organized attempt to bring Syrian Christians to Latin way of life and to correct the 'error' of the Syrians (Zacharia, 1976:19). The Jesuits, who accompanied the Portuguese to India, were appointed as bishops to rule the Syrians under the *Padroado* jurisdiction. For the next fifty years, the Jesuits endeavoured to implement the decrees of the Synod among the Syrians. They started seminaries in different parts of Kerala. Library and press[5] attached with the Ambazhakad seminary had exerted tremendous influence over the spiritual life of the native Christians. Prayer books printed in the seminary were circulated among the priestly class. These books were used in their services, since no other works were available at that time[6]. A clear change in the spiritual life and liturgy of the Syrian Christians occurred during this period. The ancient way of prayer life has slowly changed to many pious practices. With the coming of Carmelite missionaries under the *Propaganda Fide*, rosary, novenas, devotion to saints and scapular, and other pious devotions of Europe were imported to Kerala. In the course of centuries, these practices were firmly established among the Syrian Christians (Urumpackal, 1986:286). The Catholic ideology and practices evolved within the Syrian Christians were rather more influenced by the *Pro-

paganda than the *Padroado*. This ideology was working throughout their lives, or to them nineteenth century amalgamated tradition, Catholicism and modernity. The Portuguese and Dutch missionaries who preceded the English rather concentrated on the religious hegemony over the Syrian Catholics and their spiritual formation than the secular education.

"Even after the appearance of the Protestant English Missionaries and their introduction of English education, the Catholics remained indifferent to the educational needs of their flock", says Nagam Aiya (445). Commenting on the attitude and approach of the Latin Carmelite Missionaries, Mar Mathew Makkil wrote:

> Though the Carmelites here ruled the Syrian Christians for more than 200 years with great glory, they have established no educational institutions among this people for their secular development and education …At the time of the arrival of Bishop Charles Lavigne (1887), the number of Syrians who had learned or had been learning English in this vicariate might not be more than hundred.[7]

Though Catholics do not seem to have much interest in educating the Catholics in pre-British period, reason for the indifference of Carmelite missionaries towards the educational needs of the community, in the nineteenth century seems to have been, "perhaps most of the clergy being men of other nationalities than the English, that they found it extremely difficult to take part in English education" (Aiya, 1999:445). But the fear of Protestant indoctrination and ideological difference between the two mainstream Christian doctrines was the major reason that alienated the Syrian Catholics from the British machinery, in the early phase of colonial modernity. The Carmelite missionaries, in order to protect their interests in Kerala viewed the Protestants with suspicion. The context of the mutual suspicion goes back to reformation in England. The division of the Roman Catholic Church and the spread of Protestantism led to the rivalry between the two in Europe. The result was the counter reformative efforts taken by the Catholic Church in the Council of Trent. The reforms that were enacted through the Council of Trent had its reverberation in Kerala through the *Padroado* regime and missionaries (John, 2001: 270). The Carmelites had not done anything in the educational sector (Payngot, 1980:41) and Catholic educational institutions were absent till the fag end of the nineteenth century. Even then, they forbade the Syrian Catholics in entering any school run by non-Catholics and there by the modern English education were denied to them for a long time.

Thus in the latter half of the 19th century the Syrian Christians were in between confronting Christian ideologies and colonial modernity. One and the same time, they wanted to preserve the Catholic faith and to cope up with the socio-cultural changes in Travancore and Cochin. The efforts were taken up by an indigenous Catholic priest, Fr. Chavara Kuriakose Elias, who later became the first Vicar General of the Syrian Catholics. A great visionary of the Catholic Church, he was the first Keralite to start a school (1834) and a press (1846), the press being the third in Kerala.[8] The press was to print necessary prayer books and materials needed for religious practices. He founded a Sanskrit school in Mannanam and entry into school was irrespective of caste and creed. A number of schools for lower castes were also started by him. He also assisted the foundation of first indigenous monastery for men and started the first indigenous religious congregation for women in Kerala.

In 1865, a circular was issued by Archbishop Bernadinos at the instance of Fr. Chavara, the Vicar General of Syrian Catholics, calling upon all parish churches under his jurisdiction to start schools attached to each of them (*Pallikorupallikoodam*) and threatened to close down the churches that failed to comply with his orders.[9] Syrian Catholics, so far educationally backward, fearing the possibility of Protestant indoctrination; conversion to or entry into the other Syrian faction, were asked to study in schools attached to their parishes as it was necessary to educate, guide and control young ones, so that they will hold firm in Catholic ideology.

The other side of the picture was that, in the 19th century the Catholics under the ecclesiastical jurisdiction of the Carmelite missionaries were trying to free themselves from their dominance and attain autonomy. The Carmelite presence in Kerala was a hedge against the Protestant influence over the community. The Carmelite anxiety about the proselytization and evangelization of the Protestants had a remarkable influence over the Catholics. They were fighting for the autonomy of the indigenous church since 17th century and the Syrian church was separated from the Latin jurisdiction of missionaries by Pope Leo XIII and two separate Syro-Malabar vicariates, i.e. Kottayam and Trichur were created in 1887 under foreign bishops. (Vithayathil, 1980:53-83). Later in 1896, the Roman Catholic Church granted their demand for autonomy. Three Apostolic Vicariates of Trichur, Ernakulam and Changanacherry were created with Rev. John Menacherry, Rev. Fr. Louis Pazheparambil and Rev. Fr. Mathew Makil as Vicars Apostolic,

respectively. Disruption of the traditional church by *Padroado* in the name of correction of 'errors', and the subsequent domination of the West over the Eastern church was an eye opener to the Syrian Catholics. They were conscious about the further intrusions and more than that they themselves were caught hold of the Catholic ideology.

Years of struggle for autonomy have created community consciousness among the Syrian Catholics but in the phase of colonial modernity, a conscious effort has taken to build the community within the Catholic mould and also the material development of the community. Even before the establishment of the autonomous church, efforts were taken by the native priests with the support of the Carmelite authorities to establish seminaries, printing press, Catholic schools and religious congregations for men and women.

Education is conceived as the most effective tool for cultural construction (Ganesh, 2004:154). In order to construct a firm Catholic base, education under the control of the church was a necessity. The most important means to develop a community was to educate the children. Mar Charles Lavigne, the first Vicar Apostolic of the Vicariate of Kottayam, through his pastoral letters[10] repeatedly gave instructions to the believers on the significance of education, both spiritual and secular. He considered education more important than cultivation or agriculture and emphasized the need to acquire scientific knowledge. The letters which were meant for the community development instructed that both boys and girls should be given education. But that should be exclusively in Catholic schools[11]. In one of the letter, he mentions the names of Catholic higher education institutions like Mannanam, Brahmamangalam and Changanacherry. He insisted that Catholics should abstain from going to schools other than Catholics, like, Protestants, *Puthenkoor*, other Christian sects and Hindus[12]. The Catholic bishops were not ready to compromise with the education imparted through the Protestant and other educational institutions. He sees more danger in studying in Protestant schools and though others were not without danger.[13] He also asked the believers not to do anything that disturbs their faith. They were prohibited, to hear the speeches or to read the books of other sects. It is a sin against God also. Those who do not abide to the rules will be excommunicated.[14] All these instructions were in fact to keep the Catholic faith intact.

Rev. Fr. Mathew Makil, first Vicar apostolic of the indigenous Vicariate of Changanacherry, also gave similar instructions through the *Decrethu Pusthakam* published in 1903.[15] The Decree was about the

rules and regulations related to various aspects of religious life, like belief, sacraments, priests, believers, churches and festivals. Some of the decrees related to belief as well as education were: Learning catechism was compulsory (Makil, 1903: 24); Schools for the religious and secular education should be run systematically and modified if necessary. New schools should also be established in necessary places. Each parish should start schools according to their capacity and should also give financial support to schools. Books taught must be in tune with the Catholic believes and practices. Teachers should be Catholics and children should compulsorily be sent to school. More higher grade schools should be started and girls should be sent to convent schools run by Women religious (Ibid: 48-50); Books of children who are studying in government schools, English schools or church schools should be inspected so as to confirm that they are not against Catholic faith and morality (Ibid: 26); Order no. 17 says that children should be send to Catholic schools in the native places or nearby places. Teaching in other schools is strictly prohibited, otherwise known, they will not be allowed to receive the sacraments (Ibid: 46); no children should be permitted to reside in the houses of non -Catholics (Ibid); no one is permitted to read or sell books of other sects. If so, they will be excommunicated (Ibid: 48); believers were encouraged to read books printed and published by Catholics or under Catholic supervision (Ibid: 48); those who sent their daughters in marriage to *Puthenkoor* will be excommunicated (Ibid: 24). All the decrees were asked to read in the churches on three consecutive Sundays. Catholic ideology was explicit in these decrees and how conscious they were about community and community building activities. The intention was to create a Catholic identity for the community. In a letter dated 1890, *Vrichikam* 7, Bishop Charles Levigne, instructed the believers that, at the time of census, instead of telling themselves as Christians, they should reveal their identity as Roman Catholic Syrians or Romo-Syrians, otherwise they will be counted among the Jacobites, or Protestants. Thus they were made conscious of their identity as Romo-Syrians or Roman Catholic Syrians.

The changes within the community, in the latter part of the 19th century were also due to the material prosperity of the community. Though some historians maintain that the Syrian Christians had been a community of traders in Kerala, the overwhelming majority of them in Travancore were, in fact, agriculturists, mostly inhabiting the midland regions in North Travancore (Joseph, 1990: 136). When compared,

Catholics took to agriculture rather than other communities and from 1820 onwards their land holdings began to increase (Corner, 1863:72). In the latter half of the 19th century Syrian Catholics took to agriculture while Syrian Protestants went to education and government jobs. The Jacobites and Mar Thomites used their educational opportunities to increase their trade, commerce and small enterprises like printing presses besides improved agriculture.[16] The lack of education estranged the Catholics from the mainstream and they turned to agriculture.

Epoch-making events which were destined to exercise a decisive influence on the Christians were the *Pattom* Proclamation of 1865 and 1867,[17] abolition of slavery and the encouragement of the government to cultivate waste lands and forest lands. This provided a fillip to the rise of Syrian Catholics as a strong class of peasant farmers in Travancore.

The flowering of the Catholic ideals among the Syrian Catholics and the introduction of Protestant ideals and Christian morality through Protestant missionaries occurred simultaneously in Kerala. As echelons of power the Protestants had an upper hand in implanting Christian ideals and morality than the Catholics. The Christian virtues and morality spread through modern institutions and state machinery, initiated by the British and the missionary activities, were taken as a threat to Syrian Catholics. To counter these efforts as well as to cope with the changing situations and accustom to the modern institutions, materially prospered Syrian Catholics started to build their own institutions within the ambit of Catholic doctrines. The community building activities which was started in the nineteenth century, continued vigorously in the twentieth century, leading to the crystallization of Catholic ideology and identity. By early decades of the 20th century, Syrian Catholic faction owned one third of the educational institutions of Kerala and began to claim proportional representation in civil service [18], which amply demonstrate the solidarity with which the community worked for higher education and achieved high hand in the educational sector of Kerala.

Notes

1. During the early days of the East India Company the entry of European missionaries into India was banned; this ban was lifted in 1813 when the British parliament permitted them to enter the country under a new system of licensing. This threw the entire subcontinent open to missionary activity; M.N. Srinivas, *Social change in Modern India*, New Delhi, 2010, p.50.

2. Pope Gregory XV on 6 January, 1622 founded a new congregation called *Propaganda Fide* to direct the missionary activities of the church especially in America, Africa and Asia. The Pope took this initiative because the missionary patronage of Portugal was useful at the beginning but later it was hindered by various reasons and so there was a need to liberate the missionary apostolate of the church from the civil authority and put it directly under the Papal control; See T. Pallipurathukunnel, *A Double Regime in the Malabar Church* (1663-1716), Alwaye, 1982, p. 5

3. The minutes of the Madras Government by Col. Munroe, reproduced in CMS proceedings, Vol. VIII, cited in W.S. Hunt, *The Anglican Church in Travancore and Cochin1816-1916,* Kottayam, CMS, 1918, p.57.

4. *Padroado* means "patronage". The papal bulls gave Portugal and Spain the sole right to sail the sea, to conquer the new land and to take their wealth under the condition of Christianizing these lands and taking responsibility for financing all the phases of cultic life. Pope Nicholas V's Bull Romanus Pontifex of 8 January 1455 laid the foundation of the *Padroado*. Pope Alexander VI by the Bull cum Sicut Magestason 26 March 1500 gave the Portuguese kings the right of *Padroado* in India; J. Wickie, "The Portuguese *Padroado* in India in the 16th Century and St. Francis Xavier", in H.C. Perumalil & E.R. Hambye (ed.), *Christianity in India: A History in Eccumenical Perspective*, Alleppy, Prakasam Publication, 1972, pp. 46-64.

5. Portuguese and Spanish Jesuit missionaries came to Kerala and took efforts to propagate education. Many Tamil, Malayalam and Syrian texts were written and printed .It was at this time the Dutch, who were Protestants came over here and Portuguese were ousted from here. Dutch attacked the Cochin fort in 1661 and even destroyed the seminary and library. Portuguese priests were expelled from other cities also. However Jesuits in Ambazhakad continued there until the seminary and library were destroyed by Tippu Sultan., P. J.Thomas, *Malayala Sahithyavum Christianikalum*, (Mal), Kottayam, DC Books, 1989, pp.96-97.

6. *Complete Works of Chavara*, Vol.I, C.M.I Publishing Committee, Mannanam, 2000, pp.70-71.

7. Mathew Makil Diary, Vol.1, p.215 cited in Mathew Moolakkatt, *The book of Decrees of Mar Mathew Makil*, Romae, Pontificum Institutam Orientale, 1992, p.150.

8. The first press was Bayley press (1821), second, Government press Thiruvananthapuram (1839); Samuel Nellimukal , *Keralathile Samuhyaparivarthanam* , Kottayam, K.S.Books, 2003,p.151,.

9. Chronicle of St. Joseph's Monastery, Book III, 1864-1871, Mannanam and also Circular cited in Valerian,*Vazhthapetta Divyasree Kuriakose Eliasachan,* Mannanam, St. Joseph's Press, p.137.

10. Pastoral letter is an open letter addressed by a bishop to the clergy or laity of his diocese, containing either general admonition, instruction or consolation, or directions for behaviour in particular circumstances. Through this, the power relation between the ecclesiastical authority and the ruled as well as the hierarchical structure of the church is firmly is established. Ideology of the church infiltrated through this letters, bound the religious community together in terms of belief system, values and ritual practices. Acting as a social system, the religious community could generate we feeling among them and religious identities form valuable instruments to maximize economic advantages, political power and social status.

11. Charles Lavigne, letter No.14, dated.1891 *Makaram*1 in Joseph Perunthottam (Ed.). *Mar Charles Levigne Jeevacharitravum Edayalehanangalum*, Changanacherry: HIRS Publications, pp.77-84.

12. Ibid., Letter no.17 dated.1893 *Edavam* 21, pp.95-103.

13. Ibid.

14. Ibid.

15. Though the work was published in 1903, it was based on the rules regulations already published in 1871 by Rev. Leonard Louis, Bishop of Varappuzha and the *Decrethu Pusthakam* published in 1891 by Mar Charles Levigne, Vicar Apostolic of Kottayam Vicariate.

16. Interview with Puthupally Raghavan., cited in George Mathew, *Communal Road to Kerala*, New Delhi, Concept Publishing House.1989, p.58.

17. *Report on the Administration of Travancore for year 1040 M E* (1864-65) Superintendent, Government Press, Trivandrum, pp.27-30.

18. John Kachiramattom, *Catholic Grievances* (Mal). Kottayam ,2007,p.76; The memorial given to Sree Chithira Thirunal Rama Varma, Maharaja of Travancore on 26 November 1931, by Catholics of Kerala was printed and published by M. M. Varkey the publisher and editor of the news paper *Kerala Dasan*, in the title *Catholic Grievances*. The text is reproduced in Kachiramattom. It is cited in the 'grievance' with ample proof, the Catholics at that time formed 1/6 of the total population of Kerala and 1/3 of the educational institutions were owned by them.

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Body as a 'Site of Protest': Performative Strategies of Ayyankali

Gopakumaran Nair. N
Associate Professor & Head
Department of History, University College
Thiruvananthapuram
E-mail: sreegopan@gmail.com

Abstract

Self and identity arc central to the 'anti-authority' struggles that have deep-¬ened in recent decades. Lower caste leaders used hypermasculinity as resource to untouchability and resorted to amplified version of mainstream cultural values. The subordinate people developed a hypermasculine model which drew upon a range of cultural resources and deployed as a resistance to casteism.
Keywords: body, masculinity, protest, resistance, Ayyankali, Dalit.

Introduction

Ayyankali's resistance against upper caste domination was fought taking his own body as a site for registering his spirit of protest against all oppressive net works of exploitation which dubbed the physicality of the dalit and the marginalised as a site of wild, savage and ugly. Ugliness was a culture tag affixed on the dalitised sections by the affluent and this later became a self contemptuous outlook within which the dalit thought of himself as an ugly physical site. Ayyankali sensed this and invented a strategy in presenting himself as a 'civilized 'macho' transmitting a message thereby, through his performance, to all downtrodden sections in raising the collective physicality as a site for protest against the elite atrocities based on a projected masculine order. The body was tuned in such a way and the next step was his performance extended in to the public space which was a forbidden spatiality for the dalits. The paper posits this argument in the contextual background of theoretical strands drawn from scholars who have seriously worked on the area.

The concept of resistance can be seen to be central and fundamental to the concept of power. Foucauldian analysis signals that gender power and oppression can exist across a multitude of social environs, not all of them describable as masculinist or the province of

the male. As Foucault puts it, "there are no relations of power without resistances; the latter are all the more real and effective because they are formed right at the point where relations of power are exercised." (1982: 142)   Much of the discourse on subordinate masculinities is couched in terms of oppression and resistance. Social reformers and activists from subordinate castes got an opportunity to resist, it can be argued, what is at times direct and violent oppression because the discursive possibilities to do so became available to them through education, cultural pluralism and similar knowledge experiences. In their negotiation with dominant discourses, they formed a new self, and sought possibilities that arise for them as a consequence of imagining new, multiple ways of being new man. As a part of this process they were into an agentic, rational, and holistic approach.

Subordinated Masculinities and Resistance

Historically, patriarchal casteist ideology has taken the Dalit body or rather its fantasized version, and attempted to reduce it to a singular identity, an essentialized stereotype fixed on physicality and physical strength, one that is inhuman, dangerous, athletic, and virile. Rather than perceiving the Dalit males as individuals, as social agents, negotiating multiple discourses, oppositional binarisms are constructed. The upper castes had control over agricultural resources, which were used in turn to exercise control over women and men of lower castes, as well as women of their own caste, whereas the new Dalit masculinity spearheaded by Ayyankali and others had a new force that organized and controlled the labour force. Thus the strike declared by the agricultural workers led by Ayyankali is singularly significant in the history of modern Kerala as well as in the history of subaltern resistance. Subordinate masculinity in any local context is determined by the prevailing system in its totality. The caste system has its own differences in accordance with the regional and the cultural specificities. The lower caste people's determination to claim public space was the hallmark of the social- political movements of the early 20th century. Codes of domination were maintained through control over the social space and the bodies of lower caste people. Hence they struggled to claim the same.

Theoretical Perspectives

In his *Distinction*, Bourdieu (1984) argues that in urban French society bodily demeanour exemplifies social class and gender-identity. He goes on to link postures of openness, assertiveness and self

confidence with certain practices of male authority, particularly that of upper and middle class men. Conversely, he says, women and the poorer class, tend to assume bodily postures which are more defensive, diffident or accommodative. In short, Bourdieu's bodily demeanour reveals one's place in the social hierarchy. According to Bourdieu, the body is a metaphor or bearer of symbolic meaning and values and a key site through which social differences are created, perpetuated and reinforced. Whitehead argues that the body symbolizes or encapsulates the 'materiality of masculinities' (2002:183). He elaborates that this embodiment of masculinity is seen to take three forms: first in terms of experience as it were the very physicality of masculinity; second, the sense in which the male body is inscribed with meaning and becomes a template for a series of signifiers; and third, through the male body relationship to the social world and its social role. As a result, the male body becomes a site "from which masculinities appear both as illusion and as materiality."(2002:186)

This reminds of Judith Butler (1995) who explains that gender itself is more than merely constructed, it is actually "performed," the complex meanings associated with gender are therefore rendered as operations in behaviour, choice and representation. Butler's book *Gender Trouble* (1990) develops Foucault's theories into focusing on the relationship between biological sex, gender and sexuality. She argues that all gender and sexual identity categories – woman, man, femininity, masculinity, heterosexual, gay and lesbian – are produced through socialization, which she interprets as the repetition of socially sanctioned 'acts' or 'performances.' This means that there is no true essence behind 'heterosexual' identity because it is wholly socially and discursively produced. If gendered or sexual identity is constructed through repeated acts, Butler thinks, gender and sexuality can be performed in alternative ways.

In her seminal work *Gender Trouble* (1990), Butler takes the distinction of constantive and performative language from J.L. Austin's Speech Act theory and applies it to gender. In "Imitation and Gender Insubordination" she writes:

> Gender is not a performance that a prior subject elects to do, but gender is performative… It is compulsory performance in the sense that acting out of line with heterosexual norms brings with it ostracism, punishment, and violence, not to mention the transgressive pleasures produced by those very prohibitions. (1991: 23-4).

Butler further argues,

This 'being a man' and this 'being a woman' are internally unstable affairs. They are always beset by ambivalence precisely because there is a cost in every identification, the loss of some other set of identifications, the forcible approximation of a norm one never chooses, a norm that chooses us, but which we occupy, reverse, resignify to the extent that the norm fails to determine us completely. (1993: 126-127)

Butler defines gender as performative, and by that she means that gender constitutes the identity it is purported to be. Gender is therefore "always a doing, though not a doing by a subject who might be said to preexist the deed" (Butler 1990:25). In a famous statement, Butler says, "Gender is the repeated stylization of the body, set of repeated acts within a highly regulatory frame that congeal over time to produce the appearance of a substance, of a natural sort of being" (Butler 1990:33). Butler maintains that there is no gender identity behind the expressions of gender; that identity is performatively constituted by the very "expressions" that are said to be its results.

The Bodily Demeanour of Ayyankali

All his public appearances can be said to be self declarative. This was the common appearance of Ayyankali described by one of the spectators who attended his last meeting at Kollam (Kannetty near Karunagappally), a few months before his death: decorated headwear, earrings, sandal paste on the forehead, big moustache, long black coat, steady and upstanding posture. One of the important ways in which the Dalits led by Ayyankali and others asserted their masculinities was by asserting control over public places and roads. In 1893, exactly thirty one years before the legendary Vaikom Satyagraha, which sought to claim public space for *avarnas* and the removal of untouchability boards, Ayyankali started his movement for claiming public space in the capital of Travancore. That year he bought decorated bullock-carts from the upper castes which were used exclusively by the elites. He wore white *dhoti*, *vest*, and *thalappavu* and started riding the bullock-cart through the main road which was prohibited to the Dalits. His bulls with ornamented bells were a symbol of authority. This was to break rules of the caste hierarchy. (Chentharasseri, 2009).

Male performativity is often constituted around physical prowess and risk-taking, including the risk of bodily damage. For all its idealism, the method adopted by Ayyankali was dominated by a male culture, of men who consistently sought the perfect modes of risk-taking and in-

terpersonal aggression. His acts were an expression of extraordinary courage, skill and masculine grace. They were typically adventurous, daring, brave and constantly up to all sorts of escapades. The marginalized and subordinated male expressed themselves through collective toughness.

Subordinate Castes: Appropriation of Hegemonic Masculinity

The form of masculinity which is culturally dominant in a given setting is called hegemonic masculinity. Hegemonic masculinities are the culturally honoured, glorified and praised forms of masculinities. Hegemonic masculinities include such valued characteristics as achievement, aggression, toughness, and domination over women and the weaker sections. Masculinity is not only a foundational notion of modernity but it is also the corner stone in the ideology of moral imperialism—the Victorian morality and world-view—that prevailed in British India from late 19th century onwards. The cult of masculinity rationalized imperial rule by equating an aggressive muscular, chivalric, model of manliness with racial, national, cultural and moral superiority.

Ayyankali and his compatriots elsewhere in Travancore tried to emulate and at the same time subvert these masculine traits: his encroaching upon the public space in his characteristic bullock carts, his use of physical prowess (tit for tat) (Chentharassery: 72). The subdued and servile nature of Dalit youth was regulated towards aggressiveness and militarism. For disciplining his people Ayyankali got them trained in martial arts. His intention to challenge the opposition physically was a daring instance of resistance and created an unprecedented impact.

Appropriating elite rituals and practices is one form of entitlement to power. Sadanandaswami who helped Ayyankali initially to form his community organization instructed him to take over the public road defying the *savarna* challenge, resorting to a simple, but powerful act. Thus on the king's birthday Ayyankali led a procession carrying a photograph of the king, to East Fort from his native place, Venganoor. The *savarnas* were in a predicament. If they attack the procession carrying the king's photograph, it amounts to treason. Their goal was to make an appearance before the royal presence in which they succeeded. They were attacked severely on their return. But Ayyankali and his men had anticipated the eventuality so that they were well-armed to face the attack. With simple tactics and physical prowess Ayyankali and his men claimed the public space, and appropriated exclusively elite practices. (Chentharassery: 67) It was a simple, but powerful act. With simple tactics and physical prowess Ayyankali and his men claimed the public space, and appropriated exclusively elite practices. (Chentharassery:

67)

When Sadhujana Paripalana Sangham was formed in 1907 with 24 clauses in the bylaw out of which 3 clauses were given prominence: morality, hygiene and discipline. These are the three main components of hegemonic masculinity facilitated by the colonial discourses in Kerala. Ayyankali like all other contemporary social reformers in Kerala and elsewhere demanded austerity measures from the people of his caste. The concepts of tidiness, frugality, discipline, neatness etc. were thus exhorted by Ayyankali in one of his public speeches:

> My brothers and sisters, you are assembled here as manual labourers. After the day's toil, you go back to your humble huts in the evening, tired and hungry. You may pay a visit to the toddy shop on the wayside in order to get rid of your weariness. That is not purposeful nor does it have any bad intention. I do not blame you. But by that habit and behavior, what happens? Have you ever thought of it? Domestic quarrels and unrest prevail. The unrest of the family affects your children and also your community at large. That leads to social backwardness. In such a situation we cannot progress socially or economically. Not only this, marriage alliances will also be cut off. In this way, the community has to confront so many problems and handicaps. So I, as a brother of yours, advise you not to drink. That is, the habit of adhering to liquor drinking should be strictly dispensed with. I may demand from you that the people, who take oath to abstain from drinking from today onwards, may raise up their hands. (Chentharassery: 76)

Ayyankali exhorts his Dalit brethren to have a sense of increasing self-discipline, control and suppression of emotions. It was a virtue promoted by colonial discourse. He also observed that aversion to the public display of emotions was a characteristic of the modern individual. To become a 'modern individual' was also a project of overcoming subalternity. In the counter-assertion of a super-tough identity from Dalits, backward castes and other non-Brahmins in general, those who experienced subordination displayed strength, brute power, force, virility and discipline. It had made masculinity itself the axis of the confrontations between lower castes and upper castes. Through protests and other adaptations subordinate castes dissect and reject the conceptual hierarchies that had for so long constructed them as inferior. The history of dissent and resistance amply illustrates that no dominant group has ever willingly dispensed with its power out of a sense of fairness. Moreover, one could gather from the biography of Ayyankali his firm resolves that if Dalits waited for a sense of justice to bloom in the upper caste people's collective unconscious, they would

have to wait forever.

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Men, Women and Matriliny:
The case of *Arakkal* Swaroopam, Malabar

Muhammad Sirajudin K.
Doctoral Fellow
Department of History
Farook College, Kozhikode, Kerala
E-mail: sirajkarimbam@gmail.com

Abstract

Till the middle of 20th century, Kerala, the southern state of India, had resembled a matrilineal museum where almost all the major caste and ethnic groups including the Brahmins were very much keen on adhering to this particular kinship standard. It is true that many of these groups, by now have abandoned matriliny to embrace patrilineal familial structure. The most crucial factor behind this transformation was the structural changes materialized in the socio-economic milieu of the state as a result of colonial intervention. The transformation from matrilineal to patrilineal norms have well been normalized and legalized through subsequent legislative exertions and the literary rhetoric praising patriliny as the order of modern times. However, in Kerala there still exist groups like Muslims of coastal Malabar who are particularly obstinate in following the matrilineal kinship pattern notwithstanding the modernists' crusade against it. The continuing persistence on matrilineal kinship norms and matrilocal residence pattern being displayed by the Mappilas of North Malabar warrants a historical analysis of the circumstances leading to the evolution of matriliny among them. This paper precisely aims at the same by throwing light on the facets of Mappila social formation as the intermediaries of trade. An attempt is also made to unearth the exact nature of power relations existed within Mappila matriliny by taking the case of Arakkal Swaroopam, the lone Muslim principality of pre-modern Kerala. These merchant-monarchs were known in history for their distinctly peculiar form of matrilineal inheritance that does not exclude women from attaining the highest position in the ruling hierarchy.

Keywords: Matriliny, maritime, swaroopam, Beebi, musnad, mooppumura.

Introduction

Arakkal Swaroopam, with its headquarters at the historic port town of Cannanore is the lone Muslim ruling family amongst innumer-

able medieval principalities of the south western coast of India now included in the state of Kerala. The dynasty had attained substantial significance in the history of the region all through the heydays of its existence, stretching over a sufficiently longer period from mid 16th to the dawn of 20th centuries. Their prominence owes greatly to a variety of factors such as the affluence gathered from maritime trade centering the port at Cannanore, the control they had exerted upon Laccadives and their pendulous relations with the Dutch and the English mercantile powers. However, the most striking feature of these merchant-monarchs was their distinctly peculiar form of matrilineal inheritance that does not exclude women from attaining the highest position in the ruling hierarchy. Although, all the *swaroopams* or ruling families of pre-modern Kerala had generally followed the matrilineal norms of inheritance, nowhere else could women be seen considered for *muppumura* (seniority) so as to make them eligible to attain the *sthanam* or position of the head of the house. In other words, contrary to the general pattern of inheritance existed in Hindu ruling families of the region, here, in *Arakkal swaroopam* the eldest member of the family was entitled to get the highest *sthanam* irrespective of their gender. Hence, there was male *Adhi Raja* and female *Adhi Raja Beebi* in this family who had been elevated to the highest monarchical position solely on the basis of their seniority. This distinctiveness prompted a general postulation that some sort of gender equity had existed within the power structure of the dynasty. Nevertheless, a close analysis of customs and practices of the house would reveal that the particularly unique status accorded to women strata of the house was neither absolute nor unchallenged. During the second half of 19th century, the house witnessed a protracted dispute between the male and female contenders to the throne in which the British authorities were invited to play the role of an arbitrator. The details of this particular conflict would be of immense use in providing an insightful analysis of the exact nature of power relations existed in the matrilineal setting of these maritime monarchs.

The Conflict

The episode of conflict formally began in 1862 when on 6th September, Abdurahiman Ali *Adhi Raja*, refused to hand over the key of the apartment containing certain utensils required for conducting an important religious ceremony, to *Adhi Raja Beebi*, the reigning queen of the house. *Adhi Raja* opposed her accession to the throne made in the same year following the demise of his mother Ayishabi *Adhi Raja Beebi* who ruled for a period of 24 years from 1838 to 1862. This re-

bellious act on the part of *Adhi Raja* who was an influential claimant for the prestigious post of Raja, though denied eventually, attained alarming proportions and the Joint Magistrate of Cannanore invited G.A.Ballard, Collector of Malabar to intervene in the matter so as to find an amicable solution for the problem. Ballard's letter dated 9th September 1862 addressed to Pycroft, the chief secretary to Madras Government provides detailed information regarding this explicit conflict between Raja and *Beebi* for attaining power. His description of events goes like this:

> I should mention that Ali Raja claimed as a right to be a principal actor in the ceremony of the evening in the *Beebi*'s palace…..and on several others of the same character shortly to follow. The *Beebi* refused altogether to bear him at her palace; and considering how aggravating his conduct has been to her, this is not to be wondered at.

> On arrival at Cannanore, I immediately wrote to the *Beebi* and Ali Raja warning them that I should hold them responsible if there were any breach of the peace. I told Ali Raja that he was on no account to interfere with the ceremony at the *Beebi*'s unless with her full consent. They both disclaimed any wish to disturb the peace, and all passed off perfectly quietly.

> I called a meeting yesterday of the principal Mahommedan inhabitants at which I requested the Agents of the *Beebi*; and Ali Raja himself to be present…as it was very necessary to make a distinct settlement for the time, I told Ali Raja and the people present that the recognition of the *Beebi* as head of house was distinct; that she must manage affairs through whom she pleased as long as she did so in orderly manner; that Ali Rajah would be treated with courtesy as a Native gentleman as long as he conducted himself quietly, but that he had no official position nor right to interfere in affairs of State (so to speak) unless at the Bibi's desire,…". (As quoted in the Proceedings dated 23rd September 1862 of the Madras Govt.)[1].

As could be ascertained from the excerpt, initial response from British officials in the wake of emerging power conflict involving the two, was definitely one favouring *Beebi* over Ali Raja. It seems that the British authorities were overwhelmed by the fact that ever since the British Government had connection with the family of Cannanore, the succession to *musnad*[2] was in the female line, or in other words all who reigned since were Beebis. When the East India Company first entered into a treaty with the house in 1796 the *musnad* was adorned by *Valia*

Beebi (Big Queen) and she was followed only by female successors uninterruptedly up to 1862. In the letter dated 10th September1863 addressed to the Chief Secretary, Fort Saint George, Madras, G.A. Ballard, the Collector of Malabar has openly confessed that he perhaps mistook the opinions expressed by his predecessors and was certainly unduly influenced by the fact that their original treaty had been entered into with a *Beebi* and Beebis only had succeeded since. The Collector also tries to explain his failure in realizing the situation on the ground that he was then new to Malabar and had found the present *Beebi* installed. Further, they might have mistaken the peculiar version of *marumakkathayam*[3] prevalent in the house as some kind of female dominance echoing probably, the narration of Buchanan who crosses all the limits while praising the female predominance of the house (Buchanan, 1807). The initial acceptance of the *Beebi* as the legal heir apparent of the highest *sthanam* (position) was duly upheld and ratified as "judicious and proper" by the Chief Secretary, Madras Government[4].

But things soon turned upside down and the British eventually took a U-turn favouring Ali Raja. The settlement upholding the claim put forward by Ali Raja was the ultimate outcome of a series of correspondence involving the *Beebi*, the Raja and the British. After a thorough enquiry and examination of the precedents and customs prevalent in the family, conducted in response to the memorandum submitted by Ali Raja, the British finally decided to resolve the dispute in following terms:

> … the Governor in Council is of the opinion that Ali Rajah should be recognized as Rajah of Cannanore and should be placed in possession of the properties belonging to the House of Cannanore both in the Laccadives and on the Continent of India". This final order was issued on the ground that there is nothing whatever to show that the succession of females since the British connection with Cannanore was due to the absence of senior male members and that on the late *Beebi*'s death there were no grounds as far as any established rule of succession in the family is concerned, to set aside Ali Rajah and declare the present *Beebi* head of the House of Cannanore. (Order No. 311 dated 12th October 1863).

This change of position was neither strange nor inexplicable considering the soundness of arguments put forward by Ali Rajah supporting his claim over the throne. By all means, the earlier stand of the British Government upholding the claim of *Beebi* seems to have been derived out of a misconception regarding the norms of inheritance of

the House, caused out of the installation of *Beebi*, probably as the end result of an intrigue, immediately following the demise of Ayishabi *Adhi Raja Beebi* in 1862. It was this mistake that they had put right in the very next chance. In fact, the British had left with no other choice but to rectify the erroneous decision taken earlier and to reinstate Ali Rajah who was the eldest of both male and female members of the family and was senior to *Beebi*, his rival by many years. As an arbitrator the British authorities thoroughly examined the claims and arguments of both parties involved in the dispute. The British finalized their ultimate verdict fully accepting all the grounds pointed out by Ali Raja in his memorial dated 16th December 1862 addressed to the Governor of Madras. His main arguments could be summarized as follows:

Ever since the demise of the preceding ruler *Adhi Raja* Ayisha *Beebi*, in 1862 the succession to *musnad* is in dispute. The memorialist is her son and the eldest member of the family, and the one now recognized as the successor of memorialist's mother is the great granddaughter of her niece and is his junior by many years. The peculiar custom of *marumakkathayam* as applicable to all the Muslim families of North Malabar does not deprive a male of the right of succession. There exists no evidence or an instance to show that there is any peculiar custom in the family so as to exclude male members altogether from the line of heirs. The fact that the succession to the *musnad* had been in female line since the *Valia Beebi* (literally, the big queen; refers to *Adhi Raja* Joonumma *Beebi* who ruled for a long period of 42 years from 1777 to 1819) who in 1796 had entered into a treaty with English East India Company is merely accidental; having arisen from the circumstances that during the preceding 67 years succession fell to the females only because there were no male senior to them at the time of accession. Ali Raja also submitted a list containing the names of all the previous rulers of the family to prove that there were many male rulers and even the founder of the House was a male. In the light of all these grounds that appear to be sound and solid, there is no room for getting surprised over the decision taken by the British. What they did is the bestowing of the throne of Cannanore to its legitimate heir.

Thus, the dispute for power was ended amicably for a while with the timely diplomatic intervention of the British. Rather than digging deep into the nature and outcome of the dispute, the need of the hour is to historicize this interesting episode of clash. Hopefully, such an attempt would be instrumental in widening our understanding of the working of matrilineal system in the live world of north Malabar

Muslims as a whole and that of the *Arakkal* family in particular. The starting point of any such attempt is, undoubtedly, an in-depth analysis of the circumstances that might have led to the adoption of matrilineal form of succession by the Mappilas of coastal Malabar, challenging the norms sanctioned in scriptures as well as the general pattern of inheritance practiced by their religious counterparts across the globe.

Matrilineal Mappilas

To begin with, the matrilineal norms of succession prevailed in *Arakkal swaroopam* is, in no way, a concession or prerogative accorded to these merchant kings. Instead, it is the common form of inheritance practiced by the Mappilas of coastal Malabar. In fact, the south west coast of India could be described as a museum of matrilineal kinship groups with several communities like the *Nairs*, the Payyannur Namboodiris, the Mappilas and Thiyyas following this particular system of inheritance. However, in quite contrast to the overabundance of literature on Nair matrilineal system available in both fictional and non-fictional varieties, the matrilineal norms of inheritance of the Mappilas of North Malabar still remains relatively unexplored despite their overwhelming demographic concentration in the region.

It is very interesting to see that Mappilas of North Malabar still follow matrilineal kinship norms in strict contrast to their own religious counterparts in the south as well as their matrilineal cousins, like the *Nairs* and Thiyyas in the north who have completely abandoned matrilineal system of inheritance by the dawn of modernity in Kerala. It is also to be noted that this persistency on matrilineal norms was achieved all through the forgone centuries surviving the stiff reservations and opposition from different corners. Shaikh Zainuddeen, the great scholar of Sunni Islam had criticized matriliny as a Hindu practice "crept into most families of the Muslim community in Kannur and the neighbouring places". To him, it looks rather strange and surprising that the custom prevails among the Kannur Muslims, in spite of being well versed in Quran and religious learning. (Makhdum, 2006) Astonishingly, to Shaikh Zainuddeen matriliny among Malabar Muslims was only an aberration confined to Kannur region and he was silent on the matrilineal norms of succession practiced by certain reputed Muslim *tharavadus* (joint families) at Ponnani, his own place of residence. Since alleging subjectivity and suppression of unpleasant facts seems irrational in the case of Shaikh Zainuddeen, this presumably suggests a southward transition of matriliny from Kannur coast to Ponnani, of course, at a later stage. The later acceptance of matriliny by the Muslim

elites in Ponnani might be because of their enthusiasm for modeling their lives as per the standards set by *Arakkal* royal family who by then had established themselves as an influential group of highly enviable business magnets. Discussing the origin of matriliny in Kalpeni Island, Leela Dube reasonably assumes that "…centuries ago a matrilineal system, with the residence pattern, was brought to the Laccadives by the migrants from the coastal region of Kerala' (Dube, 1969: 77). The presence of certain influential Mappila Muslim families in coastal towns of south Malabar such as Tirur, and Parappananghadi is also pointing towards the southward movement of matrilineal kinship pattern. (Varma, 2004: 325)

In the early decades of 20th century, Kerala Muslim Aikya Sangam, which spearheaded the cause of reformism in Keralite Islam, was also equally hostile towards matriliny and had included it in the long list of evil innovations to be discarded, along with *shirk*, the big sin. (Ashraf, 1998: 21). In short, by 1920s, matriliny began to be referred as 'un-Islamic' in the discourses of the courts, reform movements, and Mappila youngsters who received Western education (Manaf, 2014). In spite of all these criticisms and also in the midst of the structural changes that occurred in the realm of familial relationships surfaced as a result of the restructuring of economy through colonial intervention, the Mappilas of north Malabar were very much keen on keeping the system of matriliny intact, unabatedly till the present. Further, as mentioned above, they might have influenced other Islamic groups settled in nearby islands and coastal region with which they had maintained contacts, to embrace matrilineal norms by providing themselves, an example of being Islamic and matrilineal at once.

Matriliny with a Difference

The general tendency among scholars is to relate the origin of matrilineal kinship norms to polyandry and sexual anarchy. In two separate studies published in 19th century, Bachofen (1861), the Swiss scholar and John F McLennan, (1865) an American legal expert attributes the origin of matrilineal families to a loose kind of morality and sexual anarchy manifested in the form of polyandry. Morgan and Engels have theorized that the matrilineal system was the common basis of inheritance and succession in the early stages of human history and patriarchal system evolved only at a later stage. As per Engelsian dialect, it was the origin of private property and the resultant male dominance in society that had necessitated the insistence on female chastity leading to the evolution of patrilineal system (Engels, 1886).

In the same way, the travelogues written in the context of early modern Kerala tries to relate Nair matriliny with polyandry. Many of the travelogues dealing with social life of the Nair kingdoms in medieval Kerala are filled with stories of apparently lucrative type of sexual relationships. Unsurprisingly, to the catholic mindset of European travellers, these stories appeared to be horrible and provocative. Linschoten, a 17thcentury Dutch traveler describes *Nairs* as the most lecherous and unchaste group in which women had a series of lovers (Burnnell, 1885). He was actually endorsing what Duarte Barbosa had said in the preceding century. Barbosa's portrayal of Nair women reads thus:

> [they] do no business, eat the bread of idleness, and only get their food to eat by means of their bodies: because besides each one having three or four men who provide for them, they do not refuse themselves to any braman or nayr who pays them. They are very clean and well dressed women and they hold it in great honour to know how to please men. They have a belief amongst them that the woman who dies a virgin does not go to paradise. (Dames, 1921).

These references definitely point towards the existence of a loose kind of marital relationships marked by the presence of unlimited male companions and it seems quite logical to relate the same with the origin of Nair matriliny. This was precisely what Thevenot, the 18th century French traveler did when he explains:

> "the Son Inherits not after his Father, because a Woman is allowed by the custom to live with several Men, so that it cannot be known who is the Father of the child she brings forth; and for Successions, the Child of the Sister is preferred , because there is no doubt of the Line by the female"[5].

But, the linking of matriliny with polyandry and sexual anarchy seems irrational and indigestible when it comes to its Mappila version for there is absolutely no room for polyandry in Islamic familial system. Although, the rules of marriage in Islam are very simple, liberal and there do exist plenty of chances for somewhat easy divorce, remarriage and polygamy, it never permits or foresees a situation where a woman is engaged to more than one person as husband at a time. Such relationships are extremely forbidden as '*zina*' (adultery), a grotesque sin within the framework of Islamic morality. There are absolutely no contemporary references to the existence of polyandry or a loose type of morality among the Mappilas of Malabar, neither in indigenous nor in foreign accounts. Even Shaikh Zainuddeen, who is harshly critical

of the practicing of matriliny by the Mappilas of Kannur, does not find fault with their moral standards. Instead, he actually vouches their piety and religious leaning. What baffled him most is the paradox that they are still practicing matriliny in spite of being religiously proficient and pious (Makhdum, 2006:40).

The strict insistence upon the observance of '*iddah*', the formal procedure prescribed for widows and divorced women as per Islamic jurisprudence, is also of particular relevance in this context. As per this custom, girls/women are required to go through a stipulated period of observation before remarriage, in order to ascertain whether she was conceived from her late / previous husband or not. The adherence on *iddah* simply reveals that Islamic jurisprudence is invariably keen on avoiding even the least possible chances of births with dubious fatherhood. As such, in quite contrast to the context of Nair polyandry, in Muslim familial system it is rather unlikely to have births with uncertain parentage compelling the tracing of inheritance through mothers' line. Thus, there is absolutely no point in linking Mappila matriliny with polyandry leading to the birth of children with uncertain parenthood.

Therefore, it is quite necessary to turn towards some other directions seeking a reasonable explanation for the emergence and continuity of matriliny among the Mappilas of Malabar. Here, two major factors - of course interrelated, are to be considered seriously. First and foremost is the geographical peculiarity of the region that proved instrumental in carving out its own regional identity as one of the major trade hubs of Indian Ocean world. The second factor is the prolonged nature of maritime trade of which the Arabs were the key-players. All the scholars who have attempted an analysis of Mappila social formation have established that it owes greatly to the emergence of Islamic trade network across Indian Ocean world. These trade networks that had attained substantial momentum after 9th century owing to the rise and spread of Islam, led to the emergence of Muslim trading settlements in different parts of South and South East Asia. Malabar, a coastal belt in the south western part of India providing easy access to its spice producing surroundings is the most prominent among such trading hubs. It always remained as the major attraction of Arab traders. These contacts resulted in the emergence of a network local Islamic trading communities in South Asian harbor towns through the twin processes of religious conversions and inter-caste marriages. As Burjor Avari says

in the heyday of Arab/Muslim control of the Indian Ocean, a flourish-

ing and sophisticated trade network developed in Malabar, the Keralan coast and Sri Lanka. ……The Muslims, both Arab and Persian, were also able to establish their respective coastal settlements. A large number of South Indian Muslims in particular trace their descent from the *Hadramauti* Arabs of south Arabia. The custom, popular among the Arabian tribes there, of arranging 'temporary marriages', or the *mut'a*, facilitated the increase in the Muslim population in Malabar, because many of the Arab sailors married the women from the marginalized caste of Hindu fisher-folk. The offsprings, though brought up as Muslims, stayed with their mothers in conformity with the matriarchy of Keralan society (Avari, 2013: 19).

Binu John (2011) has also pointed out mut'a or temporary marriages as a contributing factor behind the demographic concentration of the Mappila Muslims on the Malabar Coast. Certainly, the marriages solemnized between Arab merchants and indigenous women were a social phenomenon commonly noticeable in coastal Malabar of the medieval times. Most of the scholars including R.E.Miller relate the genesis of *Mappila* community of Malabar with this sort of inter-caste marriages. Miller affirmatively upholds this view and depicts the Arabs as "the progenitors of the *Mappilas*" by quoting Hamid Ali (Miller, 1976: 42). Comparatively liberal and affordably simple norms of marriage in Islam as well as the prolonged nature of maritime trading activities may naturally have accelerated the rate of such inter- caste marriages in the coast of Malabar. Islam always advised its followers to get into wedlock so as to keep themselves aloof from *Zina* or adultery, one of the seven big sins. However, it is unwise to brand all these marriages as *mut'a* since it was the *Shiites*, whose influence in the Malabar Coast was negligibly minimal at all points of time, were the known practitioners of such temporary marriages seeking pleasure. By all means, the marriages solemnized between Arab merchants and indigenous women in Malabar Coast were of semi-permanent nature if not fully permanent. The following excerpt taken from Barbossa's description of Malabar Coast also reveals the permanent character of these Indo-Arab wedlocks.

There were other foreign Moors in Calicut, whom they call Pardesy. These are Arabs, Persians, Guzarates, Khorasanys, and Decanys: they are great merchants, and possess in this place wives and children, and ships for sailing to all parts with all kinds of goods. They have among them a Moorish governor who rules over and chastises them, without the king meddling with them. And before the King of

Portugal discovered the country they were so numerous and powerful in the city of Calicut, that the gentiles [Nair Knights] did not venture to dispute with them (Dames, 1921:133).

Presumably, the reference about *pardesy Moors* in the above passage is a clear indication of the presence and prominence of Arab Muslim communities like the *Baramis*, *Hadramis* and *Ba-alavis* in the region. Anyhow, it is obvious that this type of prominence is unimaginable for a group of foreigners, if they remained merely as pleasure seekers. For this Non-Resident Arab husbands, it was impossible to bring their partners into their distant homes in the desert or to provide them accommodation in this alien land. Naturally, they had left with no other options but to accept matrilocal residence pattern. Again, as the male members of the family had to abstain from home for larger intervals because of the very nature of their maritime profession, their women who remained in their own houses along with their children might have gradually begun taking charge of domestic responsibilities. Thus, the matriliny among the Mappilas of north Malabar with its characteristic feature of matrilocal residence pattern must have evolved as a matter of practicality originated out of the marital relationship between West Asian traders and indigenous women in the context of maritime profession.

Matriliny in *Arakkal* **Swaroopam**

The emergence of *Arakkal* royal family was essentially the culmination of increasing supremacy of Mappilas, the indigenous Muslim trading community of the Malabar Coast. Naturally, the house might have chosen matrilineal norms of succession in conformity with the norms practiced by their brethren of the same faith residing in the region. Actually, the question of 'choosing matrilineal norms by *Arakkal* family' itself sounds absurd as it was the system to which they were born and brought up. Moreover, matrilineal inheritance was the norm prevalent in all other pre-modern principalities of the region including Kolathunadu, from which they had been parted off. Hence, accepting matriliny was the natural choice of the house in the context of their maritime profession and also in terms of their socio-religious milieu.

Interestingly, a detailed analysis of one of the legends associated with the origin of *Arakkal* Royal house would provide some clue towards understanding and explaining the adoption of matrilineal norms within the family. As in the case of other medieval principalities of the region, the origin of *Arakkal* dynasty is also shrouded in obscurity barring some fanciful legends narrated in certain traditional accounts

like *Keralolpathy*. The first occurrence of such legends can be traced in Keralolpathi, describing the traditional history regarding the origin of Kerala. As per the tradition revealed in this, a *Jonaka* (foreigner/ Muslim) male and a female were invited to Cannanore from *Velapuram* or *Aryapuram* and the male was given the title, the *Azhi Raja* or the lord of the sea by the last *Chera* ruler. The Dutch sources points towards another version of the story which tries to depict the dynasty as an offshoot of *kolathiri swaroopam*. As per this version, a princess of the *kolathiri* house was given in wedlock to a rich Arabian Moor to cover up disgrace and this Moor was treated much as head of the Moors of that kingdom. William Logan in his Malabar Manuel narrates a totally different story and attributes the origin of *Arakkal* Royal family to the conversion of *Arayankulangara Nair*, one of the ministers of *kolathiri*. There does exist certain other less popular versions of the story that are also seen embedded in the fables of romance and the resultant inter-caste marriage of a Muslim male with a Hindu woman.

The family records of the dynasty relate its origin to the legend constructed around the theme of conversion of *Cheraman Perumal* into Islam. As per this version, *Sreedevi*, the sister of the *Chera* Emperor residing at *Dharmapattanam* was asked to crown her son Mahabali after the emperor's conversion and departure to Mecca. This nephew of the *Perumal* was also converted to Islam and accepted a new name, Muhammed Ali. As the first Muslim ruler, he accepted the title of *Adhi Raja* meaning the earliest king (Kurup, 1975: 99-100).

The principal motive behind the coining of such stories is obviously, the enthusiasm for stressing the religious identity of the newly established regime. Myths regarding the origin of ruling dynasties are very common in all parts of India. Most of such myths, as has been established, were deliberately invented or used by respective dynasties to cater the needs of legitimacy and popular support. Apparently, the claim of linkage with the lineage of the last *perumal* had been definitely aimed at fostering the twin pillars of their identity-religion and politics. When judged from the matrilineal perspective, even more interesting is the attempt to link the origin of the dynasty with *Sreedevi*, the sister of *Cheraman Perumal* demonstrating the succession through female line. By all means, it may presumably be a calculated attempt to seek justification for the peculiar kind of matrilineal system of inheritance practiced by them. Genevieve Bouchon suggests a manipulation of the *Cheraman* legend by the Ali Rajas and alleges that "by the end of the eighteenth century the Islamic community of Cannanore had suc-

ceeded in bending it [the legend] in its favour." (Bouchon, 1988:25). Notwithstanding the variations visible in different versions, the core of the legend is seen centering around two common factors –conversion to Islam and inter-caste marriage. As mentioned earlier, it was the inter-caste marriage between west Asian traders and indigenous women and the resulting matrilocal residence system that acted as the pivotal factor behind the emergence of Mappila matriliny.

Men, Women and Matriliny

The course and events of the aforesaid conflict kept aside, it is the arguments and counter arguments of the male and female contenders to the post that makes the entire episode truly captivating. Their claims and counter claims definitely warrant some serious reservations about the exact nature of status enjoyed by the women of this ruling family in spite of the presence of a good number of female monarchs in the line. Going through the revelations made by Ali Raja, reiterating his claim over the post one could easily realise the basic fact that women rulers of the family never enjoyed absolute parity with their male counter parts. The following extract from the memorial of Ali Raja would put it in unambiguous terms:

> The inscription on the great seal of the State is in honor of this individual's (founder of the dynasty) "Sultan Ali Rajah," and the old coins issued from the Mint of the Cannanore Rajahs' have all the same inscription on them. These coins may be found all over the country. But this is not all, - all the peon's badges bear the above inscription and all the title deeds of properties are under the signatures of the male members of the family[6].

Moreover, the lack of absolute parity had also been endorsed by a statement of Ayishabi *Adhi Raja* who ruled the kingdom from 1838 to 1862. In a letter wrote in 1847 addressed to Chatfield, the Joint Magistrate, she puts it plainly that "the senior member of the family was always recognized as the head or reigning Rajah, and if the senior be a female the affairs are managed by the next junior male, though she is recognized as the *Beebi* Rajah; but if the senior be a male, he is recognized as the Sultan Ali Rajah and manages the affairs of the State without the interference of anyone'. The reference here, about "next junior male" is definitely pointing towards the major constraints of the female monarchs of the house that they were invariably lacking public space and social mobility. It clearly shows that the assistance of a 'next junior male' was inevitable to discharge their duties effectively, even in this much celebrated matrilineal setting. It is true that there do ex-

ist some ground for condoning these limitations-the absence of public space and the problem of mobility- in the overall context of Muslim women in 19th century north Malabar. However, the omission of the names of Beebis from the Royal Seal and coins and the denial of the privilege of signing title deeds are extremely difficult to explain, especially in the given scenario of hype and hallow surrounding the female predominance of the House.

Conclusion

Obviously, the peculiar tradition of inheritance prevailed in the family always treated their women exceptionally well in contrast to the norms existed in other *swaroopam* polities of the region where women were never treated eligible to be considered for the highest *sthanam*. As such, *Arakkal* family offers a brighter picture of matrilineal women in sharp contrast to what is to be expected from the backdrop of the Kerala version of pre-modern Islam branded as obscurantist and being bashed consistently for its mannish proportions. Thus, the presence of female monarchs in this Muslim Royal House is definitely appreciable while analyzing from a gender perspective. Nevertheless, attributing standards of gender equality in their power relations seems unwarranted and unworkable. As has been exposed by the dispute elaborated above, the female monarchs of the house had never been treated absolutely on par with their male counterparts. The predominance ascribed to women of the family seems more ritualistic or ceremonial rather than exerting full and independent control over statecraft. Placing men and women in equal footing, though at least in theory, may presumably be the result of an expediency emanated out of the existing nature of maritime profession of these merchant monarchs that compelled their abstaining from home for longer intervals. The absence of male members for longer intervals may naturally have forced the elder member of the female strata to take charge of familial responsibilities and this recoupment may have been well institutionalized in course of time. To explicate this general postulation, it is necessary to have a broader understanding of the evolution, working and uniqueness of the matrilineal norms of inheritance prevalent among the Mappilas of North Malabar since the socio-political predominance of *Arakkal swaroopam* owes mostly to their reputation of being the head of Muslim congregation in the region.

Notes

1. All the primary sources consulted for preparing this article such as proceedings, orders and correspondence of the colonial government are ac-

cessed from the bundle of archival documents titled *Arakkal* Papers Vol.I, preserved in Regional Archives, Kozhikode.

2. Persian term meaning 'authority. Here, it refers to the highest monarchical position.

3. Matrilineal system of inheritance.

4. Madras Government Proceedings No. 382 dated 23rd September 1862, Arakkal Papers Vol.I, Regional Archives, Kozhikode.

5. See *the Indian Travels of Thevenot and Careri: Being the Third Part of the Travels of M. de Thevenot into the Levant and the Third Part of a Voyage Round the World by Dr. John Francis Gemelli Careri*, compiled, edited and published in 1949 by National Archives of India, New Delhi.

6. Memorandum dated 16th December 1862 submitted by Ali Raja as seen quoted in the Madras Government (Political Department) Proceedings No.30 dated 28th January 1863. *Arakkal* Papers Vol.I

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'English' and the Native Life world: The Malabar Episode

Vinodan Navath
Assistant Professor & Head
Department of History
Govt. College, Madappally, Vadakara, Kerala
E-mail: vinodhistgcm@gmail.com

Abstract

English was the medium through which British colonialism tried to harness the mindset of Indian people. It is evident that the most vital factor that distinguished the educated class of India from the rest of the population was their ability to make use of the language of the former rulers of the country. Colonial administration in India twisted the tool of diplomacy and knowledge for attaining control over indigenous communities. English education was introduced with a purpose to materialize the administrative needs of the British. In the case of Malabar, which is our region of analysis, introduction of English education can be seen as a rupture in human relationships and interregional contacts. As elsewhere in India, the prime motive of the British in Malabar was economic in terms of the cultivation of commercial crops and the maximum utilisation of its geographical potentialities especially the hilly areas of Wayanad and the coastal areas of Thalassery and Kannur. Malabar, a region occupied by heterogeneous cultural elements had a knowledge system catering to the requirements of contemporary society even before the arrival of the British. At the same time it showed no hesitation to accept the colonial cultural products which in turn affected the life styles and practices of upper middle classes and some sections of traditional elites. There was displacement of social and cultural hierarchies in the background of English education.

Keywords: Dominance, metropolis, modernity, public sphere, social fabric, commoditization, orientalism.

Introduction

This article provides an introduction to the cultural interaction between the coloniser and the colonised in the region of Malabar with an emphasis on English education. This study is not in the pattern of domination v/s resistance narrative appeared in the Modern Historical studies. While dominating the cultural diversities of the colonies, a

close scrutiny and reinvention of tradition was made in the colonial period. Type of the soil, natural varieties and native potentialities, process of marginalization in the traditional societies, social intercourse, communication and other were scrutinised by the specially appointed colonial officers and missionaries. Colonial survey and mapping of even the remotest areas of Asian colonies offered a space to the colonisers to analyse the pros and cons of traditional state system. Familiarization of an alien society and its stability in the colonies was enforced through various cultural technologies of the rule. It was very powerful to alter the cultural priorities of the colonised and 'the West is now everywhere within the West and outsides, in structures and in minds' (Nandy, 1983: XI).

Cultivation of English as a Language of 'Power'

Structure of colonial state was not uniform in every colony. In India the British hunted the possibility of an indirect rule. It is argued that colonial encounter did not simply operate through coercion, but also through concessions, contestation and resistance (Mamdani, 1996:16). As stated by Mamdani, colonial powers generalized decentralized exploring and describing one's perceptions, thoughts and beliefs (1996). In the process of domination, in India the British never intended for cultural displacement by destruction but they preferred persuasion, if possible and coercion only if necessary (Panikkar, 2007:10). Extension of the ideologies of western 'liberal state' over indigenous majority was primarily linked with language, science and technology, the biggest weapons of colonialism. Liberal structures have the potential to produce difference through displacement and translation (Naregal, 2004:142). English language introduced by the British could cut across the boundaries prescribed by the dominant native groups and that touched every walk of life. The new language had inward penetration to the native environment, action, resistance, and liberation. As Gauri stated, imperial mission of educating and civilizing colonial subjects in the literature and that of England, a mission that in the long run served to strengthen western cultural hegemony in enormously complex ways (1990:3). English literature was made as a major subject in the Indian Civil Service which moulded a generation capable of running the administrative machinery of the British and played a crucial role in the ideological formation of the empire. The British state had a strong interest in creating a hegemonic culture that could marginalize local and regional as well as subaltern ways of life and knowledge systems (Mamdani, 1996). Naregal's study shows the ways that colonial

rule in South Asia restructured social hierarchies by altering the nature of relation between 'high' and 'low' languages (Naregal, 2004:139). Theory of imperialism imparted superior objectivity and rationality that always have primacy over values such as compassion, freedom and participatory democracy (Nandy, 1987:87). Paradox is that it was the same rationality psychologically harnesses the nation's mindset and that shaped future generation of intellectuals, thinkers and national leaders who were instrumental in the liberation of the nation from the charge of British imperialism.

Following Weber's logic, it was the new class situation which was determined by the kinds of skills and abilities obtained by education credentials that create life chances outside of the life chances of direct property ownership which made English as the language of power (Weber, 1978: 928-30). Michel Foucault's comment on the interrelations between citizenship and power is pertinent here. He viewed cultivation of knowledge through language is irrevocably linked to power. When the British appeared in the Asian scene, they were in total confusion with regard to the cultivation of an 'alien' language there. The British language policy in India offers us more contradictions than similarities. As stated by Boman, the debate about the nature of education imparted to Indians as embodied in the Anglicist - Orientalist controversies reflected the cultural space that colonial state was seeking, for establishing its hegemony (1943:VII-VIII). Confusion on the part of the British was evident in the speech of Randle Jackson in the British parliament that blamed the secession of the American colonies to the English folly of opening schools and colleges there. Jackson warned the directors to avoid and 'steer clear of the rock that the British split in America' (Kochar, 2008:45).

The supporters of Orientalist school of thought in administration were in favour of using indigenous languages for establishing effective rapport with native people (Mohanty, 2008:103). The acquisition of knowledge about the colony is very essential to the colonial state for domination and control (Gauri, 1999:28). Orientalist schools of thought put an argument that money of a colonial state mainly derived from the colonies so that something to be returned to the colonial subjects. The Evangelicals like Charles Grant offered two ways to communicate European enlightenment to the Orientalist world, first, through the medium of the native language and second, through the English language. In their version, when natives became acquainted with the English language, they could immediately read everything written in

it, and thus the field of knowledge open to the native mind would be greatly expanded (McCully, 1966:12). Grant argued for a structural change in the native religion for the effective implementation of western knowledge. After the Charter Act of 1823 some of the missionary groups began to toy with Grant's idea. A reverse view was offered by British officials like Elphinston, Munroe and Malcolm. Elphinston laid down the principle that the promotion of native education required considerable assistance from the government. He was in favour of extending the benefit of English education only in metropolitan cities like Bombay where there was the settlement of business community who was always supportive of the British. This was with a view that only those 'civilized' have access to European rights. As Mamdani stated the British civil society was presumed to be 'civilized society' from whose ranks the 'uncivilized' were excluded (1996:16). Elphinston's plan was not acceptable to the English official like Francis Warden, who submitted a different plan. Warden wished to give greater encouragement to the study of English and to drop the arrangements for extending native schools (McCully, 1966:29). The Anglisist faction had been built up through the appointment of men like Trevelyan, Wilberforce and John. R. Colvin who were strongly opposed to the practice of patronizing Oriental learning.

The controversies were settled in 1835 when the Government of India decided to devote to the teaching of western sciences and literature through the medium of English alone. The British government in India decided to patronize English over Oriental education and also began to make government employment increasingly dependent upon possession of educational qualifications. Macaulay's Minute was a transition from religious to secular motives in English education (Gauri, 199:145). From the 19th century onwards the colonial powers had emerged as the principal agents in disseminating modern education in India. They got immense help from the missionaries who came with a different plan. The annual reports of Basel Mission give a detailed explanation of their aims and objectives which were philanthropic, pedagogical, and financial. The philanthropic objective was to extend health services and to provide honourable means of subsistence to many Christians as well as probationers, who otherwise could hardly know what to live upon[1]. A major part of the financial resources for running the mission institutions in India came from British residents of the region. The Missionaries suspected that official policy of secularization in the early phase of imperialism in India had been instituted

in a spirit of experimentation and for testing the non- religion theory of education (Gauri, 1999:8). According to them knowledge without religion produced infidels who were the spiritual equivalent of political rebels imbued with contempt for constitutional authority (Gauri, 1999:47). Character Act of 1813 relaxed the colonial control over missionary activity in India. The demand for English education was gradually developing among metropolitan elites. At the beginning of the nineteenth century there existed a small English speaking nucleus among the wealthy native merchant families of the metropolis. In the Bengal presidency, where the government offices and the commercial activity of Calcutta produced a greater degree of intercourse between the European community and the natives, an increasing number of the Calcutta aristocracy had begun to adopt English dresses, to adorn their home with English furniture and to assume English manners. From a geographical point of view the inhabitants of coastal areas, especially those close to the growing port towns, were favourably situated to undergo primary westernization (McCully, 1966:54).

As mentioned in the outset, colonial cultivation of English language was centered on big cities like Bombay and Calcutta. As there were no such big cities in Malabar, English came late to this region. At the same time, as the northernmost colony of the British in the Madras Presidency, Malabar district was at least culturally linked to the colonial project of "one power, one mind." As in other regions of India, in Malabar the forces of colonialism consisted of two phases. In the first phase of colonial rule, Malabar was not an outstanding territory with multiple interests. The British conquest during its first phase showed all the signs of being integrated to native society (Nandy, 1983:3). The British treated the region as an important centre for revenue extraction. For the same reason, the stupendous material remains of the British administrative machinery, characteristic of many of the Indian cities, can't be seen anywhere in Malabar. In the second phase of colonialism the British were guided by capitalist economic interests which demanded availability of citizens free from traditional bondages.

Native Responses

In Malabar, the British made only a minimal effort to create a group of lower grade officials for the functioning of the administration system. Only a tiny fraction of the population came in to direct, face to face, contact with the British or other Europeans, and those who came in to such contact did not always become a force for change. Each community of the region had its own way of subsistence in which

upper castes dominated the mode of production. Education in the traditional society of Malabar was devised in tune with the existing social and economic needs of the region. Its power structure, land relations and judicial system were locally developed one. Contemporary society hardly required universal accessibility to all kinds of cultural skills and knowledge forms, since skills and knowledge were functionally specific, hereditary and also caste oriented (Gurukkal, 1999:77). It is mistaken to argue that social progress in Malabar was exclusively associated with the British. Lower caste groups of the region even practiced medicine and *vishachikitsa* as a means of subsistence. Even in the midst of western practices the avarna and dalit groups of Malabar had carved out their own space in the treatment of certain diseases and in attending delivery. There were well known persons throughout Malabar known as vaidyan who practiced medicine and *vishachikitsa* as private practitioners. The tribals like mavilans and karimbalans had attained proficiency in *vishachikitsa* (treatment of snake bite) and they were approached by snake bitten people. People of Malabar rarely approached hospitals during pregnancy and delivery. There was certain experienced group of women in Malabar to attend delivery. A letter from Tellicherry Municipal Chairman to Madras government indicates the colonial process of making unskilled *Malayi* (lower caste women) to a trained midwife in attending delivery. The Municipality proposed to train the *Malayi*s at Civil Hospital at Tellicherry to attend delivery in the town.[2] Series of articles that appeared in the native newspapers lamented that, the introduction of Allopathic medicines provided a serious setback to the traditional medicine practiced by *vaidyans* and that the people were intoxicated by the charms of the western medicine (M.D, 1918:3-3).

Social transformation in the midst of the British institutions was a slow process in Malabar. Implementation of English education does not offer a steady and progressive graph in the case of Malabar. The Imperial Census of 1871 suggests that total population of Nambudiris in Malabar was 22188 and out of which only 169 were in government service with a total percentage of 0.7[3] Missionary reports speak of the initial difficulties they had in the field of education because of the stiff opposition from upper caste people. Their reports stated that many of the higher caste people in Malabar were afraid of the modern school. The low caste people who were attracted to the missionary schools had to face stiff opposition from the local *janmi* or landlord. Even in the beginning of the twentieth century there were several people from the

high castes who were cherishing the memory of old educational practices. Some of the dissenting notes on English education appeared in contemporary journals and newspapers are worth inspecting. A newspaper report quoted the opinion of Carlyle and say: "there is a limit to attaining knowledge, going beyond this is not good for human beings" (Anantha Pillai, 1917:4-11-12).

The percentage of attendance of Muslim students in schools belonging to Malabar indicates their attitude towards western system of education. In 1854, even after the implementation of Charles Wood despatch, there was only two Muslims in the Provincial School at Calicut where the number of students belonging to the Hindu community were 108[4]. In Tellicherry School, the ratio between the Hindu students and Muslim students was 87:9[5]. The Imperial Census of 1871 indicate that out of the total Muslim population of 274320 in Malabar only 39 Muslims in schools with a total percentage of 0.01[6]. Several cases of Mappila agitation against the missionaries were reported from Malabar. When the missionaries started preaching at Panur, a crowd of Mappilas raised tumults, pecked stones at them and forced to stop preaching and some of them challenged the missionaries for a debate.[7] *Kerala Patrika* reported that some Musaliars in Kannur town prevented the Mappiala boys from studying English for the reason that studying English was 'injurious'[8]. A short story titled *Asakula* appeared in a contemporary weekly read thus: Ayisha a small girl coming from conservative Muslim family in Malabar, completed her fourth standard and came out with flying colours. When she approached her *Bapa* (father) for higher education, he said:

…now your formal education is over. English is the language of *narakatile ahilukar* (those who are in hell). I will recommend you to Moyiliar (religious teacher) to study Pathu Kittab (religious scripture) (Abdul Vahid, 1937:15-7-3).

Moidu Moulavi once lamented: education of Muslim girls ended with the study of Quran. Then they never came back from the darkness of their taravadus (Moulavi, 1981:10). Even in the royal families of Malabar, the educational status of the women was not satisfactory. In Chirakkal royal family, woman matriculates came only by late 1940[9]. However, some of the rich Muslim families in Malabar like Keyis, Maliekkal, Koyas and Arakkal family have sent their girls to English schools and took western education. One of the obstacles in the way of female education, as per the official view, was the absence of stimulating rewards and the apathy on the part of parents. One of the Brit-

ish reports said: parents were always averse to keeping their daughters beyond a very early age in schools taught by males. Where the staff entirely composed of women, the duration of school life tends to rise.[10]

'Modern' character of reform movements

There was a continuous interaction between the colonial order and social ethos of Malabar. It is generally argued that the rise of reform movements were in the context of colonial education. The spread of English education and the social awakening that followed led to rapid changes in human interactions and power relations in the region. The colonial order underlined the weakness of the traditional order and the need for reform and regeneration of institutions. Political resources of lower caste groups were not adequate for dislodging the actual bases of inequality (Naregal,2004:139). In Malabar, their acquaintance of English language with the support of missionaries and reformers turned as a determining factor in the new social formation. Following Weber's thesis, interplay of the authority of rationality and the power of charisma was relevant in the case of Kerala where the British served as the authority of rationality and religious leaders as the power of charisma. Divinity attached to the reform leaders like Sree Narayana Guru helped in the easy assimilation of their rationalist ideas in Kerala. Miller has argued that the combined influence of modern education, communist critique and economic needs have reduced the dominance of religious concerns; religion became a private matter while the public concern of the community became social progress (1992:23).

The attempt of social reformers in Kerala to impart education on modern lines to lower caste people and their call for a decent way of life by abandoning prejudices and superstitions in the society were the attempts to follow some aspects of westernization. As observed by Osella, the slogan 'one caste, one religion, one God for human kind of the same blood and form', a bold scientific insistence upon empirical equality, is articulated in Kerala not by a biologist or political activist but by a Guru (Osella and Osella, 2004:46). The lower caste movements in Kerala had emphasized the link between power and knowledge with a perception that one of the prerequisites to achieve a caste-less society was the dissemination and democratization of knowledge. Ayyankali tried to assimilate the practices of the West and East by making his body itself a symbol. His use of ornaments, turban, overcoats etc. has much significance as it extended a message of breaking caste oriented social boundaries and entering the public sphere. Theatre art forms were widely used by *Yogakshema Sabha* for propagating the

themes of education, social participation, marriage reforms etc. The influence of colonial modernity and western practice was visible in such instances like the inter-dining event of Sahodaran Ayyappan to promote the concept of universal brotherhood, Sivayogi's emphasis on women education and attempt of Chalilakathu kunhahammad Haji to reform the class rooms on western model by introducing black board, chalk, charts, map etc.

Social mobility and cultural practices

The ideology of progress which tagged along with English education has shaped a new condition for social mobility in Malabar. The reorganization of family structure, urbanization of economy, new concept of time, improved employment opportunities etc were the visible outcomes of a society groomed by western education. In Marshal Berman's discourse cultural capitalism and the expression of modernity have the potential to cut across all boundaries of geography, ethnicity, class and nationality (1982:15). While occupation in the traditional caste system was rated in terms of ritual purity and pollution, they are today rated to some extent in terms of income they produce (Rao, 1972:137). Women of Malabar were succumbed under the weight of the oppressive caste system and the social regulations imposed by it. Social reformers of Kerala supported by educated middle class prompted a barrage of questions to be raised on women education, marriage reforms and ritual practices. Progress was visible in the formation of various women organizations like *Vanitha Samajams*, *Strivedis and Mahila Sangams* in Malabar. From 1887 to 1975 there were more than twenty women magazines in Malabar.

The creation of a new public shere in the form of newspapers and socially committed organisations provided a platform for newly educated intellectuals, social reformers, *vakils*, and women leaders to discuss the crucial issues connected with Malabar society. These initial efforts combined with the positive attitude of the British officials and law courts created a favourable condition for family reforms. People were now talking of the success stories of educated people who were getting employed in the British firms and civil service and migrated to distant lands to make their fortune. Chandu Menon's hero Madhavan, Potheri Kunhambu's hero Marathon and Joseph Mulyils heroine Sukumari directly speak of the success stories of those who were English educated.

One of the aspects of colonialism which Hebermas identified was

the intense commoditization of private life. Leisure, family life, sexual relationship, and one's sense of self and development as human being, increasingly become targets of commoditization (White, 1988:115). Colonisation and its products, i.e. western education and urbanization, resulted in a secularization of the life styles of the Malabar region. Colonial practices in Malabar were at first taken up by the *Malayalees* of Madras city went for educational and occupational purposes. There was large number of people who served the British as housekeepers, butlers and servants of the British officials, planters etc. They tried to introduce new pattern of dress style, food habits and construction style of residential building. Colonial taste had its presence in towns like Tellicherry with the opening of Mampally Bakery by Karai Bappu.Words like 'sorry', 'excuse', 'hallo', 'sir', 'saree', 'shirt', 'coat', 'shop', 'market' etc. became vernacular words. Old place names were changed in tune with its English pronunciation. Tellicherry (Thalassery), Cannanore (Kannur), Calicut (Kozhikode), Trichur (Trissur), Aleppy (Alapuzha), Quilon (Kollam) and Trivandrum (Thiruvanathapuram) were some of the important changes.

Conclusion

The 'power' of language was instrumental in creating changes in the existing order of society. The British made English as a compulsory target for getting employment opportunities and social status in the colonial countries. Along with the English language some western practices also percolated into the Indian social fabric. As the region which first experienced foreign practices, introduction of western education provided a new face to the socio-economic set up of Malabar. Colonial administration and Christian missionaries played an important role in the spread of English education and culture in Malabar. Western science was also imparted along with English language. Schools and colleges served as the instrument of western culture and religion. There was a continuous interaction between colonial order and social ethos of Kerala. After the initial apathy, almost all communities of Malabar responded positively to the western mode of education. But it does not mean that every section of the society received English education. It was limited to a minuscule minority. The way of life of the indigenous people, their customs, beliefs and practices, knowledge, morals, laws and arts were allowed to decay and the western culture was communicated as role model of high culture to reorder the society. It can be fixed as the root of 'micro family' system to the western education and the new mode of job opportunities created by it. Though the indigenous system of education suffered a decline, the traditional knowledge like *Ayurveda*, *Vishachikitsa*, crafts, technology etc continued for a long

time. The extensively praised Kerala model and the identity formation of this region are to some extent connected to the introduction of English education.

Notes

1. 40th *Basel German Evangelical Mission Report* for 1879, Mangalore, 1880, p.213. It has stated its educational objectives in the following words: 'We purpose under the head to treat education as one of the organization for building up church. It is an essential duty of every church , a condition of its very life and programme to "feed the lambs" and knowing, that it is idle to expect that this duty can be properly attended to in the family, we do the utmost in our power to establish primary schools in all our churches so that even the poorest and most ignorant may be brought up in the nature an admonition of the Lord and may receive the amount of education that will enhance their to read and understand the word of God and to become intelligent members'.

2. *Letter from Municipal Chairman, Tellicherry to the Secretary, The Government of Madras*, B&A, Go No 864, Local Self Government, Regional Archives Kozhikode,P.3. Native reports of Malabar speak the presence of families and individuals who were expert in the field of medicine. Nadumbrath Kandiyil, a prominent Tiyya *taravad* popularly known as Uracheri family at Menapram has produced well known Ayurvedic physicians. Nedumbrath Koman Vaidyar, a member of this *taravad* was a well known Ayurvedic physician. His sons Kunhi Kannan, Chathappan, Kunhi Chandan, Kunbhi Koran and Othenan were great Sanskrit scholars. In the first phase of colonialism, instead of spending much money on medical research in the area, they sought the help of local physicians for curing diseases, believing that they were likely to be better acquainted with the diseases and remedies. Recurring presence of Malaria and Cholera in the region alarmed the British and they took a sudden turn to allopathic practices at least for saving 'their citizens.' The new generation of Ayurvedic physicians also responded positively to western medical practices by introducing scientific methods in diagnosis and treatment.

3. Census of 1871,vol II, Madras,1874,C/28,Regional Archives Kozhikode,P.131. In the initial phase of colonialism Nambuthiris were not sympathetic to English education. The British official reports characterised the Nambutiris as a 'section who were famous for their aloofness from the 'world' and their adherence to the 'old order of things' and were largely engaged in priestly duties and temple service.

4. *Report on Public Instruction under Madras Presidency*, 1856-57, Madras, Appendix A/766, Regional Archives, Kozhikode, p.27.

5. Ibid.

6.   Census Report, 1871, Madras, vol-II, c/28, Regional Archives, Kozhikode, p.131.

7.   Basel German Evangelical Mission Reports, Basel Mission Press, Mangalore, 1906, p.78

8.   Kerala Patrika, 26 May 1894, *Native Newspaper Report*, Tamilnadu National Archives, Chennai. Mappila reservation towards English education was due to political and religious reasons and was connected with global and local issues. Some observers like J Murray Mitchell attributed this hostility to Muslim sense of common pride. He argued that Mappilas were convinced of the infinite superiority of Arabian and Persian literature to the production of the West. In the East, Pan Islamism responded to the challenge of European economic and cultural penetration. The British revenue policy and their prolonged hostility to the Muslim community in Malabar resulted in a series of uprisings in the region. Mappila experience from the British hands created a deep suspicion of western institutions such as secular education, medicine and bureaucracy. Among the Malabar Muslims, one half or three fourth was extremely resistant to English education.

9.   Interview with Raveendra Varma, senior member of Chirakkal Royal family on 4/5/2013.

10.   Report on Public Instruction under Madras Presidency , 1916-17, Madras, A/819, Regional Archives, Kozhikode p.104. The 1871 Census Report indicates that Malabar occupied third position in Madras Presidency in female instruction. In 1881 Census Malabar ranked first in the female rate of attendance in the districts of Madras presidency. But 97.52% of women were illiterate. Official estimates suggests that girls did not pass the primary level even in the 1890's when out of 200647 girls for school going age only 11164 or 5.6%were registered as pupils and only 9463 or 4.7% actually made it to the school.

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Transmitting English Terminology in Arabic Scholarly Composition on the Internet

Rafeeq Hameed Al-Omary
Assistant Professor of Translation Studies
Department of English
University of Taiz, Yemen
Email: rafeeqomary@gmail.com

Abstract

This paper aims in the first place to examine some 'scholarly' compositions in Arabic on the internet so as to, empirically speaking, find out and describe the problematic phenomenon of the newly transmitted foreign terminology in these digitally presented communications-- terminologies that have invaded the Arabic language and culture in the digital era of today. The paper seeks to scan the selected digital compositions in order to know how their generators (to avoid the term writers), or perhaps equally rightly, communicators, have come to deal with the alien terminology. From the perspective of this paper, digital authors practice translation intentionally or unintentionally: simply because they choose their words for the new concepts they come to know. To what extent Arabic language and research are coping with the problem of alien terminologies in a digital world that does, as fast as it is, wait for none to prepare themselves for the new challenges and encounters? What translational possibilities are available for Arabic 'digital communicators?' This is what the paper attempts to probe and describe with reference to some select specimens from the internet. The paper ends with some recap and suggestions for further research suitable for extensive specialised papers or even focused MA dissertations.
Keywords: Digital Composition, Digital Translation, Transliteration, Digital Arabic Fiction, Translation Possibilities.

Introduction

Foreign terminology, its challenging nature and its rapid transmissions and translations in the digital age of today seem to pose a real problem in Arabic language and research today[1]. Discussions and debates, arguments and counter-arguments have already started and they will not come to an end as long as 'digitalisation'[2] has started constructing its matchless 'kingdom' throughout the time. It has started to eat up, metaphorically speaking, and as the Arabs say, the verdant and the arid. This technological revolution has dominated the world

of today. The changes it brought do not give residents of the globe enough time to think what they can do to meet them or to think of time-consuming solutions, let alone appropriate solutions in times that are politically, economically and culturally globalised. If we go down to the point where we can envision the log that records the changes of terminologies, we will get astonished at the bulk of terminology that has been transmitted among cultures. Cultures that have the power of technology do have the lion's share in exporting their terminology to other less powerful nations and cultures. All languages of the world, as a result, are under the pressure of technology exporters. Technology importers do not just buy the items, tools, instruments, machines and apparatuses but long catalogues, manuals and brochures along with them; sometimes translated, and at other times not. Moreover, the digital transmission of alien terminology make the problem grow bigger and bigger. Here lies the real challenge. What are the possibilities available for the Arabs to face such a problem? Moreover, if this problem has become of a digital nature, how can it be faced? This paper will limit itself to discussing the issue of foreign terminologies in certain digital Arabic compositions. Discussing such an extensive and seemingly non-stop terminological log cannot be finalised by a paper like this of a limited scope and illustration; yet a necessary initiative is to be taken to draw the attention to this new phenomenon and encourage further thought and research on it; particularly if we come to know that only little research is available in this area of study.

Setting the Theme

In the light of the introduction above, the English terminologies that have recently entered Arabic or more correctly invaded Arabic are as the same as those encountered by other cultures and languages that have unshuttered their windows for the new, for the (post)modern and for the digital. Such terminologies have been dealt with differently and with different 'quick' strategies by Arabic speakers, writers and digital interactants and communicators. The majority of Arabic speakers have always found it easier to say 'mobile' 'computer', 'internet', 'USB', 'Net setter,' 'missed call,' 'recharge,' and the like while communicating by the spoken word. This class, due to its irresponsible attitudes, is excluded and does not find its place in this paper. But when such words existed in Arabic various digital/non-digital discourses, many language participants and critics have appreciated their new existence in the language. They have been seen as enriching, developing, and expressive of a changing world:

The twentieth century Arabic vocabulary has been enriching itself by modernising Arabic words to denote fresh ideas, and concepts, by accommodating new words to mean accessories and amenities of modern life and by adopting foreign words into its body. Thus the language has expanded and developed considerably with the changing world (Aboo Backer, 2007: 11).

On the other hand, many language participants and translators still doubt the validity of such adopted vocabulary. They have nostalgia for the original and the indigenous. They consider the failure to cope with the new technologies and innovations, and their terminologies as betrayal of their linguistic national identity. Others like Dr Husam Al-Khatib, a distinguished Arab critic, finds that the real obstacle facing digital translation is not the machine at all, but the limitations imposed on it by linguistic studies which fail to offer the solution. The dialectics surrounding such ways of seeing such linguistic phenomena are really intricate and practically overlapping or contradicting. But the Arab translator, let alone the digital author, has to make his reader understand his writing not through the arabicised words he uses but through the dissemination of the Arabic terminology: the original, the generated, or those that are sculpted from pure Arabic root words at the expense of the loan words. This is the plight and dilemma of Arab translators, but they should find way at last (Najib, 2005: 25). The same holds true of the digital authors or communicators. They should feel responsible for their diction and what they choose to write originally on the internet.

However, in their digitally transmitted communications, communicators have different possibilities and strategies in what they adopt. Some of them prefer to arabicise (transliterate or at least transshape), others do have the time to translate, others find it acceptable to transplant[3] (transpose in a foreign script) and very few others can have an opportunity to create. The reality but not the theory of such possibilities, namely the digital ones, is what determines the scope of this paper. To remind, the sense of the term 'digital,' though still of unstable definition, is limited here to describe those kinds of communications generated or aided by the internet and have no *prior* paper existence.

The Nature of the Possibilities

While browsing and scanning some 'scholarly' articles on the internet, it has been found that their writers (!), more rightly may be 'digital authors, or communicators,'[4] are very much aware of the digital age in which they are interacting and the digital technology through which they are or translating their ideas and research. In their digital

communication, to stick to the issue of foreign, namely English, terminology, they happen to realize that they have four possibilities to face the rapid transmission of English terminology in their digital writings (!) or rather 'digital communications and interactions.' Let's have a discussion of the nature of these possibilities in three select specimens[5] here: the three of which belong to Arabic 'digital communicators.'

The First Specimen: Terminology Related to Digital Education

In his digitally transmitted article titled, 'الثقافة الرقمية مفهوم وفهم' [Digital Education: A Concept and Perception], Husayn Hasan Rashid uses different 'digital' terms while he is talking of digital education. The following list shows some of them:

1. الثقافة الرقمية Al-thaqafah Al-raqamiyyah [digital education]
2. تكنولوجيا المعلومات Tiknulugia al-ma'lumat [information technology]
3. العالم الالكتروني Al-aalam al-iliktruni [electronic world]
4. العمل الالكتروني Al-amal Al-iliktruni [electronic work]
5. الجهل الالكتروني Al-jahl Al-iliktruni [electronic illiteracy]
6. الحساب الرقمي Al-hisab Al-raqami]digital mathematics]
7. (المعلومات (داتا Al-m'lumat (data) [DATA]
8. (الرقمي (الديجتال Al-raqami (al-dijital) [DIGITAL]
9. المجتمع الرقمي الجديد Al-mujtam' Al-raqami Al-jadid [the new digital community]
10. التقنية الرقمية Al-tiqaniyyah Al-raqamiyyah [digital technology]
11. مجتمع المعلومات Mujtam' Al-m'lumat [information community]
12. شبكة الانترنت Shabakat Al-internet [internet]
13. التعلم عن بعد Al-t'allum 'an bu'd[distance education]
14. التطبيقات الرقمية Al-tatbiqat Al-raqamiyyah [digital applications]
15. الثورة التكنولوجية Al-thawrah Al-tiknulujiyyah [technological revolution]
16. ضغطة زر Daghtat Zir [key press]
17. (شبكة الاتصالات الدولية (الانترنت Shabakat Al-ittisalat Al-diwaliyyah (al-intarnit) [world wide web]
18. الشبكة العنكبوتية Al-shabakah Al-'ankabutiyyah [the web]
19. علوم الحاسوب Ulum Al-hasub[computer sciences]
20. ثقافة الكترونية Thaqafah Iliktruniyyah [electronic education]

The bold-font phrases above reflect one possibility which occurs clearly in the aforementioned article. These are just arabicised or trans-

literated, i.e., written in Arabic letters, and represented in Arabic in a way that reads like this: tiknulugia in item no. 2 above; al-iliktruni in item no. 3, 4, and 5; data in item no. 7; al-dijital in no. 8; al-intarnit in no. 12 and 17, al-tiknulugiah no.20. The second possibility of translating is obvious in items 1, 6, 9, 10, 13, 14, 16, 18, and 19. Readers of this paper who do not know Arabic can through the transliterations above next to each item realise to what extent the translation sounds different from the transliteration. This is because the translation of the latter items uses pure Arabic words. The author of the article is thus using two types of translation in his original digital composition.

Incidentally, the terms listed and translated above have recently occurred in Arabic in order to meet the foreign terminology - most of which have come through the internet. Prior to the digital revolution such terms were absent in spoken and written Arabic discourses and in the discourses of Arabic research as well. The appearance of such exemplary terminology reflects the potentiality of producing equivalent counterparts. In other words, it means that Arabic can have different possibilities to meet the invading aliens. The whole thing turns to be a game of strategy in which languages have to find ways to play with one another on a single digital arena, which has no univocal time, place and setting. The players can either win or lose. To elaborate and illustrate, the translated terminologies listed above manifest different possibilities of transmitting the foreign terminology in original Arabic writings on the web. Some of which turn to be pure translations, others are nothing but mere transliterations. As a matter of fact, the above terminologies have shown nothing of a creation, that is, pure Arabic terminology which is born out of an Arabic technological soil to express an original object, term, or an event. All the terminology seems to have been created in a language other than Arabic. Arabic now plays the role of a receptor. This is contrary to what Arabic used to be during the Middle Ages particularly in the 13th century. This is the period in which the Arabs were in contact with the West through wars that dominated the period in the Arab East. In those times hundreds of Arabic words related to various spheres of knowledge have invaded many foreign languages of the West (Najib, 2005: 6-25). Arabic was an exporter of terminologies, and many languages of the world had to deal with those terminologies each according to its linguistic capacity. What is happening today is just the contrary. But the problem is more serious than any time before. This is because of the rapidness of technological transmission and the non-stop growth of human learning and

knowledge. The technological inability of most of the Arabs today has reflected itself clearly in the language they speak or write. Therefore, the third possibility, that of creating terminology that can pose a real challenge to its alien counterpart, is almost absent and there is no way to talk about it in the present of our times. The following is another specimen from a scholarly article by one who is claimed to be the pioneer of the digital realistic novel in the world. There is no aim to discuss his points of view on the digital world of authorship, which can be spared for a separate literary paper, but to describe the terminology he uses in his digital article.

The Second Specimen: Terminology Related to the Digital Novel

In the third chapter of his 'digital' book titled, 'اللغة في رواية الواقعية الرقمية' [Language of the Digital Realistic Novel], the Jordanian Muhammad Sanajlah speaks of the possibilities of the appearance of a new language for the new digital literary genre. Being himself a pioneer of such a genre as is believed by many (digital) Arab critics today, his terminology used to express this new Arabic art is found to be having the four possibilities mentioned earlier. Here is a list of some of the digital terms he uses:

1. رواية الواقعية الرقمية Riwayat Al-waqi'yyah Al-raqamiyyah[the digital realistic novel]

2. العصر الرقمي Al-'asr Al-raqami[the digital age]

3. لغة البرمجة Lughat Albarmajah [programming software]

4. لغة الـ HTML Lughat Al-HTML [HTML language]

5. الاخراج السينمائي Al-ikhraj Al-sinama'i [cinematographical production]

6. فن كتابة السيناريو Fan Kitabat Al-sinaryu[the art of scenario editing]

7. فن الـ ANIMATION Fan Al-ANIMATION[the art of ANIMATION]

The seven terms listed above manifest four types of possibilities of the digital transmission of foreign terminology: translated terminology as in items 1 and 2; Arabicised or transliterated terminology as in 3, 5 and 6; the transplanted terminology as in items 4 and 7; and finally the created terminology as in item 1 above. The last type expresses a possibility of Arabic coinage. Simply because the Arab author is believed to be the pioneer of this new digital art called "Riwayat al-Waqi'iyyah al-Raqamiyyah" (the Digital Realistic Novel). Unfortunately, this last type is the least prominent as the specimen above shows. It is only the first term of the list above that is a real challenge, though not as

a term as such but as a concept by itself. However, new concepts can breed new terminologies. If this new genre of a novel is really not an imitation of an existing foreign type, then it is expected that many pure Arabic digital terminology will come into existence: a new epistemological occurrence which the rest of the world has to face and admit, and gets into the trouble of its translation. However, the article from which the specimen above is taken is quite disappointing. The essayist practices in this digital 'scholarly' article what could arouse doubt, at least for his critics, about his ability or his interest to create or coin more Arabic digital terminology related to the very requirements of the new art (the digital novel) he is talking about. The phrases "HTML" and "ANIMATION" in items 4 and 7 respectively remain without translation above. They are just copied into the Arabic text of the digital article with their exact Roman letters. They interrupt the Arabic script and look odd. Transplanting is provocative, simply because it gives an impression that such an international language like Arabic is insufficient and cannot find its equivalent terminology. He could at least do his job of transliterating and thus avoid interrupting the script with another that does not fit in. This possibility has become prominent in digital communication in Arabic today. Do Arabic digital communicators or bloggers not have capacity to translate or do not have time to cope with the rapid digital technology which waits for none to think over what he is receiving, translating, or even transmitting?!

The Third Specimen: A Digital Very Short Story

In his 'digital' very short story titled بصمة خيال""" [An Impression of An Imagination,] Husayn bin Qarin, uses the following two sentences that are sure to capture the attention of a translational critic:

1. """القى نظرة الى هاتفه المحمول [alqa nadratan ila hatifihi al-mahmul] (had a glance at his mobile)

2. "يداعب كيبورده-لوحة مفاتيحه" [yuda'ibu kibawrdahu – lawhat mafatihi-] ((pampering his keyboard (- his keyboard-))

In these two sentences, there are two technological devices mentioned. One is 'hatifihi al-mahmul' [his mobile[and the other is 'kiibawrd']keyboard[. These two words are images of two technological devices: the first one means 'portable telephone' which is exactly 'the mobile handset'; the other one is 'keyboard.' The digital short story communicator translates the first, and chooses to transliterate the second though a more common and more acceptable term for keyboard (lawhat mafatihi) already exists in Arabic. It is not only common but

more literary by its very nature. Yet, it seems that the blogger's awareness of the digital age in which he is communicating his story and his awareness of the technology he is communicating through has impressed him to an extent that he cannot resist the temptation to arabicise the English word 'keyboard.' This arabicisation is highly provocative. It does not only breach the Arabic sound system but its morphology as well. The parenthetical translation juxtaposed to it betrays this fact.[6] Once these two forms of keyboard of the sentence quoted above are translated back into English only one English term will be the equivalent of the two. Moreover, it is felt that the addition of the Arabic 'possessive pronoun' 'هـ' to the Arabicised word makes this possibility quite strange and doubtable as a word that can fit in any Arabic literary composition. However, this uncertainty seems to disappear once readers of digital compositions come to know that such communicators are in search of new language for their digital literature, as it were. Coming across upon such possibilities in such digital genres opens up new horizons for linguists, literary writers, critics and translators of- to shy from other terms already designating paper literature and literary publications- digital literary communications and interactions. Such new usages are revolutionary as far as new Arabic scholarly composition, designated as digital, can make its existence ever felt, and its challenges ever met.

Conclusion

Recapitulation

The whole paper, focusing on the possibilities of transmitting foreign terminology in Arabic as far as digital communication is concerned, has shown the existence of four possibilities on the level of the digital word: the translated, the Arabicised or the transliterated, the transplanted or the copied, and the created. These are the possibilities that appear clearly on the internet. The paper's aim, to remember, was not to take an *ultimate and decisive* ethical stand regarding these possibilities, for there should be a more extensive research scope for questioning their validity first and substantiating reasons why some of them should be rejected.

If all of those possibilities are - and this cannot be the case- vindicated and validated, Arabic then will have no problem at all to express them digitally. Roughly speaking, at this stage and without any reservation however, transplanting as was defined by this paper is found to be inappropriate for Arabic- a language with a right-to-left or-

thographical system and a completely different script. The other three possibilities can work together or enter into the debate and be assessed. Arabic favours creation, encourages translation, and tends to tolerate necessary Arabicisation, but seems to permanently find it impossible to accept transplantations. However, digital communications today and their proponents pose a different type of not only possibilities of transmitting foreign terminology but also a new language that seeks to meet the requirements of digital awareness and globalised forms of contact, and above all different standards of assessment and evaluation and online participation.

> Established translators]and probably for this case digital communicators or authors[arguably have a professional responsibility to take advantage of the continuing development opportunities offered by their professional bodies in order to help them keep abreast of technological advances in the translation sector, and in order to help them continue to achieve their goals of quality and productivity. Such opportunities might include attendance at relevant seminars and workshops, as well as participation in online discussion groups or networks, where ideas and user experiences can be informally exchanged. Participation in these sorts of activities should help to improve levels of awareness of technological developments in the sector (Heather Fulford and Joaquín Granell-Zafra, 2005: 13).

Recommendations

Every paper cannot go beyond its limited scope. The ideas of this paper, though subject to the limitations of scope and time imposed by a journal paper, can be further promoted by more critiques on the following themes:

- The validity of the possibilities of foreign terminology transmission discussed in this paper.
- The rise and history of new digital concepts in Arabic like the novel literary concept of the digital realistic novel mentioned in this paper and/or the problems of its translatability.
- Analysing one of the digital novels by Muhammad Sanajlah, whose article about such a new genre was taken as a specimen in this paper. This pioneer has to his credit several digital realistic novels so far. Its digital linguistic features can be an excellent source of empirical data for a clearer and more detailed analysis of the problems of translation accompanying digital literature creation or even its translation in Arabic.

Notes

1. Paper research on such digital issues seems to be completely absent. It is hoped that this paper will contribute to fill this gap. Its list of references reflect not only the digital load of the topic discussed but also the absence of paper research that can be made use of.

2. From the perspective of this paper a way of creating and transmitting ideas, thoughts and modes of expression, of whatever type and manner, by and through the internet only.

3. (Its meaning here is determined by the need to express a new phenomenon of translation occurring on internet communications, where the alien remains alien in its shape and orthographic form. In this case it opposes Arabicisation)

4. This is to suggest the problem of labelisation or epitheticalisation in the field of 'digitalisation' as versus the popular and recognized forms of communication like manuscripts and printed publications)

5. The specimens are also selected for their content value that is related to the new idea of 'digital' expression. Interested scholars in such a new trend can refer to the URLs provided later to read more on this issue.)

6. My parenthetical translation in the quote above shows the unnecessary use of the Arabicised form when its translation is already there. Since this is the case in such a digital work of art that has not yet gained enough recognition, it suffices to consider it, though seems as provocative as it may be, a fresh linguistic treatment in creative Arabic compositions on the Net.

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Protestant Missions and Gendered Spaces: The Case of Basel Evangelical Mission in Colonial Malabar

Shinoy Jesinth
Assistant Professor in History
Malabar Christian College, Calicut, Kerala
Email: shinoyjesinth@rediffmail.com

Abstract

As historians have interrogated the general shape and particulars of various colonial encounters, the importance of gendered discourses to define the "civilizing" colonial projects has become ever more apparent. Favorable association with the colonial state, a deep motivating sense of cultural superiority, and a divine mission to transform non-western societies, became instrumental in achieving the agendas of the colonial state to a large extent. These agendas, in turn, culminated in the bringing together of gender on the platform of capitalist labour irrespective of their assigned roles in Christian life. How gendered religious activities in an era of developing 'colonial modernities' were catalyzed and mediated by new languages and practices introduced by protestant Christian missionaries is a crucial question posed in this study. In the process of pursuing this question, this paper attempts to analyze the diversity of western missionary strategies and appropriations of Christian ideas and institutions in the then Malabar. Since the Basel German Evangelical Mission was a major missionary group which deeply influenced the socio-economic scenario of Malabar, this study concentrates empirically on the sources pertaining to this missionary society and largely draws the theoretical frame from the Weberian analysis of religion and capitalism.
Keywords: *Protestantism, Missionary, Gender, Colonialism.*

Introduction

Weber agreed with Marx that 'class' as 'political economic power' was a major factor in the historical development of 'modern society'. However, he disagreed with the fact that 'class' was the only institution that dominated the development of modern society. Weber believed that cultural factors, especially religion, were also important. However, Weber did not argue that religion was the cause of capitalism but that Protestantism and capitalism fitted together and developed in interaction with each other. So he did not argue that religion 'created'

capitalism. Gregory Baum, in his work 'Creative Religion: Max Weber Perspective' illuminates the sense of religion as an independent variable (Baum, 1975). This is supposed to answer some other scholars who used to see religion as dependent variable. Marx, for example, in his thinking on alienation clearly asserts that religion is a result of depressed human feeling dissatisfied with alienation created by an unjust economic system. Religion becomes a way to look for happiness which human beings do not find in economic life. In Baum's perspective, Weber is successful in highlighting the function of religion in social life. Religion is not merely a result of social system, but a cause of the nature of social life. Religion is energy; religion is stimulator. Religion has a significant influence on human beings.

Max Weber's *The Protestant Ethics and the Spirit of Capitalism* illuminate very clearly his position in looking at religion. This does not mean at all that Max Weber ignored the thinking that on other occasions religion can be dependent on other social systems, say culture in general and economy in particular (Weber, 1930). However, using empirical experience as a starting point to pose the alternative view on religion, Max Weber found that religion can shape human beings and human life. Weber simply compared how Catholic and Protestant communities live their life. Weber found that Catholics tend to be quieter, while Protestants are more aggressive. The idiom "to sleep well or to eat well" depicts how both religious community perceive the religious principles and practice them in their daily life. Catholics, being fatalists, considered the principles of totally relying on God and submitting their life wholly to God as primary and tend to avoid materialistic matters and prefer to enter spiritual sphere. Catholics strictly separate the spiritual and immanent, the transcendent and materialistic, and see that the spirits and the transcendent are better than those that are immanent and materialistic. On the other hand, Protestants see that to work hard is to pursue God's calls and treats it as a part of spirituality. Therefore, it is not a surprise if Weber found in the Middle Age, and may be until now, Germany which is mostly protestant used to be employers and Polish which is mostly Catholic used to be laborers. Both live in different levels of economy, in which Germany used to be much richer, wealthier and living a better life than the Polish (Firdaus, 2011:1). Nonetheless, Weber understands that religion is not the sole factor influencing one's state of economic being. There might be other things, like economy, politics, and culture. He emphasized the importance of cultural influences embedded in religion for understanding the

development of capitalism.

Capitalism efficiently colluded with religion to put forth the prospect of uplifting the downtrodden. It was a disguised means to remain at the fulcrum by intelligently exploiting the contemporary socio-economic and political conditions of the colonized. The new prospects opened up new standards of survival, offering a drastic improvement in the status quo of the converted people who were the major beneficiaries of the new ventures of the capitalist system. A corollary of the religio-capitalist development was the innovative spaces created for the converted wives. These spaces were meant to enhance the capitalist modus operandi, but in its own way it had its impact on the status of women both within and outside the family. The role of the women inside the family, as a caretaker, still remained the same while the male counterpart wielded greater authority within the family as a stronger financial source. Women, on the other hand, earned more social respect either working as aids of missionaries or undertaking easier and more productive jobs in which they were trained as part of the missionary work.

The Vision of the Mission

During the 19th century, a number of Protestant Christian Missions were formed in Europe. These missions generally followed paths of colonial expansion and established centres of activity at various European colonies. Basel Evangelical Mission was one of such missionary organizations which had its origin after the battle of Waterloo in June 1815, when a group of missionaries from Germany and Switzerland assembled in Basel on 25 September 1815 to form an "Evangelical Missionary Society" (Watson, 2015: 161). It is recorded that until the year 1813 the colonial authorities did not permit other nationals to spread Gospel in India. The British Parliament while renewing the contract of the East India Company in 1813, a bill was passed permitting the Christian missionaries to do evangelical work in the colonies (Webster, 2012:141). They were permitted to work in the expectation that the conversion of the local people would also change their consumer habits. As the sole purpose of parliamentary enquiries of 1833 was to discover ways and means of replacing indigenous produce by British substitutes in the Indian market, they assumed that 'Missions' can be used as arms for implementing the colonial policies in India (Nair, 1999:3). It was in this background the Basel German Evangelical Missionary Society sent their first missionaries to India. The first three German Missionaries named Rev. Samuel Hebich, Rev.

John Lenher and Rev. Christoph Griener belonging to the Society left for India from Portsmouth on the 12th of July 1834 and reached Calicut, the capital city of erstwhile Malabar district under Madras Presidency, on 13th October 1834 (Albert, 1980: 1).

The missionaries enjoyed the support of the authorities and many British residents also supported them with gifts of money and property[1]. Once they learned the languages their first task was to set up schools where children would be taught in the local language. Though the schools built in various parts of Malabar had considerable strength, most of the students were irregular in attending the classes. Poverty was the main reason behind the absence of scholars in the schools. Since most of the students were from the poorer class, they left the school whenever an opportunity was offered for earning the livelihood[2]. So the reports of BGEM said that it was a hard labour for the missionaries to get this people educated. The Missionaries soon realized that only if these converted groups are provided with a minimum standard of living, the objectives of the Mission could be achieved. In an early statement the goal of the Basel German Evangelical Mission was described as follows:

> …We have come together … to set up a missionary institute in our city which has the simply great purpose to conduct regular courses to appropriately train and prepare students who may then be sent out to promote a beneficial civilization and to proclaim the Gospel of peace in various regions of the heathen world where the English and Dutch missionary societies have long beenworking with auspicious success (Stenzl, 2010:28).

This description, in a sense links up with the thought of 'civilizing mission' which formed the basic justification fabricated by the colonialists.

Politics of Religious Mission and Gender

The extent to which imperial mission objectives reveal distinctive features in relation to gender is a question of growing historical importance. The distinctive contours of various denominations of Protestantism dominated the British mission enterprise in India can be best identified in the district of Malabar where the Basel German Evangelical Mission Society maintained their field of missionary activities. For instance, in early stages of missionary work the rehabilitation measures continued and the missionaries were given so many lands for settling the converts there. The unused plots at Quilandy, Annas-

sery and Chombala in the Calicut taluk were cleared and brought under cultivation (Sneham, 1992:33). These new spaces of training and disciplining taught the Christian ethics of morality and principles of life which makes a person subservient to God and the Church. It also contributed skilled and well disciplined human capital to the colonial establishments in the later days. If a baptized person or family found retrograding to their old caste vices they were sent to Calicut for counseling and necessary corrections were made on them. The letter regarding a *Vettuva* baptized couple named Andreas and his wife Salome, sent to Calicut Mission House in 1845 from the Tellicherry station for counseling, is a case in point[3].

The Basel Mission considered schools in general as important and effective institutional sites for evangelizing the natives[4]. Most of the teachers of the educational institutions were Christians — either trained persons from converted indigenous groups or the missionaries. In the Middle-Schools, apart from religious education the teachers were also assigned to teach Geography, History, Arithmetic, Geometry, as well as English and Sanskrit[5]. Gradually the people got attracted to the new educational system and the missionaries established schools in various taluks of Malabar district. It was because of their intense desire to get into the forefront of the society as most of the people who got converted to Christianity were from the lower castes. By becoming a Christian, they were 'offered' all the privileges by the missionaries whom they had never experienced. Very soon the missionaries were able to reach the caste Hindu community and draw converts even from the Muslim community[6]. Many among them were soon chucked out from their families. These destitutes, who denounced their castes, became a "castles society" and had no other option for livelihood but to depend upon the missionaries for protection and existence. It was in this background that the Mission started many industrial establishments like the carpenter's shop, weaving establishment, tile factories, dyeing industries and industrial institutes where technical know-how was imparted to the locals by German experts.

Women Education and the Mission

The main educational agenda of the Basel Mission for girls was to instill in them the spirit of Christianity. A girls' school was considered to be especially important as it provided one of the best means of access to indigenous women. In the boarding schools for boys and girls, the forenoon session was dedicated to lessons, and in the afternoon session boys were assigned for field duties like garden work, and the

girls were given training in sewing, knitting and crochet work[7]. Missionary wives took the initiative in training girls and also adult women in needle work and other 'feminine skills', and also in the sale of their products. This kind of work of women was located within the home and the family, which eliminated the necessity of going out to work, and which was more in compliance with the European model of feminity of woman as the homemaker (Konrad, 2015:83). In the process of their conscious effort to educate women, missionaries hoped to convert not just their female pupils but also the future generations as these students would pass on what they had learned to their own children. The school started by Rev. Fritz served as a boarding school for girls where they got training to meet their future tasks as wives and mothers[8]. It does not mean that they were educated simply to play their roles as wives and mothers but they were taught the western lessons of home science and were given technical training also. Since the salary of father of a converted family was not sufficient to maintain the family, income earning activities of mothers increased. Thus women were employed in large numbers in the Basel Mission industries where they were given low wages compared to the men folk. They still found it comfortable as they started earning. But the local pastors of congregations started complaining about the neglect of household duties and lack of parental attention to children (Fischer, 2009:212). The provision of crèches by the factories and the establishment of workers' temperance societies did not achieve much towards improving the situation (Fischer, 2009). The household expenditure of converts was high when compared to the others. They had to incur higher expenses for clothing that would meet decency standards set by the congregational rules. Women were asked to send their children to school and this caused only expenditures instead of contributing to the household income. In their non-convert life, children also were earning members (mostly in kind, not in money). Family also had to pay Church tax and contributed towards the factories 'sickness and old age funds' (Ibid.: 211)[9].

Bible-women: Task with converting "heathen women"

The 'Bible Women' who were the local ambassadors of the Mission in Malabar paid visit to the households and catered to the spiritual needs and provided counseling to the converted women folk. These charity women were indigenous converted women, who were employed by the Mission to visit 'heathen' women in neighbouring localities. They received partial support of the British government and the Foreign Bible Society (Maben, 2015:99). The first native Bible Women

of Calicut, Martha Vatcharan and Orphu Deborah visited the houses of Christians and non-Christians and taught the women various subjects[10]. The Sunday Schools they started for non-Christian girls inspired their parents to send them to schools. Singing, story-telling, and showing pictures became part of their scheme for work. They also took up the task of making their hearers literate. Most Bible-women were wives, generally of catechists or school-masters, or widows. A remarkable feature of the work of the Bible-women is that they could not only gain access to the non Christian women, but also to the men of the house, many of whom they could convince about Christianity. Thus, these women-evangelists were silently shouldering the colonial task of the upliftment of womenfolk along with the European missionaries and formed an important part of the transactions that took place between missionaries, indigenous communities and converts. By making the people around them get used to the notion of a new kind of mobility for women, the Bible-women made new models of gender acceptable in the indigenous society.

Women Associations

Like the Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA), the Ladies Association and Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA), in-augurated the delightedness of association life among the converted women. Earlier, these women had their gatherings in the domestic spaces of mission houses with the wives of missionaries or in the stitching rooms, a room intended for stitching and lace making. These associations became instrumental in bringing up an urbane consumer society where native women were given training classes to make laces, kerchiefs and other types of apparels and cloths for women folk. Their products got a big sale in the market and they themselves started using such types of materials. Naturally it marked a shift from the old patterns of lifestyles and to the westerners it was the success of their mission to dress the colonized bodies. They were also taught to read books and moreover, the association was keen in inculcating in them the leadership qualities[11]. Eliza F. Kent in her work *Converting Woman*, treated conversion less as an inner change of belief than as a gradual process 'revealed in and aided by changes in external behavior' like dress, diet, lifestyle, speech and comportment (Kent, 2004:6,7). Thus the colonial plan of shaping the socio-economic space of the 'other' was largely instrumentalised through the work of these missionaries.

Conclusion

The newly created 'casteless' society provided ample human capital to the industries run by the missionaries. Thus caste as a barrier of capitalism, as said by Weber, was removed by the efforts of missionaries which eventually helped the policies of the colonial state. The newly emerged western educated casteless community at various urban spaces of Malabar represented the consumer class where both men and women became the earning members of the family. Nevertheless the women were placed under their husbands in their venture of leading a Christian life. This ascertained the women folk to perform the dual roles of an industrial labourer who supports the family by her wages and also a responsible wife in the family. They became more concerned with the day to day life of the family and engaged in buying and making the commodities inevitable for the daily life of the new space. The colonial lessons of health, hygiene and cleanliness were taught first within the gendered spaces of converts with the help of these missionaries and the burden of dressing the colonized body also became part and parcel of the duties of the missionaries. Hence due to the growing influence of the missionary activities the masses, especially the women folk, became more instrumental in the 'civilizing' task of the colonial plans and it culminated in the gradual transformation of the society of Malabar during the in the colonial period.

Notes

1. The BGEM Report of 1849 contains a list of colonial officials who supported the missionary activities in Malabar by giving donations. H V Conolly, then collector of Malabar was one among them. See *Ninth Report of Basel German Evangelical Mission for the year 1849*, p. 49

2. *Sixth Report of Basel German Evangelical Mission for the year 1846*, p. 62.

3. *Fifth Report of Basel German Evangelical Mission for the year 1845*, p. 52.

4. Most of the Basel Mission Reports gives us a clear picture about the educational activities done by the missionaries in Malabar and South Canara. Missionaries, by means of their schools, sought to carve out a space within the 'heathen' world, where the most pliable segment of the population, that is children, could be schooled into the ideals of the Christian life. See Maben, Veena. (2015: 99).

5. *Twenty-Sixth Report of Basel German Evangelical Mission for the year 1865*, p. 27.

6. Rev. Gundert speaks about a Muslim youth named Baker from Tellich-

erry, who adopted Christianity and when his conversion created problems within his community, his uncle at Calicut persuaded him to get back to his own faith by offering him a good job at his business centre at the town of Calicut. It should be noted that, in those times Calicut was an attraction for the youngsters. *Fifth Report of Basel German Evangelical Mission for the year 1845*, p. 50.

7. *Thirty-Third Report of Basel German Evangelical Mission for the year 1872,* p. 37.

8. *The Fifth Tour Report of Sir Arthur Lawley to Malabar*, September 13th to 24th, 1907, p. 94.

9. Ibid., p.211. The report on Tile Industry at *Puthiyara* of Calicut congregation says that alcohol consumption was very high among the male workers and it caused poverty among the families. So the wives of these workers were forced to join the factory in order to meet the expenses. At the same time the workers of weaving establishment at Calicut were able to build houses for themselves inside the town. Here both husband and wives were encouraged to save something so as to acquire property of their own. *Fifty –First Report of Basel German Evangelical Mission for the year 1890*, p.38.

10. *Thirty-Third Report of Basel German Evangelical Mission for the year 1872*, p. 38.

11. *Sixty- Ninth Report of Basel German Evangelical Mission for the year 1908*, p.54.

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Women in Prison:
Civil Disobedience Movement in Malabar – 1930-34

Shumais. U
Doctoral Fellow
Department of History
University of Calicut, Kerala
shumais.u@gmail.com

Abstract

The paper examines women political prisoners in colonial Malabar during civil disobedience movement. As the colonial state used prison to punish criminals and to confine its political opponents including men and women, the present paper focuses on the entry of Kerala women to political life during 1930-34. The paper analyses the prison life of this women as the ABC classification resulted in multiple experiences to prisoners as some to some it was a blessing while to majority it was a curse. The paper concludes by locating their post prison life.
Keywords: Prison, Gandhi, Civil Disobedience, Political Prisoner, women.

Introduction

Modern prison system originated in Europe during the last quarter of the eighteenth century. The emergence of modern prison in England was directly related with the changing role of the modern state as an aftermath of the industrial revolution. All new disciplinary institution emerged in this period like the Hospital, School, Lunatic Asylum and prison. All of these, more or less shared the structure and functions of the Factory (Ignatieff, 1977:214-215). In India, prison system as a form of punishment was a colonial innovation but prison existed as a place of confinement of those awaiting trial and various kinds of punishments from the time of Emperor Asoka (Arnold, 2007:147). Thus, in India, imprisonment as a form of punishment can be regarded as a colonial innovation. With the transfer of Malabar from Tipu Sultan by the treaty of Srirangapatanam in 1792, the British established their new judicial system and a new punitive mechanism. The British banned the traditional practice of mutilation of human body as a method of punishment. The major forms of punishment they practiced were death by hanging, transportation, fines, confiscation of property etc. Imprisonment as a form of punishment in Malabar, as in other parts of India, too

was a colonial innovation (Innes, 1997:392).

Michel Foucault's *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison* is considered to be a path breaking study on modern prisons. The work starts with the description of the public execution of Damien in festive mode at Paris in 1757. He was wearing nothing, the flesh was torn out from different parts of his body, including chest, arms, and thighs and so on, molten lead was poured along with boiling oil, burning resin and sulphur. These were melted together on his body. This body was drawn and quartered by horses and later the body was consumed by fire and was reduced to ashes (Foucault, 1977:3). Eighty years later in the 1830's the punishment was imprisonment, where prisoners led a disciplined life of solitary confinement, labour, chapel. Foucault states two main features in this new prison system. One was that the festive mode of punishment at public place was shifted to prison where punishment was carried in private without any torture or ceremony. Secondly, the medieval punishment had targeted the body but it was replaced by 'soul' in imprisonment (Foucault, 1977:3-11). The disciplining of the soul could turn the behaviour of a person and it creates a self-controlled body where no external force was required. This new prison system was directly related with the change in political power where the state understood that, 'it was more efficient and profitable in terms of economy of power to place people under surveillance rather than keeping them to some exemplary penalty'. (Foucault, 1980:38-39).

Jeremy Bentham's work *Panopticon* or 'inspection house' published in 1791, put forward the panopticon concept in prison. Panopticon was an architectural concept in which the wardens were located at the central tower of prison and from there it was possible to see all inmates of prison while the prisoner never knows whether he is watched at one moment or not but he is sure that he is watched which forced the prisoner to self discipline without exercising any external force (Foucault, 1977:201). Foucault considers panopticon as the perfect example of power knowledge operations on human body.

Foucault raises a question why prison still continues as a major form of punishment from the last quarter of eighteenth century. He states two major reasons – firstly, the disciplining and other mechanisms of prisons have become deeply rooted in the society in general and, secondly, it carried out 'certain very precise functions' (Foucault, 1977:271). That is, for the modern state prison was not only a punitive mechanism but also a tool of political domination over the society.

In the concluding section named 'the carceral', Foucault analyses the disciplinary roles played by other institutions in the society such as the army, school, hospital, factory and family. Thus most of the disciplinary mechanisms were used not only over prisoners but also on the non-offenders.

Most of the historians who have worked on colonial prison in India hold the view that Indian prison was far away from Foucault's concept of discipline and panopticon. Anand A Yang in his article 'Disciplining Naives: Prisons and prisoners in Nineteenth Century India', written by analysing the messing resistances in colonial Bihar, states that Indian prison does not suit to Foucault's concept of prison (Yang, 1987:29-45). David Arnold states that Indian prison was very different from Foucault's concept of prison discipline and panopticon concept of surveillance (Arnold, 2007). The resistances in prison can be traced from the very beginning of nineteenth century itself which was later widely followed in the nationalist period. Satadru Sen, who studied the Indian prisons, states that Foucault's concept of prison does not have any relevance in India. (Sen, 2012)

Indian national movement under Gandhi brought countless women to the political sphere. They belonged to different regions, castes and age groups and took part in various kinds of activities. They initially concentrated on Gandhian constructive programs especially spinning *charkha* and popularisation of khadi but later actively participated in various political activities and braved to court arrest. In Malabar also women's participation in the national movement was great. But Gandhian political activities in Kerala were limited to the Malabar district alone which was the part of Madras Presidency. The reason was that Gandhi was against launching political movements in the princely states. As a result, a lot of men and women from the princely states of Cochin and Travancore came to Malabar from 1920 onwards. During the non-co-operation movement of 1920-22 in Malabar, though women had participated, they did not court arrest.

It was the civil disobedience movement of 1930-34 which witnessed the active participation of women in Malabar. Women started entering the public space boldly during this period (Gopalankutty, 2007:50), courted arrest and faced prison life. The role of women in civil disobedience movement and their arrests in Malabar was studied by various scholars but the experiences of their prison life still remain unexplored. This paper focuses on the prison life of women political prisoners during 1930-1934 on the basis of primary as well as second-

ary sources, especially archival materials available in Nehru Memorial Museum Library (NMML), New Delhi, Tamilnadu state archives (TSA), Egmore, and Regional Archives Kozhikode (RAK). The paper concludes by analysing the post prison life of these women and examines how the society looked at the question of the entry of women in politics and prison.

Civil Disobedience Movement and Political Arrests

The Lahore session of the Congress decided to launch Civil disobedience movement. It was inaugurated by Gandhi on 6th April 1930 by picking up a handful of salt and breaking the salt law. The movement was soon spread throughout the country and became a mass movement. In Malabar, K. Kelappan took the leadership of salt Satyagraha. The program in Malabar was not limited to breaking the salt law but included conducting of various kinds of processions, picketing liquor shops and shops selling foreign clothes. The main venues of political activity in Malabar were at Kozhikode, Thalassery, Kannur, Vadakara and Palakkad. However Kozhikode remained as the major centre of protest. Women also decided to participate in the movement. The Mahila Sangh formed under the leadership of M Karthiyayini Amma organised women of Kozhikode who in large numbers joined the political movement. Samuel Aron states that the members of this organisation mainly belonged to upper and middle class families (Aron, 1974:161.) The initial activity of the organisation was to collect fund for national movement by house visit and other activities. The main women members were M. Karthiyayini Amma, A. V. Kuttymalu Amma, Gracy Aron, Kamalabai prabhu, V. Ammukutty Amma, and Ms. pavamani. Gracy Aron took the leadership to organise women at Kannur.

The first political arrest was related to a protest procession organised under Mahila Sangh. It was against the police atrocities towards women in Bombay and they distributed notice about the procession. The district officials, on 16th November 1930, imposed prohibition orders, as per section 144, on women including Mrs Madhavan Nair, Mrs Sundara Iyyer, A. V. Kuttimalu Amma, E. Narayani Kutty, Gracy Aron, G. T. Narayani Amma and P. G. Narayani Amma. Women were not ready to give up their spirit of nationalism and came in white khadi dress as if they were going to a temple. The procession was started near Thali temple on 16th November consisting of more than 30 volunteers including women and girls with national and black flags. A huge crowd assembled on the way to see the procession. Besides, a lot

of police were present to create fear among the women. (Amma, 1983) Police tried to take away the national flag from a girl named Jayalakshmi but she strongly protested against it. Six persons were arrested by the police, including Jayalakshmi. The other women arrested were Gracy Aron, M. Karthiyayini Amma, C. Kunhikavu Amma, T. Ammukutty Amma and E. Narayanikutty Amma. Jayalakshi was soon let off by the sub divisional magistrate and the remaining persons were remanded until 18th November 1930. They were confined at Kozhikode Jail. The trial was conducted at Kozhikode and the magistrate punished Karthiyayini Amma alone as she belonged to the princely state of Cochin. She was given two months' rigorous imprisonment and she completed her prison term at Kozhikode Jail.

The magistrate in his judgement stated that it was the first time women in Malabar took part in political movement and he also hoped they would not repeat it in future and it was on this ground he decided to reduce Karthiyayini Amma's imprisonment to a period of two months. (HFM volume 103B, TSA). But the magistrate's hope was in vain; so many women participated in various programs and courted arrest later. The main reasons for these arrests were breaking the salt law, participating in prohibited processions, picketing of foreign cloth shops and liquor shops, etc. Iswari Ammal was arrested from Kozhikode beach for breaking salt law on 2nd February 1931. She was the first women arrested for breaking salt law in Malabar.

Picketing the shops selling foreign cloths and liquors were another major mode of agitation. Women usually picketed shops selling foreign cloths in different parts of Malabar. K. Kunjilakshmi Amma and N. Sanjeevani Bai were arrested during picketing a foreign cloth selling shop on 1st February 1931(*Mathrubhumi*, 01-03-1931). Kamaladevi Chatopadhyay, who visited Kannur on 19th march 1931, urged women to picket foreign cloth shops. As a result, on the very next day, women picketed foreign cloth shops. Kamala Bai Prabhu was arrested along with Mrs Govindan Nair and Sambhavi Amma on 27th January 1932 at Thalassery during picketing. Kamala Bai received six months' imprisonment with a fine of one thousand rupees. As she refused to pay the fine, the magistrate ordered the police to take her ornaments. She had given all her ornaments except her tali. She stated that she can't give it as her husband was alive. She was compelled to give her tali by the magistrate. The Tali incident created nationwide protests and serious debates occurred in the House of Commons, legislative council and central legislative assembly (Meera, 1999:503)

Women also picketed liquor shops. Mrs Hariswaran Tirumub with her four months' ld baby, Kunjiruthy Amma, P. A. Swarnamma and A. V. Lakshmi amma, picketed the liquor shop of Kanji Sivaji Setu at Kannur (Mathrubhumi Daily, 1932 May 3). He closed his shop as women picketed it and a lot of people came to see it. They were soon arrested by police and taken in a police lorry. Suruchi Thapar argues that by courting arrest and imprisonment women not only proved their courage, determination and strong commitment against colonial rule but also dispelled the colonial notion of Indian women as subordinate, weak or docile (Thapar, 2006:165.)

Prison Life

The women political prisoners from Malabar belonged to various age groups, from young girls to aged women, of whom some were married, a few mothers, and even grandmothers. Kunjichirutha Amma, a 70 years old woman, was arrested from Thalassery for participating in national movement and confined at Thalassery jail in 1932 (*Mathrubhumi* daily, 07 Sept 1932). Women from Malabar were confined at various prisons of Malabar especially at Kannur central jail, Thalassery sub jail and Kozhikode jail. However, majority of women political prisoners from the Madras presidency, including Malabar, were confined at Presidency jail for women at Vellore, the only women jail in Madras presidency.

The women political prisoners were also subjected to A-B-C classification system in jails. In 1929 the government of India decided to introduce A-B-C classification on prisoners. The background which forced the colonial state to introduce such a classification was the martyrdom of Jatin Das on 13th September 1929, the Lahore Conspiracy case prisoner, at Lahore Jail, after his 64 days' hunger strike. The public support extended to Bhagat Singh, Jatin Das and his associates created fear among the colonial servants. They introduced certain reforms, especially in the form of some privileges, to political prisoners. (Prasad, 2010:285). This was a class-wise division; though it contained some privileges, it was actually a colonial strategy of divide and rule. This classification was aimed at foiling the unity among political prisoners. The persons who worked together for the freedom of the country outside prison, and convicted for same offence, were started treating differently in prison on the basis of his wealth, family background, education, social status, caste etc.

A and B class prisoners were given privileges that were given

to special class prisoners while the C class prisoners were treated like ordinary criminals. The privileges of A&B class included separate cell accommodation, table furniture and reading facilities, lights, use of private bedding and cooking pots and suitable bathing and sanitary arrangements (G.O. No:1199; Law:1930). The diet was another important factor where we can see discrimination at its peaks, A&B class prisoners were given special diet cooked in separate kitchen under their supervision while C-class prisoners were given ordinary prison food which was notorious for its foul smell, stones and worms. 'A' class prisoners were permitted to wear their own clothes while 'B' class were given modified prison clothing both of which were far better than that of the 'C' class who had to wear ordinary prison clothing (GO No: 1199; Law:1930). The privilege was also extended in prison labour to A&B Class. Thus the political prisoners convicted for same offence were treated separately in prison on the lines of caste-based privileges in India. The privileges given to this A & B class were far away from Foucault's concept of prison discipline.

The A-B-C classification created a lot of problems to women prisoners than men. Prison was like home or hostel for A and B Class political prisoners while to the majority of political prisoners it was a hell. The reason was that only a few women were given A and B class privilege while the majority of women were denied them. M. Karthiyayini Amma was awarded with A class status in her first imprisonment. K. Kunji Lakshi Amma and Sanjivani Bai were awarded with B Class during the CDM (*Mathrubhumi* daily, 1931 March 1). Gracy Aron was also given A class status. Susheela considers her prison life as good moments in her life (Sreedharan, 2013:97). A and B class women political prisoners did not have any worries about prison life as they had good food and better labour environment and the attitude of prison staff was very positive but the condition of C class pisoners was entirely different.

The criteria for ABC classification and its practice were entirely different as majority of women political prisoners were awarded with C class status. The C class women political prisoners were also educated and from reputed families but were treated like ordinary criminals (*Mathrubhumi* Daily, 1932 November 30). Even women political prisoners had understood that ABC classification was a part of divide and rule policy of the colonial state. None were ready to go to the C class. Durgabai Deshmukh was against this classification and she requested to transfer her from A to C Class (Deshmukh, 1953:11). She was thus

transferred to C class during Civil disobedience movement and sent to Vellore women's jail. Even the attitude of prison staff towards C class and other two classes were different. ABC classification in theory and in practice was entirely different as majority of political prisoners who were eligible to A and B class were given C Class.

Separation from family was the major cause of tension for women prisoners. Some were mothers had to leave their children with family and relatives. However the jail rules permitted women to carry their Children below six years with them to prison. When the magistrate did not allow Kutty Malu Amma to carry her 58 days old child with her inside, the jail superintendent allowed her to do so. The jail Superintendant stated that the magistrate did not have any role in this and it was his right to decide it. The small baby named Lakshmi thus spent two years with Kutty Malu Amma at Vellore jail (Mathrubhumi, 16-04-1985).

A serious problem was the prison food. A and B class prisoners got special food; A class people even had the privilege to bring outside food at their own expense or by others. The women A class prisoners at Vellore jail prepared their food for themselves (Karthiyayini Amma, 1983), as A and B class prisoners had their own kitchen. Besides they also got outside food from the family members and other politicians. During 1932-33 Srinivasa Iyyengar's daughter was at Vellore jail and Karthiyayini Amma recollects that every week they used to get a lot of food items from Iyyengar's house (Karthiyayini Amma, 1983).

As the four regions of Andhra, Kerala, Tamilnadu and Karnataka were very different in culture and food habits, there arose some problems. Karthiyayini Amma's duty was to prepare *Avial* and during lunch time a major portion of avail was found missing. Later she identified that Tamil and Andhra women political prisoners, who liked it very much, used to stole it. There were only around ten women prisoners from Malabar and they decided to start a special kitchen. The matron allowed starting new kitchen. M. Karthiyayini Amma was the only woman from Malabar who did not join them. The *avial* issue resulted in separate kitchen for A and B class Malayali prisoners.

Like C Class men, the C class women political prisoners were also supplied with bad food having foul smell (Mathrubhumi, 30-11-1932). This created a lot of issues including diseases and boycott of food. Majority of women tried to skip this food but as there was no other option they were forced to have it. Moreover the insufficient quantity

of food always created a starvation effect. During civil disobedience movement the women political prisoners of A and B class decided to solve the food issue of C class prisoners. The task was headed by Karthiyayini Amma. As A class people were permitted to have food from outside they brought and served it to C class political prisoners keeping the matter secret from the jail superintendent. Even that was also insufficient to them. The superintendent came to know about the illegal activity later and scolded Karthiyayini Amma and the matron. Thus the food transfer program came to an end. However when the district medical officer Madhava Menon visited prisoners Karthiyani Amma complained about the food issue. He ordered the superintendent to allow it. Thus the food transfer program was resumed. However it was a temporary solution and the problem of bad food continued to persist. Serious stomach diseases ensued; there was a loud cry from C class women political prisoners for buttermilk to cure it (*Mathrubhumi*, 30-11-1932) though the authorities ignored it.

The jail hospital also was against them; for many it helped only to worsen their disease. The hospital authorities usually scolded the women political prisoners. Padmavathi Asher requested the authorities to be a bit merciful to women prisoners in the hospital (*Mathrubhumi*, 30-11-1932).

As argued by Anand A Yang, unlike Foucault's concept, the Indian prison targeted both human mind and body (Yang, 1987:29-45). The women political prisoners were subjected to physical and mental humiliation. The bodies of the inmates were searched by matron or other prisoners. The two problems women faced were searching by lower class prisoners and the shame of menstrual periods (Thapar, 2006:157).

Like the male political prisoners women also used prison as school for learning new languages and subjects. Women had used Vellore women jail as their school. The main leaders gave instructions on political matters including the history and strategy of the Congress. The women political prisoners, like their male counterparts, utilised prison to study various languages and become multi linguists. Karthiyayini Amma studied Tamil language from political prisoners of the Tamil country and in return she taught English to them as they only knew how to speak in English (Karthiyayini Amma, 1983). A. V. Kuttymalu Amma was a multi linguist. She had sound knowledge in Malayalam, English, Tamil and Telugu languages besides practical knowledge in Kannada (Vasanthi, 2009:52).

Post prison life

Another major problem for ordinary female prisoners was their post prison life. Generally, women political prisoners were welcomed as heroines. The society of Malabar found women political prisoners not as ordinary criminals as they got huge welcome during their release. M. Karthiyayini Amma after completing her two months' imprisonment was released from Kozhikode special sub jail on 17th January 1931. A large crowd including hundreds of women assembled outside the Kozhikode jail gate to welcome her in the very early morning. Armed police were also deployed there. She came out by 8 am and as soon as she was sighted shouts of 'jai' from people went the air (HFM V 103B). Susheela recalls that huge reception was given to A.V. Kuttimalu Amma after her release in 1933 or 1934 with her baby at the school in her hometown at Anakkara by the natives (Sreedharan,2013: 97).

The Vadakara during the political conference conducted on 4,5, 6 May 1931 a separate session for women titled 'Keraliya Mahila Sammelanam' was held. The conference was presided by Padmavathi Asher. Prominent women activists including M. Karthyayani Amma, Mrs Pavamani, Iswari Ammal, Kunjikavu Amma, A. V. Kuttimalu Amma, Mrs K. Madhava Menon, K. Madhavikutty Amma attended the conference (Velayudhan, 1999:501-02). The conference congratulated the women political prisoners. The women conference pointed out that only a few women participated in political activities while majority of them were either unaware of it or do not get educated. The conference also stated that the society still did not respect women as they think the only duty of women was house hold work. This notion was however broken during the civil disobedience movement. The meeting congratulated M. Karthiyayini Amma, Narayanikutty Amma and Gracy Aron stating that, by undergoing imprisonment, they became role models for Kerala women (*Mathrubhumi* daily, 05-05-1931).

Conclusion

The colonial prison and prison experience in Malabar were far away from Foucault's concept of prison discipline. Right from the beginning colonial authorities used prison as a tool of political oppression rather than a disciplinary institution. Women were also arrested and sent to prison to create fear in society. But it attracted a lot of men and women to the national movement.

The A,B and C classification of political prisoners were also far

removed from Foucault's concept of discipline. A and B class people considered prison life as hostel life with no time table and no uniform and with good food and privileges including provision for reading books and conducting study classes. Instead, C class prisoners from Malabar were treated like ordinary criminals with uniform, hard labour, bad food and so on. Thus the prison life was not the same for all as to some it was a blessing while to the large many it was a traumatic experience. The women also utilised prison in a positive manner and tried to master various subjects and languages.

The post prison life of women were also not disappointing as the society considered them as heroines and the press and literature of the period played a major role in moulding them as celebrities. They continued their political activism and braved to face imprisonment again. M. Karthiyayini Amma and Gracy Aron were imprisoned twice during the civil disobedience movement. While several women participated in political activities later some of them spent their post prison life indulging in Gandhian constructive programs.

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Two Sanskrit-Grantha Inscriptions
from Paḷunkil Sivanārāyaṇa temple, Kiḷḷimangalam

S. Rajendu
Doctoral Fellow in Epigraphy
Tamil University
Thanjavur
E-mail: rajendu@gmail.com

Paḷunkil temple is owned by Kiḷḷimangalathu Mana. The temple is situated in the Kiḷḷimangalam village (10.7233° N, 76.3203° E) of Thrissur district. There are three sanctum sanctorums for the temple, two for Lord Siva and one for Vishnu. Two Grantha inscriptions with Kalidina numbers are seen on the side of two namaskara mandapas of the temple. *śrīmal kavāṭa sōpāṇam* and *nārī hrudisthitāyuṇām* are two *kali dina* indicators.

The temple is located on the southern bank of river Nila in Thalappalli taluk.

Language: Sanskrit

Script: Grantha

Inscription 1:

Year: M.E. 766 (A.D. 1591)

Malayalam transliteration:

1. □□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□ □□□:
   □□□□□□ □□□□□□□□□□□□

2. □□□□□□ □□□□□□□□□□□□
   □□□□□□□□□□□□

English transliteration:

1. aisvarya bhāgya sampaṉṉa jāta:
   kaścil dvijottama

2. śrīmal kavāṭa sōpāṇam
   devagāramakārayal

Translation: Those who are born with prosperity, the Brahmin, who built the sopanam or the foot steps to the sanctum sanctorum, for

godly purposes.

Inscription 2:

    Year: ME 670 (A.D. 1495)

Malayalam transliteration:

    1. □□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□

English transliteration:

    1. nārī hrudisthitāyuṇām

Note: This kalidinam shows a date equivalent to A.D. 1495. The phrase means this is very easy to learn for ladies.