

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 Sampoorana 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. He 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 Tangal¹², Vakkom Abdul Khadir Moulavi¹³, Chalilakath Kunhammed Haji¹⁴ and C. Saidalikutty Master¹⁵ 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 than 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 ideal picture 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. Matriliney 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 matrilineal 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 Matriliney) 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 matriliney 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 matriliney 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 *Irfat al-Islam* 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 Vakkom Moulavi'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, *Kerala Patrika*, 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, *Sufism 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. *Muhyudeen 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'i, 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.

References

- Abraham, Jose. 2014. *Islamic Reform and Colonial Discourse on Modernity in India: Socio-Political and Religious thought of Vakkom Moulavi*. Delhi: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Abu, O. (1970). *Arabi Malayala Sahithya Charithram* (History of Arabi-Malayalam literature). Kottayam: National Book Stall.
- Ahmad, Aziz. (1967). *Islamic Modernism in India and Pakistan, 1857-1964*. London: Oxford University Press.
- Ahmad, Imtiaz and Reifield, Helmut. (2004). *Lived Islam in South Asia: Adaptation, Accommodation and Conflict*. Delhi: Oxford University Press.
- Ali, Mohammed. (1990). *The Development of Education among the Mappilas of Malabar, 1800-1965*. New Delhi: Nunes Publication.
- Arunima, G. (2003). *There Comes Papa: Colonialism and the Transformation of Matriliney in Malabar*. Delhi, Orient Black swan.
- Arunima, G. (2006). "Imagining communities differently: Print, Language and the Public Sphere in Colonial Kerala". *Indian Economic and Social History Review*, (Vol. 43 No.1): 63-76.
- Ashraf, Muhammed Niyas. (2015) *Islamic Modernity and Reform in Colonial Kerala: Reading Makti Tangal*, Unpublished M.Phil thesis, University of Delhi. Unpublished Thesis.
- Bayly, Susan. (1989). *Saints, Goddesses and Kings: Muslims and Christians in South Indian Society, 1700-1900*. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.
- Bellah, Neely Robert. 1970. *Beyond Belief: Essays on Religion in a Post-Traditional World*. New York: Harper & Row Publishers.
- Dale, F. Stephen and Menon, M. Gangadhara. (1978). "Nerccas: Saint-Martyr worship among the Muslims of Kerala." *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* (41): 523-538.
- Freitag, Ulrike and Smith, William G. Clarence. (1997). *Hadrami Traders, Scholar and Statesmen in the Indian Ocean 1750-1960*. Leiden: Brill.

- Gellener, Ernst. (1981). *Muslim Societies*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Hasan, Farhat. (2006). "Madaris and the Challenges of Modernity in Colonial India" In *Islamic education, Diversity and National identity: Dini Madaris in India Post 9/11*, edited by Jan-Peter Hartung and Helmut Reifield, 56-72. Delhi: Sage.
- Hasan, Rifaat. 2014. "Islamic Modernist and Reformist Discourse in South Asia" In *Reformist Voices of Islam: Mediating Islam and Modernity*, ed. Shireen T. Hunter, 159-186, Delhi: Routledge.
- Ho, Engseng. (2004) "Empire through Diasporic Eyes: A View from the Other Boat". *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, Vol. 46, No. 2: 210-246.
- Ho, Engseng. (2006). *Graves of Tarim: Genealogy and Mobility across the Indian Ocean*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Joseph, Suad and Nagmbadi, Afsana. (2005). *Encyclopedia of Women and Islamic Cultures: Family, Law and Politics*. Leiden.
- Kareem, C K. (1991) *Kerala Muslim History, Statistics and Directory*, Volume III. Kochi. (Malayalam)
- Kareem, K K Muhammad Abdul and Maulavi, C N Ahammad. (1978). *Mahathaya Mappila SahithyaParambaryam* (Great Mappila Literary tradition). Calicut.
- Kareem, K K Muhammad Abdul. (1997). *Makti Tangalude Jeeva Charithram*, (Biography of Makti Tangal). Calicut: Yuvatha Book House.
- Kareem, K K Muhammad Abdul. (2012) *Makti Tangalude Sampoorana Krithikal* (The Collected Works of Makti Tangal), Calicut: Vachanam Books.
- Lakshmi, L R S. (2012). *The Malabar Muslims: A different Perspective*. Delhi: Cambridge University Press.
- Lapidus, M. Ira. (2012). *History of Islamic Societies*. Cambridge University Press.
- Lapidus, M. Ira. (2012). *Islamic Societies to the Nineteenth Century: A Global History*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Lelyveld, David. (1996). *Aligarh's First Generation: Muslim Solidarity in British India*. Delhi: Oxford University Press.
- Malhotra, Anshu. (2002). *Gender, Caste and Religious Identities: Restructuring Class in Colonial Punjab*. Delhi: Oxford University Press.
- Metcalf, Barbara Daly. (1992). *Perfecting women: Maulana Ashraf Ali Thanawi's Bihishti Zewar*. University of California Press.
- Metcalf, Barbara. D. (1982). *Islamic Revival in British India: Deoband 1860-1900*. Delhi: Oxford University Press.
- Moore, Lewis. (1905). *Malabar Law and Custom*. Madras: Hiqqinbotham & Co.
- More, J B P. (2007) *Tamil Nadu Muslim Identity, Print Culture and the Dravidian Factor in Tamil Nadu*. Hyderabad: Orient Longman.

Modernity and Reform in Colonial Kerala

- Moulavi, E. Moidu. (1981). *Moulaviyude Athmakatha* (Autobiography of Moulavi), (Sahithya Pravarthaka Sahakarana Sangam).
- Orsini, Francesca. (2009). *Print and Pleasure: Popular Literature and Entertaining Fictions in Colonial North India*. Delhi: Permanent Black.
- Osella, Filippo and Caroline Osella, (2013). *Islamic Reform in South Asia*. Delhi: Cambridge University Press.
- Panikkar, K N. (1989). *Against Lord and State: Religion and Peasant Uprisings in Malabar, 1836-1921*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press.
- Partha Chatterjee. (1993). *The Nation and Its Fragments: Colonial and Post-Colonial Histories*. New Jersey: Princeton University Press.
- Pearson, M. N. (2006). "Creating a littoral community: Muslim reformers in the early modern Indian Ocean World". In *Between the Middle Ages and Modernity: Individual and Community in the Early Modern World*, edited by Charles H. Parker and Jerry H. Bentley. Rowman and Littlefield Publishers.
- Pearson, R. Harlon. (2008). *Islamic Reform and Revival in Nineteenth Century India: The Tariqah-i-Muhammadiyah*. Delhi: Yoda Press.
- Rahman, Fazlur. (1984). *Islam and Modernity, Transformation of an Intellectual Tradition*. Chicago University Press.
- Randathani, Hussain. (2007). *Mappila Muslims: A Study on Society and Anti-Colonial Struggles*. Calicut: Other Books.
- Robinson, Francis. (1993). "Technology and Religious Change: Islam and the Impact of Print". *Modern Asian Studies*, 27: 229-251.
- Robinson, Francis. (2001). *The Ulama of Farangi Mahall and Islamic Culture in South Asia*. Delhi: Permanent Black.
- Robinson, Francis. (2007). *Islam and Muslim History in South Asia*. Delhi: Oxford University Press.
- Samad, M. Abdul. *Islam in Kerala: Groups and Movements in the 20th Century*. Kollam: Laurel Publications, 1998.
- Sanyal, Usha. (1996). *Devotional Islam and Politics in British India: Ahmed Riza Khan and his Movement, 1870-1920*. Delhi: Oxford University Press.
- Schneider, David Murray and Gough, Kathleen. (1961). *Matrilineal kinship*. London: University of California Press.
- Shaheen, K (2014). *Domain of Orthodoxy: Sufi and Shari Tradition in Colonial Malabar* (Centre for Studies in Social Sciences, Kolkata, 2014), Unpublished Thesis.
- Sharabi, Hisham. (1999). *Arab Intellectuals and the West: The Formative Years, 1875-1914*, John Hopkins University Press.
- Sikand, Yoginder. (2002). *The Origins and Development of the Tablighi Jama'at, 1920-2000*. Delhi: Orient Longman.
- Troll, W. Christian. (1978) *Sayyid Ahmad Khan: A Reinterpretation of Muslim Theology*. New Delhi: Vikas.