Chapter IV

PRINT AND THE IMAGINED COMMUNITY OF MAPPILAS
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Historians have frequently noted the importance of print technology in furthering community formations. Following Benedict Anderson's assertion about nations being imagined communities, one may argue that what is true about a nation is also true of other forms of communities and identities. Anderson's espousal of the centrality of print in the formation of nationalism has generated renewed concern with the role of press in fashioning public discourse in colonial India. Hence, in contrast to Anderson's focus on the newspapers and novels in the formation of national identity, the historical and cultural context of colonial Malabar calls for a perusal of the press and literature in illuminating the dynamics of identity construction of Mappilas.

Print brought about a revolution in the transmission of knowledge. It transformed the oral transmission in which knowledge was passed in the middle ages. 'It was only in 19th century, 400 years after it started setting established in Christendom, that it was established in the Islamic world. The orthodox Ulema, ever wary of the possibility of religious innovation (bidath), would have been deeply concerned about the introduction of printing.

1 See Francis Robinson, "Islam and Impact of Print in South Asia"in his Islam and Muslim History in South Asia, OUP, Delhi, 2000. See also J.B.P. Moore, Muslim Identity, Print Culture and Dravidian Factor in Tamil Nadu, Orient Longman, Delhi, 2004.
4 Francis Robinson, op. cit., p.67.
Muslims came to adopt printing when they felt that Islam itself was at stake and print was a necessary weapon in defence of the faith.\textsuperscript{5}

It was the Christian missionaries who introduced printing press in India during the Portuguese period, the first being set up at Goa by Jesuit Missionaries. As early as 1727, the Christian missionaries had printed books on Islam and the first book on Islam was published by a missionary in Tamil, \textit{Islamanavanchvadi} (Book of Islamism).\textsuperscript{6} In the first half of 19\textsuperscript{th} century, Gundert established the Basel Mission Press at Tellichery, from where he published the early missionary journals in Malayalam, \textit{Rajyasamacharam} (1847 AD), \textit{Paschimodayam} (1847 AD) and \textit{Jnananiksheapam} (1848 A.D).\textsuperscript{7} These missionary presses were intended for the promotion of Christianity and therefore the Muslims of Malabar could not depend upon them to get their religious works printed. Hence they used to get their works printed from Bombay where Arabic litho presses had already been established. \textit{Manasikul Malabari} (Haj guide) written by Padoor Koyakutty Thangal was printed at Bombay in H.E 1278 (1862/3AD).\textsuperscript{8} \textit{Thiyannabi}, written by Ahmad Koya of Calicut was printed at Bombay Mirgani Press in H.E-1305.\textsuperscript{9} (1887/8 AD)

The first printing press (Arabi-Malayalam) was established in 1867 AD at Tellichery. One Tikukil Kunhahamad had worked in the Basel Mission Press and later, along with his father Koyali Haji, set up a Muslim litho press at Neyyam Vettel house in Tellichery.\textsuperscript{10} Those who learnt the technical side of

\textsuperscript{5} Ibid., p.74.
\textsuperscript{6} JBP Moore, op. cit., p.79.
\textsuperscript{8} C.N. Ahmad Moulavi and K.K.M. Abdul Kareem,(eds) \textit{Mahathaya Maappila Saahitya Paaramparyam} (Mal), (hereinafter MMSP), Al Huda Book Stall, Kozhikode, 1978 p.303.
\textsuperscript{9} Ibid., p.45.
printing from this press, established Arabic litho presses at Tellicherry and other centres like Ponnani, Tirurangadi, Valapattanam, Kasargod etc.\textsuperscript{11} Very often, the printers themselves were the publishers. Hence, though the authors’ name was not mentioned, the names of publisher, press and date of printing were emphatically mentioned in early Arabi-Malayalam works.\textsuperscript{12} During the last quarter of 20\textsuperscript{th} century, publishing became a lucrative business and many stepped in to this field by obtaining the ‘right of issue’ from the authors. The Mappilas leapt at the opportunities provided by lithographic press and everything was published large scale, from \textit{Malapattus} to \textit{Moulids}, from works on \textit{Tasawuf} (Mysticism) to commentaries on \textit{Hadiths}. Realizing the business potential, the publishers collected the old manuscripts of various ballads, \textit{Moulids}, Sufi works, commentaries of hadith etc., from the priests, families of earlier scholars and got them published. It is interesting to note that prior to the 20\textsuperscript{th} century, the publishers were unable to introduce new subjects for its discourse. Almost all works composed before the introduction of press were put to print during the last quarter of 19\textsuperscript{th} century. Thus, the knowledge of Arabi-Malayalam manuscripts, normally the preserve of a select few, was now available to anybody at a nominal price. As Tithi Bhattacharya observed, 'the specificity of printed book is always mitigated by its abstract receptivity. Once a book is printed no one can predict who will read it and how. Thus, as a technological form, print calls for an anonymous audience’.\textsuperscript{13} What had previously been the monopoly of the learned and holy men, because the books (written by scribes) were rare and costly, was now available to anybody who could read Arabic script. As Nazir Husain, an Urdu scholar of 19\textsuperscript{th} century put in, 'God has been gracious in providing books. Books which one could not see in dreams or conceive of in imagination, are

\footnotesize\textsuperscript{11} For the list of Muslim litho presses in Malabar, see the Appendix IV.

\footnotesize\textsuperscript{12} O. Abu, \textit{op. cit.}, p.126.

\footnotesize\textsuperscript{13} Tithi Bhattacharya, \textit{The Sentinels of Culture: Class, Education and Colonial Intellectuals in Bengal}, OUP, Delhi, 2005, p.110.
now available for couries.\textsuperscript{14} Thus, printing made a tremendous impact in the dissemination of Islamic knowledge in Malabar.

Once the printing technology became familiar to Mappilas, lithographic presses were set up at different Muslim centres of Malabar. From Tellicherry, the location of print now turned to South Malabar also. At Ponnani, Aniyapurath Mammu established a litho press while Karakkaad Saeed of Tellicherry established one at Valakkulam.\textsuperscript{15} At Tirurangadi the first litho press was established in H.E 1304 (1886/87 AD) by Chalilakath Ahmad with three shareholders from Tellichery. Later, Ahmed himself took up the ownership and renamed it as \textit{Amirul Islam} Press.\textsuperscript{16} Subsequently, litho presses were established at other centres like Parappanangadi, Chaliyam, Kondotty, Tirur, Vengara, Kodungallur etc.\textsuperscript{17} But Tellichery remained as the headquarter of Islamic printing and it had around twelve litho presses publishing Islamic books. After the entry of print, a new generation of poets and writers also sprang up. Thus, the efflorescence of Mappila literature could be linked directly to the technology of print.

A survey of the entire gamut of printed works – Arabi-Malayalam poetry, missionary tracts, journals, books and pamphlets – of Mappilas is necessary to understand the Mappilas as a community. The survey of the print-discourses help us to comprehend the religious leanings, hopes, worries and joys in short, the whole mentalities of the Mappilas. Any 'gaze' at the community, neglecting this print culture of Mappilas, would provide only a

\textsuperscript{14} As quoted in Barbara D. Metcalf, \textit{Islamic Revival in British India: Deoband, 1860-1900}, OUP, Delhi, 1982, p.205.


\textsuperscript{16} Abu Rashida, "Chalilakath Family" (Mal.) in \textit{C.H. Ibrahim Hajee Souvenir} Tirurangadi, 2001. During 1921 rebellion, the rebels burnt the press and later it was restarted with the support of the British by C.H. Ibrahim kutty.

\textsuperscript{17} Judicial Department. Govt. of Madras, R2/M-10 dated., 10\textsuperscript{th} Octo. 1910, KRA.
turncated view. Hence, a humble attempt to peel out the Mappila 'common sense' as reflected in print form, is attempted in the following pages.

**Arabi-Malayalam Literature**

Though the Mappila literary tradition could be traced back to early 17\textsuperscript{th} century, when *Muhiyudhinmala* was composed, much of these earlier works were printed and published only in late 19\textsuperscript{th} century. During the pre-print phase, umpteen works were composed either in Arabic or in Arabi-Malayalam. There were many professional scribes who used to copy these works.\textsuperscript{18} It was in the pre-print phase that Mayinkutty Ilaya, a member of Arakkal family of Kannur, translated Quran in eight volumes, in 1868 AD and managed to get 100 copies of this voluminous work written by scribes and distributed to various mosques of Malabar.\textsuperscript{19} Being a member of royal family, it was affordable for him to spend more than one lakh for preparing 100 manuscript copies of an 8-volume work during the middle of 19\textsuperscript{th} century.\textsuperscript{20} Though scribes were there, memory and orality were the medium through which the earlier works withstood time. Written copies were used only as an aid to memory and oral transmission. In the absence of print-media, the only means of preserving knowledge was by memorizing it. There were many in Malabar who could memorize the entire Quran and they were called *Hafil*.

May be because of this oral transmission of texts, the date and author of earlier Mappila poems were inserted inside the poem itself. For eg, the date and authorship of *Muhiyudhin Mala* could be known from the content of the poem itself.\textsuperscript{21} In *Rifai Mala* also the author mentions the date of

\textsuperscript{18} *MMSP*, op. cit., p.225. Many Mappilas were having the surname *Khatib* in the early decades of 20\textsuperscript{th} century.


\textsuperscript{21} *Khazi Mohemad athennu perullovar*
composition within the text itself, but the name of author is absent.\textsuperscript{22} It shows that the direct association of the work with the author, was not a strong priority before print. But even after the emergence of print, it was not the author but the publishers and date of publication (not composition), which were mentioned in these works, as most of these works were composed before print and had no indication of either the date or the authorship. The earliest works, which were put to print in Malabar, were the Malapattus and Madhupattus (eulogies), which were more popular than the Quran among Mappilas. The publishers were bound by the taste of their readers, long trained to enjoy such songs, which assured them rapid sales. Hence, the early phase of print culture in Malabar, saw the mushrooming of works in Mappila poetry. It is to be noted that, it was print, which saved hundreds of Arabi-Malayalam works, known for literary merit from literary extinction. Thus, in the case of Arabi-Malayalam literature, 'print far from widening the gap between literary culture and oral tradition, actually bridged it and brought them together in the form of a printed folklore'.\textsuperscript{23} Folklore in print, occupied a prominent place in Mappila literary culture in late 19\textsuperscript{th} and early 20\textsuperscript{th} century. As observed by Burnell, in 1873, "the Mappilas are by no means destitute of literature. They have a few treatises on their ceremonial law.... and several remarkable songs, religious and historical. All these are vastly superior to the miserable strings of conciets, which pass for poetry in South India and are

\textsuperscript{22} Kozhikote thura thannil pirannovar.
[By examining all these texts, this was composed by Kazi Mohemad of Calicut Port]. See O. Abu, \textit{op.cit.}, p. 71

\textsuperscript{23} Kollam Thollayirathambezhamantil
Korthen immala njan nottambathettill

[This was composed in Kollam Era 987 (1813 AD) in 158 rhymes]. See O.Abu, \textit{op. cit.}, p.71.

Stuart Blackburn, \textit{Print, Folklore and Nationalism in Colonial South India}, Permanent Black, Delhi, 2003, p.3.
remarkable for a manly tune of thought, which must have come from Arabia". 

**Arabi-Malayalam**

From the beginning of 17th century, a new type of poetical composition developed in Malabar in a pidgin called Arabi-Malayalam. Though Mappilas's mother tongue was Malayalam, it was generally felt to be an un-Islamic language and hence unsuitable as a medium for Islamic propaganda. Hence, recourse to a curious hybrid called Arabi-Malayalam or Mappila Malayalam, which made indiscriminate use of Arabic, Tamil, Canarese, Sanskrit, Urdu etc. It was Malayalam rendered in Arabic script. We come across such practices in Kannada, Tamil and even in Punjab. As A.C Burnell put in, 'it is not known who introduced the Arabic character and adapted it to the Dravidian languages. But, its use extends over the whole of Tamil country and since the last few years, it has been the favourite character of all Mohammadans in Southern India'.

Arabic, being the language of *Quran*, gained popularity wherever Islam had gained a foothold including Malabar. Knowledge of Arabic was always considered to be essential to knowledge of Islam itself as Muslims recited their daily prayers in Arabic and read *Quran*. Since the Mappilas wanted both Arabic and their mother tongue, they retained Malayalam for written discourse, but rendered it in the Arabic script. "The translation of any language into Arabic script not only facilitated the Arabic vocabulary but fostered a psychological bond between the non-Arab and Arab Muslims." 

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Arabi-Malayalam, the Mappilas never used expressions commonly associated with Hindu deities in discussing matters related to Islam. For instance, for Daivom (God) they used Allah and for Pravachakan (prophet) they used only Rasul. Hence, these Arabi-Malayalam works were completely unintelligible and even inaccessible to non-Muslims. The retention of Arabic script and extensive use of Arabic terms, not only distinguished them from non-Muslims but also provided a distinct identity in Malabar's religious landscape. Mappilas always expressed their deep impulses and thoughts in this medium which they reverently called Quran script. Hence, they identified passionately with the symbol, Arabi-Malayalam script. It was as part of their cultural self defence that the Mappilas opted for this curious blend of languages. This was the case with Tamil Muslims who had their own mixture called 'Tulukka Tamizhu'.

**Early Works in Arabi-Malayalam**

Around 6000 works have been composed in Arabi-Malayalam dialect. Out of this a 1000 might have been put to print. The concern of authors expressed in this literature, spanned a wide range of issues but majority of which was religious in nature. The most popular theme, whether in poetry or prose, was Islam itself.

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29 Around 136 Mappila poets have been identified by KKM Abdul Kareem in his *MMSP* and most of them deal with Islamic theme.
Malapattus

The earliest printed works in Arabi- Malayalam belong to the genre called Malapattus, which signified a Mappila literary style. These were otherwise known as Nerchapattus. These were also known as Sabeenapattukal as it was sung in the night. All these Malapattus were eulogies of Islamic divinities and were appended with intercessionary prayers called 'Iravu' and certain malas like Nafeesath mala have got two Iravus. It was believed that collective recital of such works would bring about miracles in life. These Malas were recited in times of trouble as these poems address not the problems of the other world but of this world itself. An 'easy delivery' is a common prayer found in the Iravus attached with most of the malas which also shows that a major chunk of readership belonged to women. Take the three popular malas, Badar Mala, Nafeesath Mala and Manjukulam Mala, in all these, we come across reference to the miraculous power of the respective divinities for an 'easy delivery'.

Contextually, it is to be noted that, when the British rulers denied natural justice to Mappilas in 19th century, they were alienated from social life and were forced to rely upon the supernatural forces for relief and this was provided by the Malas. May be because of this, Malapattus rivalled all other genres of Mappila literature in terms of popularity. Also, it was these Malapattus that brought Mappilas into the world of literature. Umpteen such songs were published in Malabar during the period 1875-1950, many of which were composed much earlier and several editions of these were published. This situation underlines the proverbial saying that 'print did not produce new books, only more old books'. What we witness here is a

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30 In Persian language, sabina means 'those used in night'.
31 Manjakulam Mala, p.94, Badar Mala, p.55 and Nafeesath Mala, p.84 in Moulid Malayalam, Ashrafi Book Centre, Tirurangadi, 2000.
'paradox of a modern technology in the service of pre-modern traditions.'

Though some of these poems were produced much before the introduction of print, they continued to enjoy uninterrupted popularity till the middle of 20th century, when they had much increased readership. For instance, *Muhiyudhin mala* was composed in 1607 AD and began to have printed version only in 1870', hundreds of editions of it were brought out with in a period of 80 years.

Prominent among these *malas*, in terms of popularity, were *Mohiyudhin Mala, Rifai Mala, Nafeesath Mala* and *Manjakulam Mala*. Among these, the most popular was *Muhiyudhin Mala*, which deals with the life and miracles of a *Sufi Shaik* of Bagdad, Muhiyudhin Abdul Kader Jilani who lived in 11th century AD. It was composed in 1607 A.D by Qazi Mohemad of Calicut and was considered to be the earliest Arabi-Malayalam work. Hundreds of impressions of this were brought out in Malabar from various litho presses, which show the popularity of the same. In the backdrop of the fact that *Qadiriya Tarika* was the most formidable *Sufi* order in Malabar, the popularity of this was quite natural. Every Muslim house in Malabar kept a copy of it as an object of veneration. It was even mandatory on the part of Muslim bride to study it by heart. Throughout the work we come across references to the miracles performed by the *Shaik*. He was depicted as observing fast for one month immediately after birth as he was born in the first day of Ramzan, the month of fasting for Muslims. He was also imbued with the power to see the heart of his *murids* (disciples) as transparent as an object inside the glass bottle. All the later *Malapattus* were modelled after *Muhiyudin Mala* and hence it remained as the core text from where the later poets made their derivative discourses.

Rifai Mala, the second in popularity, deals with another Sufi Shaik for whom a number of disciples were there in Malabar. The poem contains similar descriptions about the miracles of Rifai Shaik. Nafeesath mala deals with the miracles of a Sufi Saint, Nafessathul Misriya, the grand daughter of the orthodox Caliph Ali, who lived in 8th Century AD in Egypt.36 This mala was specifically recited by women of Malabar for a smooth delivery. Mampuram Mala deals with the life and miracle of Sayid Alavi Thangal, a Qadiriyya Sufi pir, who lived in Tirurangadi, during the first half of 19th century. Several such malas were composed in Malabar by various poets.37 Most of these Malas were of anonymous authorship, but published in umpteen editions. It was composed in an age of Bhakti movement in Malabar that swept across until the 3rd decade of 20th century, when the cult was bemoaned by reformists. It was through these malapattus that the problem of how to translate the highly sophisticated tradition of Islamic mysticism, in terms meaningful to illiterate Mappilas, was resolved. For, 'poetry was practically the only vehicle for influencing the illiterate masses, who have had an incredibly good memory for verse’.38

Mystical Poems

Another genre of Mappila literature was the philosophical works, which normally could not stir the imagination of common folk. Kappapattu of Kunjayan Musaliyar of 18th century, is foremost among them. As the title itself denotes, the song equates human life with a ship. A.C. Burnell writes, 'this song is one much in favour and deservable so. It is an allegory of the fate of the body, which is compared to a ship, the ribs to the framework, and the

37 For details on Malas, see O. Abu, Arabi-Malayala Sahitya Charitram, Kottayam, 1971, pp.121-122. See Appendix V.
spine to the keel. It describes the voyage of life and dangers the body meets from rocks and shoals of temptations by Satan, its wreck or safe conclusion of voyage. Kunjayan Musaliyar, who was a Khalifa of Qadiriya Tarika in Malabar, lavishly deployed metaphors pertaining to sea and sea voyage. This song was so popular that all Arabi-Malayalam poetry after the composition of this poem came to be known as Sabina pattus, sabina being the Arabic term for ship. The poem reminded that both Ulemas and Qasis would have to suffer on the day of judgement for not leading the community through the right path. In short, the poem tries to instill in the minds of the believers a kind of immutable belief in God and inspires them to lead a moral life.

Safala Mala of Kulangara Veetil Moidu Musaliyar (died. 1920) popularly known as Shujai, deals with Islamic mysticism from the genesis to the death of prophet Mohamed. It is a didactic Mahakavya in Arabic-Malayalam, which invites man, who is lured by worldly pleasures, to the path of spirituality. Another work of this group is Naseehath Mala composed by Kunhikoya of Tirur. This work reminds the people of the nothingness of material life and the permanence of life after death.

**War Songs or Padapattus**

War songs constitute a major category of Mappila ballads. About a hundred padapattus were composed in Malabar and most of these were composed during the later half of 19th century. Almost all battles fought by prophet and orthodox caliphs during the formative phase of Islam, have been

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dealt with in these songs. Among them, the most popular were Badar padapattu, Uhd padapattu, Makkam fath, Futuhsham, Hunain padapattu, Khandak and Khaibar padapattu. These were the histories of Islamic battles in verses. These songs which were sung at social gatherings continuously reminded the Mappilas of the sacrifice made by the Shahids (martyrs) for the cause of Islam. Among the battles, the Badr battle was a perennial source of inspiration to scores of Mappila poets and around 18 poems were written in Malabar about Badr war. This war has got a special sanctity in the minds of Mappilas in general. In times of trials and tribulations, it provided relief and mental courage to them. The holy warriors of Badr were believed to possess eternal life. This must be the reason that by 1896 itself, the Badar patapattu of Moyinkutty Vydiar had already gone three editions of 1000 copies each.

The miraculous power of this padapattu could be seen from the fact that ‘a blood stained copy of Badr patapattu was found on the body of a ‘fanatic’ in Manjeri temple, where the Moplas found dead in the battle against British troops in 1896, with a talisman scrawled in ink which would add up 15 in any direction.

Since the battle of Badr took place in the month of Ramzan, Mappila rebels in 19th century usually selected this month for the pitched battle with enemies and for becoming Shahids. All these show that the Mopla poets like Vydyar, through these war poems, were attempting to

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43 Similar war songs were popular in Arabi-Tamil called Padappor Charitam during 19th Century AD. See JBP Moore, op. cit., p.32.

44 See Appendix VI.


46 Ibid., p.99.

47 The Police authorities in Malabar always took precautionary measures during the month of Ramzan. A news report of Kerala Sanchari Support this concern of authorities. It says 'The Ramzan festival was over without any disturbance in Ernad and Walluvanad Taluks. Many were afraid that there would be an outbreak in those Taluks this year also Kerala Sanchari, Calicut, 10th March 1897, MNNPR, TNA.
synthesize the Islamic social psyche with the throbings of contemporary historical situation in Malabar.

Through the narration of important chapters in early Islam, Vydiar and other poets provided a new life to the dead consciousness of Mappila community and inculcated a spirit of pride and valour among the Mappilas. For, Vydyar in his Malappuram padapattu says, 'nothing is more pleasing to God than sacrificing one's body and soul in defence of God and none are more honoured than these Shahids.'48 Again in Badr Padapattu he says, 'The prophet swore to army that such happiness would be theirs [in paradise] if they died fighting bravely. Hearing this, Umar, who was eating dates, cast the dates away, saying that he wished to waste no time in eating dates and rushed like a lion, killed many and died fighting.'49 In short, all war songs reminded Mappilas about the bliss that awaited martyrs, who died in the fight against infidels.

Other war songs of Vydyar were Salasil Kissapattu, Elippada (an imaginary war) and Saliqath Kissapattu.50 Chettuvai Parikutty (1848-1886) has written a famous war song called Futuh Sham in 1887, which deals with Syrian victory of pious caliphs, Umar and Abobacker.51 The dramatic description of the sorrow of Umaiban, the wife of martyr Ibn Saeed, whose married life lasted only for a month, touches the hearts of its readers. This was the favourite song of the story-tellers (Kissapattu artists) of Malabar.52

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49 Ibid., p.508.
50 As Saliqath Qissa deals with an imaginary war between Prophet and the Queen of Saliqath, Thattangara Kuttiamu Musliyar issued a fatwa against this song. See Balakrishnan Vallikkunnu, "Mappilapattile Kalapamudra", Chandrika, Calicut, 5th August 2001.
52 MMSP, op. cit., p.373.
Hunaipadapattu of Maliyekkal Kunhahamed Sahib (d.1905) written in 1879 deals with Hunain War between Caliph Ali and Dabul Himar. Vyasana Mala of Kunhutty Musaliyar (d.1951) deals with the battles of Caliph Ali. Muhtath pada by Vallanchira Moideen Haji of Manjeri, Khandak pada and Futuh Tayif by Kadampiyath Kunhiseethi koya in 1889, Makkam Fath by Tannur Munhiyudhin Mulla etc. are other works in this genre. In short, there were around 100 poems, which belong to this category of war songs.

Within the war songs, there was a separate category, which extolled the heroic exploits of not the Islamic war heroes but of martyrs of Malabar who died in the battles against the indigenous and European enemies. Malappuram padapattu, Mannarghat Padapattu, Manjeri padapattu Kaprattu Krishna Panikkar pattu, Cherur padapattu, Cherur Chinthu, Muttiara Shahadakkal etc. were the popular padapattus of Malabar. Almost all these were composed in a period of continuous hostility between Mappilas and the English in 19th century. No wonder, these war songs were identified by the British authorities as the inspiration behind many of the rural revolts of Malabar in 19th century. As F.Fawcett, the British Police Superintendent in Malabar opined, 'these poems must be read if the Mappilas are to be understood'. He further states, 'How much stronger force on life and the Government and use of life there is in songs, which stir the heart of a people to the core.. No people of Madras presidency sings songs of this kind as do the Mappilas.... You cannot read the songs I am sending you without feeling the terrible strength of the spirit which animates them'. Hence, all these above mentioned war songs were prohibited and the copies were seized and burnt.

53 Ibid., pp.395-398.
54 F. Fawcett's letter, No.1567, Note no: 45, p.100.
55 Ibid., p.97.
56 MMSP, op. cit., p.71.
Among the war songs of second type, the prominent one was *Malappuram padapattu* of Moyinkutty Vydyar, composed in 1886.\(^{57}\) The poem deals with the story of the 44 *Shahids* who died in the Malappuram revolt between the retainers of Paranambi and Mappilas in 1728 AD.\(^{58}\) Another *padapattu* of this type was *Cherur padapattu*, composed jointly by Cherur Mammadkutty and Muhiyudhin, which deals with the Cherur riot of 1843, in which seven Mappilas died. Within a short period after the occurrence of the revolt, this poem became very popular in Malabar and was instrumental in the percolation of anti-British sentiments in Malabar. Hence the government banned it and the *Malhar ul Muhimmath* press (where it was printed in 1844) at Tirurangadi was seized by the Government.\(^{59}\) Khayyath of Parappanangadi also wrote a poem dealing with the same incident called *Cherur Chinthu, which* was banned by the Government.\(^{60}\) Still another poem on the same incident was *Kapratt Krishna Panikkar Pattu*. About this A.C. Burnell says, 'As far as the literary merit is concerned, the best is *Kapratt Krishna Panikkar Pattu*. The poem on this event (Cherur riot 1843) was written by a 'Mopla of Mannarghat'.\(^{61}\) All the copies of this song were seized and burnt by the British and the only remaining copy of it was collected by Burnell.

The British officials in Malabar had taken keen interest in this kind of war songs, as they were in search of a cause for the frequent Mappila outbreaks of 19th century.\(^{62}\) They could detect the inflammatory potential of

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\(^{57}\) The first impression of this came out in 1886 from Malharul Uloom Press, Tellichery, *MMSP*, p.357.

\(^{58}\) For details of this poem, see 'Works on History' in this chapter.

\(^{59}\) *MMSP*, op. cit., p. 387.


\(^{62}\) See F.Fawcett, "War Songs of Mappilas of Malabar". *Indian Antiquary*, Vol.30, Nov-Dec. 1901. Also see F.Fawcett, letters, No. 1567, Judicial, 30th Sept. 1896,
such songs and their opinions prevailed upon the government to proscribe such songs. In short, these songs provided Mappila the fuel to fight against their oppressors, both lord and the state and thereby it created a sense of 'us' against 'them'. Even when the copies of Cherur padapattu were confiscated and burnt by British, the poem was transmitted orally and memory of the heroic fight was kept alive in Malabar. Thus, these war songs were crucial in the formation of an identity among Mappilas.

Hagiographic works

Mappila Hagiographic works were called Madhupattus or Kissapattus which eulogize prophet Mohamed and other historical personalities of Islamic history. While Madhus (eulogies) were exclusively eulogies of prophets, the malas eulogized both Shahids and Sufi Shaiks. While Malas were recited for satiating worldly desires, the Madhus represented the selfless urge for union with the prophet. Hence when there existed divergence between seeker and sought in Malas, in Madhus, both converged. The most prominent figures eulogized through Madhu pattu or Kissapattu were prophet Mohamed, prophets like Adam, Yusuf, Ibrahim, Prophet's wives, the pious Caliphs and Caliph Ali's sons - Hasan and Husain.

The most prominent Madhu is Nool Madhu of Kunjayan Musliyar written in 1737 AD. It extols the virtue of prophet Mohamed in 666 verses and comes second in popularity to Muhiyudhin mala. It has been equated with Krishnagatha of Cherusseri that narrates the story of Krishna and both were the reflection of a common cultural stream of 18th century Kerala.

Extra-Ethnic works

pp.98-100.

63 See Appendix VII.
64 Balakrishnan Vallikkunnu, op. cit., pp.24-25.
65 C.K. Kareem, op. cit., p.349.
This genre of works was not exactly Islamic but were adaptations from Persian or Arabic works and they include stories, novels, dramas, books on maxims etc. Generally the stories are set in Islamic countries. There were a few works, which were translations from Sanskrit literature. But the bulk of them were from Persian, Arabic or Hindusthani, which the Mappilas considered, quite erroneously as being connected with Islam. *Badrul Munir Husanul Jamal*, the favourite poem composed by Moinkutty Vaidyar is a classic example of this genre. It is an adaptation from a Persian work 'Nazr-i-Benazir' by Qaja Muinudhin Sha. More than translating Perso-Islamic romantic literature into Arabi-Malayalam, Vydyar attempted to adapt the whole range of Perso-Islamic Civilization to the Malabar cultural universe. Indigenous metaphors like 'cassia flower', 'plantain tree', 'coral reef', puliyangam (duel with Tiger) abound in *Badrul Munir*.66 As F. Fawcett observed, 'the poem [Badrul Munir Husanul Jamal] seems to offer but an instance of how old stories are used and passed on, just as Boccacio and Shakespeare handled older materials and moulded it into what they have left us'.67 Thus the authors of this literature presented Islamic imagery and ideas in terms readily familiar to rural Mappilas and they could identify the exogenous with indigenous or Perso-Islamic with that of Malabar. The fact that 175 reprints of *Badrul Munir* were brought out in Malabar, either in Arabi-Malayalam or Malayalam shows the popularity of the song.68

The influence of traditions connected with Persia and *Shism* was very strong in Mappila literature. *Jinpad*, *Balqiz kissa*, *Hasan Kissa*, *Saqoompada*, *Kilathi mala*, *Pakshipattu*, *Kuppipattu*, *Saliqath pada*, *Salasil pada* etc. are examples where *Shia* influence could be detected. 'During the pre-reformist phase in Malabar, the authors were not worried about the theme

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or content of such works but later these works were shunned as anti-Islamic. The idea of Islam as a closed system, as observed by Eaton, with definite and rigid boundaries was largely a product of 20th century reform movements.69

The early novels printed in Malabar were translations from Persian. Chahar Darvesh the Persian work of Amir Khusrau was translated by Muhiyudhin of Tellichery and published in 1886 in four volumes by K. Hasan. Though the work was not basically connected with Islam or Islamic History, the author claimed that ‘the reading of this work would cure of diseases by the grace of God’.70 It shows that any book, if presented with a claim of healing power, could be sold out. Another work of this genre is the translation of Alif laila, the celebrated 'Arabian Nights'. This was translated jointly by Kunhimoosa and Kuhayan T.C and published in 8 volumes in 1900 AD.71 Other famous Persian works like Amir Hamza, Khamar Zaman, and Nurjahan were translated in to Arabi-Malayalam by Nalakath Kunhimooidinkutty (d.1920) of Ponnani.72 Most of these were classical tales of Persia, characters having no connection with Malabar. This pre-occupation reflected their tendency to look for inspiration outside Malabar and identify with a trans-Indian tradition.

Didactic Novels in Arabi-Malayalam

Novels were also published in Arabi-Malayalam with the intention to reform the religious life of the community. The earliest novels written in Malabar were Khilr Nabiye Kanda Nafeesa (Nafeesa who saw prophet Khilr) and Hiyalilakath Zainaba written by K.K.Jamaludhin Moulavi (1909-1965) of Nadapuram in early 1920's. Criticism of social evils figured in both these

69 Richard M. Eaton, Note. no. 26, p.271.
70 MMSP, op. cit., p.438.
71 Ibid., p.439.
novels. Both were puritanic in nature and echoed reformist ideology and the message projected was quite straightforward. The first novel *Nafeeza* revolves around the protagonist Abdurahiman Moulavi who questions the un-Islamic practices like tomb-worship, *Moulud* etc and finally he is being ousted from home by his father.\(^{73}\) In *Hiyalilakath Zainaba*, written in 1929, the author introduces a Muslim lady Zainaba with reformist zeal. She engages in debate with a traditional *Sunni Musaliyar* on contentious issues like *Ratib*, mortuary rites, intercessionary prayers etc. and defeats the *Musaliyar* in the debate.\(^{74}\) Both works had tremendous effect on the Mappilas as both question the very foundation of the age-old belief system of *Mappilas*.

**Secular Works**

Another branch of knowledge to which Mappilas contributed much was medicine and astronomy.\(^{75}\) The translations of *Ashtangahridaya* and *Amarakoshapadartham* were available in Arabi-Malayalam. All such works were composed by the professional physicians among Mappilas. Astronomy was another area to which *Mappila* contributed much as they had to use it on many an occasion like fixing the day of *Id, Ramzan*, timings of *Namaz* etc.

**Prose Works**

One of the far-reaching effects of print was the more or less simultaneous invention of modern prose. Translation from Arabic, Persian or Urdu constituted the main chunk of prose writing in Arabi-Malayalam literature. Hence, in Arabi-Malayalam, the very word *Tharjuma* (translation)

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\(^{75}\) See Appendix. No VIII.
carries an altogether different meaning as a byword for prose. \(^{76}\) The earliest prose works belong to the genre of didactic works like *Vellāti Ma'sāla*, *Nurul Iman* and *Nurul Islam*. Following the model of these works, many prose works prescribing the religious codes of daily life were composed and published in Malabar. \(^{77}\) All the textbooks of *Madrasas* were printed in Arabic-Malayalam script, which Mappilas reverently called 'Quran Script'.

**Debates reflected in Print media**

Print provided an additional fillip to the ongoing debates that ravaged the Mappila religious landscape during the latter half of 19\(^{th}\) century. The most prominent among them was known as *Kondotty-Ponnani Kaitharkam*. \(^{78}\) This feud played a crucial role in the efflorescence of Arabi-Malayalam literature in Malayalam. The earliest in this genre is the elaborate work written by Puthiyakath Bava Musaliyar of Ponnani. \(^{79}\) The work, addressed to the disciples of Kondotty Thangal, exhorts them to keep away from the wrong path. It is a collection of *fatwas* substantiating the fact that the rituals connected with Kondotty *Tarika* are anti-Islamic and opposed to the principle of *Touhid*, the unity of God. Countering this work of Ponnani faction, Musaliyarakath Ahmad Musaliyar of Kondotty wrote *Al-Busthan* justifying the Kondotty *Tarika*. \(^{80}\) In reply to this, Puthanveetil Ahmad Musaliyar of Ponnani faction wrote a counter tract *Hayathudhin Wa Mamathul Muanidhin* in 1899 and it was published by Karakkal Saeed Ali. \(^{81}\) It was approved by the leading *qazis* of Malabar and it was after the publication of this book, certain


\(^{77}\) See Appendix IX.

\(^{78}\) It was a religious feud between the *Tarika* of Kondotty Tangal and the orthodox school represented by Ponnani theologians.

\(^{79}\) The copy of this is kept in Rousathil Uloom College Library at Feroke.

\(^{80}\) MMSP, op. cit., p.321.

\(^{81}\) Ibid., p.322.
customs like *Muharam* celebration and the prostration by disciples before *Thangal*, were abolished at Kondotty *Takia*. Another work of this nature was *Risalath fi Nakshabandi* by Tanur Abdurahiman Sheik (d. 1904) criticizing the *Tarika* of *Nakshabandi*.

Reformist versus Traditionalists

Following Eisenstein's observation that print contributed heavily for the Protestant Reformation in Europe, it could be argued that it was print which facilitated the reform movement within Malabar Islam. With the emergence of the reformist group from 1920's, a kind of 'tract war' began to sweep Malabar. As we have seen in chapter III, the polemical debates were the order of the day in 1930's and 40's and these debates were carried on mainly through the print media in the forms of bills and tracts. As put in by K. Umar Moulavi, a reformist leader, 'this (issuing of bills and tracts) is the earliest and cheapest means to educate people about the true positions related to theological issues and to expose the hollowness of the opponents of Islam. My critics always called me 'notice Moulavi'. Print culture helped to consolidate and diffuse more widely the reforming spirit in Malabar society which naturally collided with the interest of Orthodox *Ulema*. 'Ironically', as suggested by Robinson, 'while print enabled the Ulema to extend their influence in public affairs, it also seriously damaged the roots of their authority, as their monopoly over the transmission of knowledge was broken. A series of tracts, both in prose and poetry, legitimizing their respective positions were composed by both reformists and traditionalists. The earliest in this genre is *Al-Irshadathul Jifriya fi Radi ala Lalath* by Sheik

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84 Francis Robinson, (ed.), *op. cit.*, p. 80.
Jifri of Calicut (1726-1808) criticizing the views of Abdul Wahab of Najd, the founder of Wahabi Movement.85

Regarding the direction of Mosque, a serious debate had occurred in Malabar in the first decade of 20th century, which was also reflected in literature. Chalilakath wrote a pamphlet Tuhfathul Ahbab (AM) which was published by Sulaiman Musliyar. Again, when an open debate between two groups of scholars about the direction of mosque occurred at Pulikkal in 1910, the whole story of the debate was incorporated in a pamphlet which was published in 1910 by P.N. Ahmad Moulavi with the title Ishtihar.86

Even prior to the emergence of the Reform Movement in the 1920's, Karimpanakkal Kunhipokker Musliyar (d. 1936) had written Irshadal Amma in 1891, opposing the mortuary rituals of Mappilas to which a critique was composed by Chappangadi Hasan Musliyar.87 He also wrote Imamath Bidathil Jahiliya, criticizing the beliefs, which were against the principle of Touhid.88 Similarly M. Kunhava Vydyar of Ponnani (d.1950) wrote Bidathmala criticizing the innovative rituals of Malabar Muslims.89

Regarding the dispute over the placement of hands criss crossed at the time of namaz, the Sunnis rebuked the reformist through a pamphlet Kai Kettalinte Chattam (The rule of placing the hands) that was countered by the reformist leader M.C.C Abdurahiman in his Chattathinoru Chottu.90 Sadakathulla Moulavi wrote a counter critique to this called Chottinoru Thattu. While the reformists pray with their palms crossed over the chest, the

85 P.P Mammad Koya Parappil (herein after Parappil Koya), Kozhikotte Muslingalude Charithram (Mal), Focus Publication, Calicut, 1994, p.93.
87 MMSP, op. cit., p. 502.
88 Ibid., p.502.
89 Ibid., p.509.
traditionalists held them crossed below the navel. The point here is that even a trivial issue like this was hotly debated and much paper was wasted for the same. It also shows that many levels of intra community conflict marked Muslim thought and influenced their attitude.

When Issudhin Moulavi wrote a pamphlet *Muslianmarude Pallakkadi* (A blow to Musaliyar's belly) ridiculing moulud and ratib, which were a source of income to traditional Musaliyars, Pangil Ahmedkutty Musaliyar provided the tit for tat through his *Randakshara Moulavimarude Mandakkadi*. Against Athouhid of P. Abdul Qudir Moulavi exposing the innovative rituals of Sunni folk., P. Moosa Moulavi wrote *Al-Qaulussadid fi Radi Athouhid* which tried to legitimize the Tawassul Istigaza or intercessionary prayers, practiced by traditional Ulema. To this K.M. Moulavi wrote a counter-critique titled *Fathul khavi fi Radi alal Furthavi* (AM), reiterating the formulations of Abdul Kader Moulavi of Kannur in his 'Athouhid'. Athouhid was instrumental in disseminating the reformist ideology in Malabar. Vakkom Abdulkader Moulavi's *Saussabah* was a reply to the Sunni Musaliyars, when they depicted him as enemy of Islam through their fatwas.

In 1925, Abdullakutty Musaliyar of Ponnani wrote 'Ehlan', despising Aikya Sagam and its journal Al-Irshad and branding the Sangam as Wahabis. Against this book, the secretary of Aikya Sangam wrote a letter in Mathrubumi, severely criticizing the Musaliyars of Ponnani, whom he

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91 *Samastha 60th Annual Souvenir*, 1985, p.86. Most of the reformist moulavis were known by their initials like K.M. Moulavi, E.K. Moulavi etc. and the traditional Ulema rebuked them as Randakshara Moulavi.


93 *Ibid*.

considered as the real culprits in innovating the un-Islamic rituals in Malabar.\textsuperscript{95} Besides 'Athouhid', Abdulkader Moulavi wrote two other works, \textit{Siyarathul Khubur} and \textit{Khatamunnubuva}.\textsuperscript{96} While the former exposed the hollowness of tomb worship, the latter exposed the claim of Mirza Gulam's prophethood. His last work, \textit{Pravachaka Samaptiyum Mirza Khadiyaniyum} (The end of Prophethood and Mirza Qadiyan) was also an attack against Ahmadiyas.\textsuperscript{97}

When Ibn Husan, a Qadiyani scholar from Kannur wrote \textit{Tuhfathul Malabar} (AM), Maulana Chalilakath wrote \textit{Qadiyani Khandanam} during the first decade of 20\textsuperscript{th} century.\textsuperscript{98} \textit{Radul Wahabiya} of Karipanakkal Muhiyudhin Kutty (Tellicherry Mahikkal Garaib Press, 1927), \textit{Hujjath ul Kaviyathul Wahabi Radd} (song), \textit{Hidayathul Muslimeen Wahabi Radd} (prose), \textit{Sulalathussalam Wahabiradd} (song), \textit{Suwalun wa jawabun} by Abdulkutty Musaliyar (Malharul Muhimmath, Tirurangadi, 1926) \textit{Waliya Radul Wahibiya} (prose), \textit{Wahabi kissa} (prose), \textit{Kadiyan sual Jawab} (published by Haji UM Abdulla, Ponnani), \textit{Qadiyante Radd Tharjama} (UM Abdulla and Sons Ponnani) etc., are works of polemical nature, published in Malabar, in the context of intra-community ideological war through the print-media.\textsuperscript{99}

K.M. Moulavi's \textit{Al Wilayathu Wal Karamathu}, (Tirurangadi, 1948) exposes the orthodox claims about the miracles of saints and other holy men.\textsuperscript{100} It was a reply to the Sunnis regarding their allegation that Mujahids did not recognize the miracles of prophets and walis. Another book of K.M.

\textsuperscript{95} \textit{Mathrubhumi}, 15\textsuperscript{th} May, 1925.
\textsuperscript{96} \textit{Yuvakesari}, Issue.9, 1946.
\textsuperscript{97} \textit{Ibid.}
\textsuperscript{98} K.K.M Kareem, Note no: 92, pp.36-37.
\textsuperscript{100} K.K.M Kareem, Note no: 92, p.187. Also see \textit{Islamic Seminar Review}, Ernakulam, 1965, p.250.
Moulavi, *Al hidaya ila Mahqil Bidi Wa dwalala* (AM), enlightened the Muslims to keep away from the innovative practices like *nercha, kodikuthu* and mortuary practices. Against this, Chundangayil Moideenkutty Musaliyar wrote a critique *Radul Wahabiya*, which was again contested by K.M. Moulavi by another work, *Tanbiul Muslimun*.¹⁰¹

The *Satya Vivechanam* published by P.T Mohamadali (Janmabhoomi Press, Calicut), deals with the judicial proceedings of the Muthanur Palli case of 1954.¹⁰² Throughout the deliberations of the case, major issues of contention between the two factions, were severely debated in the court and thus it forms an important source book to study the Sunni-Mujahid debate in Malabar.¹⁰³ In 1949 the *Servants of Islam Society* of Calicut wrote *Shia Kunjungalude Ilakiyattam*, criticizing the Sunni leader Pathi Abdul Qadar Musaliyar and in retort, N. Ahmad Haji (d.1977) wrote *Hidayathul Muhminin*.¹⁰⁴

Popular poets also were involved in this polemical debate through print. In 1932 Kadampott Alavikutty wrote a poem *Parishkara mala* attacking the reformists and *Aikya Sangam*, to which Pulikottil Hydru (1879-1975) in a poetic style of his own replied with his *Parishkara Ghandanakavyam* in the same year.¹⁰⁵ Hydru extols the *Aikya Sangam* in the following words.


¹⁰² This was a horrible incident that occurred in Muthanur, a village near Manjeri in Ernad Taluk, which shows the intensity of the rift between *Mujahids* and *Sunnis*. When a Moulavi, who had affinity towards reformist died, his body was denied burial by the *Mahallu* committee and his body remained unburied for one week. Later the *Sunnis* filed a case but the *Mujahids* won the case.

¹⁰³ P.T. Muhammadali in this book *Sathyavivechanam* narrates the whole arguments and counter arguments of both parties in court.

¹⁰⁴ *Samastha 60th Anniversary Souvenir*, p. 100.

¹⁰⁵ *MMSP*, *op. cit.*, p. 532-35.
Aikya Sangam is shining like the sun
It is the light of Muslims
As per the advice of semi-literate Alims
The ignorant idiots worship at tombs
Islam cannot be established thus

Mundampra Unni Mammad (1868-1930) of Areekode wrote Kodikettamala dealing with an incident that occurred at Areacode in 1917. It was a poem that exposed the anti-Islamic rituals connected with Kondotty nercha varavu.

Nallalam Beeran, another popular poet of Malabar, wrote a poem debasing the reformist group, specifically of Isudin Moulavi in the following words: 'Friends, an organization called Thimiya Sangam has emerged in Malayalam, which turns upside down the religion of Islam. Pretending to be a scholar, a dajjal (Anti-Christ) among them, reached Calicut and began preaching among people.' In reply to this, Pulikottil wrote a poem in which he used unparliamentary words.

Another poet, N. Kunhikammu master (d.1958) of Kondotty wrote two poems about Aikya Sangam and their ideology, Aikya Bhushanam and


108 MMSP, op. cit., p.534.

109 Ibid., p.535.
Khurafath Mala.\textsuperscript{110} Kannan Pareekutty, (d.1958) wrote Kodikuthumala, despising the rituals like Kodikuthu and nercha ceremonies.\textsuperscript{111} Besides the above-mentioned poems of Pulikottil Hydru, many of his poems like Kaliyugam, Kathukuthumala, Sthreemardimala, Maranmarude Thakaru etc. were aimed at reforming the Muslim community, to make them keep pace with the changing world.\textsuperscript{112} His poems laid bare all customs and usages which were against the Islamic belief and the progress of the community.

Print, because of its inherent capacity to stock and diffuse information, had given an extra vigour to these debates and preserved them for the future generation.

**Works on History**

History or the past was used by Mappila writers as a resource for constructing, mobilizing and consolidating their community identity. Just as the modern nation states used the past to legitimize and valorize its project, so too, Mappila community used the past as a legitimizing discourse. Islam, being a historical religion, Muslims generally gave greater significance to Ṭarikh (History) and it was a part of their syllabi in Madrassa. So just like their counterparts in other parts of the world, Mappilas also evolved their own genre of historical literature. To them, history was a great reminder of the knowledge of past experience, which should keep them steadfast in their faith.

Very often, Mappila scholars wrote history in the form of poetry, which were often dramatic, rich in colour and taste, alive with feelings as was natural to the genre of poetry in which they were written. To quote David

\textsuperscript{110} Ibid., p.535.
\textsuperscript{111} Ibid., p.532.
\textsuperscript{112} M.N. Karasseri, (ed.), *op. cit.*, Preface XVI.
Schulman, 'History is written in the dominant literary genre of a particular community located in space at a given moment in time... Each community writes history in the mode that is dominant in its own literary practice. It was difficult to extricate Malabar Mappilas from their literary mode and to make them write history in prose in a period when their dominant mode of expression was poetry. This conscious recasting of poetry for communitarian purpose had an electrifying effect on the Mappila psyches, be it literate or illiterate.

_Tuhfathul Mujahideen_ of Zaik Zainudhin and _Fathul Mubeen_ of Qazi Mohamed of Calicut were the earliest historical works in verse written in Malabar. These two were works written during the Portuguese period and hence reflect the tension and tribulations of the community due to the hostility of the Portuguese. _Thuhfath_ is the earliest historical treatise written in Kerala. Though written with a specific purpose of inciting the fellow Muslims to fight against the Portuguese, Zainuddhin provides a graphic picture about the evolution of the community up to the Portuguese period. Copies of this tract in Arabic were sent to all leading mosques of Kerala during 17th century and this work was instrumental in creating an anti-Christian (Nasar) consciousness among Mappilas. _Fathul Mubeen_, written by Qasi Mohamed, the celebrated author of _Muhiyudhin Mala_, deals with the history of the battle between Portuguese and the Muslim-Nair combined forces in 17th century. Along with this, a detailed history of the origin and spread of Mappila community have been provided in it. In the preface to the work, Qasi Mohamed says, 'It is to invite the attention of other Muslim rulers of the world that I write this work. Let this news (about the battle) spread to different directions of the world, particularly Syria and Iraq. Then they would 

114 MMSP, op. cit., p.151.
come to know about 'Zamorin and his fight against Portuguese'.\textsuperscript{115} As the intention was clear, he wrote it in Arabic in the mode of poetry, the dominant mode of expression during the period. Since both 
*Tuhaft* and *Fathul Mubin* were written in Arabic, they could not influence the rural *Mappilas* to whom Arabic remained an unintelligible language. It was in 20\textsuperscript{th} century that these works were translated into Malayalam and there by reached a wider audience. In 1935, K. Moosakutty Moulavi of Tirurangadi translated *Tuhaft* in to Malayalam and serialized it in *Al-Murshid*, a Journal (AM) published from Tirurangadi by K.M. Moulavi.\textsuperscript{116} Similarly, *Fatuhul Mubin* was also translated and put to print during the first half of 20\textsuperscript{th} century. Both these Mnemo-historic works dealing with earlier instances of resistance to the Portuguese were used later to construct a Mappila identity.

*Malappuram padapattu* of Moyinkutty Vaidyar written in 1885 is a classic example for Mnemo-history. The first half of the poem is devoted to the narration of the introduction and growth of Islam up to the period of Malappuram battle in 1728 AD. An elaborate narration of the evolution of the community; prophet's mission in Arabia, Perumal's conversion and his meeting with Malik ibn Dinar and his mission in Kerala, Zamorin's tolerance, agrarian background of Malappuram and the tenant-lord conflict, etc.\textsuperscript{117} are described in extenso. ‘This narration of the historical evolution of the community in a work that deals with an incident in 18\textsuperscript{th} century Malabar was not accidental but intentional. It was like building a *padippura* (gate house) bigger than the house itself’.\textsuperscript{118} ‘It many not be considered as history by the conventionally oriented observers of modern period probably because, it is

\textsuperscript{115} Ibid., *op. cit.*, p.156.
\textsuperscript{116} K.K.M. Kareem, Note no: 92, p.174.
\textsuperscript{118} Balakrishnan Vallikunnu, *op. cit.*, p.144.
not dull enough to count as historical narrative'. Of course history and non-history are interwoven in such poems.

*Keralacharithram pattu* (Song of Kerala History) of Pulikottil Hydru (1879-1975), is another work in poetry that exclusively deals with the history of Muslims in Kerala from its genesis.\(^{119}\) It is the longest poem written by him. The poet narrates the early history of Mappilas, the secular nature of Zamorin and the Portuguese encounter with Mappilas. Zainudhin's *Tuḥfathul Mujahidin*, Firishta's *History*, Akbar Sha Khan's *Ayine Haqiq* (an history text in Urdu), Ibrahimkutty Moulavi's *Kushful Asrar*, Shamsalla Qadiri's *Ancient Malabar* (Urdu) and *Keralolpathi* are the sources which poet depended on in composing this poem.\(^{120}\) By quoting these sources he was trying to legitimise the authenticity of the narrative. He makes repeated references to the tolerant outlook of Zamorins and the cruelty of the Portuguese. Being written in poetic mode, this was well received by the community.

Mappilas were not averse to the mode of prose in the realm of history. The works of Shuaj Moidu Musaliyar (d. 1920) deserve special mention in this regard. His voluminous work *Failul Fayyal* (1887) in Arabic-Malayalam, covers the history of Islam from the genesis to Abbasiya Caliph Nazir.\(^{121}\) His work *Fathul Fatah* (3 Vols), the last volume of which was completed in 1909 is another work on history. *Kasfuthathar fi Akbari Malaibar* composed by Ibrahim Moulavi, in two volumes, is another work in Arabic-Malayalam dealing with the history of Malabar.\(^{122}\)

Ibrahim Moulavi of Pulikkal (d.1951) wrote *Malabar Charithram* (AM) in 1929.\(^{123}\) Earlier, Mohamed Ibn Umar Ba Alavi had written a text in


\(^{121}\) *MMSP, op. cit.*, p.401.

\(^{122}\) O.Abu, *op. cit.*, p.130.

\(^{123}\) *MMSP, op. cit.*, p. 526.
Arabic on the history of Mappilas which claimed that Islam reached Kerala during the time of prophet itself.\textsuperscript{124} Another work in Arabic was Kazi Abubacker Kunhi’s \textit{Sharah Vithriya}, a comprehensive history text which sheds light into the ancient history of Kerala Muslims.\textsuperscript{125} An Arabic work on Mappilas was written by Hazrath Mohamed Ibn Malik, an Islamic missionary who had worked in Malabar Coast and later this was translated by Husain Mullakoya Thangal, the Qazi of Calicut in 1890, for Gopalan Nair, who published it in Malayalam with title \textit{Malayalathile Mappilamar}.\textsuperscript{126} \textit{Rihalathul Muluk}, is another work on Malabar Muslims written by a Sufi saint of Kerala.\textsuperscript{127}

Vallanchira Khunhamad (1842-1906) of Manjeri wrote ‘\textit{Akbarul Hind}’ narrating the history of Hyder Ali and Tipu Sulthan and their heroic fight against the British. Initially the publishers were reluctant to publish it, fearing that it would invite the wrath of the British authorities.\textsuperscript{128} Parol Husain Moulavi’s (d. 1954) \textit{Tipu Sulthan} (AM) also depicts the history of Tipu Sultan.\textsuperscript{129} In the backdrop of the anti-British stance of the Mappilas, such works on Muslim rulers who engaged in fierce resistance against the British, might have fuelled the Mappila's fight against oppressors and facilitated the formation of an identity among Mappilas.

Thus, history as a mode of organizing community-memory was not unknown to Malabar Muslims. 'Indeed for the three groups of semitic origin in Kerala, (the Jews, Syrian Christians and the Mappilas) as also for the \textit{Nambudiris} or \textit{Thiyyas}, there was a rich and complex tradition of Mnemo-

\textsuperscript{124} MMSP, op. cit., p. 169.
\textsuperscript{125} Ibid., 158.
\textsuperscript{126} Parappil Koya, op. cit., p.113.
\textsuperscript{127} MMSP, op. cit., p. 129.
\textsuperscript{128} Ibid., p. 484.
\textsuperscript{129} Ibid., p. 560.
history that they had evolved, to organize their collective memory’, says G. Arunima.\textsuperscript{130} In both modes, poetry as well as prose, the Mappila scholars tried to narrate their own perception of their past. Thus, the history of Mappilas was intrinsically tied up with the history of remembering.

\textbf{Print and Anti-Christian Discourse}

The fear among Muslims in the context of Christian missionary propaganda provided inspiration for the growth and development of Muslim press in Malabar and Travancore. Interestingly enough, the Muslims were forced to switch over from Arabi-Malayalam to Malayalam in the context of this debate with Christians. The 'defenders of Islam' wrote their tracts in chaste Malayalam as against Arabi-Malayalam script, which was illegible either to Christians or to the general public. Besides, by 20\textsuperscript{th} century, the Mappila attitude that Malayalam was the language of Hindus also began to be softened. This switch over from Arabi-Malayalam to Malayalam in its pure form, gradually led to its acceptance even by the orthodox Muslim \textit{Ulema}. The new generation of educated Muslims discarded Arabi-Malayalam and began to produce their works in Malayalam.

In response to the propaganda of Christian missionaries, a host of tracts were published in Malayalam during the last decades of 19\textsuperscript{th} century. The uneasiness felt at the propaganda of missionaries was reflected in the pages of these religious tracts, as well as Muslim journals of the period between 1890-1930. This uneasiness felt by educated Muslims, as pointed out by Rafiudhin Ahmad in Bengal’s context, about missionary activities seemed more a reaction to the nature of the latter's propaganda than to any large scale conversion.\textsuperscript{131} Christian missionaries in north Malabar, like Herman Gundert


\textsuperscript{131} Rafiudhin Ahmad, \textit{The Bengal Muslims: 1871-1906: A quest for Identity}, OUP, Delhi, 1996, p.97.
and Samuel Ambatt, depicted Muslims and their divinities in derogatory terms.\textsuperscript{132} They profusely used imagery like 'Devil Muhamad' in their missionary tracts.\textsuperscript{133} Such writings of missionaries provoked furious rebuttals from the Muslim press, embittering the dialogue between Christian crusaders and the Muslims. The debate of the 'defenders of Islam' in Malabar like Makti Thangal with Christian missionaries, imparted an acerbic tone to the Muslim press in Kerala during the first decades of 20\textsuperscript{th} century. The increasing apprehension of Muslims was reflected in their writings, which evolved into propaganda in self-defense.

It was Makti Thangal (1874-1912), a native of Ponnani, who started the ideological crusade against Christian missionaries in Kerala.\textsuperscript{134} In \textit{Iman Salamath} (Protection of Faith), Makti appealed to Muslims to set aside a portion of their earning for the protection and propagation of religion.\textsuperscript{135} The principal means, through which he tried to counteract the growing influence of Christian missionaries, was the publication of religious tracts. The following are the main tracts he published - \textit{Kadora kudaram} (1884), \textit{Satyadarsini} (1891), \textit{Parkalitha Porkalam} (1891), \textit{Kristiya Mooda Proudi Darpanam} (1900).\textsuperscript{136} All these were in a sense counter-tracts to Christian pamphlets like \textit{Vishuda Venmazhu} (Vidwankutty) \textit{Kadorahani} (Varapuzha mission), \textit{Vijnanolmulaveumazhu}, \textit{Vijnanadarpanam} (Paduva 1894), Abdul

\textsuperscript{132} See Chapter III.

\textsuperscript{133} M.R. Raghava Varier, \textit{Amma Vazhi Keralam} (Mal), Trichur 2006, p.149.

\textsuperscript{134} See Chapter III. It was almost during this period, in Bengal, Munshi Meherulla (1861-1907) began his anti-Christian missionary activities. Mehrulla's first treatise \textit{Hollowness of Teachings of Christianity} in Bengali and Makti's \textit{Kadora Koodaram} came out in 1886 itself.


Qader Mudalaliyum Munsifum (Kottayam, 1895) etc. All the tracts of Makti were written in highly sanskritised Malayalam, not only for reaching out to the general public but also to prove that Muslims were not lagging in their command over Malayalam language. To use Amilcar Cabral's terminology, Makti was using this chaste Malayalam as a 'weapon of the weak'. Makti also turned against Hinduism, when he published a tract called Satyadarshini in 1901, which was a critique of Hinduism and its, polytheistic practices. A separate journal, Ahamodayam was started to expose the hollowness of Hinduism.

After Makti, the task was undertaken by his disciples all over Kerala. Chekku Molla of Kondotty, a disciple of Makti, who engaged in polemical debates with Christians, wrote Islam Christhava Samvadam. A.K. Ali Mohamed Sha, another disciple, wrote Satyaviswasa Sakshyam in 1937. About his guru, he wrote, 'Through the umpteen works that extol the virtue of Islam and through organizing sermons, Makti Thangal enlightened Mappilas about the greatness and glory of Islam.' When Father Mannassery came out with his Satyamataneshanam which despised prophet as a womanizer and a bandit, C.K. Bava Sahib, editor of Muhamadali (1920-21) countered it through his book, Satyamatasaram. Ishaath, a Muslim missionary journal, published a series of articles in 1934 against the book of Manassery. Later Father Manassery through an article in 'Ishaath' titled Samudaya Samakhan repented to Muslim community for offending their sentiments.

B. Mahinkutty's Valal Pracharicha Matham Ethu? (which is the religion that was spread by sword?), published in 1936, is an attempt to counter the missionary allegation that Islam was a religion spread by sword.

138 K.K.M. Kareem, SSMT, op. cit., p.95.
141 Ishaath, Vol.2, No.5, 1934 (Kottayam).
The book raised a serious complaint that the prescribed textbooks of schools were indirect means to spread Christianity.\textsuperscript{142} A.M. Abdul Kader of Eriyad (d.1962) wrote three works in this genre - \textit{Apposthalanmarude Aswasapradan}, \textit{Vedopedesam} and \textit{Christhu Daivamalla}.\textsuperscript{143} Abdurahiman Musaliyar's \textit{Raddunnasara} (AM) and Puthanveetil Ahmad Musaliyar's \textit{Hayathudhin} (A.M) were polemical works against Christianity.\textsuperscript{144}

Towards the middle of 20\textsuperscript{th} century, some Islamic missionary tracts turned their focus towards Hinduism also, especially in the context of missionary work of Arya Samaj in Kerala. As early as 1924, \textit{Aikya Sangam} had taken a decision to establish a missionary organization to counter the Arya Samaj.\textsuperscript{145} Moulana Muhamadali Memorial Library, Cochin published \textit{Samathvam Evide}? (Where is equality) which laid bare the ideology of Arya Samaj.\textsuperscript{146} It equated Arya Samaj with a dam, which tries to arrest the flow of scheduled castes to other religions. Supporting the views of B.A Sukumaran, the \textit{Izhava} leader, that Islam was the only asylum to the lower castes of Malabar, the book exhorted the \textit{daliths} to keep away from Arya Samaj and embrace the democratic religion of Islam.\textsuperscript{147} Similarly C.V. Abdurahiman Hydros (1885-1947) of Cochin, a disciple of Makti, wrote three works with the intention of attracting \textit{daliths} to Islam. They were \textit{Islamum Ayithocharananavum} (Islam and untouchability), \textit{Islamum Harijanodharanavum} (Islam and Harijan Uplift) and \textit{Islamika Sahodaryam} (Islamic Brotherhood) and all these works tried to uphold the universal

\textsuperscript{142} \textit{Mathrubhumi}, Book review, March 7, 1936.
\textsuperscript{143} C.K. Kareem, (ed.), \textit{KMD, op. cit.}, p.7.
\textsuperscript{145} \textit{Mathrubhumi} 29, May 1924.
\textsuperscript{146} Moulana Mohamadali Library, \textit{Samathvam Evide}? (Mal.), Kamal Book Depot, Cochin, 1936.
\textsuperscript{147} \textit{Ibid.}, p.15.
brotherhood of Islam and the democratic space within it. All these works were published from Malabar Islam Book Depot, which he himself set up at Cochin in 1913, with a missionary intention.

K.H. Sulaiman wrote Swantanta Samudayavum Muslingalum (Muslims and the independent community) in 1935 as a reply to E. Madhavan's Swatantra Samudayam (Independent community). Madhavan, in his work, had advised Ezhavas to free themselves from the fold of Hinduism and form an independent community. He had also criticized Muslims for their opposition to Sarada Bill (fixing the age of marriage) and their objection to eating pork. Sulaiman, in his book, countered all the allegations of Madhavan, on the basis of 'Scientific truth'.

B. Mahinkutty's Islamum Athakritharum (Islam and Untouchables) published by Ishaath society, Alleppey in 1936, is another attempt to prove the egalitarian face of Islam.

The above survey shows that many tracts were published during the first half of 20th century, running down Christianity and Hinduism and replying to Christian tracts against Islam in the same vein. The increasing apprehension of Muslims was reflected in these writings, which evolved in to a sort of propaganda in self-defense. This missionary literature of Muslims helped to restore confidence in their faith in Islam and arouse a consciousness in them of the superiority of Islamic culture.

Muslim Literature during the Reform phase

MMSP, op. cit., p. 443.

K.H. Sulaiman, Swantantra Samudayavum Muslingalum (Mal.), Sarasan Publicity Bureau, Cochin, 1935.

This book was proscribed by Travancore and Cochin govt.

An example of the authors 'Scientific truth' would be contextual. According to him Islam prohibited pork eating on a scientific basis. The pig when involved in mating with one invites other partners for the same. In the character formation the food that is eaten is important and hence a pork eater will turn to be as immoral as pigs in sexual relations (K.H. Sulaiman, op. cit., p. 24).
We also come across umpteen prose works in Malayalam, which shed light on the different aspects of Islamic life. An analysis of all these works would be out of the scope of this study. These works reflect the concern of Muslim literati in Malabar in the context of onslaught of modernity. For instance, when socialist ideology began to exercise its influence in the public sphere of Malabar, Muslim scholars tried to depict Islam as the best socialist ideology. In 1938, C.N. Ahmad Moulavi wrote 'Islamile Danavitharana Paddathi (The distribution of wealth in Islam) which tried to counter the arguments of socialist writers against Islam and other religions. A Malik Muhamad's Islamum Sthithisamathavum (Islam and Socialism) published in 1936, was another venture in this respect and this was written to prevent Muslims from drifting towards communist movement, which was making inroads in Malabar in 1930's.

Another attempt of the Muslim literati was to depict Islam as the best option in the modern context. For instance, A. Ammu of Calicut, in his Pravachakanum Adunikathavum (Prophet and Modernity) published in 1931, examines the life and message of prophet Mohamed in the backdrop of modernity and proves that the message of Islam is the most relevant ideology in the modern world. This work also signifies the command that Muslim writers achieved over Malayalam language as it profusely used sanskritised Malayalam.

'Gender justice' was another issue taken up by the literati during this period. T.K. Mohamed's Islamiile Sthrikal (Women in Islam)

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152 A list of such works has been given in Appendix.XI.
155 A. Ammu, Nabiyum Adunikathavum (Prophet and Modernity) (Mal), Madrasathul Muhamediya Sahitya Samiti, Calicut, 1931.
published in 1932, deals with the Islamic concept of women. K.M. Moulavi's *Islamum Sthreekalum* (Islam and Women) is another venture in this regard. Similarly, *Sahrudopaharam* published by E.M. Habeeb Mohamed in 1930, is a collection of essays by Muslim scholars on various subjects related to Muslims in Kerala. These essays give us a picture about the concerns and aspirations of educated Muslims in 1920's and 1930's. It is to be noted that although most of these Malayalam works were printed outside Malabar, majority of the authors and readers were from Malabar and hence these works had great impact in shaping the mentality of the Muslims of Malabar.

**Muslim Journals and Community consciousness**

An assessment of the vernacular press has to be part of an enquiry in to the construction of separate identity. The expanding print and publication market served as the main fount of the communitarian discourse. The dissemination of this discourse was facilitated by an exponential growth of print market, particularly after the relaxation of government control. In 1835, Charls Metcalf abolished restrictions on printing, especially native printing. Vernacular press is an excellent source from where to begin exploring the early narrative on Muslim identity. As Aysha Jalal points out 'Gyanerdra Pandey's single minded determination to portray 'communalism' as a 'construction' of colonial discourse entails missing out much of the context and texture of communitarian narrative of the period. Hence, an analysis of the vernacular press in the first half of 20th century, enables us to perceive its vital contribution in the construction of a narrative of identity.

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The Muslims of Kerala were aware of the importance of print media in the development of a community. In an appeal by the editor of Kerala Chandrika, a Muslim weekly started in 1919, this urgency was echoed. He says, "In the present context, journals are the light houses of any community or nation. It is the citadel that protects the community. In the absence of journals for Muslims, it will steep in darkness. Nobody will listen to such community and will be trampled by other communities, who are involved in a rat race for development. It is only after the publication of Kerala Chandrika that Government and other communities became aware of the civic rights of the Muslims".\textsuperscript{160} A.M. Abdul Kader, the editor of Muslim monthly also airs the same view in an article in Mathrubhumi titled 'Mappilas of Malayalam'. He says, 'On a war footing, efforts have to be made to create real consciousness about religion through books, magazines, dailies and pamphlets'.\textsuperscript{161} Syed Bava Sahib also enlightened the Muslims about the urgency of appropriating the print media. He says, 'Had the Muslim press been popular in Kerala, the community would not have been so steeped in ignorance and poverty .... The progress and reform of the community depends on the quality and quantity of print media owned by a community. The development of the community is directly proportional to the popularity of press among its members. While an increased number of people belonging to Nair, Christian and Ezhava communities feel that it is a disgrace not to subscribe a newspaper which work for the welfare of their respective communities, the Muslims are ignorant about such a development per se ...... Hence, the wealthy section of the community have to share a part of their wealth to resolve this lacuna within the community.\textsuperscript{162}

\textsuperscript{160} Mathrubhumi, 12\textsuperscript{th} July, 1923.
\textsuperscript{161} Mathrubhumi, August 7, 1923.
The above concern of the Muslim literati in the early decades of 20th century shows that the Muslims also became aware of the potential of print media, in the over all development of the community.

It was the anti-Islam propaganda of Christian missionaries and the Islamic revivalist movement that provided the initial pull for the development of Muslim journalism in Malabar. There were many short-lived Muslim journals in Arabi-Malayalam and Malayalam. The first Muslim journal in Malayalam was Kerala Deepakom published by Kadar Haji of Kochi, in 1878.\(^{163}\) The chaste Malayalam in which it was written was the language of better-educated urban middle class and hence had a restricted clientele. Thus, owing to the indifference of Muslims towards reading a Malayalam journal, it had a premature death. Kadar Haji also published a second journal Satyaprakasam in 1899. It was natural that these journals had a very little popularity among the rural Muslim masses, to whom the language of 'Malayalam' itself was a 'forbidden one'.

**C. Saidalikutty, the Pioneer of Muslim Jouranlism in Malabar**

The doyen of Muslim journalism in Malabar was C. Saidali Kutty Master of Tirur in Malabar. Born in 1856 at Tirur, he served as a school Inspector in Malabar.\(^{164}\) He was a multi faceted personality but it was in the domain of journalism that he is remembered for. He registered a Salahul Iqwan company at Tirur with six directors. In 1899, he started the 'Salahul Iqwan' a monthly from Tirur and it lasted for about eight years.\(^{165}\) In an editorial of the same in 1903, Saidali Kutty wrote 'our Salahul Iqwan was started in H.E. 1317 (1899). Now we are entering the 4th year. The

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\(^{164}\) *MMSP*, op. cit., p. 406.

difficulties in the past three years were beyond our limit and God alone knows about the trials and tribulations. During the first year, 177 issues were brought out and those issues touched up on all knowledge that a man should know. Besides this, a brief description of the attributes (Sifath) of Allah was also given in those issues.\textsuperscript{166} The paper dealt with all the developments in the Muslim world, including the reforms within Turkey.\textsuperscript{167} The translation of Aliflaila was published serially in Salahul Iqwan.

After the demise of Salahul Iqwan in 1909, he started another journal Rafiqul Islam (AM) which lasted for two years.\textsuperscript{168} Makti Thangal, Chalilakath Abdulla Moulavi, Madampi Alavi Musliyar, V.M. Moulavi Kokkur were the main scholars who wrote scholarly articles in this journal.\textsuperscript{169} A study of the back volumes of this journal shows that the reverberations within Malabar Islam were amply reflected in its pages. For instance, in one of the issues, the journal provides a clue to the polemical debates that ravaged Malabar. The editor says, "As far as the Malabar Muslims are concerned, they are not yet free from the heat and dust of debates... the rift between the clappers (Kaimuttukar) and non-clappers (Kaimuttillathavar) of Calicut Town which had begun generations before, still continues. The debate around Wahadathul Wajud in Balapattanam is almost settled. The Ahmadiyas of Kannur have spread to Calicut also. The La-majud debate of Taliparamba has spread to Cochin and Travancre areas. The Qibla dispute in Tirurangadi has reached to all parts of Malabar. It is requested that all these rival groups may settle their points in the light of scriptures and avoid any breach of peace and tranquillity of the country".\textsuperscript{170}

\textsuperscript{166} \textit{Salahul Iqwan}, Issue 1, Book 4, 1903.
\textsuperscript{167} \textit{MMSP}, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 408.
\textsuperscript{168} \textit{Ibid.}, p. 408.
\textsuperscript{169} \textit{Ibid.}
C. Saidali Kutty Master himself wrote many articles, most of which were translation from Arabic and English journals like *Al Muayyid, Review of Religions, Health Magazine*, etc.\(^{171}\) Most of the developments in Islamic world were covered in it and thereby kept the Muslims of Malabar in touch with the latest developments around the world. Even articles dealing with the necessity of breast feeding (translation of an article from Indian Ladies Magazine) could be seen in *Salahul Iqwan*.\(^{172}\) It was through 'Salahul Iqwan' that Saidalikutty manufactured the consent among the Mappila for liturgical change of *Khutaba* (Friday Sermon) into regional language.\(^{173}\) Saidalikutty published a series of articles, explaining the urgency of rendering *Khutuba* in regional language, as Arabic was Greek to majority of Mappilas. He used to report in *Salahul Iqwan*, a regular news item, regarding the popular enthusiasm in various *mahals* where the sermon had been delivered in Malayalam.\(^{174}\)

Saidalikutty published a series of lead articles in *Salahul Iqwan* proving that earth is round in shape, which was appreciated by the educated section and condemned by the orthodox *Ulema* of Malabar.\(^{175}\) It was to counter the argument of Nuhukannu Musaliyar in his *Fathunnur* (AM) that Saidalikutty published three articles regarding the shape of earth.\(^{176}\) He wrote two regular columns, one titled *Muslims and new education* and the other

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\(^{171}\) MMSP, op. cit., p. 65.  
\(^{172}\) Salahul Iqwan, 1st October, 1901.  
\(^{173}\) Salahul Iqwan, Book.2, Issue 7, December 1900. This has been discussed in Chapter III.  
\(^{176}\) K.K.M Kareem, Note no. 28, p.80.
Muslims and Science in Salahul Iqwan and later these two collections were published in book form.\textsuperscript{177}

Makti Thangal wrote two articles in Salahul Iqwan exhorting the Muslims to get rid of the system of Matriliny, which he believed was against the tenets of Islam.\textsuperscript{178} Both these journals were in Arabi-Malayalam and hence it could make inroads among the rural Mappilas of Malabar. While Salahul Iqwan lasted for eight years from 1899 to 1906, the Rafqul Islam lived for five years from 1906 to 1910. Having got wide range of circulation among Muslim public and the Ulema in particular, both could bring about a qualitative change within the Muslim community of Malabar. Both published valuable articles, contributed by the Muslim intellectuals of the day like Hamadani Thangal, Makti Thangal and Vakkom Moulavi and gave a new thrust to the movement of revivalism that set in motion in Malabar. As Makti Thangal wrote in Salahul Iqwan, "by reading my books, the enlightened Muslims as well as Hindus are defeating the Christians in debates. It is a matter of joy to Muslims and sorrow to Christians that much knowledge about Islam, hitherto unknown, have become familiar in Kerala and thereby the light of Islam glows in this land".\textsuperscript{179} In a letter in Salahul Iqwan, Makti lamented, 'If anybody reads my articles and books, faith will sprout in him and the faith of the ambivalent will be fixed ... But this kind of joy or enthusiasm (in defeating the Christians) cannot be seen among the Malayalam Muslims, because their wisdom is still enveloped by clouds'.\textsuperscript{180}

**Missionary Journals of Makti Thangal**

\textsuperscript{177} MMSP, \textit{op.cit.}, p.411.
\textsuperscript{178} \textit{Salahul Iqwan}, Vol.4, Issue 9, 18\textsuperscript{th} November,1902 and \textit{Salahul Iqwan}, Vol.4, Issue 10, 1\textsuperscript{st} January, 1903.
\textsuperscript{179} \textit{Salahul Iqwan}, Vol.5, Issue 8, 21\textsuperscript{st} July, 1903.
\textsuperscript{180} \textit{Salahul Iqwan}, Vol. 5, Issue 4, 1\textsuperscript{st} May 1903.
It was Makti Thangal (1847-1912), the 'defender of Islam', who profusely used the print media in his effort to counter Christian allegations against Islam. Besides writing in other journals like *Salahul Iqwan*, he himself started journals at different parts of Kerala. In 1890, he had started Mohamadiya press at Cochin. But even prior to that in 1888, he started a weekly *Satyaprakasam* with Kadars Haji as sub editor, which lasted only for nine months.\(^{181}\) In 1894, he started a fortnightly, namely *Tuhfuth Akiyar Hidayathul Ashrar*, which fought relentlessly against Muslims orthodoxy.\(^{182}\)

Makti's next venture in this domain was *paropakari*, a fortnightly from Calicut, which lasted for three years. It was through *paropakari* that he used to provide 'tit for tat' to Christian missionaries. He dared to start 'Paropakari' in Malayalam, when majority of Muslims were unable to read Malayalam. It was the Hindus who helped him to publish this magazine.\(^{183}\) After the demise of *Satyaprakasam*, which Makti started from Travancore, he shifted his venue to Calicut.\(^{184}\) In *Makti Manaklesam*, his autobiographical account, he says 'Due to *Paropakari*, I was forced to dispose of my house and I have been wandering like a cat with its babies, without food and help. My own brotheren are afraid of giving me a rented house'.\(^{185}\)

He planned to start a new journal called 'Nityajeevan' and he appealed the Muslims of Malabar to help him financially in this regard. In *Salahul Iqwan* he wrote, 'Due to the allegations and verbal assaults of Christians, the sorrows of Muslims are increasing. Islam is in trouble due to the inability to give defensive reply to them..... . In the absence of proper financial assistance, I am unable to print and publish them (the replies to the allegations). Once

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\(^{181}\) KKM Kareem, SSMT, *op. cit.*, p.18.


\(^{184}\) Parappil Koya, *op. cit.*, p.249.

\(^{185}\) KKM Kareem, , *MTSK, op. cit.*, pp.1033-35.
these replies are published, the Christians will perish and Islam will succeed.....\textsuperscript{186} In 1909, he started \textit{Turkey Samacharam} which used to publish articles on Osmania Caliphs and their socio-economic progress, but it could not survive beyond six months.\textsuperscript{187} The sudden demise of all the journals started by Makti Thangal due to lack of public support, speaks about the general condition of Muslims in literacy during the dawn of 20\textsuperscript{th} century.

\textbf{Nationalist Journals}

Calicut, the capital of Malabar District of Madras presidency, was also the cultural capital of Malabar Muslims. Many Muslim magazines and journals were published from Calicut during the first half of 20\textsuperscript{th} century. In 1922, the first Muslim newspaper in British Malabar was started and this was published every Wednesday. Karaparambu Imbi Mohamed, a progressive nationalist Muslim of Calicut, was the editor.\textsuperscript{188} The paper, which mainly covered war news, lasted only for one year.

\textit{Hidayath} started in November 1922 from Calicut, was another journal of nationalistic moorings, with K. Ahmad as the editor.\textsuperscript{189} Later, when the press was disposed of by the owner, he was forced to stop publishing and a 'Hidayath protection sangam' was orgaized by the editor for raising fund for setting up a press for \textit{Hidayath} and it was revived in 1924. But it could not survive after 1926, but within this short span of life, \textit{Hidayath} stood for Hindu-Muslim Unity in Malabar.

\textbf{Al-Ameen and the Mappilas}

\textsuperscript{186} \textit{Salahul Iqwan}, Vol. 3, Issue 18, 1902.
\textsuperscript{187} KKM. Kareem, \textit{SSMT, op. cit.}, p.23.
\textsuperscript{188} Parappil Koya, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 249.
\textsuperscript{189} \textit{Ibid.}, p. 249.
Among the Muslim journals of Calicut, the most lasting impact was made by *Al-Ameen*, the mouthpiece of the 'nationalist' Muslims of Malabar. The soul of this journal was Mohamad Abdurahiman, the veteran leader of the congress party in Malabar. It was started on 12th October 1924 (on a *Miladunnabi* day) as a trimonthly but became a daily on 4th August, 1930. During the post Rebellion period, the loyalist newspapers published cooked up reports about the rebellion, with deliberate intention of wrecking the national movement. As Vidwan T.K. Raman Menon, the sub editor of *Al-Ameen* observed, 'During that period, except *Mathrubhumi*, all Malayalam papers (*Keralapatrika, Manorama, Kerala Sanchari* and *Mitavadi*) and all English papers (*West Coast Reformer, West-Coast spectator* and *Champion*) did not dare to publish articles in favour of national movement or against the government. It was at this juncture that the second nationalist paper, *Al-Ameen* began to be published from Calicut. Even the nationalist paper *Mathrubhumi* took a partisan stand in covering the rebellion. Thus, an effective media to counter such a move and to present a matter of fact picture of the rebellion before the general public necessitated the establishment of a national newspaper in Malayalam. It was in this backdrop that Abdurahiman Sahib decided to start *Al-Ameen*. But along with this, he had some other objectives like the reform and regeneration of Muslim community and to inculcate national consciousness among Muslims.

It is difficult to summarise all the subjects covered by a newspaper like *Al-Ameen*, which survived for one and half decades. To what extent this

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192 See Chapter, 'Representation of the Rebellion and its Aftermath'.
nationalist newspaper of the Muslims of Malabar helped to bring about an identity among the Malabar Muslims, is the pertinent question here. *Al-Ameen* was never hesitant to use Islamic idioms for nationalist cause. The paper profusely quoted from *Quran* and *Hadith*, even when dealing with the most secular subjects. In an article in *Al-Ameen* of 6th July 1930 captioned *Jihadul Akbar*, with regard to Civil Disobedience Movement, the writer observes:

'If love of one's country is a part of his faith, if Islam is a religion that extols the message of freedom, it is the duty of true Muslim to sacrifice everything for the freedom and salvation of mother country and renounce life in the path of God....The great *nabi* [prophet], the *Khalifas* and *Imams* employed their valuable lives to win freedom from Unrighteousness and injustice. The flag of Islam bears the sign of establishment of freedom. The holy *Qura* shows the way to the ladder of freedom ...If there are any among Muslims who deride this passive resistance, they are guilty of having contravened the order of Islam. They are rats that nibble and eat up the great message of great *nabi* ... The great *nabi* himself has said that air, water and salt should not be taxed ...Muslim who die in the war of salt law breaking will certainly deserve compensation from God and will be blessed...... May this war of salt *Satyagraha*, the war of freedom, this *Jihadul Akbar* be victorious.\(^{194}\)

In connection with boycott of foreign cloths, *Al-Ameen* wrote, 'If Kerala welcomes foreign cloth chucked out from other province, it reflects everlasting dishonour on the people and will be an unpardonable sin that we commit against our woeful motherland and that this action calculated to help

\(^{194}\) *Al-Ameen*, 6th July 1930, MNNPR, July-Aug, 1930, p. 1069, TNA.
foreign capitalism, which has sucked India to dry skeleton, will not be approved even by Allah'.

Regarding the same issue, Al-Ameen exhorted the Muslims of Kerala to engage themselves in manufacture of Swadeshi cloth and thus help the material uplift of them, not to disgrace their holy religion by bringing foreign cloth during Ramzan month and to prove to the world by helping the Swadeshi movement that Muslims of Kerala are not behind others in patriotism.

Al-Ameen took up all the issues concerned with the Mappilas of Malabar like repeal of Mopla Outrages Act, Restoration of Mamburam Tangals, fight against Anadaman scheme, education of the Muslims etc. Al-Ameen deplored that the government of India did not provide the same concessions to Haj pilgrims as they give to Christian and Hindu pilgrims in respect of railway fare during Christmas time and important Hindu festivals and prayed that concession be extended to Haj pilgrims also. Al-Ameen of 29th September, 1925, in a leading article, condemning the Andaman scheme, observed that 'it was in the interest of Islam that Mappilas were being sent to Andamans. The arguments were on the lines already reported from time to time. It was also stated that the supply of cheap labour to develop islands was one of the motives for launching the scheme while the interior motive of government was to prevent once for all the return of Mappila convicts to Malabar and to destroy the 'turbulent race' in Andamans'. The paper concluded that the scheme should be opposed by means of vigorous propaganda and public meetings. The propaganda work was taken up by Al-Ameen for years.

195 Al-Ameen, 21st Nov. 1930, MNNPR, Nov-Dec, 1930, p. 1779, TNA.
196 Al-Ameen, 8th Jan. 1931, MNNPR, Jan-March, 1931, p.82.
197 Al-Ameen, dated 5th Jan. 1933.
Another issue, which Al-Ameen continuously raised, was the release of Mappila prisoners. Regarding this, in a long leading article *Al-Ameen* comments:

"At the time of riots, our Ma-Bap Government considered it to be an offence for a person to be born as Mappila at places where the riots occurred. At that time everybody raised a hue and cry to beat and kill the Mappilas. But the mentality of people at large has now given up the hard view that Mappila is still a Mappila.... Can anybody deny that they are political prisoners according to their status in life? What do all these proclaim except the weakness of Muslim community?"199 The paper therefore calls upon the community and its leaders to bestir themselves to bring about the release of Mappila prisoners.

About the Mopla Outrages Act, *Al-Ameen* made an ardent appeal to the leaders of Mappila community, deploiring their lethargy and urging them to take united action to repeal of Mopla Outrages Act. It observed, "There is no doubt whatever that if this lawless law continues to have a place in the statute book, it will be a source of unceasing danger to the Muslim community. Let the section authorising the inhuman burning of dead body and procedure followed in some cases of killing Mappilas and burning them with dogs, redound for ever to the credit of glorious British administration.200 The article pointed out that it was the most opportune moment for the Mappilas leaders to agitate intensely and to create public opinion in this direction.201

In another lead article, *Al-Ameen* reminded the Muslims of the sufferings of Mappila in the Rebellion of 1921 thus:

200 *Al-Ameen*, 9th March 1931, MNNPR, p.381.
‘The grief which our poor brothers and sisters had to suffer is indescribable. How many of them became the targets for shots of British soldiers and how many of them received on themselves their sharp byonets, suffocated in the wagon and not having a drop of water to quench their thirst, how many died biting each other and drinking each other's blood in fierceness of that thirst. It is difficult to describe in what various ways poor Muslim women and children were maltreated’. 202

Even when criticizing the government against the Vernacular Press Act Al-Ameen used a religious tone. The paper says 'Prophet Nabi has said' – speak the truth eventhough it may cause you trouble – It looks as if it will not be possible at present especially in Malabar to conduct a paper in accordance with prophet's holy word ...Al-Ameen has been living till now bearing the gravity of these words of Rasul [Prophet] well in mind. But it seems some people are attempting to make Ameen live like a 'deaf devil'. 203

Another issue, which Al-Ameen consistently raised, was Muslim Education. Umpteen articles in this regard were published in it through out its career. In 1925 itself Al-Ameen wrote – 'it cannot but be said that the indifference shown by people, the leading men and the Government in the matter of Muslim education in Malabar has now become notorious. The government themselves have often said that constant recurrences of riots in Malabar is due to want of education. How far have government tried to remove ignorance, which they themselves say that is the cause of riots'. 204

In the editorial titled 'Two words to Muslims' Al-Ameen examines the causes of the decline of Muslims in Malabar:

202 Al-Ameen, 22 April 1931, p. 592, TNA
203 Al-Ameen, 29th July 1930, p. 1193, TNA.
204 Al-Ameen, 29th Jan 1925, MNNPR, 1925, p. 495, TNA.
What will be the mentality of those who think about the condition of 15 lakhs of Muslims of Kerala? Anybody's heart will be torn to see the plight of Kerala Muslims who neither know nor try to know the cause of this downfall. The cause of this downfall is nothing but that we have lost that power which caused progress in the past. The more we neglected the teachings of the prophet, the more we began to decline. We lost our pride and glory. No education, no wealth and, above all, we lack a community structure to live like a community. The moment the beauty of Islam ceased to throb our hearts, the beginning of our decline also set in. We began to forgo the traditions of prophet and *Bidaths* [innovations] began to creep in to our religion. The only way out now is to practice the tenets of our religion in our daily life ... The Muslims should be ready to desist, if needed ready to fight, the designs of the enemies to destroy our community. It is a period when rampant competition is going on between different communities and in this scramble, if they want success the Muslims have to make others understand that no one can rival them in terms of solidarity and material well being.  

These types of communiterian appeals were incessantly made through the pages of *Al-Ameen* for about 15 years and being the most popular daily among Mappilas of Malabar, these appeals had its impact. As pointed out by K. Umar Moulavi, 'those who had written about Sahib and his *Al-Ameen* mentioned about his patriotism and service to National Movement alone. Very little was written about the yeoman service of his paper in the efforts to reform the Muslims of Kerala. *Al-Ameen* fought in emphatic voice to purge out the blind beliefs and rituals embedded in Muslim society.  

In an lead article by M.S. titled 'Islamic Unity', *Al-Ameen* reminds the *Muslims* that they were the descendants of the pious ones, as well as great

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*205 Al-Ameen*, Editorial, 28th August, 1928.  
*206 K. Umar Moulavi, op. cit., p. 86.*
warriors and rulers. 'In order to regain that community known for its bravery and strength, Are you not able to unite against your enemies? .... Did you forget the basic tenets of Islam that all Muslims are brothers'? On another occasion, P.A. Sainudhin Sahib in an article captioned 'To Kerala Muslims' wrote, "suffer; the prophet is merciful to them that they are steadfast in suffering'. This is here worthy of remembrance. Do not holy verses quoted above tell us that such troubles are signs of success? Fear and timidity are not the qualities of Muslims. ...And the history of Islam teaches us that by suffering, sacrifice and non-violence the Muslim community and religion and country have derived great benefit. The service of community and service of the country are indispensible duty of ours. It is deplorable that Kerala Muslims are backward in these matters'. Such religious idioms were consistently used by Al-Ameen to bring Mappilas to the path of nationalist politics.

In charting out the path to Muslim incorporation in to the mainstream Indian nationalism, Abdurahiman Sahib and his mouthpiece used copious quotation from Quran and Hadith to prove that the followers of prophet could not live under a government which impeded their religious freedom. He was in a way aping the examples set by Moulana Abdul Kalam Azad. Thus, religion as the basis of participation in Nationalist Movement found voice in most of the articles of Al-Ameen which we have examined already. This profuse use of Islamic symbolism indirectly helped to strengthen the community identity of Muslims of Malabar. What Al-Ameen did was to advance its nationalist purpose through communitarian mobilization. Every year, Al-Ameen used to publish special issues in connection with Milad-unnabi (prophet's birthday), loaded with articles of interest to Muslims. It was the most popular daily in Malabar and as such the British authorities

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207 Al-Ameen, 28th August, 1928.
208 Al-Ameen, 9th December 1930, MNNPR, p.1828.
banned its publication twice. For, the chief secretary of Madras wrote in 1933, 'Mohammed Abdurahiman, the editor of Al-Ameen, a west coast journal is apparently out to make trouble among Mappilas'.\(^ {209}\) As E.M.S. Namboodiripad opined, 'both Al-Ameen and Aikyam did similar work in social sphere – educational uplift of common Muslims by eradicating blind beliefs. They did for Kerala Muslims what Sir Syed Ahmad Khan did for Indian Muslims. Had this work been done a generation before, the 1921 Rebellion could have been avoided or atleast the intensity and ferocity could have been reduced ...Both these journals got wide support among the Moplas. It was this generation of Muslims which flourished under the shadow of these journals, who later became the workers of nationalist Muslim organization as well as Muslim League'.\(^ {210}\)

Reformist Journals

Even prior to the birth of Aikya Sangam, many Muslim journals in Travancore and Cochin began to disseminate the reformist ideas among the Muslims. Malabar Islam, a weekly started in 1909 from Cochin with P. Abdu Muhamad Haji as the editor, was a reformist journal which had subscribers in Malabar. The journal, which functioned well for one decade, did great service in spreading the message of the Khilafath movement as well as the reformist ideology among Muslims. During the same period, Vakkom Abdul Kader Moulavi started a journal Muslim in 1906 from Vakkom with the intention of reforming the community and it lasted for about five years.\(^ {211}\) A printed appeal made by Shaik Hamadani Thangal, the most respected theologian of the age, to support both Malabar Islam and Muslim financially,

\(^ {209}\) FNR, dated Feb. 1933, No: p. 4-3. Public (General), T.N.A.


was widely circulated in Malabar but the response was very meagre.\textsuperscript{212} The 'Muslim' monthly spear headed the Muslim renaissance movement in Kerala. Though it was published from Travancore, it could bring about a revolution within the community of Muslims all over Kerala. The editorial of the first issue of \textit{Musilm} says, 'Each and every community has started to strive for its welfare and therefore, the Muslims also must have a journal of this sort, to educate them about their problems and to bring about necessary reforms'.\textsuperscript{213} 'Enlighten the community through education' was the slogan of this monthly and it continuously urged the authorities about various needs of the community in educational sphere. It also took up women's issues and several articles by prominent women of the age were published in it, emphasising the significance of women's education.

It was in \textit{Muslim Vruthantham}, a fortnightly from Aleppy during 1917-8, under the editorship A.M. Abdul Kader Moulavi, that the celebrated polemical debate between K.M. Seethi Sahib (the reformist) and the editor was serialized.\textsuperscript{214} This debate, which continued for several issues of this journal, helped to create a new awareness about true religious tenets of Islam among the Muslims. Under the banner of \textit{Aikya Sangam}, a Malayalam journal \textit{Muslim Aikyam} was published from Eriyad in 1923 with Manappat Kunhimohamed Musaliyar as editor.\textsuperscript{215} Since it was in Malayalam, it failed to attract readers and had a premature death. In the same year, \textit{Aikya Sangam} came out with its second journal, \textit{Al Irshad} in Arabic-Malayalam, with E.K. Moulavi as editor.\textsuperscript{216} It was printed at Muhiyudhin litho press, Eriyad and lasted for about 18 months only, but within such a short period, it could

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{212} Abdu Majida, \textit{op.cit.}, p. 109.
\item \textsuperscript{213} \textit{The Muslim}, January 1906.
\item \textsuperscript{214} Abu Majida, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 109.
\item \textsuperscript{215} M. Abdu Sammad, \textit{op. cit.}, p.134.
\item \textsuperscript{216} \textit{Al-Irshad} (monthly), Vol. 1, No:1, 1\textsuperscript{st} 1923.
\end{itemize}
spread the message of reformist ideology in Malabar. It was through this journal that many fatwas of K.M. Moulavi, related to religious issues reached the general public. *Al-Irshad* relentlessly fought against the un-Islamic practices like *Kodikuthu nercha*, *Ratib* etc., with the firm conviction that these were against the spirit of Islam. This naturally invited the wrath of the conservative wing and they resorted to an anti-*Al-Irshad* propaganda depicting the journal as 'anti-Islamic' and hence, it was stopped publishing after a span of 18 months. In 1925 *Aikya Sangam* started another journal from Eriyad itself called *Al-Islah* (AM) with E. Moidu Moulavi as the editor. Though 23 issues alone were brought out, the journal published many scholarly articles on Islam and current developments in Islamic world and the *Fatwas* of K.M. Moulavi. Though short lived, both the journals exerted a tremendous impact upon the Muslims of Malabar. 'The question and answer' column handled by K.M. Moulavi (1886-1964) was the most notable item in the *Al-Islah*. Behind the growth of reformist ideology in Kerala, both these journals were instrumental.

Another journalistic venture of the reformists was the publication of *Al-Murshid*, a journal in Arabi-Malayalam from Tirurangadi in 1935.\(^{217}\) It was through this journal of *KJU*, that the leading Muslim writers like T.K. Mohammad, E.K. Moulavi, MCC Abdurahiman, M.C.C. Hassan Moulavi, P.V. Mohammad Moulavi, C.N. Ahmed Moulavi, P. Mohammed Salih Moulavi (Valapattanam) and Saeed Moulavi (Wandoor) emerged in Malabar. Leading scholars of reformist group were the columnists of *Al-Murshid*. For eg; M.C.C. Abdurahiman dealt with the translation of *Al-Bukhari*, the Hadith collection; M.C.C. Ahamad engaged the columns, ‘Awwalul Muslimum’ and ‘Atharaveeh’. K.M. Moulavi’s column ‘why did the Muslims decline?’ was a

\(^{217}\) Abu Majida, *op.cit.*, p.106.
translation of Shakib Arislan's Arabic work 'Lima Tahkarul Muslim' K.M. Moulavi wrote a regular column on 'Haj' and 'Namoz'.

In its July issue of 1938, Al-Murshid published an article titled *Pattiniyum, Pariharavum* (Poverty and Remedy), which tried to lay bare the arguments of the socialists about social progress and to prove that Islam was the only remedy to the problem of poverty. It says, "India is filled with the poor ... The socialists who have sprang up in our country now hold the view that the destruction of capitalism is the remedy to poverty. We can't understand this logic that the demise of capitalism will resolve poverty. Islam has put forward a definite programme to resolve this problem. It is *Zakath*."  

Other important regular columns in Al-Murshid were 'Quran and non-Muslims and 'Qutuba Reform' by U.N. Moulavi. These columns triggered of a controversy in Malabar and were countered in the publications of the orthodox Ulemas in Malabar. Another contentious column by C.A.Muhamad Moulavi in Al-Murshid was *Ihyaussunnah*, which exposed the innovations in *Ibadaths* (religious rituals). Similarly, the translation of *Tuhfathul Mujahideen* of Sheik Zainudhin by K. Moosakutty Moulavi was published through Al-Murshid. M.C.C. Abdurahiman wrote 'Khatimunabiyun' in Al-Murshid exposing the hollowness of the arguments of Ahmadiyas. Thus Al-Murshid functioned well for four years (1935-1939) and later in 1949 its publication was renewed with K.M. Moulavi as editor but only to live for one year. It was during its second tenure that A.K. Abdul Latheef Moulavi, K.K. Jamaludeen Moulavi and K. Ummar Moulavi came to limelight as columnists within the theological sphere of Malabar. A series of Fatwas of K.M. Moulavi related to *Tawassul Isthigaza* quoting *Ibaraths* (evidences) from

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218 Ibid., p. 173.
219 Al-Murshid, July 1938.
220 Al-Murshid, July 1938.
221 K.K.M Kareem, Note no: 92, op.cit., p. 175.
Quran and Hadith in Al Murshid (Book No.2 to Book No.9) threatened the very foundation of the Muslim orthodoxy in Malabar. 222

'Al-Itihad', started in 1954 under the editorship of E.K. Moulavi from Tirurangadi, in Arabi-Malayalam, was another journal of the reformists group in Malabar. It survived for about three years and the most significant column was the 'History of Islahi movement in Kerala' by the editor himself, which analysed the history of reform movement in Kerala from 1922 to that of 12th Annual conference of Aikya Sangam in Kannur in 1934.

Journals for the cause of women

In 1925, P.K. Moosakutty Sahib started a journal for women Muslim Mahila from Cochin. This journal contained valuable articles related to the position of Muslim women in Kerala. In an article in 'Muslim Mahila' titled 'our women' K. Mohamed writes, 'the condition of Muslim women is deplorable. They get neither religious education nor temporal education. Cooking and gossip are their pastimes. Though they can read Quran, they don't know anything about the belief system and the ritual aspect of Islam. So they are unable to educate their children properly. Thus lack of education among women is the prominent cause of the decline of the community'. 223

In 1946, another Muslim women's magazine called Muslim Vanitha was started by a Muslim woman, Haleema Beevi of Tiruvalla 224 and this journal was a catalyst in enlightening the Muslim women in Kerala. It published many articles quoting verses from Quran and Hadith arguing for the freedom of women. In 1947, she began to edit 'Bharatha Chandrika' which was a mouthpiece of Muslim League in South Kerala.

222 Ibid., p. 193.
223 Muslim Mahila, January 1927, Cochin, p.4.
In 1929, K.C. Komukutty Moulavi, the nationalist Muslim leader started a Muslim women’s journal *Nisaul Islam* from Calicut. It lasted for about two years.\(^{225}\) It did yeoman service in the realm of reform and uplift of women within the Muslim community. The column of K.C. Komukutty Moulavi regarding the commentary on *Surath ul Aswar* of Quran in the journal captivated the attention of Muslim scholars.\(^{226}\) He also translated and published the historical narrative of Moulana Abdul Haleem through the issues of *Nisaul Islam*.

**Journals of the Traditional Ulemas**

When the reformist *Mujahids* were making steady progress in print areas, the traditionalist Sunnis also stepped in to this domain. The founder of *Samastha Kerala Jamiyyathul Ulema*, A.P. Ahmad Musliyar started a Journal from Calicut named *Al-Bayan*.\(^{227}\) This official organ of the *SKJU* could not survive long and it ceased to exist after five issues. From 1950 onwards, it was published from Parapangadi and lasted for about ten years. Moulavi Abdul Bari, Paravanna Moideen kutty Musliyar, Kaderi Mohammed Moulavi etc were prominent editors of *Al-Bayan*. *Al-Bayan* always tried to counter the arguments of the reformists and it utilized every opportunity to score over the reformists. In an article aimed at the reformists, *Al-Bayan* says:

‘The *Wahabis* (reformists) are the organization of those who blackened the beautiful face of Islam by composing a dirty book *Risalathul fil Banki* and started a Muslim bank, undermining the injections of *Quran* and *Hadith* about interest. Everybody knows that *Al-Ithihad* is an organ, which strives hard to propagate the message of *Wahabis*.\(^{228}\) This was the tone and tenure of

\(^{226}\) Ibid.,
\(^{228}\) *Al-Bayan* (AM), Issue 5, February, 1955.
Al-Bayan. In 1950's there was a heated debate between Al-Bayan and Al-Ithihad on various religious issues. 'Hidayathul Muhmineen' was another monthly started by traditional Sunni Ulemas in 1950 from Calicut. In the editorial of the first issue, the agenda of the journal was clearly stated thus:

'All who adhere to Ahlusunnathwal Jamath agree that something is to be done to check the activities of those who propagate among ordinary people that the rituals and Tawafsul Isthigaza, which Muslims have been practising for about 1300 years, are anti-Islamic. It is with that purpose that this magazine has been started'. In the same issue, K.M. Mohammad Koya's article 'Why did the Muslim community decline?', tells that the reformists and their study classes, sermons and educational institutions are the real cause behind the decline'. It concludes that the Mujahids are responsible for the conversion of Unnian to Hinduism. In the November issue of 1951, Hidayathul Muslimeen contained an article titled 'From Socialism to Atheism' which examined the dangers of communism. Another journal of Sunnis was 'Al-burhan' (A.M) started in 1960 by K.V. Mohammed Musliyar from Parappangadi, which lasted for only one year. In 1926 itself, P. Hussain Moulavi, the founder secretary of SKJU had started Malabari from Calicut to give vent the views of his organization. Later he shifted it to Tanur where it become a daily but could not survive long. During the last phase of his life, he became a supporter of Mujahid Movement and revived the 'Malabari' in 1953 from A.R. Nagar.

Other Muslim Journals

229 Hidayathul Muslimin (A.M), Book 1-Issue 1st October 1950.
230 Hidayathul Muslimin (AM), Book 1-Issue 1st October 1950, p.11.
231 Unnian, a member of Kilimannil family of Malappuram, who converted to Hinduism in 1948, was killed by the Mappilas.
232 Hidayathul Muslimin (AM), Book 1- Issue 1 Nov. 1951.
In 1925 K. Mohammed of Chennamangalur started *Yuvalokam* from Calicut and in 1926 this was taken up by K.C. Komukutty Moulavi and it survived for about nine years. Prominent writers of this weekly were Vakkom Kader Moulavi, E.K. Moulavi, K. Muhamadali, K.M. Seethi Sahib, A. Mohamed Kannu etc.\(^{234}\) The journal was committed to Nationalism and Islamic renaissance. Many articles from Arabic and Urdu journals were published in it.

In 1930, Imbichi Mohamed started a monthly from Calicut called *Muslim Shakari*, which could not survive long. In the same name a monthly was started by P.M. Ismail from Kodungallur also. O. Mahinali, the leader of Malabar Muslim League, started two journals from Tellichery. *Yuvajanamitram* in 1929 and 'Yuvakesari' in 1934, but both of them had a premature death. In 1945, he started 'Mujahid' to propagate the message of Muslim League but due to lack of support, he withdrew his journal. 'Bharata Chandrika' from Tiruvalla during 1945-48 was another journal, which supported the cause of Muslim League.

With missionary intention, P.M. Abdul Kader Moulavi started *Ishath*, a monthly from Alleppey in 1930. It had subscribers in Malasia and Ceylone and was managed by Kerala Muslim Ishaath Sangam, an organisation formed for religious propagation. Another journal started in 1924 with a missionary zeal was *Shamsul Islam* from Karunagapalli with Badarudhin as editor.\(^{235}\) This monthly, which lasted for about seven years, was popular in Cochin and Malabar. It was in this journal that the articles of Moulana Moudidi were first published in Malayalam.\(^{236}\)

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\(^{234}\) Ravindran Elamkode, *op.cit.*, p.11.

\(^{235}\) *Prabodhanam*, special issue, p.110.

\(^{236}\) Abu-Majida, *op.cit.*, p.111.
'Mappila Review' was another journal started in 1940 from Calicut by K. Mohamed Sahib, the DEO of Malabar during the British period. It published articles on religion, history socio-cultural issues, science and short stories. An attractive column in this journal was the letters of K. Mohamed from England, the first Malabar Muslim to study in England. Felicitating the magazine, Uloor S. Parameswar Iyer, prominent poet of Malayalam wrote, 'I am happy that it is with the intention of educating the Malayalis about the real message of Islam and thereby to develop friendship and mutual understanding between different communities that you have started this journal'. Until 1946, the journal functioned well creating a literary proclivity among the Mappilas of Malabar.

In 1942, 'Mithram' with N. Bappu as editor was started from Malappuram but could not last beyond two years. In 1943, K. Aboobacker published *Pourashakti*, a daily from Calicut with the financial assistance of Koyappathodi family of Vazhakkad and continued up to 1948.

*Chandrika*, a weekly from Tellichery started on 24th March 1932, was another notable journal of the Malabar Muslims. C.P. Mammukeyi, M.P. Moosa Sahib, A.K. Kunhi Mayin Sahib, K.M. Seethi, Abdul Sathar Sait were stalwarts behind the journal. In 1945, it was shifted to Calicut and began to be published as a daily. It was the official organ of Muslim League in Malabar and played a crucial role in educating the Mappilas of Malabar in political sphere and drawing them towards a communitarian political philosophy in Malabar.

About the role of *Chandrika*, P.M. Sadik Moulavi, the editor of *Al-Farook* wrote in 1957 that, 'it is the mouthpiece of Muslim community. There may be differences of opinion; still, it is of the community. Nobody will

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237 *Mappila Review*, Book 1, Issue 1, May 1941.

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desert his own children on account of handicaps. So one has to forgive and bear the pitfalls of Chandrika’. A Jamathe Islami sympathiser like Sadik Moulavi had realized the importance of the existence of a communitarian daily and until 1980's it remained as the only Muslim daily in Kerala.

Besides these journals, umpteen Muslim publications were there which could not survive for even one year and some of them died with a single issue itself.240

Conclusion

It would be pertinent here to outline some of the broad conclusions, which follow from the above exhaustive survey of print culture of Mappilas of Malabar. As pointed out by Francis Robinson, print irreversibly undermined the authority of rural ulamas who were traditionally the sole custodians of Islamic knowledge and its transmission through dars and religious sermons. Now any Ahmad, Mohmud or Muhamed could claim to speak increasingly for Islam.241 Even the layman got access to the scriptural world of Islam. Printing destroyed localized understanding and reception of texts and created broad audience. Though this democratisation of theology was disliked by traditionalists, they too fully realized the importance of print media to defend their views. Thus, print media became an arena where various groups, the traditional Sunnis, the reformist Mujahids, Jamathe Islami, Ahmadiyas and various subsects clashed, in order to advance their interests. This resulted in the percolation of religious ideas and awareness among the common folk. Much of the polemical debates that took place between these rival groups were facilitated by the print media and these controversies had serious implications for the Muslim identity in Malabar.

239 Al-Farook, 15th September 1957, pp.3-5.
240 A detailed list of the Muslim journals have been given in the Appendix X.
Though debates and controversies had always existed within Malabar Islam even prior to print technology, print accelerated the process of Islamisation in Malabar. Thus, though print is considered to be a product of modernity, it can be at the service of everything that is not modern. As Eisenstein opined, 'the impact of printing on western scriptural faiths points in two quite opposite directions, towards 'Erasmian' trends and ultimately higher criticism and modernism and towards more rigid orthodoxy culminating in literal fundamentalism and Bible Belts'.

Print also contributed to the strengthening of exclusiveness of the Muslims in Malabar. The large production of literary works grounded in Islam provided them a separate identity. In other words it strengthened the frontiers separating them from others. The anti-Muslim missionary propaganda, the fear of degeneration in Muslim society, all resulted in an increased awareness of the Muslims of their identity and led them to defend it from threat. A tendency noticeable in Muslim writings was to glorify the Islamic achievements in the past and inviting fellow Muslims to rise and prosper on that line. Advice on how to be a proper Muslim in every way was the favorite topic of the articles published in Muslim journals.

The biographical notes in these journals about great personalities of Islam were an attempt to present the past as an ideal to create an emotional hankering in readers for bygone days. A new focus on the person of prophet could also be noticed. The writers looked back to remote past to the primal sanctity and glory of early Muslim life, in order to purify the Muslims of their un-Islamic customs and practices. They held the view that unless Muslim religious ideas of the day could be freed from superstitious accretions, Mappila community would not progress. With this in view, at times, certain

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writers, ignoring the rigid observance to the fundamentals of Islam, prescribed some adjustment and accommodation with contemporary demands. Scholars now searched with increasing vigour into the resources of both Islamic tradition as well as western civilization, to find answers to contemporary challenges. *Risalathun-fil- Banki* of K.M. Moulavi legitimizing modern banking system was an attempt in this regard.\(^{243}\) The print also created a Muslim public sphere in favour of the improved condition of Muslim women. Issues like polygamy, divorce, law of inheritance, *kathukuthu* (ear piercing), dowry etc were taken up by Muslim literati during the period.

Another area, where a rational trend could be identified in print media, was the non-religious approach to education. Besides an increased interest in general education, there were efforts to introduce secular subjects and non-Islamic languages in *Madrasas*, in the belief that a combination of both modes of education would enlighten Muslim mind to accept change for betterment of society. Right from Makti Tangal's period, we come across exhortations in print media to empower the community through education, both secular and religious. The Malayalam generally spoken by Mappilas itself underwent drastic changes. It is in *Jamathe Islami* literature we come across chaste Malayalam for the first time and through this literature new terminologies like 'Islamic movement', 'Islamic revolution', 'Islam brotherhood', 'Islam and political philosophy' etc emerged in the religious discourse of Malabar Islam and Muslim literati began to ponder over these new terms.\(^{244}\) Thus print, 'as an innovative technology became an agent of change'\(^{245}\) in Malabar Muslim Society.


\(^{244}\) K. Moidu Moulavi, *op. cit.*, 146.

To sum up, print contributed to a range of major developments in Malabari Islam, the emergence of scriptural Islam as against syncretic Islam, the strengthening of pan-Islamic layer in the Muslim sense of identity, the levelling of an assault on the *Ulema* as the sole interpreters of Islam, the opening of the way towards a new understanding of Islam such as those of reformists and traditionalists. In short, print media revolutionized religious understanding among the Muslims of Malabar and contributed much for forging community solidarity among them.