CHAPTER 11

COLONIAL EDUCATION
AND THE MUSLIMS
IN KERALA
In the medieval period, Islamic community gained a highly exalted position in the socio-cultural and economic realm of Kerala. During that period the Muslims enjoyed a monopoly on overseas trade and they developed a healthy relation with the Zamorin of Calicut. The cordial relation between Zamorin and the Muslims was an important factor for the development of Islamic community in Kerala. But the landing of Vasco da Gama the Portuguese navigator, at Calicut in May 1498 marked the beginning of a new era in the history of Kerala.

The Portuguese contact made some drastic changes in the political, economic and socio-cultural field of Kerala. Gradually the Muslims lost their trading monopoly and the Europeans became the masters of overseas trade. The Dutch were the first protestant nation in Europe to establish trade exchanges with Kerala by challenging Portuguese trade monopoly. The Dutch period of Kerala history began with the capture of Cochin from the Portuguese in 1663. The Dutch made some significant contributions to the economy of Kerala. But in the educational and cultural field, the Dutch left little impact.

Like the Portuguese and the Dutch, the English also came to Kerala for trade. The merchants of English East India Company came to India for trade and their sole motive was to earn maximum profit. The company purchased Indian goods like cotton, silk, handicrafts, spices etc. and sold in England and other

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European countries at profitable price\(^2\). But when the company became a territorial power it could control and direct the economy of India and used the same for maximum profit.

The later half of the 18\(^{th}\) century witnessed the beginning of the Industrial Revolution in England resulting in a powerful and influential industrial and manufacturing class in England. The Europeans' arrival in India and the establishment of colonies were its after effects.

The spread of English education among Indians was intended to meet the requirements of the British colonial administration. The employment of a large number of Indians in the subordinate services was an administrative necessity. Their training in western ways of thinking facilitated the functioning of an essentially western administrative machinery\(^3\). There was a general impression in India that the English education was introduced by the British rulers for their administrative convenience and the course was deliberately designed to make the Indians only fit for clerks\(^4\).

Sir John Malcom, Governor of Bombay wrote in 1828; 'one of the chief objects I expect from diffusing education among the natives of India, is our increased power of associating them in every part of our administration'\(^5\).

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\(^4\) R.C. Majumdar (ed.), *op.cit.*, p.34.

The British government was however the principal agent in disseminating modern education in India. It established a network of schools and colleges in India, which turned out innumerable, educated Indians well versed in modern education. The British government organised a huge, extensive and well-ramified state machinery to administer the conquered territory. A large number of educated persons was required to staff this immense machinery of political rule.

Therefore, it became necessary to establish schools and colleges in India to turn out educated people who would staff the administrative apparatus of the British rule. Britain entrusted the key posts in the state machinery to the British and filled the subordinate post with educated Indians.

A group of English men, Mountstuart Elphinstone prominent among them, also held that English education "would make the Indian people gladly accept the British rule". It was hoped that the enlightenment due to education would reconcile the people to British rule and even engender a sense of attachment to it. However all sections of people took a keen interest in English education in the beginning of the 20th century.

Though the Muslim community was one of the important communities in Kerala, on the basis of education, they were treated as a backward class. Western education widely began to spread in Malabar during the first half of the 19th

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6 Ibid.
century. But unfortunately the earlier efforts were an utter failure as in the case of Muslims and there were enough reasons for the same.

After the *Srirangapatnam Treaty*, the British authority in Malabar witnessed about more than 90 upheavals against them. Due to the military superiority of the British they succeeded in suppressing all such revolts, which ultimately led to alienation between the rulers and the ruled, that is, between the British and the Mappilas. The British government succeeded in enlisting the support of landlords, which were mainly Hindu landlords. Most of the tenants were Muslims and hence the British could possibly establish a communal tinge to all those riots as against Hindu landlords.

The heavy land revenue and suppressive and oppressive activities of the landlords had made the Malabar Mappilas rioters. In order to create a communal gulf among lords and tenants the British administrative historians were trying to depict all riots in a communal outlook and named them as *Mappila Rebellion*. Gradually the resistance of the Malabar peasants towards the

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8 The treaty was signed by Tippusultan of Mysore and the British. As per the treaty of *Srirangapatnam* in 1792 the whole of Malabar except Wynad, Cochin and Croorg were ceded to the English by Tippu. Thus Malabar came in to the hands of the British according to the terms of the treaty.


11 An important event connected with the political movement in Malabar, during this period was the Malabar Rebellion of 1921. The rebellion was led by such leaders as Variankunnath Kunjahammad Haji, Siti Koya Thangal and Ali Musaliar. The rebellion was at last suppressed by the British government with an iron hand. It may be
British land policy took the form of an opposition towards all the policies of the British. Consequently the Mappilas began to view every British policy with an eye of suspicion. This was also true in the case of modern education.

The British brought about many changes in the agrarian sector after Malabar came under the Madras Presidency. The newly introduced agricultural policies made life hard for majority of the Muslim farmers and the changes in tax collection also affected adversely taking the common farmers to poverty. Meanwhile the warring kings of Malabar also presented their kingdom to the British and the situation was not different with the kings of Travancore and Cochin.

Slowly, the people who were primarily against the agricultural policies along began to object the British policies as a whole. They thought that the various reforms that the English introduced in Malabar in the administrative, economic and judicial fields were ruinous to the Mappilas. Hence the Muslims suspected each of the British reforms and the same happened mainly in the case of modern education too. The earliest efforts to spread English education in Malabar had been a part of the District Administrative System.

The Christian missionaries and the government gave all kinds of support to English education. The activities of Christian missionaries and socio-religious

mentioned that the rebellion of 1921 was a gigantic national upheaval against British authority and not a mere Mappila outbreak as British writers have characterised.

12 K.Madhavan Nair, Malabar Kalapam (Mal), 2002,p.78.
policies of the British government aimed at asserting the superiority of western culture. The Christian religious propagation was the main objective of the missionaries and they used education as best tool for the purpose\textsuperscript{14}. The missionaries promoted modern education and they established several schools throughout Kerala.

Woods Despatch of 1854 was another important landmark in the history of Indian education\textsuperscript{15}. Following the directions given by the Despatch of 1854, the government of Madras pursued the educational activities in the Presidency, including Malabar, very actively. It opened a few vernacular schools in Malabar. Certain missionary schools set up in the first half of 19\textsuperscript{th} century helped, to some extent, the promotion of western education among the various communities in Malabar\textsuperscript{16}. The Dispatch directed the government to take special interest in institutions for specific professions such as medical science and engineering to encourage education among the Muslims and to give frank and cordial support to the education of girls.

The policies introduced to nourish education by the British government in the early years were not helpful for the Reformation of Muslims in Kerala. The 1871 census report recorded that the Mappilas have yet shown very little desire

\textsuperscript{14} M.Abdulsamad, Islam in Kerala, Groups and Movements in 20\textsuperscript{th} Century, 1998, p.24.
for education. In 1871, only 15693 or 2.7 percent among them were literate which increased to 62344 or 6.2 percent by 1921, 13.0 percent\(^7\).

But at the same time almost all Muslims continued to get religious education through the Madrasas. They established a network of primary Madrasas throughout Kerala. They were one-man-centered educational institutions. During this period also the two types of religious educational systems (Madrasa) existed in Kerala, the first one was for elementary education and the other one was for higher education. The elementary educational centre was known as Othupalli giving basic knowledge of Islamic principles. Most of the Othuppallis were run in the houses of the Mulas. There was no age limit for students.

The educational system introduced by the British was strongly opposed through these religious educational centres on the belief that it threatened to subvert the very basis of Islamic faith. As W.W Hunter observed, “our system of public education, which has awakened the Hindus from the sleep of centuries and quickened the inert masses with some of the noble impulses of a nation is opposed to the traditions, unsuited to the requirements and hateful to the religion of the Mussalmans. Therefore they opposed secular education”\(^8\). At the

\(^7\) K.N.Panikkar, Against Lord and State, 1992,p.54.
\(^8\) A.P.Ibrahim Kunju, Mappila Muslims of Kerala their History and Culture, 1989, p.251.
same time almost all the Muslims were literate as in the case of Islamic education\(^\text{19}\).

However at that time Islam had become established religion in Kerala and the *Madrasas* were given much importance. For *Madrasa* education, the Muslim community primarily depended on Arabic and *Arabi Malayalam*\(^\text{20}\) languages as medium of instruction. Though Malayalam was their mother tongue they did not give much attention to learn the language. They thought that Arabic and *Arabi Malayam* languages only were essential for them and considered that Malayalam or English has no particular use for them\(^\text{21}\). Moreover Mulas preached through the *Madrasas* that the worldly life is very short and these languages were insignificant. But the other world (life after death) would be permanent and Arabic will be relevant there.

The religious leaders were able to exert great influence among the Muslim community in Kerala at that time. But these leaders did not encourage English or western education in the early years. It was the Christian community that favoured the promotion of English education and the Muslim leaders were suspicious of the activities of the missionaries in the sense that modern


\(^{20}\) *Arabi Malayalam* was a new language developed during the colonial period. The main feature of this language was writing Malayalam through Arabic script.

education was meant for the conversion to Christian religion\(^2\). That was why they opposed English education and even propagated English as *Naraga basha*\(^2\) through their religious educational institutions.

Basically the Muslims in Kerala were an economically backward community and the changes in the agricultural sector in the 19\(^{th}\) century again must have worsened their condition. New land taxes imposed after Malabar came under the British rule made life of the ordinary Muslim farmers difficult. The farmers were not able to spend enough time to think over the new educational system or the necessity of modern education, when their life was in danger. So they trained their children for conventional occupations. This was one of the reasons for not allowing their children go far modern education.

The British started English education among the Malabar Muslims not with the intention of reforming them. Rather, the Reports\(^4\) from those who made study on the rebellions came out with a conclusion that educational backwardness of Muslims was the reason for the rebellions that paved the way for the introduction of modern education. Of course, the British thought that those who obtained English education would come under their control. Thus to

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\(^3\) *Naragabasha* a term very popular during the colonial period. The Muslim religious leaders were completely opposed to the English Education. They said that the language of English was the language of hell. And they discouraged English education.

\(^4\) After the Malabar rebellions the British government appointed a committee to enquire in to the reasons for violence. The committee gave a report and it pointed out the reasons for the violence and recommendation for solving the burning issues of the *Mappila* Muslims of Malabar.
spread modern education they even formulated laws. But it could be seen that no significant developments were brought into the Muslim community with the early attempts of the British.

**Table 1**

Progress of *Mappila* Education (Boys) during 1868-69 to 1870-71
(Modern education)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>European</th>
<th>East Indians</th>
<th>Native Christians</th>
<th>Hindus</th>
<th>Muslims</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1868-69</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>601</td>
<td>1589</td>
<td>9649</td>
<td>309</td>
<td>12184</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1869-70</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>709</td>
<td>1870</td>
<td>11412</td>
<td>348</td>
<td>14354</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1870-71</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>575</td>
<td>1898</td>
<td>14439</td>
<td>369</td>
<td>14324</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

25 K.T. Muhammadali, op.cit., p.44.
Table-2

Progress of *Mappila* Education (Girls) during 1868-69 to 1870-71
(Modern education)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>European</th>
<th>East Indians</th>
<th>Native Christians</th>
<th>Hindus</th>
<th>Muslims</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1868-69</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>254</td>
<td>417</td>
<td>360</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1045</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1869-70</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>315</td>
<td>469</td>
<td>583</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1367</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1870-71</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>252</td>
<td>389</td>
<td>603</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1257</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The tables show the awfully negligible role played by the Muslims in modern education. Going through table 1, one can see that the growth of boys' education was insignificant. It is also notable in table 2, where girls' education is dealt with, that not even a single Muslim woman came forward to undergo modern education at that time. But as in the case of religious education, the condition of Muslim was far better. Each and every Muslims student irrespective of sex went through the primary religious institutions of their locality.

According to 1891 census, Madras, of which Malabar formed a part, possessed a level of literacy higher than any other province. Malabar, on the west coast, was relatively advanced. However the position of Muslims was deplorable. As per the census of 1891 out of a total population of 413085 males, 2

only 12.25 percent were Mappilas literate\(^27\). The number of persons knowing English was only ninety-seven. In Malabar, Brahmin and Nair students filled the seats of the colleges, and schools and Mappilas were left far behind due to their enmity towards English\(^28\).

The British tried to attract Mappilas to western education. Munro had recommended one Muslim school for each collectorate. But no such schools were established in Malabar. However a taluk school was started in 1856 at Malappuram and it was the first of its kind in Malabar. It was established with a special objective of providing secular education for the Mappilas\(^29\).

The British government took special educational efforts in 1871 and suggested a change in the existing educational programme so that in the long run the best safeguard against a recurrence of Mappila outbreaks will be the spread of religious education. The committee requested inducements in the form of small salaries and grants to Mullas for each successful student to encourage the provision of elementary instruction in Malayalam along with religious training in the Mosques\(^30\). Unfortunately the efforts were not fruitful. The Mullas showed very little interest towards this endeavor. And they were not fully aware

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\(^{27}\) S.M.Muhammed Koya, 'Beginning of Mappila Education in Malabar', 13\(^{th}\) Session of South Indian History Congress Proceeding, 1993, p.251.

\(^{28}\) Ibid.


\(^{30}\) Roland E Miller, Mappila Muslims of Kerala; a Study in Islamic Trends, 1992, p.204.
of how it could effectively be implemented. The British government failed in this earlier attempt and it was limited to Kozhikode and to some parts of Malabar.

In 1886 the British government sanctioned some grants to Mappila schools which were paid from provincial funds and the distribution was left to the District Board\(^\text{31}\) on the understanding that they would contribute towards Mappila education a sum of not less than Rs 10000\(^\text{32}\)/-. Consequently some improvements were made in the Mappila educational programme. But its aim was not fulfilled due to the continued religious opposition of the Mappilas.

The Basel Mission\(^\text{33}\) was in control of modern education in Malabar\(^\text{34}\). Many schools including girls and boys' schools were established in different parts of Malabar for the uplift of Mappilas. These were mainly under native managements and organised on the model of government institutions\(^\text{35}\).

An important turning point in the history of Mappila education in Kerala was the formation of Kerala Provincial Muslim Educational Association. It was established to safeguard and protect the interest of education of the Muslims of Kerala. The association was registered under Act 20 of 1860\(^\text{36}\). The association took some resolutions for the improvement of Muslim Education in Kerala.i.e,

\(^{31}\) Administrative authorities of Malabar
\(^{32}\) A.P. Ibrahim Kunju, \textit{op.cit.},p.251.
\(^{33}\) In Malabar Basel Evangelical Missionaries were pioneers in the field of Education in Malabar.
\(^{34}\) A.Sreedhara Menon, \textit{A Survey of Kerala History}, 2000,p.356.
\(^{35}\) K.T.Muhammadali, \textit{op.cit.} , p.52.
\(^{36}\) Records from the Kerala Provincial Muslim Educational Conference 1926, Regional Archives Kozhikkode,G.O.No.1987,pp.7-9.
the government was requested to establish at least one industrial school for poor Mappila boys\(^7\). And it also took arrangements without delay for the introduction of a compulsory scheme of elementary education in areas where a large number of indigent Mappilas congregated as a first step towards civilizing these areas\(^8\).

During the colonial period the reformatory attempts based on educational progress of Muslims were made by Sir Sayyed Ahammed Khan, as Rajaram Mohan Roy, Kesav Chanda Sen and others did in North India. In a speech delivered at Amritasaras on January 29\(^{th}\) 1884, Sir Sayyed said, “though we have protest in denying certain rights we hope after getting higher education we would be able to achieve those rights”\(^9\). These types of speeches had a role in attracting Muslims to modern education.

But the sole reason for the backwardness of Kerala Muslims could be the lack of leadership like Sir. Sayyad Ahammad Khan who envisioned the attainment of both political and social power through education.

The educational progress of the Ezhava, Christian, Namboodiri and Nair communities too proved their interest in educating themselves. Sreenarayana Guru in 1911 spoke to his educationally backward fellow beings in the community, “there are only limited number of persons who have attained higher education in our community and it is glad that the interest towards education is

\(^7\) Ibid., p.6.
\(^8\) Ibid., p.7.
increasing for the last few years. Education must be given importance if we wish the progress of our community since education has a reformatory role in society. The Muslims hould excel in modern education only if they too hold this approach.

After the Mappila outbreaks of 1894, I.T Bradley, acting magistrate of Malabar, recommended that Mappilas should be declared as an educationally backward community. Thus the Mappilas of Eranad and Valluvanad were officially recognised as a backward caste, thus becoming eligible for special grants as per the Grant-in-Aid Code. In the meantime the British government recommended that the Mappila pupils may be exempted wholly from payment of school fees in all public schools in the backward Thaluk of Eranad and Valluvanad. Aided schools had been separated as far as possible from the mosques and freed from the reactionary influence of Mullas.

The efforts of the government to solve the problem of Mappila violence did not succeed and Mappila outbreaks continued to occur at irregular intervals particularly in the rural areas of Ernad and Valluvanad Taluks. The Mappilas formed the majority in these places and agriculture was their main occupation and they were totally ignorant of modern educational developments. The

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41 Musthafa Kamal Pasha, op.cit., p.196.
42 A.P.Ibrahim Kunju, op.cit.,p.252. The grant at a rate of 75 percent higher than that of standard scale was provided for them in that Grant-In-Aid Code
government was greatly alarmed at the disturbances in this region and after the revolt in 1894 various means for the prevention of recurrence were sought\textsuperscript{44}.

The department of Public Instruction took initiative to start a magazine in order to imbibe reading habit among the \textit{Mappilas}\textsuperscript{45}. And during this period, there were continuous changes in educational activities. The educational rules were revised to affect these changes. Up to 1906 two stages of primary education were recognized, namely, upper and lower which was later dissolved under new rules. A school that offered eight years of course a complete elementary school—corresponded to the vernacular middle schools of other parts of India. Vernacular, Astronomy, General Knowledge, Drawing, Recitation with Ragas or Singing and Physical Exercise were the compulsory scheme of studies for these schools\textsuperscript{46}.

Though there was a gradual improvement in education, these efforts on the part of the government did not, however, have the desired effect on promoting the spread of education among the community. In 1895 the President of the District Board expressed his conviction that the results did not

\textsuperscript{44} K.T.Muhammadali, \textit{op.cit.}, p.60.

\textsuperscript{45} An illustrated quarterly magazine in Malayalam was brought out in 1901 with a view to providing hygienic literature for the reading section of the \textit{Mappila} community in Malabar. The publication of this magazine was under taken by the schoolbook and literature society, and the government paid half of the cost. Five hundred copies of the magazine were printed and distributed through the inspecting agency to the \textit{Mappilas} schools during 1901-1902.

\textsuperscript{46} K.T Muhammedali.\textit{op.cit.}, p.64.
commensurate with the outlay. Out of the 19000 Mappila children in schools, little over 300 was reading in standard fourth during 1906-1907\textsuperscript{7}.

However the British Government took a number of steps for the educational development of the Mappilas. They established a college with a hostel for the use of the Mappilas at a convenient centre in Malabar to enable them to realise the full benefit of modern education and to improve their moral and material condition\textsuperscript{8}.

\textsuperscript{7} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{8} Records from the Kerala Provincial Muslim Educational Conference 1926, Regional Archives Kozhikkode, G.O.No.1987, pp.7-9.
Table IV

Progress of *Mappila* Education (Boys)*49*.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>No. Of <em>Mappila</em> Boys Public and Private</th>
<th>Total No. Of Pupils</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1900-1901</td>
<td>572</td>
<td>26092</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1901-1902</td>
<td>652</td>
<td>30503</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1902-1903</td>
<td>645</td>
<td>31044</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1903-1904</td>
<td>537</td>
<td>25220</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1904-1905</td>
<td>562</td>
<td>26010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1905-1906</td>
<td>584</td>
<td>26790</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1906-1907</td>
<td>605</td>
<td>27235</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1907-1908</td>
<td>678</td>
<td>31262</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1908-1909</td>
<td>566</td>
<td>26929</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1909-1910</td>
<td>635</td>
<td>31830</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*49 This Report is based of the Public Instruction of Madras Presidency for the years 1900-1901 to 1909-1910.*
Table-v

Progress of Mappila girls' Education\textsuperscript{50}.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>No. of Mappila Girls</th>
<th>Total No. of Pupils</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1900-1901</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>627</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1901-1902</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>621</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1902-1903</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>655</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1903-1904</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>805</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1904-1905</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1905-1906</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>836</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1906-1907</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>754</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1907-1908</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>788</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1908-1909</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>798</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1909-1910</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>820</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As one can infer from the two tables given above there was no much progress in the case of modern education of Muslims. Boys were more in number when compared to girls going for education. The Madras governments took special interest in the case of the Muslim girls in Kerala.

At that time fifty scholarships of an annual aggregate value of Rs. 966/- were awarded to Mappila girls studying in the elementary schools under the

\textsuperscript{50} Ibid.
control of the inspectors\textsuperscript{51}. Unfortunately these kinds of efforts were a complete failure in the earlier stages.

It was in this political scenario that the freedom movement in Malabar took a massive form and Muslims' abhorrence towards the British was increasing as well. During that period *Khilafat*\textsuperscript{52} movement was started as a protest against the British government in disrupting the Turkish Empire and denying the Sultan of Turkey of spiritual leadership as the *Khalifa*\textsuperscript{53}. The philosophy of the *Khilafat* movement was not that of territorial nationalism but of community federalism and of federalism in one party, the Muslims\textsuperscript{54}.

This *Khilafat* agitation also made a tremendous impact on the Muslims of Malabar. The *Khilafat* works were organized all over the country under the auspices of the Congress and therefore, for a while, the Congress and *Khilafat* movements merged themselves into a single movement in which the Hindus and the Muslims took part with great enthusiasm\textsuperscript{55}. Meanwhile the *Madrassas* gave all kinds of help to propagate the *Khilafat* agitation.

After the Malabar Rebellion of 1921, the government resolved to take further steps to encourage *Mappila* education. A committee was constituted for

\textsuperscript{51} Report of the law and Education Department of Madras Presidency G.O .No.293, Law and Education, 3-2-1928, Regional Archives Kozhikode.

\textsuperscript{52} *Khilafat* movement was started as a protest against the action of the British Government in disrupting the Turkish Empire and depriving the Sultan of Turkay of his spiritual headship of the *Khalifa*. This agitation also made a tremendous impact on the Muslim population of Malabar.

\textsuperscript{53} A.Sreedhara Menon, *op.cit.*, p.359.

\textsuperscript{54} P.Hardy, *The Muslims of British India*,1972, p.190.

\textsuperscript{55} A.Sreedhara Menon, *op.cit.*,p.360.
preparing special religious textbooks for Mappila students. The Education Code of 1921 provided exemption of fees to the children of depressed classes and fee concession to Muslims, Ezhavas, and other backward classes in their English schools.

In 1922 the government appointed a committee of officials and non-officials to advise whether it would be possible and desirable to abolish the separate elementary schools for the Mappila community to maintain better relation between the Hindus and the Mappilas of Malabar. The committee made certain recommendations for improving the condition of Mappila education. The study of the committee reveals that the Muslim population was more in number in Eranad, Valluvanadu, Ponnani and Calicut Taluks where thirteen secondary schools for Mohammedan boys existed. One of the principal reasons for opening separate schools for Mohammedans was that their vernacular was ordinary, which was different from the vernacular of the other communities.

Meanwhile the Muslim Educational Conference convened at Thalassery on 16th May 1926 put forward certain suggestions to improve the condition of the Muslim community. Major recommendations are given below.

a. To arrange for the introduction of a compulsory scheme of elementary education in no time.

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56 Regional Archives Kozhikkode, C.No.2701 C.I.p.12.
57 Ibid. and Orders were passed on the in G.O.No376 Education dated 9-3-1925.
58 Ibid., p14.
b. To request the government to sanction grants to such *Mappila* pupils as they are obliged to attend elementary schools.

c. To request the government to give an impetus to female education among the *Mappilas* by enhancing the amount and incidence of scholarships and to establish at least one secondary school, where *Mappila* lady teachers can be trained in plenty, in addition to elementary girls schools.

d. To establish Educational Association at Taluk and district headquarters and at other convenient centres to watch the progress of *Mappila* education.

e. That the above said Educational Association does establish at least one industrial school at convenient centres for the benefit of *Mappila* education\(^6^0\).

One can see that these schemes could not bring total educational progress of the *Mappila* community. *Mappila* education, though slow, had shown a steady progress. The following table shows the growth of *Mappila* education in Malabar District from 1908 to 1931.

\(^{60}\) *Ibid.*
The statistical figures show increase in the number of boys and girls under instruction in elementary and secondary schools.

After 1940, the steps already taken were continued without adopting new measures. However the impact of modern education began to increasingly be felt among the common folk.

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Thus the British government took a number of steps to the development of Muslim Education at that time. But the Muslims were not making use of the beneficiary efforts of the British government. Really the Muslims were not against the modern education but at the same time, the political tensions and religious orthodoxy compelled the Muslims to avoid the benefit of modern education.

This kind of attitude changed gradually due to the efforts of social reformers among the Muslim community in Kerala. The early reformative activities were boosting and encouraging the Muslim community to acquire the benefit of Modern education. But all the traditional Muslims deliberately avoided the benefit of modern education. The orthodox Ulamas were also against modern education. The parents were prevented from sending their children to schools established by the Government and the Christian Missionaries.

Meanwhile Travancore and Cochin were not under the direct control of the Madras presidency as Malabar. But the rulers therein fully accepted the British suzerainty. At the same time the people of Travancore and Cochin were not affected by the disgusting experiences resulted from the British domination. The 1906 census of Travancore points out that the Muslim male literates were 8.4

percentage and the girls, only 0.6 percentage. The figures clearly mention only a nominal progress in the case of education among the Muslims.  

The educational set-up in Travancore and Cochin was not as worse as in Malabar. The English education began in Travancore much earlier than in most parts of British India and before any of the other native states undertook it. The existence of a large and ancient Christian population within the state were attracted to it. European missionaries started seminaries in the early 19th century, for imparting a Christian training and for giving some general education. The first of these were founded at Kottayam in 1816 and another was founded at Nagercoil in 1819 A.D.  

During the early years of the nineteenth century, two English schools were established in the Travancore area by the protestant missionaries, one the Syrian seminary at Kottayam which later on developed into the C.M.S. College and the other, the Nagercoil seminary which is the present Scott Christian College. Both these institutions received state aid in the shape of grants of land. The first direct step taken by the government in promoting western education in the country was in the year 1834, when an English school for boys was started at Thiruvantharam by Mr.J. Robert, the headmaster of the Nagercoil London.

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65 Ibid.
Mission Society, at the invitation of His Highness the then Maharaja\(^6\). Originally it was a private school but in 1836 it was taken over by the government and was thence known as the Maharajas Free School at Trivanandapuram\(^7\). No fee was levied in this school and the number of pupils was restricted to 100\(^8\).

The Christian missionaries get the honour for having taken the first positive step to introduce western learning and education in Travancore area. The CMS missionaries set up a chain of schools in the district and Col. Munro, assisted them in this task, the name of Rev. Thomas Norton the first missionary to be sent to the state by the CMS stands out prominent in this connection.

The protestant missionaries, though later arrivals in the field were the first to introduce English education in the state. The pioneer of English school in Travancore was Rev. William Tobias Ringle Taube, a native of Prussia and a great man of character. From 1806 when he came to Travancore, till 1816 he devoted his whole energy to evangelistic activities, and wherever he went he carried with him the mission of English education\(^9\). In 1818 he founded the Nagarcoil seminary, which was the first institution to give regular English education in Travancore.

Lord William Bentick, the Governor General, recorded in a minute that the great objective of the British government ought to be the promotion of

\(^{67}\) K. George (convenor), *Report of the Educational Expenditure Committee*, 1921, p3
\(^{68}\) *Ibid*.
European literature and science among the states of India and that all the funds appropriated for the purposes of education would be best employed on English education alone. In 1836, district schools were opened by the government through Mr. Roberts at four places, viz. Kottar, Thuckalay, Kayankulam and Chirayinkil. Madhava Rao, who was appointed Dewan in 1858, gave a new stimulus to the progress of education.

Grant-in-Aid Code for vernacular schools in 1869 was another important step. As vernacular education became more popular, the government hit upon a plan for assimilating the course of instruction in private vernacular schools. The first government girls' school was established in 1867 in Thiruvananthapuram as resultant of the earlier British efforts.

The year 1884 witnessed a landmark in the growth of vernacular education as the government laid down a policy for the advancement of vernacular education that year.

In 1894-95 the government provided grant to schools for backward classes under certain conditions. The government established 15 schools for backward classes as follows.

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74 V. Nagam Aiyya, *op.cit.*, p.482.
Before 1900, it could be seen that the status of education in the Muslim community was awfully low. The British government had even established about 15 schools alone for the lower classes during 1895-96 and seven out of fifteen schools were given to the Muslim community. But the Muslim community could not reap any benefit out of this.\(^{75}\)

After 1902 the Travancore government implemented many schemes for the educational uplift of the Muslim community. As a result special concessions in fees were granted for Mohammedans' education to promote modern education.\(^{76}\)

It could be seen that by 1908-09 the British government was concerned about the uplift of the Muslim community and it was evident from the special back up given to the education of Mohammedans, like award of special scholarships and the appointment of Mohammedan schools to supervise

\(^{75}\) *Ibid.*

\(^{76}\) *Report of the Educational Expenditure Committee 1921*, p.9.
teaching of Arabic\textsuperscript{77}. Moreover in 1915 a confidential circular was issued to all Heads of Departments directing them to show special consideration to the members of communities such as the Ezhavas, Mohammedans, etc., which were backward in education, consistently with efficiency, qualifications etc\textsuperscript{78}.

The outcome of efforts taken by the religious Reformation leaders in the Islamic community was obviously the improvement in education, which was revealed in Travancore Educational Committee Report\textsuperscript{79}. Even though primary and secondary levels were started in separate schools by the British government for the improvement of modern education among Muslims, the effort did not lead to substantial improvement\textsuperscript{80}.

The backward state of Mohammedans in education was directly reflected in the literary figures for the community in 1932. While the literacy figures of all the communities in the state show 40.8 percent males and 16.8 per cent females as literate, the figures for Mohammedans are 21.0 per cent for males and 2.4 per cent for females\textsuperscript{81}. The following table shows the percentage of literate persons above the age of five to the total populations during 1932\textsuperscript{82}: -

\begin{table}[h]
\centering
\begin{tabular}{|c|c|c|}
\hline
Community & Males & Females \\
\hline
Mohammedans & 21.0 & 2.4 \\
\hline
Other communities & 40.8 & 16.8 \\
\hline
\end{tabular}
\end{table}

\textsuperscript{77} Ibid., p.14.
\textsuperscript{78} Report of the Travancore Public Service Recruitment committee, 1933, p.22.
\textsuperscript{80} Census Report of India, Travancore, 1911, p.159.
\textsuperscript{81} Ibid., p.529.
\textsuperscript{82} Ibid.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Persons</th>
<th>Males</th>
<th>Females</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hindus</td>
<td>27.0</td>
<td>39.9</td>
<td>14.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christians</td>
<td>35.7</td>
<td>46.0</td>
<td>25.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Muslims</td>
<td>14.4</td>
<td>25.3</td>
<td>3.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Special schools were maintained for Mohammedans at the primary and secondary stage both by the department and by private managements. In addition to the above special schools for Mohammedans and a large number of Arabic classes were attached to ordinary schools. Teaching of Arabic language and fees concessions were also implemented in order to attract Muslims towards primary schools. But these kinds of efforts were a complete failure as in the case of Muslims.

Another characteristic feature of the state of Mohammedans education in Travancore was the almost entire absence of Mohammedan teachers other than Arabic Munshis at any stage. With the exception of the Assistant Inspector of the Mohammedans schools, there was no graduate Mohammedan employed in the education Department and there were only two Mohammedan graduates working in the aided schools. There were very few Mohammedan trained

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83 Ibid.
84 Ibid., p.538.
teachers of any grade and Mohammedan women teacher exceptionally difficult to obtain.

Amongst Muslim girls English education scarcely existed at all; and there were only Fifty-Five Muslim girls reading above the primary stage. The following table shows the distribution of Muslim girls in English school in Travancore.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Preparatory class</th>
<th>Form</th>
<th>No. Girls</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>11</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>111</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>IV</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>V</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>V1</td>
<td>nil</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Travancore education reform committee recommended that at the primary stage all schools should be mixed. But unfortunately the efforts were not successful.

However minor improvements could be made in Muslim community as a result of the efforts taken by the reformation leaders from within the community.

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85 Ibid.
86 Ibid. p529.
after 1900. Many educated Muslims themselves actively worked for the advancement of Muslim education. As western education had spread so widely among other communities in Travancore and Cochin it began to influence the Muslim community. Two among the pioneers in the educational field were Hamadani Sheik and Vakkom Moulavi. They had published several articles in Arabic-Malayalam journals to promote education among the Muslim community.

Many of the enlightened Muslims began to feel that only through English education the community interests could be safeguarded. Thus the Lajnathul Muhammadiya Association was founded at Alleppy to promote educational needs of the Muslims in 1915. N.A. Muhammedkunju Sahib, Bava Haji and Ibrahim Rawther gave the lead to the community in the establishment of Lajnathul Muhammadiya Association. Several other local associations like the Muslim Darmaposhini Sangam of Nelakkamukku, Chirayenkizhu Thaluk Sangham etc. were formed to promote educational efforts in different parts of Travancore. Another substantial effort was the formation of Travancore Muslim Mahajana Sabha, through the leadership of Vakkom Abdulkhadar Maulavi. Though the Sabha was short lived, it was able to persuade the Travancore Government to pass several measures for the benefit of the Muslim community. It was through its efforts

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87 A.P.Ibrahim Kunju, Mappila Muslims of Kerala Their History and Culture, op.cit.,p.254.
88 Ibid.
89 Ibid.
that the government approved religious instruction in schools and appointed Arabic teachers in schools.

*English education in Cochin was begun at Mattanchery in 1818 by starting* Grant-in-Aid school by a Christian missionary. But the school was closed in 1821. Another elementary English school was established at the same place in 1835. In 1837 an English school was opened at Trichur and another at Thrippunithura for the education of the princes and others, and one at Ernakulam in 1845 was opened for the public.

The credit for further advancement of English education on large scale had been claimed for Dewan Sankunni Menon, who successfully and distinctively administered the affairs of Cochin for about 18 years. He had himself been a pupil of the Rajas free school at Trivandrum. When he became Dewan in 1860, he found that the English schools at Ernakulam and Trichur had only about 30 students each. By 1873, English schools were opened in all the important centres of the state.

The progress of English education in Cochin was steady and constant at the beginning of the last quarter of the 19th century. In the meantime distinct schools were opened in all the Taluks and in 1877 they were placed under the direction of Mr Sealy. These schools steadily grew in numbers and standards.

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93 *Blue Book containing important Orders and Official papers Connected with the Progress of Education in the Cochin State for the year 1908-1914*, p.2.
and most of them were subsequently raised to the status of high schools. In 1889 a set of rules was framed for giving grants in aid to private schools. Consequently several schools sprang up under the management of private agencies.

It could be seen that the tremendous spreading out in modern education among the Muslims was at the time of Muslim Reformation leaders. In the Cochin state, Kodungallur was the centre of educational efforts. On 20th April 1911, a primary school was started at Azhikkal in a building donated by Seethi Muhammed Sahib. This school proved to be the training ground for many persons who rose to vital roles in later life like Abdul Rahiman Sahib and Seethi Sahib. As religious education was given along with secular education, large numbers of Muslims students were attracted to the schools.

In 1911 the Malabar Muslim Educational Association was formed at Cochin and its branches were formed in different parts of Cochin. In 1918, The Muslim Samajan at Munampam, Mufidul Islam Sangham at Kalvatti, Cochin and Anwar ul Islam Sangham at Mattanchery were established to promote educational activities among the Muslims in the Cochin state.

With the establishment of Cochin Muslim Educational Association, Azhikkode became the centre of Muslim educational activities in Cochin State.

The government was fully aware of the need for Muslim education. Sri. C.Achutha Menon, op.cit.,p.375. A.P.Ibrahim Kunju, Mappila Muslims of Kerala their History and Culture, op.cit.,p.256. Ibid.
Vijayaraghavachari, Dewan of Cochin relevantly said, “it is the Muslims and low caste people who are educationally backward in Cochin. The social and political development of Cochin is possible only with the reformation of these two communities”

These words imply the very concern of the government on social reformation at that time.

As far as religious education is concerned, in each and every mosque, there was a *Maktab* attached to it. The children were sent to this institution. But the Muslim parents were not fully interested in the case of modern education. They were not aware of the need of modern education. At the same time they thought that the religious education was necessary to fulfill their own religious practices. At that time the religious education was not systematic. In every Muslim settlement the *Madrasa* worked as an important centre of Islamic learning. This basic religious educational institution played a leading role in shaping the identity of the Muslim community. The teachers of the institution were not supportive of the modern educational system. They watched the modern educational system introduced by the westerners with suspicion.

It was during this period that the Muslim Reformation leaders came forward with an objective for the development of the Muslim community. The prominent leaders were Chalilakathu Kunjahammad Haji, Makthi Thangal, Hamajani Thangal, Vakkom Moulavi etc. They tried to give an orientation for

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98 *Maktab* is the primary Islamic religious institution attached to mosque.
the social and cultural revival of the Muslim community. These leaders were trying hard through their writings for the need of modern education as well as religious education. These leaders were not fully successful in disseminating modern education because of the deep-rooted hatred of the Muslims towards the British.

However acceptance gained by the social reformers and their activities accelerated the spread of modern education as well as Islamic education in Kerala. They understood the necessity of modern education among the Muslims in Kerala. When the British government and the missionaries were engaged in the activities of modern educational system, the Muslims concentrated on developing parallel educational system. As a result a network of Madrasa systems was developed in Kerala. The method, which they used in teaching, was traditional and orthodox. Under this system of network the primary educational centres developed in each and every corner of Muslim settlements. The prime motive of this Madrasas was to give a basic knowledge of Islamic teaching.

It was quite impossible to promote modern education at a time when Malayalam, the mother tongue, was believed to be the language of ‘Kafirs’ and English ‘the language of hell’. However, one can never totally ignore the crucial role played by the government and religious reform leaders in disseminating

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99 The word is generally used by Muhammadance to define one who is unbeliever in the ministry of Muhammad and Quran.
100 K.N.Musthafa Kamal Pasha, ‘Kerala Muslingalude Vedyabhyasam Veshakalanam’ (Mal), Farook College Golden Jubilee Souvenir, p.132.
modern education because it was their efforts which moulded the society towards modernity. Madrasa Reformation movements were also led by these leaders who earned modern education and hence the role of modern education was vital and should never be sidelined when one considers the Madrasa reformation movements.