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 வியoßใக囚12 translumination, transparadisation, trans- textualisation, transcreation, transluciferation, transhelenization, poetic reorchestration, reimajination-

 mø̆ (Bassnet, Trivedi 1999: 96).








































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'Because they are necessarily ‘defective’ all translations are reputed females.' - John Florio.
'Translator occupies a (culturally speaking) Female position.' -Nord Ward Jouve.











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2. 'The goal of the discipline is to produce a comprehensive theory which can be used as a guideline for the production of translation. The theory would gain by being developed along lines of argument which are neither neopositivistic nor hermenutic in inspiration. The theory would gain by being elaborated against a background of, and constantly tested by case-histories. The theory would then not be static; ........It is not inconceivable that a theory elaborated in this way might be of help in the formulation of literary and linguistic theory: just as it is not inconceivable that translations made according to the guidelines tentatively laid down in the theory might influence the development of the receiving culture' Lefevere (Gentzler 1993:7677).














5. Through the foreign works, features(both principles and elements) are introduced into the home literature which did not exist there before. These include possibly not only new models of reality to replace the old and established ones that are no longer effective, but a whole range of other features as well, such as new (poetic) language or compositional patterns and techniques. It is very clear that the very principles of selecting the works to be translated are determines by the situation governing the home polysystem, the texts are picked according to their compatibility with the new approaches and the supposedly innovatory role they may assume within the target litera-ture-Zohar (Toury 1987:109)








7. 'Toury successfully pushes the concept of a theory of translation beyond the margins of a model restricted to faithfulness to the original, or of single, unified relationship between the source and target texts. Translation becomes a relative term, dependent upon the forces of history and the semiotic web called culture. The role of translation theory is correspondingly altered, ceasing its search for a system which to judge the product and now focusing on the development of a model to help explain the process which determines the final version' (Gentzler 1993:129)
8. 'The roles include the initiator, the commissioner the text producer the translator, the target text 'applicator'and the receptor, and each role is highly complex' - Schaffner (Baker 1998:4)
9. 'Skopos rule:Human action (and its sub category: translation) is determined by its purpose (skopos), and therefore it is a function of its purpose. The rule is formalised using the formula: IA (Trl) = f(Sk) - Shaffner (Baker 1998:236)
10. ' Indeed this book as a whole argues not only for the establishment of a cultural studies to replace altogether the traditional field of the literary study of translation. Linguistic and interpretative literary models are too limited in nature: they are not open up the necessary number of perspectives to describe translation's effect on the development of literature within a given receiving culture'. (Heylen 1993:137)







 (to translate was) 'to engender a work anew. Engender, I say, because (the ancient writers) have to be decomposed by profound and penetrating reflexion, inorder to be reconstituted by a similar process; just as meat must be decomposed in our stomachs inorder to form our bodies' (Bassnet 1995:147).

















 دంఱృm؛ (Bassnet, Trivedi 1999:10).
15. It is an amusement to me to take what liberties I like with these Persians, who (as I think) are not poets enough to frighten me from such excursions and who really do want a little art to shape them'- Fitzgerald (Bassnet 1991:3).


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 ates here as it might have in traditional marriages. The unfaithful wife/translation is publicly tried for crimes the husband/original is by law incapable of committing. This contract in short, makes it impossible for the original to be guilty of infidelity. Such an attitude betrays real anxiety about the problem of paternity and translation; it mimics the patrilineal kinship system where paternity - not maternity - legitimizes the offspring' (Bassnet 1995: 140-1).

 are never faithful if they are the least attractive.' Editorial. The Times of India. December 10th 1998.
 கひర: 'My translation practice is a political activity aimed at making language speak for women, So my signature on a translation means: this translation has used every srategy to make the feminine visible in language.'(

 acing 3. footnoting 4.hijacking (:14)
19. 'The Bible teaches that woman brought sin and death into the world,that she precipitated the fall of the race, that she was arraigned before the judgement seat of Heaven, tried, condemned and sentenced. Marriage for her was to be a condition of bondage, maternity a period of suffering and anguish and in silence and subjection, she was to play the role of a dependent on man's bounty for all her material wants, and for all the information she might desire on the vital questions of the hour, she was commanded to ask her husband at home. Here is the Bible position of woman briefly summed up' - Stanton (Simon 1996:115).
20. 'It is not good for the groundling to be alone; I will make for it a help as its counterpart'- Mary Korsak (Simon 1996:120).
21. 'When I translate I read the text then I re read the text and I re read the text, and then I write the reading and the reading has re- written my writing
 the appropriate penetration of the source text, so that the text is captured and the translator then compensates for the act of aggression by a gesture



 ing. I surrender to the text when I translate' ( Simon 1996:180)
23. 'By translation I first of all mean a process by which, inorder to objectify cultural meaning there always has to be a process of alienation and of secondariness 'in relation to itself'. In that sense there is no 'in itself' and 'for itself' within cultures because they are always subject to intrinsic forms of translation'. 'Translation is also a way of imitating but in a mischievious displacing sense -imitating an original in such a way that the prioriry of the original is not reinforced but by the very fact that it can be simulated, copied, transferred, transformed, made into a simulacrum and so on: the "original" is never finished or complete in itself. The "originary" is always open to translation so that it can never be said to have totalized prior moment, of being or meaning an essence' (Bhabha 1995: 210).
24. 'The fact that Indian literary communities do possess this translating consciousness can be brought home effectively by reminding ourselves that the
very foundation of modern Indian literatures was laid through act of translation, whether by Jayadeva, Hem Candra, Michael Madhusudan Datta, H.N.Apte or Bankim Chandra Chatterjee' - Ganesh Devy (Bassnet, Trivedi 1999:187).
25. 'Translation is then the wandering existence of a text in perpetual exile'









26. 'The soul, or significance, is not subject to the laws of temporality, and therefore significance even literary significance, is ahistorical in Indian view. Elements of plot, stories, characters can be used again and again by new generations of writers because Indian literary theory does not lay undue emphasis on originality. If originality were made a criterion of literary excellence, a majority of Indian classics would fail the test. The true test is the writer's capacity to transform, to translate, to restate, to revitalize the original. And in that sense Indian literary traditions are essentially traditions of translation' - Ganesh Devy (Bassnet,Trivedi 1995:187)






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28. 'Comparative literature as a discipline has had its day. Cross cultural work in women's studies, in post-colonial theory, in cultural studies has changed the face of literay studies generally. We should look upon translation studies as the principal discipline from now on with comparative literature as a valued but subsidiary subject area, (Bassnet 1995:161).

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It is the loss of memory, not the cult of memory, that will make us prisoners of the past. - Paolo Portoghes:





























































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MAPPILAPPATTU

## M. N. Karassery

'Mappilappattu' is a term to denote the literary - song tradition of Kerala Muslims. Formerly the Dravidian word 'Mappiia' (meaning the 'bride groom') was used for Jews (Yahuda Mappila), Christians (Nasrani Mappila) and Muslims (Jonaka Mappila) alike in Kerala. Now it is used exclusively for Kerala Muslims. 'Pattu' is another Dravidian word for song. So 'Mappilappattu' marks the 'Song of Kerala Muslims'.

Kerala, the southern most Indian State, had trade relations with Arabs even before the period of Prophet Muhammad (570-632). At that time the centre of trade of spices like pepper, ginger, cardamom etc. was Malabar, the northern region. This coast of Arabian sea was ruled by Zomarines as Kozhikode (Calicut) the capital. The very name Malabar was given by Arabs, meaning 'the land of mountains'. Calicut is the Arabised form of Kozhikode.

Muslims of this area believe that their religion came to Kerala in an early period as that of Prophet Muhammed, i.e., the 7th century. We get historical evidence to mark the presence of Muslim community in Kerala in the 9th century. There is reference about Muslims in Tarisappalhi copper plates (A.D. 849).

Islam reached Kerala through missionaries and traders by sea route and not through invaders. Only males came from abroad and they married local ladies (hence they were called 'bridegrooms') Their generations and the converts mainly from so-called 'lower caste' Hindus (agricultural workers) form the Muslim community of Kerala. The main inspiration of conversion into Islam was to resist the caste discrimination prevailed in the region. Kerala was never ruled by Muslim Kings. The only exception is that of Arakkal dynasty which ruled a principality in Kannur, the northern part in 16th -18 th centuries.
'Mappila' is a hybrid of Islamic civilization and Kerala's local culture. He is Muslim and Keralite alike. Mappila's languages is Malayalam. It is noteworthy that in Kerala different communities speak the same language, Malayalam. There is no Urdu in Kerala.

Instead Kerala Muslims have a written dialect called ArabicMalayalam. It is a form of writing Malayalam in modified Arabic script to suit the Malayalam alphabets. The literature in this script is known as Arabic-Malayalam literature' and it is rich with both prose and poems. The themes of the texts consist theology, Islamic History, Jurisprudence, medicine, mathematics, trade and the like - both religious and secular subjects. The poetic compositions of this literature is widely known as 'Mappilappattu'. Along with the written tradition, Mappilappattu has got a parallel vocal tradition also.

Without adequate training no Arab can read Arabic-Malayalam. So also, if he listens to someone reading this script he may not understand anything. A Malayali, on the other hand, can make out the gist of Arabic-Malayalam read out to him. In short, Arabic Malayalam is a mode of transliterating Malayalam into sophisticated Arabic script.

In Malabar, the northern part of Kerala, this community has a distinctive which is reflected in its life style - in the mode of dressing, the decoration of the household, the dishes served at feasts, and most important of all, in its codes and conventions. The idiosyncracies of their spoken Malayalam and the admixture of foreign words in their everyday vocabulary are very striking. Even the simple Sanskrit words of Malayalam figure in their conversation with marked deviations. A stranger would hardly make out that "Peraliyam" is 'Pralayam' (i.e., the Deluge) or "Pirisam" is "Priyam" (i.e., dear). Such deviations together constitute what is designated as "Mappila Malayalam" - viz., the Malayalam spoken by the "Mappila" or Malabar Muslim.

Arabic-Malayalam script can be taken, in a broad sense, to be the written form of "Mappila Malayalam." When did this script evolve? The answer is not easy. Scholars like T. Ubaid, C.N. Ahammed Maulavi, K. K. Mohammed Abdul Kareem etc. who have made some investigations in this field hold that the script could be as old as 15000 years. O. Abu, author of a well-known work on the literary history of Arabic Malayalam opines that the script must have existed for over 1000 years, Roland E . Miller who has written a significant work about Mappilas shortens the span to 500 years in his reckoning.

This script had currency in South Kerala also.

This script was the chief medium of education for the Malabar Muslims till recent times. It helped them preserve, though indirectly, the purity attributed to Arabic. Matters related to religious belief and codes of conduct were taught and assimilated in this medium.

The use of this script was not confined to religious instruction. In due course it entered into the daily life of the people.

As the Mappilas began to express their thoughts and feeling in this medium, it acquired a literary dimension. Many words alien to the spoken language of the Mappilas can be encountered in these literary writing. The literature of Arabic Malayalam can be divided into prose and verse. It is verse that merits greater attention. Generally known as Mappila Song, this verse tradition includes hymns that enclose the holy figures, martial songs, moral lessons, songs of praise addressed to God, historical documents of holy events, epistolary verses, love lyrics and wedding songs.

It is customary to trace the beginning of Arabic-Malayalam verse to a work called Muhiyddin Mala. The work itself mentions the author to be Khazi Muhammed of Calicut and the year of composition as A.D. 1607. It renders, in a devotional tone, the major events, especially, the miraculous feats, in the life of Muhiyuddin Sheik of Jilan. Among other works of this genre maybe mentioned Badar Mala, Nafeezath Mala, Manjakkulam Mala, Mamburam Mala, Malapuram Mala, and Muhamood Mala.

There are over 50 martial songs in Arabic-Malayalam, the most prominent ones being Bador Patoppattu, Uhad Patappattu, Makkam, Fathahu, Fathuhussam, Hunain Patappattu and Khandaku Patappattu. As the titles indicate these narrate the early wars fought by Muslims in Arabia. The Major contributions of the illustrious poet Moyinkutty Vaidyar (1 852-1892) belong to this genre.

Modelled on these works, songs were later composed about riots in Kerala as well. Vaidyar's own Malappuram Patappattu has, for instance, a riot that broke out in Malappuram (Malabar region) for its theme. The rebellions raised against the landed gentry also formed the subject of some works. A large number of such songs were destroyed by the rulers of the time. Those that survived fell under neglect in due course. Even the well-known Malabar rebellion (1912) has been the source of number of Mappila songs. But none of them has been published. Another major theme is the war waged by the Mappilas against the Portuguese and British forces in Kerala.

Moyinkutty Vaidyar is, beyond controversy, the most important figure in Arabic Malayalam literature. He was a native of Kondotty which is
now a part of Malappuram District. He came into the limelight at a very young age with a work entitled Badarul Munir-Husnul Jamal (1872), a song that treats the theme of passionate love in a romantic vein. Equally significant from a technical vantage point are Badar Patappattu, Uhad Patappattu and Malappuram Patappattu in the sense they served as the basis for the prosody of this genre of composition.

Besides being devotional in appeal these work kindled in the audience a sense of Islamic history and spirit of rebellion against the British. Badar Patappattu (1876) is widely acclaimed as the author's masterpiece and is undoubtedly the best work in this genre.

Kunhayin Musaliyar's Nool Mala and Kappappattu, Chettuvayi Pareekkutty's Futhuhussam, Shujayi Moidu Musliyar's Safala Mala, the metaphysically oriented songs of Abdul Khadir Masthan and a collection of short songs composed on topics of common interest by Pulikkottil Hyder are worthy of special mention in any survey of Arabic-Malayalam literature. Women have not lagged behind in literary pursuits: The songs of T. K. Haleema, V. Ayishakutty, Kundil Kunhamina etc. have enjoyed great popularity.

Kerala is very rich in folk songs which is of ten inter linked with prayer and religious rituals. Because of the difference in believes and customs Kerala Muslims had to generate a song tradition of their own.

Mappilappattu, like the community which gave birth to it, is a hybrid in many respect:

1. The language used in early times was on amalgam of Arabic and Malayalam. It can be called as a parallel Manipravalam, the mixture of Sanskrit and Malayalam used as a literary dialect.
2. The tunes rhymes and alliterations used in this branch are taken form both Arabian and Keralite folk traditions. In several occasions Arabic tunes are mixed with Kerala tunes to create new ones. The most important feature of Mappilappattu is its tune, popularly known as 'isai'. To know whether it is a Mappilappattu or not, you have to listen to its mode of singing. Mappilappattu is very rich in hundreds of tunes. In Mappilappattu music is more important than literature.
3. The themes of the song draw heavily form Islamic history and local life. Along with history of Prophet Muhammad, the stories of local saints and martyrs are also found space in many songs. Mahatma Gandhi was celebrated in Mappilappattu in his days and afterwards. The love affairs, the local riots, and natural calamities are also seen here.
4. The script in which it was written in those days was ArabicMalayalam. Now it is also written and printed in Malayalam script. Mappilappattu is not confined to Malabar, where Mappilas are residing in large numbers. Though the tradition is prominent in Malabar, we see its presence is southern regions (Kochi and Travancore) also.

In this respect, we have to take lakshadweep also into account Those islands in Arabian sea share the language and culture of Malabar Muslims. It should be noted that the islands were under the rule of Arakkal dynasty of Kannur for many decades. Their language is a variety of Mappila Malayalam, the spoken dialect of Mappilas of Malabar. In islands we see the presence of Arabic Malayalam script and Mappilappattu. The Mappilappattu works of Kerala are very popular there and the islands have contributed poets and singers of their own to this tradition. The works like Qasim Mala and Yusuf Kissa of Islands are popular in Kerala. The songs written by Jameela Begum of islands could win so many admirers in Kerala.

Mappilappattu became a 'Kerala experience' when such a song ("Kayalarikathu Valayerinjappol") was included in the Malayalam movie 'Neelakkuyil (1953). The song written by P. Bhaskaran was composed and sung by K. Raghavan. It was written and sung by non-Muslims and celebrately accepted by all Keralites irrespective of caste and community. Thus Mappilappattu became very popular through films, dramas, stage programmes, cassettes and television programmes. The tunes and forms of this genre are being used by poets and singers hail from different communities. Kerala's famous singer K.J. Yesudas is also known for his several Mappilappattu songs sung for films, radio programmes, cassettes and CDs.

Now Mappilappattu has become an integral part of Kerala's music and literature. It could find space in the syllabi of Universities and schools in Kerala. The admirers of this song tradition consist different communities. The very name 'Mappilappattu' now only denotes the history of its origin. As we saw this tradition has a history of atleast 5 centuries. Even today it is alive. New songs are being written on new themes and sung in new tunes for films, TV programmes, dramas, radios, stage programmes and CDs.

The Mappilas consist $23 \%$ of the state population now. In the feudal period they belonged to the weaker section that of poor tenants and peasants. Basically Mappila community is agrarian in rural areas. In Urban areas many of the members of the community are engaged in
trading. Later on, a small group even in rural areas shifted to trade and commerce. After 1970s the job hunters from the community could gain chances in oil rich Arabian countries in large groups and this played an important role in the finance! Betterment of Kerala Muslims. Though a backward community belongs to the minority sect, the Mappilas could come forward to occupied a space in the main stream in each and every field like politics, trade, education, literature, art forms of the state. Their presence is important now. In 1979 a Muslim league leader late C.H. Muhammad Koya held the position of the Chief Minister of the state for two months. If my understanding is right, most prosperous Muslims Community of India resides in Kerala. It was due to the communal harmony prevailed through centuries in the state. The language and art forms had much to contribute to this calm atmosphere. I have to repeat: Malayalam is the only language for different communities in Kerala and Mappilappattu is a branch of its folk song tradition. Mappilappattu is a beautiful manifestation of the cultural hybrid which helps the democratisation and secularisation of the Kerala Society.

## Semitic Creeds and the Concept of Religion in Kerala

## M. G. S. Narayanan

The three Semitic creeds - Judaism, Christianity and Islam - which had a profound impact on the history of the world were born in West Asia. There were great civilizations and empires in this region, but the oldest among the Semitic creeds, now known as Judaism, did not come from the centre of the great Egyptian empires or the empires of Mesopotamia. What was the religion practised by the ancient Egyptian or Mesopotamian peoples? They had their different myths and legends associated closely with rulers and priests. They worshiped the forces of Nature, believed in life after death, and conducted animal and human sacrifices.

However, Judaism was not the religion of those elite groups, but sprang out of the marginalised tribes mentioned in the Old Testament. It was the creed of people who rebelled against the authorities in Egypt, and sought to escape from their territory through mass migration. They possessed a rebellious content in relation to the great empires, though their culture was influenced by contact with the old cities and rulers. They developed a strong faith in one God, veneration for his prophets, and aversion towards image worship. These have continued to be the core ideas of the Christian and Islamic religions which grew out of the old Jewish tradition at different times.

A common trait of the three creeds is the theoretical assertion that those who believed in them alone were the chosen people who were saved and sent to heaven. All others on earth, including those who were born before the advent of the prophets, were condemned to eternal hellfire. This kind of theory promoted unity and solidarity within the community of believers, but at the same time contained the seeds of conflict
and intolerance. This was an important factor in the long-term rivalries and wars among the three Semitic creeds in West Asia and Europe. The strength and rigidity of the faith were related. Such religion with strict rules and a system of prizes and penalties was a new phenomenon in the old world. We do not hear about any religious wars in the ancient societies of Europe and Asia, until the emergence of the Semitic faith on the scene. The religious conflicts continued in the crusades of the middle ages. They have taken different forms and political expressions, and mixed with other factors - economic, military, ethnic, political etc. - they still divide the peoples of the world and inspire violence. Paradoxically, the love of God and the love for the children of God have often brought wars and hatred, though the religious people pray for preach harmony and peace. How strange, how sad, that they literally 'fight for love' and kill each other, and never find their goal through centuries of warfare!

India had a different experience. Geographical conditions, ethnic factors, and even military circumstances might have been responsible for the emergence of creeds with a pluralistic approach to religion. We find various icons in the Harappan culture, representing male and female deities. This variety exists even today, though many of the icons have been transformed and many new ones have appeared. In that sense it may be stated that there has been no basic change, no progress from polytheism to monotheism as in certain other societies, though monotheistic ideas are expressed occasionally in literature. At any rate there has been no serious attempt to get rid of the numerous deities or the practice of image worship on the part of the common people. In Harappan society there were animal and human deities, and mythical deities, and some of their seals also represent sacrificial cults, Vedic or otherwise.

Contrary to the general belief, sponsored by Brahmin writers, and Western writers who took the cue from them, the Vedic creed never constituted the religion of the great majority of people of India including the large number of lower castes and outcastes. Only the Brahmins who were in a very small though vocal minority, and even among them a very small fraction of the community, were familiar with the Vedic rituals and practices. The majority of people including the ruling classes were outside the purview of the Vedic religion. These Brahmins claimed superiority as the Bhudevas or gods of the earth, who placated the gods of the sky with their sacrifices, and propagated the claim through art and literature. Even many of the Kshatriya ruling clans of the early period had disputed this claim, and their leadership was acceptable to the lower groups of Vaisyas (traders) and Sudras (manual labourers).

The trading and agricultural groups appear to have had the protoforms of Mahavira's Jainism, established in the $6{ }^{\text {th }}$ century before the Christian era. According to the Jains, there were 24 Theerthankaras before Mahavira, and this would take us roughly to the period of the composition of the Vedic literature, i. e. two thousand or three thousand years before Christ or even more. Innumerable terra costa figures and the sculptures of the Mauryan, Sunga and Kushan periods in granite testify to the continuity of worship of the Yakshas and Yakshinis, Vrikshadevatas, Nagadevatas etc. throughout ancient times. These were not related to the Brahmanical Vedic religion.

In the period of the Aranyakas, Brahmanas and Upanishads there occurred serious questioning of the Vedic ideas among the Brahmins themselves. The followers of Gautama Buddha and Mahavira and more than three hundred Acharyas who lived in their time had refused to accept the authority of the Brahmins or the Vedas. Nor did the Brahmanas persuade others to take up the study of Vedic literature. Even among Brahmins there were those who followed the cults like Vedanta which dispensed with the concept of God or even the worship of a deity. There were among the Brahmins, the devotees of Vishnu, Siva, Kali and several other deities, who owed exclusive allegiance to their favourite deity, and refused to acknowledge others except in a subordinate position. Different deities and systems of faith coexisted among the 'Hindu' population.

In reality there was no Hindu religion as such other than a broad tradition, or way of life, flexible and accommodative in faith, customs and rituals. The Upanishads themselves declared that Truth is one; it is expressed in many ways (Ekom Satyam, Viprã bahudhã vadanti). It implies the absence of a monopoly of Truth in the revelations or teachings of some great saint, avatara or prophet in the native creeds of India. If there is no monopoly, there is no heresy either. This philosophical position was detrimental in certain ways to the promotion of unity and strength in society until other secular forces like nationalism emerged in the modem age. At the same time it can also be viewed as the recognition of the basic dignity and independence of the individual human being who was the final authority to decide what kind of religion, if any, he should accept and practice

Historically speaking, the idea of God or the authority of the Veda was not central to the concept of religion in India. Gautama Buddha, one of the greatest personalities who shaped Indian life and thought, clearly told his disciples that he was not interested in the idea of God. He did not claim any divinity; saw himself only as a teacher and preacher who based his philosophy on his own insight and experience. He asked people to
accept his way of thinking if they found it useful and reasonable. He seems to have shared the general beliefs in the evolution of the spirit through several births, i.e. the law of rebirth (punarjanma) and the law of action (karma). Nevertheless, it is reason and not faith that formed the corner stone of his philosophy of life. In fact he never founded a religion, but only a monkish order with the prescription for happy life. Later on, his followers created a whole system of thought in which Gautama Buddha himself was a God to be worshipped, and many other Gods were also acknowledged.

Even though great rulers like Asoka and Harsha were much influenced by the Buddha, they did not reject the other ancestral Gods and ways of life. Ashoka appealed to his subjects to show reverence towards Brahmanas and Sramanas alike. Mahavira, his great contemporary, also criticised the concept of God and the authority of the Veda. Harsha vardhana of the $7^{\text {th }}$ century worshipped Siva, Aditya and the Buddha on different days of the grand festival on the banks of the Ganges. There was no claim for the monopoly of truth, and there was no idea of heresy or a state religion that everybody in the kingdom had to follow. As a result, there were no religious wars in the early history of India.

In medieval times when Islam, one of the Semitic creeds, became the official religion of the Sultans of Delhi, some of the rulers decreed that non-Muslims had to pay a special tax called Jeziya. Religion was an issue in some of the disputes, and the name of the faith was dragged into wars and politics by the Muslim rulers and their Rajput Adversaries. Even then the right to follow one's own religious order was not questioned. Many Hindus, including Rajputs, were employed as Ministers and Commanders in the Mughal Empire. However, in this period, the Hindus began to imbibe some of the Semitic features of Islam through imitation, but that did not alter the basic attributes of the religious outlook of the people.

The great weakness of the pluralistic view of religion followed in India was the Brahmin indifference towards the poverty and sufferings of their low caste brothers and sisters. As a result, the great majority of people were indifferent towards the problems faced by the society and state in times of invasion. For the low caste subjects of the Hindu rulers, the Muslim conquest gave an opportunity for improving their status through conversion to Islam. The same thing happened in the period of the British conquest also, with the result that Christian missionaries had a heyday under the British rule. In spite of all these problems, the open pluralistic view of religion has survived, and even triumphed in India, where secularism has been declared as a basic character of the written constitution, incorporating the right to the free exercise of religion as a fundamental
right of every citizen. According to law, there should not be any discrimination on the basis of faith among the citizens of India. In fact, throughout the long history of civilization in India, there were only some rare occasions when Jains or Sikhs were persecuted in the name of religion. There was no large scale effort to bring all subjects under the flag of the Brahmanical faith even though the Brahmins established their hegemony in all walks of life in course of time in most parts of India.

In several cases we find kings donating land and money for the construction and maintenance of places for worship for non-Brahmanical groups like the Jains, Buddhists, Jews, Parsis etc. Members of the same royal family, queens and princes, often patronised different religious groups without ill-will. This could happen in India because of the firm conviction that different paths for spiritual development are equally valid. In other words, the equality of religions became a basic assumption for the rulers and peoples of India. The Hindu notion of religion may be compared to that of ancient Greece or Rome, or ancient Mesopotamia or Persia or ancient China rather than that of ancient Israel or medieval Europe and West Asia.

This open, pluralistic view of religion is exemplified in the history of Kerala also. It is illustrated by the royal charters given to Syrian Christians of Kollam, the Jews of Kodungallur, and the Muslims of Calicut as well as the freedom granted to Jains and Buddhists to promote their temples without political interference by the Hindu rulers. The important thing is that all this was carried out in a period when a strong Brahmin oligarchy had full control over the rulers of Kerala. The custody of weights and measures and the royal seals were left in the hands of traders professing Christianity in Kollam, Judaism in Kodungallur, and Islam in Kozhikode. They were often handling matters of state jointly in spite of their conflicts and rivalries exhibited so openly in other countries. This functional freedom would not have been possible if the open pluralistic view of religion was not deep-rooted in the minds of the rulers and the people. Economic and political interests prevailed over religious prejudices. This enabled the Christian, Jewish and Muslim traders to settle down in the coastal cities of Kerala and prosper in trade with the support of the native Hindu rulers even though their own religion emphasised the monopoly of truth and the theoretical superiority of one's own religion, which was modified to some extent in practice.

Thus we have the Synod of Diamper (Sunahados of Udayamperur) lamenting about the Christians adopting Hindu names and practices like untouchability and pollution, and even worshipping images at home. In Calicut the Mappila Muslims who were partners in developing, the city and the kingdom of the Zamorins adopted even matriliny and the
system of visiting husbands. The Zamorin permitted the chiefs of his Christian and Muslim allies to stand by his side during the twelve-yearly religious festival of the Mamankam at Tirunavaye. When Vasco da Gama visited Calicut in 1498, he and his companions were taken to a Bhagavati temple on the way from Kappad to Kozhikode. The devout Christians offered worship there, assuming that it was a temple of the mother of Christ, but one who observed the eight hands and long teeth of the image murmured that he would pray to God instead of the devil. All these would show that religious status was not made a bone of contention in Kerala. This healthy atmosphere was most conspicuous in Kerala, but it was the product of the long pluralistic tradition in religion cherished in Indian society, although in several other parts of the country foreign conquest and occupation had resulted in disturbances. In the absence of such invasions Kerala became the cradle of religious harmony where Brahmanical Hindus, Jains, Buddhists, Jews, Syrian Christians and Mappila Muslims could co-exist and compete peacefully and provide a model of tolerance and mutual acceptance.

The secret of this religious harmony is found in a passage from the journal of Pyrard de Laval, which K. V. Krishna Ayyar proudly reproduced in his account of the history of Calicut:
"Calicut is the busiest and most full of traffic and commerce in the whole of India, it has merchants from all parts of the world, and of all nations and religions by reason of the liberty and security accorded to them there; for the king permits the exercise of every religion, and it is strictly forbidden to talk, dispute, or quarrel on the subject, so that there never arises any contention on that score, everyone living in great liberty of conscience under the favour or authority of the king who holds that to be a cardinal maxim of government with a view to making his kingdom very rich and of great intercourse." (The Zamorins of Calicut, Calicut, 1938. p.94)

A Kerala poet named Atula who composed the earliest known work of regional history in Sanskrit language named Mushakavamsa kavya, about a century before Kalhana's Rajatarangini, has expressed the same sentiment in verse beautifully in the context of the foundation of the townships of Marahi (Madayi) and Valabha Pattana (Valarpattanam) in Kolattunadu in the northern part of Kerala. Sailing vessels from distant islands harboured there. He says:
" Kritaaspadah kaanana satva jaatayah / Tapoobhritaam siddhimataam ivaasrame / Jagat prateetaati viruddha vrittayah / Sahaakhilaa yatra vasanti deevataah" (Atula, Mushakavamsa kavya, Sarga 12, sloka 112.) T.A.S. II. I. P. 94)
[Different deities co-existed in peace like wild beasts forgetting their natural animosity in the vicinity of a holy hermitage.]

The earliest example of the open spirit is manifested in the Tarsappailli Copper Plates of Sthanu Ravi, dated 849 A.D. where Ayyan Atikal, Governor of Venad grants land and privileges and servants to Mar Sapir Iso, leader of Manigramam to set up a church in Kollam, the headquarters of the province. It is mentioned that the Anjuvannam of the Jews and the Manigramam of the Christians were to manage the affairs of the church jointly, in collaboration with the officials of the state. The charter is signed as witnesses by ten Christians who signed with names written in Pahlavi script, eleven Muslims who signed with their names written in Kufic script, and four Jews who signed with their names written in Hebrew script. (M.G.S. Narayanan, Cultural Symbiosis in Kerala, Trivandrum, 1972. pp.56-57)

The fact that the conversion of the last Ceraman Perumal (Rama Kulasekhara - 1089-1124 A D.) to Islam, followed by his partition of the kingdom and journey to Mecca, is described in detail in the Brahmanical chronicle of Keralolpatti and the palace chronicles of the successor states without any ill will is in itself the greatest testimonial to the open approach to religion that prevailed in Kerala.

## The Historical Traditions of the Jews of Kochi

## Nathan Katz

Three very different types of data must be considered in any attempt at constructing a history of the ancient Jewish community of Kochi in Kerala. There are scant historical, a third-century patristic letter, a ninth-century Muslim travelogue, an eleventhcentury royal charter engraved on copperplates, a twelfth-century Hebrew tombstone. There are numerous motifs from Kochini folklore, especially the intriguing Malayalam songs of Jewish women. Finally, there are indigenous narrations by which the community presents itself to the outside world. Even taken together, these three types of data do not yield a comprehensive history. But what they do reveal is perhaps more significant; they chart the community's crafting for themselves a niche within the social framework of Kerala. In sum, in their narrations they create an identity that resonates exceptionally well with both Indian and Jewish values, themes and motifs.

What does a scholar of religions have to say to a group of distinguished historians?
What is the overlap between what in American academic circles is called 'the history of religions' (religionswissenschaft) and history proper?

Perhaps it would be too facile to say that historians are interested in facts, while religionists are interested in meanings. Such a formulation is too simple to be sure, but it also contains an element of truth. In the course of learning about the Jewish community at Kochi in south-west India, issues of methodology immediately rise to the top. So little is objectively known, yet the data available are rich and suggestive. How to make sense of these data, how to interpret the Jews, historical
self-understanding in particular, is an intellectual riddle that stands foursquare in one's path and must be addressed as a prolegomena to any systematic interpretation of the Kochi Jews' historical traditions.
There are, in essence, three types of data to be considered:

1. Purely historical data. For example, the Jews of Kochi claim to have arrived at Cranganore in 72 C.E. at the destruction of the Second Temple in Jerusalem. From a purely historical point of view, this claim can be evaluated by examining what we know of ancient Israel and its links to India as portrayed in the

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attitudes embodied in texts from that period (Katz 1999), what we know of commercial patterns of the time, an approach pioneered by Ashin Dasgupta and developed by Ranabir Chakravarti (2002). And with archaeological and philological evidence (Rabin 1971), this claim becomes entirely plausible.
2. Folkloric data, in particular Malayalam Jewish women's songs. The works of Albrecht Frenz and Scaria Zacharia (2000), P. M. Jussay (1986) and Barbara C. Johnson (2001) are especially rich in textured interpretation of these songs. In general, these scholars tend to argue for a number of migratory waves of Jews to south India, this despite the indigenous claim to a unilateral arrival.
3. And finally there are data of testimony, the story the remaining few Jews of Kochi tell about themselves and to themselves. This narration was crystallized in a series of paintings that hang in a vestibule in the Kochi Synagogue, especially commissioned for the synagogue's 1968 quarter-centenary celebrations when the community attracted international attention from politicians, dignitaries and scholars. Occupying a media centre stage, the long-standing tradition of presenting themselves to outsiders came into the focus of contemporary observers.

In picking these very different types of data, the problems inherent in an attempt at reconstructing a history of the Cochin Jews are overwhelming. Clifford Geertz (1980:5) noted some of these difficulties in his study of Bali:
Not only are the data scattered, equivocal, and all too often poorly presented; but the mode of interpreting them, a matter largely in the hands of philologists, has been . . . sociologically unrealistic in the extreme . . . . [These accounts] have led to a picture of the Indic period which, though not without its elements of plausibility, perhaps even truth,
has about it the unmistakable air of fantasy systematized which derives from attempting to know what one has no way of knowing.

Historical data that exists, the meagre archaeological findings at Cranganore, linguistic and literary evidence, traveller's tales that were often wildly exaggerated, folk songs, indigenous histories written centuries after the accounts they narrate, offer us a sketchy portrait at best. Large gaps exist in our knowledge of ancient and medieval Kerala. The outside world's encounters with Cochin Jews were mediated through whatever intellectual-mythical framework dominated Europe at the time. During one historical period, for example, being grafted onto the ten lost tribes mythology afforded them status. In more recent times the claim of a continuous, recorded history, anchored in Jerusalem and Cranganore, generated yichus (lineage).

Confronting such varied sources, some more or less reliable and others entirely speculative, the student of Cochin myths and history is like Claude Lévi-Strauss.
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bricoleur, the intellectual 'Jack of all trades' who 'works with his hands and uses devious means compared to those of a craftsman', an academic handyman, a 'ragpicker' (Lévi-Strauss 1955) who collects whatever data might 'come in handy' to impose an order on the chaotic fragments of legend, folk song, memory, archaeological remains, philological inferences, an occasional medieval merchant's letter, and a few scattered Talmudic and historical references.

Before picking over the fragments of history, it would be appropriate to consider the legendary accounts of Kerala of the Christians, Muslims and Hindus, especially as they reflect upon Jewish experience there. The most significant set of legends emerge from Kerala's ancient Christian community.

## History in Ten Images

Local artist S.S. Krishna was commissioned to emblazon the community's history onto ten large canvases, paintings that were to be a focal point for the exhibition and seminar planned for the anniversary. These depictions crystallized the community's identity before the world, as was first observed by anthropologist Barbara C. Johnson (1985). Today the captioned paintings hang in a storeroom of the synagogue, soon to be forgotten, like the once-proud moment twenty years ago when they were proudly displayed for the entire world to see.

The first painting shows a bazaar filled with spices and ivory, a shipping entrepôt of the ancient world. It is Shingly, the Jews' ancestral home, known in Malayalam as Kodungallur, in Anglo-Indian as Cranganore, and as Muziris to the Romans. The caption reads: 'There was trade between King Solomon's Palestine (992.952 B.C.) and Malabar coast. The Biblical name for India was 'Odhu' [Hodu]. Teak, ivory, spice and peacocks were exported to Palestine. Long before the birth of the Cochin community, the linkage between India and Israel was established. ${ }^{1}$ The entire history of the community was grafted on to yet earlier traditions. The splendor of Solomon's reign became the tap root of glory for the Jewish princes of Shingly.

The second painting depicts the Second Temple ablaze, Jews fleeing in all directions. In the lower right is a ship sailing east, to Shingly. The moment of the birth of the Diaspora is also the moment of the birth of Indian Jewry. 'Destruction of the Second Temple in 70 A.D. by the Romans,' the caption reads, 'and the consequent dispersal of the Jews to the four corners of the earth from Palestine'.

In the third painting is a ship full of Biblical-looking Jews about to land on a verdant, hospitable coast. Lest there be any doubt, the lower right corner displays
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map of India, an arrow pointing towards Shingly: 'Landing of the Jews at Shingly (Cranganore) in 72 A.D'. Amidst graceful palm tress, a fourth canvas depicts a king greeting the Jews. The king is attired like an idealized Nayar maharaja, his retinue holding the royal parasol and beating royal drums. 'The raja of Cranganore receives the Jews,' the caption simply proclaims.

The fifth painting embellishes upon the theme of the Jews' hospitable reception in India. A Jew, their leader Joseph Rabban, one learns, is in the audience hall of the maharaja, a room whose murals bring to mind the Mattancheri 'Dutch' Palace of the Maharaja of Cochin, the patron of the Jews. The maharaja hands something to Rabban: 'Joseph Rabban, leader of the Jews, receiving the copper plates from Cheramperumal. He was made prince of Anjuvanam and thus a Jewish kingdom was established at Cranganore in 379 A.D.' The date may be less than accurate, the term 'kingdom' may be an exaggeration, and the name 'Cheraman Perumal' refers to the Chera dynasty and not an individual ruler (today's state of Kerala takes its name from the first two syllables of this dynasty), but the basic idea is accurate. Like other immigrant groups, the Christians and Muslims, Jews were accorded
autonomy and respect by the rulers of ancient and medieval Kerala. The copperplates, which are more likely from the tenth or eleventh century (Narayanan 1972: 23.30), remain in the ark of the Cochin Synagogue.

To the Jews, Cheraman Perumal was the idealized Kerala king, the model for the beloved Cochin maharajas. So, too, Joseph Rabban became the ideal Jewish leader, the model for a succession of Jewish 'merchant princes' in service to the maharajas and the Dutch, as well as for each and every Jewish bridegroom. The two, Cheraman Perumal and Joseph Rabban, became archetypes of the relationship between Hindus and Jews in Kerala, an important motif in the Cochin Jews' selfunderstanding (Johnson 1986)

The sixth painting depicts discord, the loss of the paradisiacal Shingly. At the same time, it continues the theme of establishing the Cochin Jews' connections with the royalty of ancient Israel in the days of the Temple. 'Two of the original silver trumpets, used in the Second Temple at Jerusalem, with the ineffable name carved on them, were brought to Cranganore and were blown by Levites on the eve of the Sabbath. Once the Levites were late and the laity (non-Levites) usurped their privilege and in the resulting quarrel, the trumpets were unfortunately destroyed.' To say that the trumpets of the Temple were brought to Cranganore obviously connects Shingly with Jerusalem; indeed, even today the Cochin of 'the good old days' before mass emigration to Israel is referred to as 'Little Jerusalem'. We do not know what history lies behind this legend of a quarrel between the Levites and the 'laity', although the struggle between the Malabari and Paradesi communities may be the subject of this legendary allusion. The destruction of the trumpets may be an allegory for the destruction of Shingly.

The seventh and eighth paintings were out of chronology, and in any case the eighth had been so badly eaten by white ants that it was no longer displayed. Both paintings, as the sixth, depict the abandonment of Shingly and the welcome afforded by the Maharaja of Cochin and the re-establishment of the community
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there. Fully six out of the ten paintings, then, touch upon the theme of the Jews being welcomed by Hindu kings' of Shingly first and later of Cochin. As the subject of so much attention, this theme of welcome, royal patronage and hospitality is the guiding metaphor for Hindu, Jewish 'symbiosis' in Kerala. The seventh painting depicts the construction of the Cochin Synagogue in 1568 next door to the Maharaja of Cochin's 'Dutch' Palace in Mattancheri (which was actually built for him by the

Portuguese) and the maharaja's private Krishna temple: 'Construction of the Cochin Synagogue next to the Maharaja's palace and temple in 1568.' The eighth painting depicts the sack of Shingly in 1524: 'Destruction of Cranganore by the Moors and Portuguese in 1524. Joseph Azar, the last Jewish prince, swam to Cochin with his wife on his shoulders. The Jews placed themselves under the protection of the Maharaja of Cochin.' Joseph Azar was the last in the line of Joseph Rabban. He bears the same family name as the last Jewish kings of Himyar in the Yemen (Goitein 1975: 47); as there had been so much sustained maritime traffic and religious influence between the Yemen and Cochin, perhaps this similarity of names was more than a coincidence. ${ }^{2}$

The ninth and tenth paintings continue the theme of the special relationship with the maharaja enjoyed by the Jews. Both are set inside the Cochin Synagogue. The ninth shows Jews of Cochin in Middle Eastern dress. With them is a stylized maharaja. The Torah scrolls are prominent in the open Ark. They bear the caption: 'The Maharaja of Travancore presenting a gold crown for the Torah in 1805.' Travancore was the neighbouring princely state which had a Jewish community in North Parur. The gifted 22 -carat, jewel-encrusted Keter Torah is a very tangible symbol of Hindu, Jewish amity.

The final painting is poignant, Jews in Western dress, many of them identifiable, meet in the synagogue with the Maharaja of Cochin. The Torah scrolls are again prominent in the open Ark. 'The last reigning Maharaja of Cochin addressing Jewish subjects in the synagogue before relinquishing his throne in 1949,' the caption reads. Cochin was not properly part of British India and enjoyed at least nominal sovereignty until its amalgamation into the Union of India shortly after independence. Although they were patriotic citizens of India, the Jews realized that their position in Indian society was bound to deteriorate for no other reason than demographics. A few thousand Jews in a small, princely state could exert considerable influence. But in the context of a republic of 350 million, they would become too infinitesimal to maintain their high position. The situation was appreciated by the maharaja in his farewell address to the community, well remembered by all elderly Jews. On 24 March 1949 he congratulated his loyal subjects on the independence they had just received from Great Britain in Israel, and wished 132 / NATHAN KATZ
them well in their newly regained homeland (Koder 1951:34). Not all of the Jews realized the significance of the maharaja's words about Israel at the time, although Sattu Koder wrote of the occasion: The
establishment of the State of Israel has created a general stir in the community. Hundreds have already left to build the Land of their forefathers and many more are waiting their turn, and it may be that after a few years the story of the Jews of Cochin ... will come to an end. (ibid.: 35).

In retrospect, both Koder and the maharaja were indeed prophetic. If a Cheraman Perumal chartered the establishment of the Jewish community by giving them the copperplates, then the Maharaja of Cochin chartered its demise in his 1949 address. Both events are highlighted in the paintings.

What do we do with this legend? How can such a selective, constructed narrative inform our attempt at doing history?

Making sense of it requires methodological creativity. In essence, we can do two things. We can (a) interpret it as a method of identity generation; and we can (b) view it in the context of the historical traditions of other, neighboring communities, namely, Kerala's Syrian Christians, Muslims and Nambudiri Brahmins. After the latter, we will return to the former.

## Christian Legends

The Acts of Thomas is a curious second- to fourth-century compilation from various sources that are part midrash, part gospel, and composed in Syriac (a language closely akin to Aramaic), although a Greek version may have appeared earlier (James 1924: 364).

The First Act contains the relevant passages for our discussion. It begins in Jerusalem, where Jesus and his apostles 'divided the regions of the world, that every one of us should go unto the region that fell to him and unto the nations where unto the Lord sent him'. They drew lots, and India 'fell unto Judas Thomas', much to his dismay. He protested, but Jesus insisted: 'Fear not, Thomas, go thou unto India and preach the word there, for my grace is with thee'. Still Thomas resisted: .Whither thou wouldst send me, send me, but elsewhere, for unto the Indians I will not go. (James 1924: 365).

Just then, an Indian merchant named Abbanes, an emissary of the Indian king Gundaphorus, judging from his name, a Graeco-Indian ruler of Bactria, in northwest India. arrived. In a story that remains popular in Kerala Christian wedding folk songs, Abbanes was looking to purchase a carpenter slave on behalf of the king who wanted to construct a temple as magnificent as Solomon's had been. Jesus then sold Thomas to Abbanes, and Thomas had no choice but to acquiesce. The two set sail
for the city of Andrapolis in India, which local Christians identify with Cranganore (Weil 1986: 185).
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Upon arrival they found the city in merriment. It was the wedding day of the king's daughter. Amidst food and drink, a flute-player girl, 'by race a Hebrew', happened to be nearby. Thomas began reciting mystical poems in Hebrew understood only by the girl, who fell in love with him. The apostle rebuked her with discourses about the virtue of chastity (sexual continence was Thomas' preeminent teaching), leading to the conversion of both the Jewish flute-player and the king's daughter, who decided to eschew sexual relations with her new husband (James 1924: 367.68). The Kerala Christians' basic origin legend is found in the apocryphal text: Thomas was sent to India by Jesus and began his mission by converting a Jew already there.

This has led many of the 'St Thomas Christians', one of the names by which they are known, to claim Indian Jewish heritage as their own, and has even led some to reconvert to Judaism. According to them, they are close kin to the Jews, having originated from the 'JewishChristians' among them, following the paradigmof St Thomas's conversion of the Jewish girl. Thus, they are often known in Malayalam as Nazaranee Mâpillas. According to Indian civil servant and anthropologist L.K. Anantakrishna Ayyar: The 'Nazaranee' [meaning 'separatists', from the Hebrew 'nazar'] was a name by which the Jews had originally designated the primitive Christians . . . . The term Mâpilla is a compound [of ] . . . maha (great) and pilla (son), signifying 'prince' or 'royal son', which were the honorary titles granted to Thomas Cana [a fourth-century Christian merchant and missionary] and his followers by Cheraman Perumal, the old renowned Emperor of Kerala. (Ayyar 1926: 1.2) In colloquial Malayalam, mâpilla is a respectful term for son-in-law or bridegroom, the royal connotation being secondary at best. Muslims are also known as Mâpillas, or Jonaka Mâpillas to distinguish them from the Christian Nazaranee Mâpillas (Logan 1981: 225).

The oldest group of Christians is also known as Knani (which some translate as 'Canaanite') Christians, named after this fourth-century merchant. According to their narrative, Knayi Thommen, as he is known in Malayalam, came to India and encountered .people wearing wooden crosses; Christians they claimed but steeped in idolatry. Thomas concluded that these people were the remaining descendants of those natives whom St Thomas the Apostle to the East had converted centuries before. (Swiderski 1988: 51). Returning to his native Edessa, Syria,

Thomas met with Bishop Joseph who, guided by prophetic dreams and with the approval of the Bishop of Antioch, commissioned Thomas to organize Christians from Edessa, Jerusalem and Baghdad into a 'colonizing mission' to purify Christianity in Malabar. Some seventy-two families, 400 persons all told, set sail aboard seven ships. 'Before leaving they burned all their houses and personal belongings, carrying only some ashes as memento. Before leaving all swore to maintain their racial purity, teach the true religion and stay loyal to the Patriarch' (ibid.: 52). 134 / NATHAN KATZ

The narrative continues with a royal welcome from Cheraman Perumal and the bestowal of a copperplate at Mahadevapattanam, 'the city of the Great God', in Cranganore that granted sovereignty and rights to the seventy-two privileges of royalty. There they prospered until military losses to the Muslims of north Malabar forced them to move south, to Cochin and Travancore (ibid.).

The Knani Christians share the Jews' high-caste status as well as many customs, including taboos about women in their menses (Ayyar 1926: x.xii) and a hereditary priesthood, the latter of which could as likely reflect their purported Hindu Brahmin pedigree as their Jewish kohenite (priestly) origin, and has been used as evidence for both (ibid.: 2.3). They marry under a canopy known as a pantal, analogous to the Jewish chupah; prior to the wedding the bride immerses herself in a kuli, similar to the Jewish miqveh; they sing folk songs very similar to those of the Jews, describing their arrival in India and referring to such observances as Yom Kippur (Swiderski 1988: 37.50); virtually all of their home observances are preceded by the ceremonial lighting of a lamp, vilakku; and they eat unleavened bread at a special, ritual meal held after nightfall on Maundy Thursday, during which the father ceremonially washes his hands twice, as is done at a Passover Seder (Vellian 1971: 104.5). They also eschewed any efforts at converting others to their religion. Shalva Weil (1986: 186.88), who studied Christian-Jewish parallels in Kerala, cited several other similar customs, including: The position of the bride standing on the right of the bridegroom . . . the bridal veil . . . burial of the dead to face . . . Jerusalem . . . the priests. black velvet cap which is supposed to be similar to the Jews. head gear ... and the 'Kiss of Peace' ceremony . . . which . . . was copied from the Jews . . . . the ululatory sounds uttered by Knani women known as kurava, ${ }^{3}$ the unique Knani betrothal ceremony, and the symbolic sixpointed star which appears on the sleeve of the bridegroom's long velvet coat.
the deathbed blessing passed on from parents to children or grandchildren: God gave His blessing to Abraham, Abraham gave that blessing to Isaac, Isaac gave that blessing to Jacob, Jacob gave that blessing to my fore-fathers, My fore-fathers gave that blessing to my parents, And my parents gave that blessing to me.

Now, dear son (daughter), I give that blessing to you. (Vellian 1971: 105)
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Beyond these ritualistic parallels, Weil noted similarities in legends, Malayalam folk songs, geographic patterns of settlements, and a common sense of origin and history (Weil 1986: 194). They also share with Jews the tradition of having received a royal charter, an âcâram or sthânam, engraved on copperplates, from the idealized Hindu emperor Cheraman Perumal.

Christians, who today comprise 20 per cent of the population of Kerala, are of split allegiances, belonging to several branches of the Church and observing differing rites. The oldest group is that of the Nazaranee Mâpillas, who claim to originate with the Apostle in 52 C.E. ${ }^{4}$ They came under the influence of the Nestorian Church of Persia from the sixth to the sixteenth centuries and, like the Jews, received a copperplate charter from Cheraman Perumal during the eighth or ninth century. They use the Syriac language in their rites. Syriac is the language of the Church of Persia and of Thomas of Cana, in any case a tongue closely related to the Aramaic of the Apostle.

Roman Catholicism came to India with the Portuguese explorer Vasco da Gama, who arrived at Cochin in 1498. Shortly thereafter, in 1560, an Office of the Inquisition was established at Goa, and in 1599 St Francis Xavier, Archbishop of Goa, convened the Synod of Diamper to purge the Church of both Nestorian doctrines and vestigial Jewish practices. The Roman Catholic Church in south India today has three rites, in Syriac, Latin and Malayalam.

There are also Orthodox Syrian Christians in Kerala, known as Jacobites because they follow the monophysite doctrines of Jacob Zenzalus formulated at the Council of Ephesus in 430. The Kerala Church broke off from the Syriac-rite Roman Catholics early in the seventeenth century. In the nineteenth century they split into two sects: the Reformed who follow the Malayalam-language Orthodox rite and are known as the Mar Thoma Syrian Church; and the Unreformed group continues under the Bishop of Antioch. Just as the Portuguese brought Roman

Catholicism with them, so the Dutch brought their Dutch Reformed Church and the British their Anglicanism, later joined by Congregationalists, Lutherans and Presbyterians. The events described in the Acts of Thomas were relocated explicitly in Kerala by Maliekel Thômâ Rambâm in the 1601 Malayalam epic poem, Thômâ Parvam (Thomas 1924: 214). For example, the island of Malankara, near Cranganore, is revered as Thomas. landing site (Ayyar 1926: 13). It is held that: [ He ] converted the people of all castes among whom were the Nambudiris [Brahmins] of thirty-two families . . . . Of these, the [Sankarapuri and Pâlamattam] . . . families were ordained and set apart for sacred orders and bishops. The priesthood has been practically hereditary in the two families . . for several centuries with inheritance in the female line. (ibid.: 2.3)
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He is believed to have built seven churches in Kerala, the oldest at Parur, and all are located near Jewish settlements (Puthiakunnel 1970: 189.90). As early as the third century, Church fathers taught that Thomas went to Mylapore, now a section of Madras, where he was martyred on 3 July 72 and buried on Calamina, or .Little Mount., in Madras; a fast is observed on that day by Christians in Kerala (Thomas 1924: 216).

## Muslim Legends

Muslims make up about 20 per cent of Kerala's population. They were preceded by their ethnic, if not religious, ancestors, the Arabs, who had traded between Kerala and the Middle East since prehistory. Some hold that there have been Arab trading settlements in Kerala ever since the second century (Segal 1967: 386). Archaeological evidence from north-west India indicates trade between the prehistoric Indus Valley Civilization of India and Sumer between the twenty-fifth and nineteenth centuries B.C.E. (Wheeler 1968: 81, 134.37) As early as 25 B.C.E., Hellenized Jews, in alliance with the Romans, led an expedition that wrested the spice trade monopolies from the Arabs. Alexandria, with its large Jewish population, became the chief western centre for the spice trade (Lamotte 1953: 95f). For centuries before the rise of Islam, Arabs traded with China and India, pursuing both the overland silk route as well as the monsoon-driven sea lanes from Aden to various west Indian ports, including Cranganore.

The first century of Islam saw the new faith spread by the sword as well as by the inherent dynamic of the new civilization which was being created. As early as 712, Muslim armies had reached the Sind in western India. Three hundred years later Mahmud of Ghazni led periodic
raids across north India. Another Turko- Afghan, Muhammad of Ghur, established the Sultanate of Delhi at the end of the twelfth century, and Muslim rule over significant sections of India was established for the first time (Thapar 1966: 238).

The interaction between the people of India with Muslim dynasties that followed, for example; the Tughluqs, the Sayyids and the Lodis, led to Muslim. Hindu acculturation in all spheres, from mysticism to architecture to music and cuisine. It was, however, the Mughal dynasty, established by Babur of Kabul, which was to have the most transformative impact upon India. Due to the Mughals' missionary efforts, the large majority of Muslims in India were native rather than foreign. Similarly, much of the India we know today is a consequence of Mughal.

## Hindu interactions

From the arrival of Arabs in the early eighth century to the plundering raids of the Ghaznavads, to the dynasties established by the Ghuris and, ultimately, the Mughals, northern India was dominated by Muslim invasions, a rule that lasted until the British replaced them in the eighteenth century. But this strife was unknown in Kerala. While the north was besieged, embattled and subjected to an unwelcome rule, Islam, like Judaism and Syrian Christianity in earlier centuries, came into Kerala not like a conqueror but as an honoured guest in the house. (Narayanan 1972: 39).
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There can be no vouching for its historical accuracy, but Cranganore's newly rebuilt (paid for with 'Dubai dollars' earned by Kerala labourers in the Middle East) Cheraman Juma Masjid bears a painted sign, proudly proclaiming the mosque to be the oldest in India, having been established in 621. This would date the mosque from the lifetime of the Prophet himself, thus connecting Kerala's community directly with Muslim sacred time, in accord with local legend. Our best source for the idealized history of the Muslims of Kerala is found in the Tohfut-ulMujahideen, an Arabic historical work written by a Kerala Muslim, Shaikh al-Mabari Zain al-Din, in the sixteenth century, the oldest historical record of Kerala (Rowlandson 1833). It is an intriguing text, written to encourage the Muslims to resist 'al-Afrunj', the Portuguese, who had made important inroads into Muslim- and Jewish-dominated trade monopolies. The Portuguese entered into an alliance with one of Kerala's two most powerful rulers and patron of the Jews, the Maharaja of Cochin (or Raja of Kushee, as al-Din calls him), while the Muslims aligned themselves
with the Zamorin of Calicut, another Hindu king who ruled northern Kerala, or Malabar as it was then known. His title, 'Zamorin', was an Arabic pronunciation of Samudri Raja, 'king of the seas' (Dasgupta 1967: 5). That the Muslims' arrival in Malabar was marked by amity rather than strife is one of the assumptions of al-Din's work, and an important part of the local Muslims' self-understanding:

The Lord most high hath willed, [wrote al-Din] . . . that the faith of Islamism should flourish throughout the chief of the inhabited regions of the earth; in some countries making the sword and compulsion the means of its dissemination, in others preaching and exhortation. But he mercifully ordained, that the people of Malabar, beyond the other nations of India, should evince a ready and willing acceptance of this holy creed. (Rowlandson 1833: 5) Their origin is traced to the year 710, when a company of three poor, pious Muslims from Arabia, 'under the spiritual guidance of a Sheikh', made a pilgrimage to the spot where Adam is believed to have first set foot upon expulsion from Paradise, the mountain known to them as Adam's Peak in Sri Lanka (ibid.: 48), a site sacred to Muslims, Hindus, Buddhists and Christians alike.

En route to Adam's Peak, the pilgrims stopped at Cranganore, where they were warmly received by the king. The sheikh (a term used in Sufism to indicate a spiritual teacher; in exoteric Islam, a secular leader) told the king about the Prophet Muhammad, especially the legend of ishfak-ul-kumur, an apocryphal miracle tale about the division of the moon. The king became intrigued and commanded the sheikh to return to Cranganore after making pilgrimage. This he did, and the king stealthily accompanied his party back to Arabia, where he apparently converted to Islam.
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Local Hindus share the narrative, according to the nineteenthcentury, quasihistorical Malayalam text, the Keralolpatti (Logan 1981: 265). It records the conversion to Islam of the last Cheraman Perumal king $^{5}$ who left for Makkah and thereafter became known as Makkattupoya Perumal, 'the emperor who went to Makkah' (Narayanan 1972: ix). As ritual recompense for this familial apostasy, the maharajas of Travancore used to recite, on receiving their sword of office at their coronation: ‘’ will keep this sword until the uncle who has gone to Mecca [Makkah] returns' (Logan 1981: 269). The text and the custom reveal a basic structure for interreligious relationships in south India, a family structure. The apostate king remains the 'uncle' of succeeding generations of maharajas. This legend established not only the identity of the Muslims
of Kerala, but it also defined their relationship with the dominant Hindu, Nayar in particular, community.

## Similarities in the Legends

The three Abrahamic religious communities in Kerala - the Jews, Christians, and Muslims -each developed legendary accounts of their sojourns in south-western India. These legends are not fixed; they are periodically reconstructed to reflect the conditions of the time. Nevertheless, the three sets of legends bear striking similarities on several points, similarities that help us appreciate the unique and salient features of Kerala civilization:

1. Each community traces its origin to a sacred time and place.

The Jews' story begins with the destruction of the Second Temple and the Diaspora to 'the four corners of the earth'. Thus the sacred city of Jerusalem was connected with Kerala and became replicated in local traditions of Shingly.

The Christians' origin was put into the mouth of Jesus himself when he commissioned Thomas to voyage to India. Again, sacred time and sacred place were the locus for the origin of Kerala's Syriac community.
The Muslims, legend, at least one version of it, connected their community to Makkah and to the time of the Prophet. The story of the last Cheraman Perumal king's voyage to Makkah and meeting with the Prophet was conflated with the arrival of the first Muslim pilgrims.
2. All three communities made explicit reference to sea travel in their legends.Land travel was possible at the time, but due to the dependence of each
The historical traditions of the Jews of Kochi / 139 community on maritime trade, arrival by the sea routes would be an obvious choice. Each legend embellished this point with references to continuing sea contact with the site of origins.
3. The theme most often emphasized in each legend is the hospitable welcome received from Cheraman Perumal. This theme dominates six of the ten paintings selected by the Jews to present themselves to the outside world. The Thomas legend recounts his reception at a royal wedding feast, the song of the Jewish flute-player girl, and the conversion of Brahmin families. Thus, three extant, high-caste
communities 'the rulers, the Jews and the Brahmins' all participated in receiving Thomas. The Muslim legend recounted the Cheraman Perumal king's invitation to the pilgrims to return after visiting Adam's Peak. In one version, he accompanied them back to Makkah and converted to Islam.
4. Each community received royal charters, two on copperplates and one a stone inscription, which granted high privileges and a degree of autonomy. These charters are often associated with the erection of synagogues, churches or mosques. Similarly, each group attained high-caste status in Kerala and generally eschewed missionizing on any large scale. Their adaptation to Kerala social structures was reflected in 'Hindu accretions' in their religious and ritual traditions and in each group's proliferation of sub-castes, the higher status group claiming antique origins in Israel or Arabia, the lower status group considered 'native'. This strategy for high-level accommodation into Kerala.s highly structured society was eventually problematic for the Jews since it contravened Jewish ethical standards.
5. In exchange for royal patronage, each group contributed to the prosperity of Kerala, serving as 'windows' to the outside world, the Middle East and Europe, as well as large-scale cultivators, government officials and soldiers. This unique set of arrangements between Hindu kings on the one hand, and Jewish, Christian and Muslim settlers on the other has been aptly termed 'cultural symbiosis' by historian M.G.S. Narayanan (1972: 1.8). The prosperity theme is also found in the paradisiacal accounts of these foreign settlements in Kerala. All of these themes have mirror images or counterparts, albeit imperfectly so, within the historical traditions of Kerala's Hindus, who today make up about sixty per cent of the population. Hindu Legends Hindu legends about the origin of Kerala must be understood in the context of the topography of the state. Kerala is bound to the east by the densely-forested Western Ghat mountains, ranging from 1,000 to more than 2,600 metres, and to the west by the Arabian Sea. Kerala lies, as it were, facing west with its back to the rest of India.

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The region was known to Arab and Jewish traders as Malabar, derived from mala, old Tamil for 'hill', and the Arabic barr, 'country'. According to historian William Logan (1981: 1), it was especially appropriate that the very name of the country reflected a symbiosis of

Hindu and Middle Eastern language and, therefore, culture. However, a more plausible etymology would connect mala with vâram or slope (J Richardson and Sumathi Freeman, personal communication,9 September 1989). Its alternate name, Kerala, shares a root with the ancient dynasty of Chera kings, the Cheraman Perumals. There are several etymological possibilities to account for that term, one of which derives from chernta, 'added', and Cheralam would mean 'the land which was added on (to the already existing mountainous or hilly country)' (Menon 1984: 10).

Both etymologies square with geology and legend. The land was once under water and at some time it emerged from the Arabian Sea bordering the Western Ghats. Volcanic or seismological forces elevated the coastal planes, creating the numerous rivers and backwater lagoons which are so typical of Kerala today (ibid.: 9). According to legend, the land was 'added on' by divine rather than natural forces: the story of Parashurama, 'Rama who Wields the Battleaxe', the sixth of the ten incarnations (avatara) of Vishnu, 'the most violent character in Sanskrit literature' (Goldman 1977: 85).

Rama was a member of the Bhargava caste of Brahmin priests. The Bhargavas feuded with the Haihaya caste of noble-warrior Kshatriyas, a dispute representative of the great power struggles between Brahmins and Kshatriyas. According to the epic compiled by the Brahmins, the Mahabharata, Parashurama led Brahmin armies in what one scholar called the defence of their social and ritual leadership against 'arrogant' Kshatriya usurpers (Gail 1977, 35.39), and what another scholar called 'a genocidal crusade against the ksatriyas'. (Goldman 1977: 85).

Parashurama is 'a brahmin who behaves like a ksatriya,' (ibid.: 101; 'ksatravrttir brahmanah', p. 104) for whom 'the power of tapas [asceticism] is not enough . . . Rama must humiliate and even annihilate [the kshatriyas] . . . with their own weapons. He must not only put them in their place, he must, by clearing the earth of them and their heirs, usurp that place,' (ibid.: 139.40) and this anti-Kshatriya role receives as much emphasis in Indian folktales as it does in the literature of the 'high tradition'. (Beck et al. 1987: 85.87). Parashurama is the paradoxically militant leader of an 'aberrant' caste of priests whose concerns included 'death, violence, sorcery, confusion and violation of class-roles . . . intermarriage with other varnas . . . and open hostility to the gods themselves' (Goldman 1977: 5). Parashurama is a special patron god in south India, where many shrines are dedicated to him.

The Agni Purana tells of his battles with the Kshatriyas over Kamadhenu, the wish-fulfilling Cow of Plenty. After slaying so many Kshatriyas that the ground became too crowded with their corpses for him to move, Parashurama was told by Varuna, the god of order, that he could have all the land he could cover with one toss of his battleaxe. At the same time, Varuna was cautious lest Parashurama become too powerful, so he transformed Yama, lord of the dead, into an ant that
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gnawed Parashurama's bowstring, weakening it. When he shot, the arrow reached only as far as Malabar, which became his home (Gail 1977: 215.18).

Another version of this legend of Brahmin ascendancy in Kerala is found in the Keralolpatti:
Parasurama threw his parasu or ax across the sea from Gokarnam [in Karnataka] to Kanyakumari [at the southern tip of India] (or from Kanyakumari to Gokarnam according to another version) and water receded up to the spot where it fell. The tract of territory so thrown up is said to have constituted the land of Kerala, otherwise called Bhargavakshetram [land of the Bhargavas] or Parasuramakshetram [land of Parashurama]. (Menon 1984: 8)

According to the local, mixed-Sanskrit Purana, the Kerala Mahatmyam, Parashurama then invited a poor Brahmin who had eight sons, the eldest settling at Gokarnam, some say Trichur, who became the leader of all of Kerala's Brahmins (Logan 1984: 258). The Keralolpatti continues to say that Parashurama then brought more Brahmins to establish Kerala's villages, and finally various castes and the system of matrilineality so characteristic of Kerala (ibid.: 259.60). 'Thus,'the Keralolpatti says, 'Parasu Raman created the land of Malabar, the Karmabhumi, or country where salvation depends entirely upon good actions, and bestowed the same upon the Brahmans of the sixty-four gramams [villages] as a poured-out gift' (ibid.: 260).

As Rama was to become associated with Vishnu, these legends indicate the ascendancy of the worship of Vishnu in Kerala, especially among the ruling class, who in Kerala were Shudras and not Kshatriyas. Thus, the rise of the Nayars and the rise of Vishnu and his religion, Bhagavatism, were connected; Parashurama the Brahmin became the champion of the Nayars because he was against the Kshatriyas, whose divinely-ordained leadership of society they challenged; the divine defeat of the Kshatriyas was a necessary step toward the legitimation of the Shudra rule of the Cheras. Since the religion of Vishnu, Bhagavatism,
is open to all castes, its adoption by Kerala's ruling Nayar families served to legitimate their 'unnatural' rule. ${ }^{6}$

The Keralolpatti goes on to discuss the establishment of various villages and social institutions, and does not neglect the absorption of foreigners into the very fabric of Keralan society. It is said that the Cheraman Perumal invited these foreign merchants to settle in his country (Logan 1984:274). According to Kerala's most eminent historian, M.G.S. Narayanan, it was a combination of factors that led to this unique relationship between Hindu kings and foreign traders, which he aptly termed 'cultural symbiosis'. This hospitality was due to: (a) 'the Brahmin' Kshatriya
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prejudice against trade and navigation . . . induced them to leave such 'vulgar' affairs in the hands of the foreigners. (Narayanan 1972: 5); (b) the geography of Kerala, which tends to seal it off from the rest of India and open it to the Arabian Sea; (c) the foreigners. relatively advanced knowledge of those very skills needed to assure the prosperity of the kingdom; and perhaps (d) the much-discussed 'tolerance' of Hinduism, about which there is much more to say, but that will be left for another occasion.

## Identity as a Narrative

Placing the narrative of the Cochin Jews in the context of parallel narratives of other religious communities of Kerala, whether indigenous or extrinsic, tells us much about the salient features of Kerala's society, as well as about the adaptive modalities of extrinsic communities there. It also prepares us for some reflections as to the role of narration in the process of identity formation.

Recent theory in hermeneutics, the philosophical interpretation of texts, provided a clue to the significance of the Cochin Jews' obsession with their history. Borrowing from the thought of Hans-Georg Gadamer and Paul Ricoeur, such theory understands a person's identity to be 'a narrative construct', and it points to 'the continuous need for narrating experience in order to exist as a meaningful human subject, and the function of narrative interpretation in generating a continuity of identity, of self' (Kerby 1988: 232, 234). As an individual.s narrative constructionof self orders the data of past experiences, so the Cochin Jews constructed an Indian Jewish identity through narrating a story which interwove Jerusalem with Cranganore, which emphasized their high status and
proximity to the maharajas, a thoroughly charming tale of honour and affection, of spices and piety.

To approach the identity-generating nature of the Cochin Jews' narrative, their story must be viewed against the background of historical data. It does not matter that the history of Kerala is very sketchily known; what matters is the meaning the Jews elicited out of such scant data. That narrative meaning is more significant in generating identity than historical data was argued by philosopher Anthony Paul Kerby (1988: 239):

Narrative expression is not the mere communication of information or data, but is a sense-giving and synthetic activity. Historical narration takes its lead from artifacts but must aim beyond them to a synthesis that yields a satisfactory a Bhagavata title meaning 'the Cera lord who is the Bhagavan' (or Maha-Visnu) . . . . There were no Ksatriyas in Kerala; the Parasurama story appears to mean that the 'Sudra' Cera dynasty was 'purified' by the 'axe of detachment' that Parasurama wielded through initiation according to Bhagavata liturgies...
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coherence, directionality, and intelligibility; otherwise history would be a mere cataloging or dating and could not hope to rise beyond the chronicle stage.

There is a complex relationship between the data of history, or artifacts, and the narration, which partially depends upon those data. While the data are used to justify the narration, they could be used to justify other narratives as well. Indeed, Cochin Jews have offered varying narratives in varying circumstances, largely because 'the desire to appear consistent (to ourselves and others) ... causes us to embellish or change our stories, and this is, of course, very much a social demand' (ibid.: 237). Therefore, to tell the Cochin Jews' story is to indicate both the artifacts and the narrative, treating the one as warp and the other as weft of a tapestry of meaning, which is to say of an identity-generating myth. The narrative becomes intelligible by setting it against the background of data, such as they are, and one must bear in mind to whom certain narratives were addressed. Moreover, the plausibilities and possibilities of history are like empty spaces that invite narrative closure. As Kerby (ibid.: 241) argues: Historical discourse, like selfnarration, falls into that intermediary realm between fact and fiction... What distinguishes history from fiction is that the events related in the former are presumed to have actually taken place. What unites history
with fiction is its dependence on narrative discourse and creative synthesis in order that events have meaning. As with traditional fiction, history seeks both closure and completeness, but can attain this only through selection and by applying the formal beginning 'middle' end structure of narrative; which then implies 'discovering' such teleologies in the events of the past.

## Conclusions

To return to the question introduced at the beginning of this essay: What does a historian of religions have to say to historians? The historian of religions is indeed a ragpicker, a characterization mandated by the complexity of the subject matter, religion. In many senses, religion is a sui generis phenomenon, not reducible to modes of enquiry borrowed from other disciplines. Neither is it separable from them, and it is just such a truly interdisciplinary approach that characterizes the modern study of religion. Religionswissenschaft is not theology, of course, but neither is it properly understood by relying entirely on anthropology or psychology. As a ragpicker, the historian of religion borrows from literature, philosophy, anthropology,history, sociology, psychology, economics and, yes, even theology, to elucidate the object of his or her study. At the same time, methodology, however complex, must serve the data rather than the other way around, lest one utterly lose sight of what it is that we wish to understand.
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## Notes :

1. There are other, very old Cochin traditions regarding their arrival at Cranganore. A 1503 letter written by a European Jew who lived in Shingly reported that before the destruction of the First Temple, in the days of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, nine and a half tribes went and settled in Cush until this day. We who live in the land of Shingly are from the tribes of Judah and Benjamin.. The letter goes on to describe a second arrival of exiles from Israel, 800 years later: .After the destruction of the Second Temple, our revered master and teacher, Samuel Halevi, and Israelites and priests, came to the land of Melibara. (Lesley 2000: 9).
2 It was not only foreign communities who evolved tales of welcome from a benevolent ruler upon whom they became dependent. The Kurumba community of sorcerers relied upon the dominant Badaga farmers of the Nilgiri Hills, just beyond the Western Ghats from Kerala. According to the Kurumbas. story, because of a drought they migrated to the Badaga-
dominated region, where they received hospitality and settled (Beck et al. 1987: 125.29).
2. The cry kurava . . . shrill and high pitched, is raised by women at the time of auspicious events, of which a typical example is the birth of a boy . . in the inverse case of the birth of a girl, the ground is beaten with the branches of coconut palms. (Tarabout 1986: 112, fn. 6). The historical traditions of the Jews of Kochi / 135

4 Most scholars claim they more likely began with Thomas of Cana who arrived from Jerusalem in 345 . We simply do not know whether Thomas of Cana built upon and .purified. the earlier mission of the Apostle, as the Nazaranees hold, or whether he was India.s first missionary who became conflated with the Apostle at some later date.
5 Similarly, the Knani Christians narrate how the Cheraman Perumal king who welcomed Thomas of Cana in 345 C.E. converted to Christianity and made pilgrimage to the tomb of St Thomas the Apostle in Mylapore. There he died and was buried alongside the Apostle. It seems that Cheraman Perumal is a good empty name to fill with whatever events satisfy the audience of the faithful. He legitimates one or another foreign religion in India by welcoming its proselytes and himself becoming a convert in the end. (Swiderski 1988: 64).
6 According to Dennis Hudson (personal communication, 1991), .The Parasurama story in the history of Kerala . . . symbolizes the .conquest. of Kerala by the Bhagavata tradition that has Krsna at its center as the full avatar of the Bhagavan [God]. That tradition is followed by the Cochin maharaja and probably by the Cheraman Perumals at Cranganore, [whose] name is probably

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## THE RHYTHMS OF KERALA

A Cultural Study with Special Reference to Ekachuzhati Rhythms

## Manoj Kuroor

In spite of being a small geographical area, Kerala is enriched by hundreds of traditional art forms. It may be the result of the convergence and conflicts of various religions, castes and races that have immigrated to this land through several centuries for various historical reasons. This hybridity of cultures had its reflection in the literature and artistic devices used in these art forms. The lack of historical evidence is a real hazard that compels us to refrain from making objective statements about the formulation of most of these art forms.

## Classification of Rhythms

In a conventional manner, these art forms are divided into two genres i.e. Classical and folk. Kathakali, Koodiyattam and Krishnanattam belong to the classical genre ${ }^{1}$ while Theyyam, Padayani, Mudiyettu, Poorakkali, Kanyarkali, Kummattikkali, Margamkali, Dufmuttu, Sanghakkali etc. are grouped as folk. ${ }^{2}$ In a cultural perspective, it is important to note that these art forms are marked by the presence of numerous varieties of rhythms (talas). In other words, rhythm is the dominant factor among the artistic devices used in each and every traditional art form. A cultural study of these rhythms will strongly denounce the conventional classification of rhythms into classical/folk. Unless the adjective 'folk' helps to announce the existence and identity of some of these art forms by differentiating them from the classical tradition, even the classical art forms themselves were derived from the same folk tradition through the methods of stylization or standardization, the classification will allow the classical art forms to remain 'pure' and elite.

As far as the presence of rhythm is concerned, the same rhythm is used in various art forms and rhythms belonging to different systems of rhythm are practised in one art form despite the conventional division into classical/folk. A scholar and practitioner of these rhythms, the famous Arjunanritham artist, late Kurichi P. S. Kumaran said in a private conversation: "There are no classical rhythms; all rhythms are folk."3 This statement offers the possibility of comparison with the observation made by Edward W. Said on Western classical music: ". . . I accept the existence of a relatively distinct entity called 'Western classical music,' although at a later occasion perhaps l'd like to show that it is far from coherent or monolithic and that when it is talked about as if it meant only one thing it is being constructed with non-western, non classical musics and cultures very much in mind."4

Every art form flourishes in the cultural continuum of its own region while the regional culture is being nourished by the presence of these art forms. Though sometimes the cultural factors inherent in these arts are not so visible on the surface, it is possible to elucidate them by analyzing the techniques or devices - like rhythms, tunes, gestures and footsteps - used in them. In the works of Kunjan Nambiar, the 18th century poet and exponent of the art form Thullal, who had traveled and lived in many parts of Kerala, we can see the rhythms belonging to different regional cultures. ${ }^{5} \mathrm{He}$ used the rhythms that consist of various systems of rhythm and defined some of them, even though he employed the criterion of classical music.

The ancient books on Indian music had divided the rhythms generally music - into two categories. They regarded the rhythms belonging to a pan-Indian tradition as Marga Talas and rhythms practised in different regions as Desi Talas. ${ }^{6}$ But Marga is divine and only used by Devas, the deities and Gandharvas, the semi Gods. ${ }^{7}$ Still all the rhythms that were in practice, whether classical or folk, belonged to 'human' art forms demarcated as Desi! So many Desi systems of rhythms such as 120 talas, 101 talas, 108 talas, and Suladi system of 35 talas are some examples. ${ }^{8}$ Even the classical music and classical dance use these systems of rhythms.

Carnatic music, the most dominant form of South Indian classical music, has been practising Suladi system since the 16th century. This system consists of seven main talas. Dhruvam, Matyam, Roopakam, Champa, Triputa, Ata and Eka. Each of them has five divisions (Jaties): Thryasram, Chaturasram, Khandam, Misram and Sankirnam. Then the total number of talas is $7 \times 5=35 .{ }^{9}$ All other ancient rhythms are replaced by these rhythms for the eminent scholar-writers like Purandaradasa,

Thyagaraja, Muthuswami Dikshitar and Syama Sastri had written several compositions in these talas. The wide acceptance of these compositions and rhythms in the modern age and the tendency among the traditional scholars to measure all other rhythms by using the criterion of this system put aside other rhythms practised in several regional art forms as well as the rhythms belonging to ancient systems.

The domination of a single system is not only a technical fallacy but also a question of cultural power. It gives a universal definition to rhythm and determines the other rhythms as synonyms or parodies of the dominant rhythm by means of some peripheral similarities between them. For example, some rhythms, even if they belong to different systems, have the same number of matras or same duration. Chathurasra jathi dhruva tala of Suladi system and Marma Tala of Ekachuzhati system have the same duration of 14 matras. A traditional scholar of classical music may identify the Marma tala as Chathurasrajathi Dhruva Tala irrespective of the differences between them.

The rhythms of every art form must be analyzed by placing them in their cultural context and the conventional approaches that could lead to a cultural domination of any aesthetic ideas or ideologies must be resisted for Kerala has been a land of diversity- the diversity of social groups as well as rhythm structures. The presence of rhythms belonging to various systems such as 5 rhythms described in Natyasastra (e.g. Chachatputam and Shatpitaputrakam used in Arjunanritham and Garudanthukkam), 120 rhythms (Vishamam used in Thekkan Chendamelam and Mallatala practised in Koodiyattam), 108 rhythms (Karika used in Sastampattu and Thullal), 35 rhythms of Suladi system (Triputa used in Kathakali, Thullal, Koodiyattam and Krishnanattam), and Ekachuzhati rhythms (used in Mudiyettu, Padayani, Theyyam and Sastampattu) is evident in the art forms of Kerala. In addition to them several rhythms that belong to none of these systems (e.g. Ganapathy, Lakshmi, Kundanachi, Mutakkutalam), various unnamed rhythms (e.g. the rhythm for etuthukalasam of Vishnumurti in Theyyam) and a large amount of orally rendered rhythms (used in Poorakkali) are being performed in them. ${ }^{10}$ When a rhythm belonging to a particular system is absorbed by an art form, it transforms its structure, so that it could be appropriate for the aesthetic or cultural need of that art form. To enter into the complicated realm of these rhythms, it will be helpful to understand the relatively simple structure of Ekachuzhati rhythms.

Ekachuzhati system consists of seven main rhythms i.e. Ekam, Roopam, Champata, Karika, Panchari, Marmam and Kumbham. ${ }^{11}$ Balyutbhavam Sitankan Thullal of Kunchan Nambiar refers to the first
two of them, Ekam and Roopam. ${ }^{12}$ Harineeswayamvaram Thullal of the same poet has given the examples of Karika, Kumbham and Marmam. ${ }^{13}$

The practice of Ekachuzhati rhythms is limited neither to the performances of Arjunanritham nor Thullal. They are being used in various artistic contexts by the artists who are often unaware of this system, even though the names and structures of rhythms are almost same. But the fact that these rhythms used in different art forms have an order in position and they are unified in a simple method, unknown to the contemporary cultural scenario, will be helpful to an eager student to raise some questions in relation with rhythm and culture.

Sangitachudamani defines rhythm (tala) as "tala signifies measurement of time through the matras produced by (sounding and unsounding) actions." ${ }^{14}$ There are various methods to perform rhythm viz. actions by hand like slapping and fingering, oral rendering and tonal variations made either on a percussion instrument or on a symbol. These devices are important for defining a particular rhythm. The same rhythm may be performed through these different devices, though, in a subtle way of analysis, the differences may compel us to consider each form of them as unique entities. Here I am trying to define these rhythms by using two basic actions: sounded and unsounded. Matra is a term indicating the time taken for each action. In Ekachuzhati System, the time taken for a sounded action is similar to that of an unsounded action. In a way Ekachuzhati rhythm system is a threshold to the perplexed realm of various rhythms as well as their formulations and combinations.

## Definitions and applications

## Ekachuzhati Rhythms

(Digit-Number of beats. '1' indicates first beat, '2' indicates second beatso that. X-Gap)
1 Eka Tala 1x
2 Roopa Tala 12x
3. Champata Tala 123x
§ㄴ. Karika Tala 1234x
5. Panchari Tala 12345x
6. Marma Tala $1 \times 12 \times 123 \times 1234 \times$
7. Kumbha Tala $123451 / 2 \times 1231 \backslash 2 \times 1 \times 1 \times 12 \times$

## Eka Tala

Eka Tala is a simple rhythm of one beat (sounded action) and one gap (unsounded action). When the rhythm repeats, the gap is taking
place between two beats. This rhythm is used almost in every art form of Kerala such as Arjunanritham, Garudanthukkam, Thayampaka, Theeyattu, Theyyam, Thitampunritham, Koodiyattam, Krishnanattam and Kathakali. This rhythm has some similarities with the Eka Tala of 108 rhythm system.

## Roopa Tala

Roopa Tala has a form of two beats followed by a gap. This rhythm is used in Garudanthukkam, Arjunanritham and Theyyam. In contemporary Carnatic Music, this rhythm is practised instead of Chaturasrajathi Rupaka Tala, which has a form of one Drutham and one Lakhu.

## Champata Tala

Champata is a pattern of three beats succeeded by one gap. This is a popular rhythm for it is used in several art forms like Kathakali, Krishnanattam, Koodiyattam, Chendamelam, Thullal, Theyyam, Theeyattu, Padayani, Sastampattu, Maranpattu, Garudanthukkam, Arjunanritham, Mudiyettu and Mudiyeduppu. There are so many different patterns used even in a single art form, though the name is same. For example, in Kathakali, in addition to the form mentioned above, some other patterns are used.

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                                    \(2 \times 12 \times 12\)
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(32 matras.)
Second tempo: $1 \times x \times 1 \times 12345 \times x \times 12 \times 12 \times 12$ _(underline indicates the variation of speed i.e.twice that of the other parts.)
(16 matras)
Third tempo: $1234567 x \quad(8$ matras)

In Chendamelam, this rhythm has four tempos with 64, 32, 16 and 8 matras respectively. This rhythm is used in Mudiyeduppu in a Vaithari (oral rendering) form as under:

Ta $\times$ ka $\times$ ta $\times$ ka $\times$ kitatakitarikitata $\times$
Ta $\times$ ka $\times$ ta $\times$ ka $\times$ kitatakitarikitata $x$
Ta x ka x ta x ka x kitatakitarikitata x
Ta $\times$ ka $\times$ ta $\times$ ka $\times$ kitatakitarikitata $x$
Ta $\times$ ka $\times$ ta $\times$ ka $\times$ ta $\times$ ka $\times$ ta $\times$ ka $x$ Ta $x$ ka $x$ ta $x$ ka $x$ ta $x$ dhim $x$ kitatakitarikitata $x$
(underline indicatesthe variation of speed i.e. twice that of the other parts.)

In this manner, Champata has different forms in different contexts of performance.

## Karika Tala

Karika Tala is a pattern of four beats and one gap and is used in Sastampattu, Thullal, Padayani and Arjunanritham. Kunchan Nambiar gives the definition of this rhythm in Harineeswayamvaram Thullal in terms of classical music and in that manner the rhythmic pattern is Lakhu, Lakhu, Lakhu and Guru. ${ }^{15}$ If it is compared to the existing form, we can translate Lakhu as one beat and Guru as a unit of one beat and one gap. There is a rhythm with the same name in 108 rhythm system but it is different in matras as well as in structure.

## Panchari Tala

Panchari Tala is in the form of five beats followed by one gap. This rhythm is practised in Chendamelam, Kathakali, Krishnanattam, Thullal, Mudiyettu, Mudiyeduppu, Theeyattu, Arjunanritham, Thitampunritham and Theyyam. This rhythm is very popular in Kerala for Panchari Melam, a collective performance by more than a hundred artists on various musical instruments, prominently on Chenda, a percussion instrument with a tumultuous sound. Panchari Tala performed in it with five tempos by progressively accelerating from the first tempo of 96 matras to the fifth tempo of 6 matras. The second, third and fourth tempos have 48, 24 and 12 matras respectively. Panchari Melam represents the standardization that could have happened to a simple rhythm. The rhythm pattern of five tempos performed in Panchari Melam is given below: ${ }^{16}$

| Second tempo: | 1 x 1 x 1 xxx 1 xxx 1 xxx |
| :---: | :---: |
|  | $1 \mathrm{xx} \times 1 \times 1 \mathrm{x} \times 1 \times 1 \mathrm{xxx}$ |
|  | $1 \times 1 \times 1 \times 1 \times 1 \times 1 \times 1 \times x \times$ |
|  | $1 \times 1 \times 1 \times 1 \times 1 \times 1 \times 1 \times x \times$ |
|  | $1 \times 1 \times 1 \times 1 \times 1 \times 1 \times 1 \times \times 1$ |
|  | $\mathrm{x} \times 1 \times 1 \times 1 \times 1 \times 1 \times 1 \times \mathrm{x}$ |
| Third tempo: | $1 \times 1 \times 1 \times 1 \times 1 \times 1 \times 1 \times x \times$ |
|  | $1 \times 1 \times 1 \times \times \times 1 \times 1 \times 1 \times 1$ |
|  | $\mathrm{x} \times 1 \times 1 \times 1 \times 1 \times 1 \times 1 \times \mathrm{x}$ |
| Fourth tempo: | $1 \mathrm{x} \times \mathrm{x} \times \mathrm{x} \times 1 \times \mathrm{xx}$ |
|  | $1 \mathrm{xx} \mathrm{\times 1} \mathrm{\times 1} \mathrm{\times 1} \mathrm{\times x}$ |
| Fifth tempo: | $1 \times 1 \times 1 \times 1 \times 1 \times \mathrm{x}$ |

The bold digits indicate the open beats and normal digits represent stifled beats on a Valanthala, a percussion instrument used to keep the rhythm patterns and tempo.

## Marma Tala

Marma Tala is a combination of Ekam, Roopam, Champata and Karika, the first four rhythms of this system. The pattern of this rhythm is one beat, one gap; two beats, one gap; three beats, one gap; and four beats, one gap. The exclusive structure of this rhythm gives us a new idea about the combination of rhythms; hence the Ekachuzhati rhythms themselves are rhythms as well as the units of creating new rhythms. This rhythm is used in Arjunanritham, Padayani, Thullal, Sastampattu and Theyyam.

## Kumbha Tala

Kumbha Tala, the last one of Ekachuzhati system, is different from the above mentioned rhythms in form and order: therefore it gives some notions about the formulation of rhythm system which becomes more complicated in their structure. This rhythm is used in Thullal, Padayani, Arjunanritham, Garudanthukkam and Sastampattu. The orally rendered form of this rhythm, which is used in Sastampattu, is given below:

Thi thi thi thi thithei x thi thi thithei x thei x thei x thi thei
This rhythm offers a way to enter a field of orally rendered (Vaithari) rhythms which are huge in number.

## Some other rhythms

## Champa Tala

Despite of a common name Champa, this rhythm is used with various patterns in various art forms. This rhythm is used in Chendamelam, Kathakali and Thullal in the form of four beats, one gap; two beats, one gap and one beat, one gap ( $1234 \times 12 \times 1 \mathrm{x})$. The pattern of this rhythm in Padayani is different: one beat, one gap; two beats, one gap and four beats, one gap $(1 \times 12 \times 1234)^{17}$. Yakshaganam, an art form performed in the far northern parts of Kerala employed this rhythm in the form of five beats, one gap and three beats, one gap ( $12345 \times 123 \mathrm{x}$ ). Each of these forms has the similarity in the number of Matras i.e. ten.

## Atantha Tala

Atantha Tala is used in many art forms of Kerala, like Thullal, Kathakali, Jeevithanritham, Chendamelam, Sastampattu, Theyyam, Thitampunritham, Padayani and Koodiyattam. One form of rhythm is four beats, one gap; four beats, one gap; one beat, one gap and one beat, one gap ( $1234 \times 1234 \times 1 \times 1 \times$ ). Different rhythms which share the common name Atantha like Valyatantha and Chattatantha are practised in Padayani. ${ }^{18}$

## Lakshmi Tala

Lakshmi is a Vaithari rhythm which is practised in Padayani, Thullal, Arjunanritham, Ayyappantheeyattu, Koodiyattam, Sastampattu and Garudanthukkam. The form of this rhythm is shown below:

Thi thi thei x thiki tha thei x thi thei thikithei thitheyitha thikitha thei $x x x$

## Kundanachi Tala

Kunchan Nambiar has given a definition to Kundanachi Tala but it is rarely used in contemporary performances. It has a Vaithari form as under:

Tha dhim $x$ dhim $x$ tha dhim $x$ dhim $x$ dhim $x$ Tha dhim $x$ dhim $x$ tha dhim $x$ dha $x$ tha $x$

This rhythm is used for Jeevithanritham and Chendamelam especially in southern parts of Kerala.

## Ganapathy Tala

Many rhythms are used in various art forms under the common name Ganapathy. This is used in the beginning of a performance as a
ritual for an unbroken conclusion since Ganapathy is considered in Hindu mythology as the deity of impediment. The form of this rhythm in Sastampattu is given below:

$$
\text { Thei } x x \times \text { thei } x x \times \text { thei } x x \times \text { ki ta ta ki tha } x \text { ku thi } x \text { ku tha ka }
$$ thim $x$ tham $x$

Dhi $x$ dhi $x$ dhim $x$ ga ne $x$ ka dan $x$ tham $x$ ki ta tha ki tha kkam thi mmi thei $x$

## Combined rhythms

As mentioned earlier, Ekachuzhati rhythms can be used as units to create new rhythms. There are some rhythms performed in different art forms which may perhaps identified as the combination of Ekachuzhati rhythms. Roopamchampata, a combination of Roopa Tala and Champata Tala ( $12 \times 123 x$ ) is used in Sastampattu and in the Chendamelam of southern Kerala. Marmampanchari, a blend of Marma Tala and Panchari Tala is practised in Jeevithanritham (in the form $1 \times 12 \times 123 \times 12345 \times 1234$ ) and in Chendamelam of southern Kerala (in the pattern $1 \times 12 \times 123 \times 1234 \times 12345 \times$ ). The combination of Ekachuzhati rhythms with some other rhythms like Champa-Panchari of Jeevithanritham $(1234 \times 12345 \times 12 \times 1 x)$ or Panchari-Champa of southern Chendamelam (12345×1234×12x1x) and Panchari-Atantha of Southern Chendamelam ( $12345 \times 1234 \times 1234 \times 1 \times 1 \times$ ) are present in the vast area of the systems of rhythms.

The study of these rhythms arises some questions about the conventional classifications as well as the interconnections between various rhythms. The awareness of the association of the rhythms with the regions of their performance urges one to rethink about the conventional methodologies of aesthetics.

## Notes

1. See, for example, A. K. Nambiar, "NatanKalakalkku Oramukham", Keralathile Natankalakal (Kottayam: National Book Stall, 1989):23.
2. See Folk Arts Directory, ed. Kerala Sangeetha Nataka Akademi (Trichur: Kerala Sangeetha Nataka Akademi, 1986): 113, 135,200, 170, 42, 61, 196, 240, 224.
3. An Interview with Kurichi P. S. Kumaran on 19. 06. 1995, Manoj Kuroor (Unpublished audio Cassette).
4. Edward W. Said, "Introduction", Musical Elaborations (London: Vintage, 1992): xiv.
5. See Kunchan Nambiarute Thullalkathakal, ed. P. K. Sivasankara Pillai (Trichur: Kerala Sahithya Academi, 1976).
6. Sarngadeva, Samgitaratnakara Vol.I, ed. S. Subrahmanya Sastri (Madras: The Adyar Library and Research Centre, 1992):17.
7. M. R. Gautam, Evolution of Raga and Tala in Indian Music (New Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal Publishers, 1993): 35-37,221-22.
8. Arun Kumar Sen, Indian Concept of Rhythm (New Delhi: Kanishka Publishers, 1994): 59-60, 115-19, 141-64.
9. A. K. Raveendranadh, Dakshinendian Sangeetham (Thiruvananthapuram: D. C. P., Govt. of Kerala, 2004): 56.
10. The rhythms mentioned in this essay were collected from these artists:

Kurchi P. S. Kumaran:
Neelamperoor P. Ramakrishnan: Kuravilangad M. N. Bhaskaran Nair: Katammanitta Vasudevan Pillai: Kuroor Vasudevan Nampoothiry: Kannan Peruvannan:
Kanathoor K. V. Kannan Vaidyar: Cheruvathoor Rajan Panikkar: Balussery P. Janaki Amma: Harippad K. Vishnu Nampoothiry: Harippad S. Sivadasan: Kaviyoor Sadasivan:
Kandalloor Unnikrishnan:
Bakel Sreerama Aggithaya:
Keezhillam Gopalakrishna Marar:
Vazhappally Krishna Pillai:
Kanjangad Jayan:
Kasaragod Gopalakrishna Bhatt:

Arjunanritham
Garudanthukkam percussion
Sastampattu
Padayani
Kathakali Percussion
Theyyam
Theyyam
Theyyam percussion
Maranpattu
Jeevithanritham
Jeevithanritham percussion
Thekkan Chendamelam
Thekkan Chendamelam
Thidampunritham
Mudiyettu
Mudiyeduppu
Poorakkali
Yakshaganam.
11. The primary notions of these rhythms are given by Kurichi P.S. Kumaran, an Arjunanritham artist. Interviews and performances of some other artists helped me to get a lucid idea about these rhythms.
12. Kunchan Nambiar, "Balyutbhavam", Arupathu Thullalkkadhakal, ed. P. K. Narayana pillai, Cheppattu Achyutha Warrier (Kollam: Sreeramavilasam Press, 1958): 105.
13. Kunchan Nambiar, "Harineeswayamvaram", Arupathu Thullalkkadhakal: 76-78.
14. M. R. Gautam, Evolution of Raga and Tala in Indian Music: 228
15. Kunchan Nambiar, "Harineeswayamvaram", Arupathu Thullalkkadhakal: 77.
16. See P. S. Warrier, "Pancharimelam", Keraleeyamelakala
(Thiruvananthapuram: D. C. P., Govt of Kerala, 1992): 45-99.
A. S. N. Nambisan, "Pancharimelam", Thalangal Thalavadyangal (Thrissur: Kerala Sahitya Academi, 2000): 155-56.
17. Katammanitta Vasudevan Pillai, Padeniyute Jeevathalam (Thiruvananthapuram: State Institute of Languages, 1997): 105.
18. Katammanitta Vasudevan Pillai, Padeniyute Jeevathalam: 107-13.


We are reprinting two articles on Mappila songs by F. Fawcett for the critical evaluation of scholars and researchers - (1) A Popular Mopla Song, The Indian Antiquary 1899; pp 64-71 (2) War Songs of the Mappilas of Malabar, The Indian Antiquary 1901; pp 499-508, pp 528-537. Being a colonial police officer of Malabar Fawcett had direct access to Mappila community and their valuable songs. His interest in Mappila literature is admirable but his views and judgements of the Mappila community are coloured by western colonial prejudices. We hope that researchers shall reexamine them in the modern context making use of the contemporary theories and methodologies.

- Editors


## 1. A Popular Mopla Song (1899) <br> <br> F. Fawcett

 <br> <br> F. Fawcett}The Moplas (Mâpillas) of Malabar, ardent and fanatical Muhammadans as they are, are much devoted to songs, mostly religious, about the Prophet's battles and also their own for the most part. But their songs are not confined to descriptions of sanguinary conflicts, and the one which is given here is not in this style. The songs are written in the Arabic character, and their language is a curious polyglot patois of Malayalam, the local vernacular, Tamil, Telugu, Hindustani, Arabic, and of many another tongue, a word of which is here and there brought in for some special use. The song here given is exactly as it exist, so far as it can be translated into English. ${ }^{1}$ Its author was one Alungal Kandi Môyankutti Vâidiâr. His grandfather was a Hindu, a Vêlan or medicine-man, converted to Islam (became a Mopla) and called Uni Mammad Vâidiâr after his conversion. The profession of the
family was medicine; hence Vâidiâr, a term which is synonymous with Vêlan. The poet died six years ago, aged 45 . His songs were very popular. Not at all a cultivated man, he was circumstanced just as the ordinary poor and ignorant people of his class around him; and, let it be said, in matters educational there is no more backward class in India than the Moplas.

He was distinctly imaginative, and he had studied the art of poesy, such as it was amongst the uncultivated Moplas, - but whence did he get his ideas? The poem seems to offer but an instance of how older stories are used, adapted and passed on, just as Boccaccio and Shakespeare, to go no further, handled older material and moulded it into what they have left us. It seems there was in one village, Kondotti, a man by name Puthan Maliyakal Nilamudin Miah, reputed as a Persian scholar who translated several Persian works into the vernacular. Through him he was able to have some slight acquaintance with Persian literature. His story seems to be an adaptation from "The Nasr-i-Be-Nazîr (a story of Prince BeNazîr), an eastern Fairy-Tale," known generally through its English translation (by C. W. Bowdler Bell, Lieut., 5th Royal Irish Lancers, 1871).

As the transmission of tales is always a subject of interest, an outline of this one will be given, as there are doubtless many to whom it is not readily available.

It is the story of Be-Nazîr and Badar-i-Munîr. According to a prefatory note by the Urdu writer the story he relates is a prose version "of the poetry by the late Mir Hasan, with the poetical name Hasan," of Delhi, written about 1802, " in an easy style, in conformity with the language of the high and low, for newly taught gentlemen." In fact it is a "text-book for the High Proficiency Examination in Urdu". It is not said at first where the scene is laid, but it transpires (page 101) that the city of the king is called "Ceylon". The hero is the king's son, - in the Mopla poem it is the heroine whose father is king; and the heroine's name is the same as that of the prince in the story as told by our Mopla poet.

Mâh Rukh, a Fairy (Peri) Queen, finds the prince asleep and carries him off. She gives him a mechanical horse to ride for a
period daily. In one of his excursions he sees Badar-i- Munîr, then aged 14 or 15 . "Her face was so beautiful the moon would become spotted on seeing it" "Her glance was destruction and her look a calamity without remedy." "Her eye-lashes would overturn a row of lovers." "If an angel saw her jewelled bodice he would rub his hand with sorrow." Mâh Rukh is told by a devil of the prince's amour and puts him down a well. The heroine is disconsolate and wanders as a jogin. Á propos of her playing the author says:- "Music has wonderful effect, as it makes the liver of hard stones water." Ferozshah, son of the king of the jinns, meets her, and says:"It is true that love is as grass and beauty as fire. There is always a connection between love and beauty. And music is like the wind; it applies this fire to that grass." As she played, "pieces of his liver fell from his eyes." He carries her off, and eventually she tells him the cause of her sorrow; he sends to Mâh Rukh and demons release the hero. Through the instrumentality of Feroze shah they are married, and then they go to the prince's father's kingdom.

Such is the story which our Mopla poet in all probability knew more or less correctly. We will now see how he has used it. ${ }^{2}$

## The story of Hasanu'l-Jamâl and Badaru'l-Munîr.

I sing the praise of God before I begin this poem ; I also invoke the blessings of the Prophets whom God in His mercy has from time to time sent to the world of men, and I pray to the ministers and to the relations of the Prophet. Oh God ! help me to Complete this song without errors. Oh Lord ! give force and fluency to my tongue, so that my song may be excellent! Oh God! May the Prophet's mercy be upon me ! I pray to the Prophet's chief minister who saved the Prophet by allowing a serpent to swallow the toe of his foot; and who kept pebbles in his mouth so that his tongue might be free from useless talk. I pray to the second minister (of the Prophet) who adhered closely to the precepts of the Qurân, who put to death his own son in accordance with the ordinances of the Qurân, and whom God himself called Fârûk - one who separates truth and falsehood. I pray to the third minister, who arranged the Qurân, whom the Prophet acknowledged from

Heaven to be his friend, and whom the Prophet met in all the seven Paradises. I pray to the fourth minister, who killed in battle the most powerful monarchs, who married the most beloved of the Prophet's daughters, and whom the Prophet pronounced to be 'the Gate of the Hall of knowledge.' I pray also to other six ministers, and to the two grandsons of the Prophet who are Princes of the Watchmen in Heaven. May I obtain the blessing of the Prophet's daughter, of all the Prophets, of all the Shahîds, of all the illustrious Shêkhs in Baghdad and Ajmer, and of all the true followers of the Prophet. May the everlasting and changeless God direct towards me the blessings of all these illustrious men. Oh God, Who existed before all created things, whose existence knows no end, I possess none of the educational qualifications proper to a poet; mayst Thou enlarge my narrow intellectual vision!

The author of this poem is the celebrated Nizamu'ddîn, learned in "Hanur".

In the country of Ajmêr, in the north-west of India, there lived a great king, Mahâsîl, ${ }^{3}$ by name. He was very powerful, many kings were tributary to him, and he had countless subjects; his fortresses and strongholds were innumerable. But mention of all particulars of the kind would make my story too long, so they are omitted.

Now the king had a faithful minister of wide-world fame, called Mas Amîr, who was in great sorrow because that he was childless. One day an astrologer came before him, and he addressed him thus:- "Oh astrologer! tell me my fortune. I suffer terribly because of my childlessness. My wife and I have had no issue. Death may overtake us at any time, and if we have no child, who will inherit our property? Thought of this makes my heart burn. Tell me whether we are destined to have a child or not."

The astrologer asked the name of the star (planet?) under which the minister was born and, having examined his horoscope, said :- "Oh most gracious minister! There is not any doubt that before long God will bless you with a beautiful son; put away your anxiety and rejoice, for the son to be born to you will become a happy king over many countries. You must call him Badaru'l-

Munîr, which means "the full moon." He will be victim to many misfortunes and fall into great dangers, but he will get free from them all, and obtain as his wives the most beautiful women."

The minister was much pleased to hear what the astrologer said, and gave him large presents.

In course of time the minister's wife gave birth to handsome and intelligent boy. King Mahâsîl came to see the child, and was struck with wonder at its loveliness. As advised by the astrologer the child was called Badru'l-Munîr. Then the king and his retinue departed. The child grew up the delight of all. When he was three years old a daughter was born to the king. She grew up so beautiful and so lovely, that she was a wonder to all beholders, and she was called Hasanu'l-Jamâl, which means "The most beautiful." The minister's son and the king's daughter grew up together; they played together, and they were taught by the same teachers. They advanced in years and in knowledge, and at length began to feel love for each other. By day and by night they were in each others company. The beauty of the girl when she was ten years old cannot be described. Her hair was darker than the black clouds and more shining than the wings of the beetle, and when untied reached the sole of her foot; when tied up it was of wonderful beauty. Her forehead was arched and narrow; her eyebrows were like the rainbow or the half moon; ${ }^{4}$ her eyes were black - as if blackened by eye-salve; her teeth were small, and white like the seeds of the pomegranate; her tongue was like the petals of the red water-lilly; her lips were of the colour of the red coral: her face was like the lotus. She was the first fruit of the tree of gold. Her neck was more graceful than the deer's; her breasts, round at their base were like blossoms of the jasmine. They were like two golden cups, as the knobs on the head of a caprisoned elephant; they were of full size, without flaw, of never-fading beauty ; and yet, only a handful. Her waist was very slender, about her thighs she was fleshy, and her legs were like the plantain tree. ${ }^{5}$ Her feet were like gold. She had every grace, every accomplishment, and everyone called her Hasanu'l-Jamâl. Her morals and disposition were exact counterparts of her physical beauty. This beloved daughter of king Mahâsîl
laid beautiful jewels in abundance. She wore golden ornaments set with the most precious stones. She slept in the fairest of beds. She dressed in the most beautiful silk. She walked like an elephant, with wavy side to side motion, her head slightly bent. She looked with quivering eye which resembled the bee that has seen honey. Any one, man or angel, who saw her smile with her coral like lips, would be smitten instantly with love; nay, more, he would lose his wits and go mad. This fine coloured parrot ${ }^{6}$ of a princess loved Badaru'l-Munîr with all her heart ; her feelings towards him never changed. There did not live in that age one who was in any way comparable to Badaru'l-Munîr. His face would have put the lotus flower to shame; his talk would have stopped the course of the river of honey: even the hurîs of Paradise would have been enraptured with the music of his voice, with the sweetness of his words. Not a day passed without this beautiful princess and this fairest of youths meeting each other; day by day their love increased, till at last the people began to whisper tales of sin. Rumours reached even the ear of the king, who issued stringent orders forbidding the minister's son to come to the palace. Badaru'l-Munîr fearing the king's displeasure, did not go to the palace. Day and night, without food or sleep and with aching hearts they thought of each other. Their dreams were their only means of sympathetic communication; waking, they were undeceived, and wept bitterly.

The princess called a faithful slave, and told him to bring to her presence unknown, to anyone, the full moon of her affections. True to his mission the servant conveyed secretly the joyful message to the minister's son. He was elated, and arranged to meet her the same night. Delighted beyond measure by the way in which the slave had carried out her orders, the princess immediately gave him his liberty and a present of four hundred silver coins. With eagle eyes the princess looked out for her beloved Badaru'l-Munîr who, like the beetle seeking the lotus flower, kept his tryst faithfully.

The princess of resplendent beauty thus addressed him abruptly :- "My father lies between our meeting; the full moon of our happiness is gone : do you propose any remedy?"

Badaru'l-Munîr replied:-" Oh my dear one! Oh most beautiful manikam ${ }^{7}$ ! Oh rising moon! Your father's cruel order is a deathblow to us. Oh fairest flower of humanity! Whatever you wish to be done I will do it at all risks."

The princess said:-"Oh my beloved! So long as my father is king we cannot live together in this country; if we cannot meet at least once a day the ocean of our love will be tossed with violent waves, and we shall go mad; 1 see no way for our remaining here. I am ready to quit my father's realm and go elsewhere. I have golden ornaments set with precious stones of great value: one of my bracelets would suffice to maintain us for a life-time."

As these words came out of her coral-like lips he blushed with joy, and said:-"Oh sweetest flower I am ready to do your wish and bidding at all hazard. I accept entirely what you say." The princess then said to him with bated breath :-"I will get ready the fleetest of horses that will gallop through the forest with the speed of the wind; I will have everything ready by midnight: you must be here then. By daybreak we will be beyond the dominions of my father."

Having so resolved, they embraced and parted.
Now this conversation took place at the foot of the staircase of the palace in which the princess lived. A fisherman by name Abû Sayyid who used to bring fish to the palace was sleeping near the foot of the staircase. Hearing a voice ${ }^{8}$ above his head he awoke and listened attentively and understood what the lovers had said. He was astounded, and, hastily leaving the palace, went home; at daybreak he went to the minister and said as follows:- "Oh my lord, take good care of your beloved son this day; if you doubt me and let your son go out to-day the king will surely have your head, and not only yours but the heads of many innocent persons." Min-ister:- "What is your reason for saying this?" Fisherman: - "Your slave will explain fully when the day is done."

The minister was perplexed, and, calling his son, said to him:"Oh my son, go to my room, open my box, and bring to me my ring." No sooner had the son entered the room but his father shut
the door. Badaru'l-Munîr was surprised by what his father had done; he was stricken with grief.

Hassanu'I-Jamâl made all arrangements for departure, taking with her all her jewels and beautiful clothes, also laced coat and silken garments for Badaru'1-Munîr, and a beautiful horse finely caparisoned. Thus she awaited her beloved at midnight, she, unfortunate lady, not having the slightest suspicion of the misfortune which had overtaken him. The wicked fisherman appeared in disguise at the spot at the appointed hour. The princess said "Let us go." In a low voice the fisherman said:- "Yes.' They mounted the horse and were soon out of the town with the speed of the wind. Before daybreak they had crossed hills, forests, plains, and left many miles of country behind them, and during all this time they neither looked at each other nor exchanged a single word. At last they halted on an open plain, and turning back to see her lover seated behind her, she was astounded to see instead of him- the fisherman! "Oh! where is my most beloved Badaru'l-Munîr?" she cried and fell senseless from the horse. The fisherman trembled with fear, and, folding his hands, stood at a respectful distance. Soon she recovered her senses, and began to beat her breast with her hands and to roll in the dust as she wailed :- "Oh God! what misery has befallen me! How have I been deceived! I have left my home and all its pleasures pursuing a shadow. When shall I forget this separation from my beloved ? What shall I do to get out of this pit of misfortune? Oh God! what further dangers are in store for me? So long as I live I will not return to my father's palace. What misfortune has overtaken my beloved Badaru'l-Munîr, and prevented him meeting me as we arranged? He would never have failed me but that some great danger has come over him." So saying she wept bitterly. Suddenly her features changed, her eyes became bloodshot; drawing her sword she leapt like a lioness towards the fisherman. "Miserable fisherman! answer me truly or I will cut off your head this instant. Have you killed my beloved friend? "Oh princess" said the fisherman, "do not be angry. Protect me! I will tell you the whole truth and nothing else. Last night I went out to fish, but caught none. As I was going home I saw a
big horse and a woman stand by. As I came near the woman said:'Let us go.' I said - 'Yes.' Then you mounted the horse and told me also to get up. This is all. I knew nothing beforehand. The sword in your hand terrifies me. Do what you please; I will not prevent you. It is in your power to protect or destroy." Having said this the fisherman began to weep. The Princess believed and was pacified. Again she mounted the horse and told the fisherman to mount also. So they travelled for a month, and passed out of the dominions of her father.

As soon as they had crossed the boundary, she pitched her tent under a tree, and, looking round saw a palace and a fort and a town in which were upstair buildings. She understood at once that it was the residence of a king; so giving two gold coins to the fisherman she told him to go and buy provisions. The fisherman obeyed. She told him, if people asked who she was, to say she was his wife. The fisherman asked respectfully what was the good to him - of so saying? The princess changed colour and with the fury of a tigress addressed him thus:- "Senseless fisherman! Do you love your life?" The fisherman trembled, and, falling at her feet, cried for mercy. Then she opened the box in which she had brought clothes for Badaru'l-Munîr, and took out of it a cloth, a coat and a pair of sandals. She examined carefully all the jewels she had brou-ht. She took up the sandals, placed them on her head, and kissed them. She was overpowered with grief, and called aloud the name of Badaru'l-Munîr, and said:- "When shall I see your face again? I am unable to suppress my love and control rny feelings;" and beat her breast with her hands. After some time she threw the clothes and sandals to the fisherman and told him to put them on. He did so, and, taking leave from the princess, strutted along the street, seeing many curious things. He saw a large crowd, and went to mingle in it. There were several foreign merchants, and the king's minister, dressed in beautiful silken garments, seated on a chair. When they saw the fisherman coming they were struck with amazement at the costliness of his dress, and questioned each other as to who he was. He answered that he came from MuskanTeresa, his name was Abû Sayyid, and he was a celebrated trader
in precious stones; in the course of his travel he came to this place. The king's Minister was much pleased, and with much respect offered him a seat. The following conversation then took place between the minister and the fisherman. The latter said :- What is the reason for this large crowd?" The minister said :- "By order of the king. The king of Sham has sent a pearl to our king, saying it is worth 64 lakhs of gold, and challenging any one to find a flaw in it. If found to be flawless 40 important seaports are to be given to him ; but if any flaw is found in it, then he will give 40 of his chief seaports to whomsoever discovers the flaw. When he received the letter our king ordered me to write letters to all interested. These merchants and myself are examining the pearl, and we are in a dilemma, for in our opinion there is no flaw in it. Just as we came to this opinion you appeared. Now, if you will give your opinion about this pearl, our king will reward you with immense wealth and honours and horses and titles. Have no doubt about this." Abû Sayyid said:-"I came to the bazaar to buy provision; my wife waits for me; to-morrow I will come and give you my opinion." The minister agreed. Abû Sayyid returned to his wife, ${ }^{9}$ and related to her his adventure. She told him to be of good cheer; he should tell the minister that his wife is a better judge of pearls than himself, and as she cannot leave her house the pearl should be sent to her, and she would give a correct opinion on it. So, the next day Abu Sayyid brought the minister with this pearl to his house. The woman ${ }^{10}$ examined the pearl, and said it was nothing but chunam, ashes and water; if it were broken it would be seen at once that what she said was true. The minister reported all this to the king, who asked whether Abu Sayyid would give, security for the loss of the pearl if it were broken and his opinion was found to be wrong. Abû Sayyid offered to give any security that was demanded. Then the pearl was broken in the presence of witnesses, and it was found to be just what the princess had said. The king's joy and admiration were boundless; he would give Abû Sayyid anything he chose to ask. But Abû Sayyid would do nothing without his wife's permission, so promised to return the next day. The next day he came, and the king asked him what presents would satisfy
him. He said:- "My wife would accept no presents. All we want is a house in a suitable locality, and for this we will pay the price." The king was astonished, and, to test him, ordered the costliest mansion to be selected, and double price to be charged. With a single pearl from one of her rings, the princess paid the price of the mansion, thus confounding the king and his minister with surprise. The fisherman and the princess moved quiet into the mansion. When she saw the grandeur of the mansion and the splendour of its furniture she was drowned in grief, for they recalled to her mind the loss of her lover, and she wept bitterly.

Abû Sayyid tried to console her with sweet words. He said:"Oh my benefactress! why weep over the inevitable? Will the sun rise in the west by thinking over it? "Hearing this she struck him in the face with her shoes, kicked him, and spat in his face. He besought her a pardon, and promised never more to speak to her in that fashion.

Now the king was so pleased with Abû Sayyid that he gave him his daughter in marriage, and asked him to divorce his first wife - the princess. Abû Sayyid said he would not, for his life as all his happiness was due to her. Then the king said he would hand over to him his kingdom and his wealth if he would divorce her. This temptation was too strong for the poor fisherman, and he agreed to the king's proposal. Accordingly the king appointed Abu Sayyid to be his successor, and made him king.

The king who had heard from his minister of the great beauty of the princess, sent an old woman to tempt her. When the old woman reached her house the princess was lying as in a trance, lost in dreams of her lost lover. "What is it?" she said to the old woman. "I am an old woman, named Kunsath, oh beautiful parrot! Prosperity and greatness are yours, for the king wishes to see you, and has sent me to take you to him. Daughter! if he sees you, all his wealth is, at your feet." Hasanu'I-Jamâl said:-"What you say is true, but how can I come without my husband's permission? He is in the palace; if he comes back and gives me permission, I will come." The old woman said:- "Daughter! He has divorced you; he
has married the king's daughter, and is happy there. Listen to me, a danger will befall you." Then Hasanu'l-Jamâl thought perhaps the king and the fisherman had conspired to ruin her. "Oh God! what shall I do!" Thus she mused in deep sorrow, and while so absorbed the old woman spoke again:-"Beloved daughter! Follow me quickly. Do not hesitate. You are helpless here. You are like an elephant ${ }^{11}$ in a pit. If You refuse to follow me your mansion, and all you possess will be lost to you. You will be in endless sorrow. Obey me." Thus insulted Hasanu'l-Jamâl rose angrily and kicked the old woman out of the house. She went to the king, trembling from head to foot, and said:-"Oh king, I have obeyed you and come to grief. The woman kicked me hard and told me to say to the king- 'So long as the sun rises in the east and sets in the west nobody need think of me. Nobody shall touch me. Combat, I do not fear.' I escaped with my life." The king was angry and ordered four soldiers to seize Hasanu'l-Jamâl and bring her before him. The soldiers entered the house. Hassanu'I-Jamâl asked :-"Who are you to come to my house without permission'? Go away. "The soldiers were startled by her beauty, but approached to seize her. She drew her sword and killed two of them. The other two fled to the king and told him what had happened. He was angry and sent his soldiers to besiege her house, bind her hand and foot, and bring her before him. The soldiers surrounded the house and called upon her to surrender. She prayed to God, resolving to die rather than fall into the hands of the king. She fought desperately until late in the night, ${ }^{12}$ killed several of the soldiers, and drove the rest back to the king's palace: to evade her pursuit they fled into the jungle. After all this she rested under a tree. The king of the Jinns saw her, and carried off to a deep forest, raised a beautiful mansion on the top of a hill and placed her therein.

We must now return to the story of Badaru'I-Munîr. For three days he shut himself up without food or rest. News of the affair spread all over the country, and huge crowds gathered.Unable to bear his pain and shame, Badaru'I-Munirr left the town stealthily, and fled to unknown lands. For six months he roamed the forests. In the course of his wanderings he met the Fairy Queen Kamarba.

She took him off to the land of the peris and shut him up in her beautiful crystal palace; and there he lived for two years and ten months. One day the Peri Queen and Badaru'I-Munîr went for an aerial drive. They passed over seas and mountains and visited many countries, until at last, resting under a tree, they fell asleep. Just then Sufayi-rath, daughter of Shihah, king of the Jinns, with her forty maids, was roving the skies in her beautiful chariot. When she came near the tree she asked her maids what they saw under it, - was it the moon or a star dropped from the skies? "Whatever it be, let us alight here and see what it is." They came near and found a lovely youth and a beautiful girl sleeping in a warm embrace, a shawl over them. Quietly she removed the shawl. The sight dazzled her eyes and stupefied her senses. Quickly she took the youth, placed him in her chariot, and with the speed of lighting left the place. Thus she took him to the top of a hill on an island in the fourteenth sea, and there she ordered a palace of gold and precious stones to be constructed for him; her genii attendants obeyed her in the twinkling of an eye.

When Badaru'I-Munîr awoke he found himself in a strange place and was very uneasy. His wonder was greater when he saw the woman. But the woman consoled him; said she was the daughter of the king of Jinns; the celebrated Mustak, her brother, was a terrible giant, whom she feared, so Badaru'I-Munîr should remain quiet in the house by day, and she would visit him at night. Thus passed seven years, until one day when he said he could no longer endure his imprisonment; so she gave him a chariot that would in one night carry him as far as one could travel in forty years; and she told him he might go where he liked the day but he must return at night.

In one of his flights he travelled far and came to the garden of a king whose daughter Jumailath, met him, and, falling in love with him, detained him seven days. But the Fairy Queen came to the king's palace in disguise and carried him off. The king's daughter was filled with anxiety, and, unknown to any one, fled from the palace and wandered here and there, until she came to the palace of Mustak, who had carried off Hasanu'l-Jamâl. The Jinn, Mustak,
led her to an apartment of his palace in which he had confined Hassanu' 1-Jamâl, and asked her why she had wandered so far away from all human habitations, and had trespassed into the land of the Jinns. Then she related her adventures, and said she had come in search of her lover. The genii at once summoned all his maids, and ordered them to find out which of them had concealed a man.

One of the maids told him his own sister, Sufayirat, had a man in her custody, and she visited him every night. So he sent for his sister, and commanded her to produce the man. She did so. The king's daughter at once recognized Badaru'l-Munîr, and was glad indeed to see him. Mustak asked Badaru'l-Munîr how he had fallen into the hands of the genii, and Badaru'I-Munîr related all his misfortunes and the story of his wanderings. The Jinns then bethought him of the story of Hasanu'I-Jamâl, and suspecting that she might be the sad cause for all these, ordered that she be dressed in the finest robes and adorned with the most precious jewels. Badaru'l-Munîr was dressed and decorated in like manner, as if for his wedding. At night, when both were fast asleep, the Jinns and the king's daughter placed the cot of Badaru-l-Munir beside that of Hasanu'l-Jamâl, and they concealed themselves behind the door. When Badaru'l-Munîr and Hasanu'l-Jamâl awoke, each wondered who was their bed-companion. At last they recognized each other, embraced, wept, and related their adventures from the very beginning. The Jinns and the king's daughter clapped their hands and entered the room.

Then all four entered a car and ascended to the skies. First they dropped the king's daughter in her father's palace; then the others went on and reached the palace of the father of Hasanu'lJamâl. The Jinns caused a golden palace to be created in front of the king's palace in the dead of night. The king was surprised, when he awoke, to find a shining palace in front of his own. All the people flocked to see this wonderful sight, but what was their wonder when they saw Hasanu'l-Jamâl and Badaru'l-Munîr the mistress and master of it! The king and his minister were much pleased to see their children after ten years' absence, and all the
people rejoiced. Their wedding was duly celebrated, and all the Jinns attended the ceremony. After this the king vacated his throne in favour of Badaru'l-Munîr, and went on a long pilgrimage; and Badaru'l-Munîr and Hasanu'I-Jamâl lived happily as king and queen.

## Notes :

1. In the difficult matter of translation from Malayalam into English I owe everything to Mr. T. Kannan, B. A., Head Quarters Inspector of Police, Calicut.
2. Whence Mir Hasan "with the poetical name Hasan" received ideas for his tale cannot be pursued here, but it is safe to say it is likely he had read the Arabian Nights. [According to Beale, Oriental Biog. Dic. s.v. Hasan, Mir: Mir Hasan wrote the story of Badar-i-Munîr and Be-Nazîr in 1785 and died in 1790. It appeared in the Masnavi-Mir-Hasan otherwise the Saliru'l Bayân-Ed.]

3 Mahâsîl = Mahơ̂îla, a pure Hindu name. Observe also the subversion of the sexes throughout in the names Badaru'l-Munir and Hasanu'l-Jamal -Ed.]
4 Perhaps "the waning moon," a favourite simile is meant.
5 A favourite simile.
6 A Tamil simile of loveliness.
7 A precious stone. Lit., the precious stone which is within the head of the serpent Mahasesa, but applied generally to any precious stone.

8 In the original -"human voice".
9 The princess is meant: not his wife.
10 The princess.
11 Catching elephants in pits is very common in Malabar. When in the pit the elephant is, of course, entirely at the mercy of its captors.

12 Lit., until 10 o'clock.

## 2. War songs of the Mappilas of Malabar

## F. FAWCETT

When introducing a Popular Mopla (Mâppila) Song (ante, Vol.XXVIII, p.64), I wrote:- "The Mâppilas of Malabar, ardent and fanatical Muhammadans as they are, are much devoted to songs, mostly religious, about the Prophet's battles and also their own for the most part..... The songs are written in the Arabic character, and their language is a curious polyglot patois of Malayalam the local Vernacular, Tamil, Telugu, Hindustani, Arabic, and of many another tongue, a word of which is here and there brought in for some special use." The song which was then given in translation, "The story of Hasanu'l-Jamâl and Hadaru'l-Munîr," is of love and wonderful adventure in the fashion of a story in The Arabian Nights.

I will now consider those songs of the Mâppilas which relate to war and stir up fanatic fervour. In quantity they form probably about nine-tenths of their literature - such as it is. But before doing, this something must be said of the Mâppilas themselves. They were described by the present writer in the October (1897) number of The Imperial and Asiatic Quarterly Review as "men who exhibit a courage which is absolutely dauntless, and a contempt for death which is rarely paralleled and certainly unsurpassed in any other part of the world by any race." This was not long after they had given proof of these qualities, when 92 of them met their death near Manjêrî, the chief town of the Ernâd tâlûkòof Malabar. And yet so little was the effect of this terrible punishment on their fanatic fervour that a gang of seven started out the next day, having devoted themselves to death. A strange people truly!

The Manjêrî ${ }^{1}$ Temple, a shrine of the Hindu Bhâgavatî, situated on the summit of a small hill just outside the village of Manjê̂̂̂, which lies roughly between Ootacamund, the summer capital of Southern India, and the sea to the west, has been the scene of more
than one little battle. In 1784, this temple and the palace of the Karunamalpâd, its owner, were besieged by a large body of Mâppilas, and after three days' fighting utterly destroyed. The rebel Mâppilas were attacked by some of Tippu Sultân's troops, a thousand strong, and were victorious, slaying Tippu's commander. The temple was restored in April, 1849, and in August of the same year during the Muhammadan-Ramazân, a body of 30 Mâppilas desecrated it, and routed two companies of sepoys, killing 4 Privates and a European Officer, Lieut. Wyse. Their number soon rose to 64 , and a few days afterwards they were destroyed fighting gallantly, by European troops, who lost 2 Privates killed and 2 Officers and 6 Privates wounded.

The temporary defeat of our well-armed troops was effected by the Mâppilas with war knives, in shape between a bill-hook and a Gurkhâ kukrî. They tie them to the hand and wrist, sometimes one to each hand, while madly rushing at their foes. Of this kind of warfare there has been much in Malabar. Even when, in 1894, the British troops were armed with the Lee-Metford rifle and the Police with Sniders, some of the fanatics reached the bayonets ere meeting what they sought: death and entrance into paradise. To the Western mind this devotion to death, which combines tender longing with fiendish fury is altogether incomprehensible. How is it that the severest of all punishments has no effect in preventing one outburst succeeding another, in none of which a Mâppila has ever been taken unwounded? Men, old and feeble, as well as the young and lusty, come on unflinchingly until the bullet or the bayonet ends their existence. The lad, in his father's house quiet and inoffensive until a few hours before he faces the British troops, will rush on as if to the manner born; will throw himself, on the bayonet, if he can, and, covered with wounds, will try to strike at a soldier. Others will leave the plough or sickle, or their cattle, in order to join a passing gang of shahîds, or intending martyrs of the faith. There may have been instances of half-heartedness before a battle, but in the struggle of death no case of flinching or being taken unwounded has ever been known. The man who goes out to die and does not die, even though he seeks death with all the heroism of which a man is capable is never forgiven, and his life
would not be safe for a moment among his own people. Father, mother, brothers, sisters and wife would not as much as listen to me when telling how one dear to them a few days before, was lying in Hospital with bullets through his body. "Why did this would-be-shahîd not die?" is all the notice that a family gives in such a case: or else, "He is gone ; he is nothing to us." Just after the outbreak in 1894 when 32 fanatics were shot, of whom but 2 survived - one a convert shot through the spleen, and a boy of 15 wounded in the leg - the mother of one of the survivors was heard to say indignantly: "If I were a man, I would not come back wounded!"

This longing for death, which is so opposed to Western feelings no matter what the belief in a future existence may be, was evinced with greater strength than ever during the last outbreak; for it was plain that nearly one half of the dead were self-slain, or had been slain by their comrades. They were wounded perhaps by military or Police rifle bullets, but not unto death; determined, however, not to to be taken wounded, they asked their comrades to kill them. One survivor, whose left humerus was smashed and who had also a few flesh wounds, was lying on his back. One of his fellows, went over to finish him. The keen knife was already on his throat and had severed the skin, when the would-be slayer was shot dead by our men. The killing of Mâppila by Mâppila is, however, a new departure, and somewhat at variance with their ideas.

The tract inhabited by the Mâppilas, who are fanatically inclined (all are not so, but those of a certain tract only), was disarmed some 15 years ago, but the operation has not in the least scotched the spirit of "shahîdism." In accordance with it there must be no chance of capture. The position taken up should be chosen most carefully, as it must not be one in which the fighters can be caught like rats in a trap. But of late there here has been, however, some change in tactics, and in the last few outbreaks guns have been used for defence of the position taken up. To secure as many as possible of these the country round is scoured by the gang. The war knife is prohibited by law, but a very efficient substitute, and almost identical in shape, is the common wood-chopper of the locality; these and swords are now used.

The band which takes the initiative is composed of men who have, through continuous religious devotions, assumed an attitude of mind in which the ordinary functions of the brain are stayed by religious ecstasy. The orthodox procedure then is to dispose of all their worldly possessions; divorce their wives, solemnly give up body and soul to God, dressed in a long white coat and white cap, and finally to go out calmly in order to seek death whilst fighting. The above directions are not always and strictly followed, for many of the shahilds possess nothing but their wives, and these are not divorced for fear of their intentions to fight and die becoming known. With the exception of the unfortunate murder of Mr. Conolly, District Magistrate of Malabar in 1855, the first overt act has been invariably the murder of some landlord or land agent, or of an apostate. Confused ideas as to Mâppila outbreaks being purely agrarian, or purely fanatical, have thereby arisen. Agrarian they are, fanatical too, to a considerable extent, but fixing on any social phenomenon as the product of any single cause is and must be an error.

Before discussing further this portion of the subject let us consider how Islam was brought to Malabar - events which are often referred to in their songs. Ceremonies, too, perpetuate them. For example, the Mahârâja of Travancore takes possession of the throne only "until his uncle returns from Mecca." The word "Mâppila" is said to be a contraction of Mahâ (great) and 'Pillai' ('child,' an honorary title; as amongst Nayars in Travancore), and it was probably a title of honour conferred on the early Muhammadan immigrants and possible on the still earlier Christian immigrants.... The Muhammadans are usually called Jonaka or Chânaka Mâppilas to distinguish them from the Christian Mâppilas, who are also called Nasarâni ${ }^{2}$ Mâppilas. Jonaka .... is believed to stand for Yavanaka = Ionian + Greek." Be that as it may, Mâppilas of the tract subject to fanatic outbreak are Muhammadans to a man. It is only in Cochin and Travancore that certain Christians are termed Mâppilas.

The following account of the conversion to Islam is taken from Logan's Manual of the Malabar District :-
"All Malayâli accounts are substantially in accord as to the following facts:- The last king or emperor of Malabar was one Cheramân Perumâl who reigned at Kôdungallûr (Cranganore, the Mouziriz of the Greeks, the Muyiri-Kodu of the Cochin Jews). He dreamed that the full moon appeared on the night of the new moon at Mecca in Arabia, and that when at the meridian, she split into two, ${ }^{3}$ one half remaining and the other half descending to the foot of a hill called Ahi Kubais, when the two halves joined and set. Sometime afterwards a party of Muhammadan pilgrims on their way to the foot-print shrine at Adam's Peak in Ceylon chanced to visit the Perumâl's capital, and were admitted to an audience and treated most hospitably. On being asked if there was any news in their country, one, by name Sheikh Sekke-ud-din, it is said, related to Perumal the apocryphal story of Muhammad having, by the miracle about which the Perumal had dreamt, converted a number of unbelievers."

And so it came about that the Perumâl wished to unite himself to them. A vessel was made ready and the Perumâl landed eventually at Shahr on the Arabian Coast.
"It is uncertain whether it was here (Shahr) that the Perumâl came for the first time into contact with persons who were to be the prisoners of Islam in Malabar, or whether they or some of them had been of the party of pilgrims with whom he originally set out from Kô $\boldsymbol{d u n g a l l u ̂ r . ~ B u t , ~ h o w e v e r ~ t h i s ~ m a y ~ b e , ~ t h e ~ n a m e s ~ o f ~ t h e ~}$ persons have been handed down by tradition as (1) Malik-ibnDinâr, (2) Habîb-ibn-Malik, (3) Sherf-ibn-Malik, (4) Malik-ibnHabîb and his wife Kumarieth with their ten sons and five daughters. The Perumâl apparently changed his name to that which is said to appear on his tomb, namely, 'Abd-u'r-Rahmân Samiri." ${ }^{4}$

After some time he wished to return to Malabar to spread the new religion and build places of worship, but while the ship was being built he fell ill, and, feeling death at hand, implored his companions to do that which he had intended to do himself, and gave them letters to the various chiefs of Malabar. "And after this he surrendered his soul to the unbounded mercy of God."5
"It has come to notice from the information of an Arab resident near the spot, that the tomb of the Perumâl still exists at Zaphâr on the Arabian Coast, at some distance from the place (Shahr) where he is reported to have landed. The facts have still to be authoritatively verified, but it is stated that on his tomb the inscription runs : Arrived at Zaphâr A. H. 212. Died there A. H. 216. These dates correspond with the years 827-832 A. D." The Malabar Kôllam Era dates from the departure of Perumal to Arabia in 825 A. D. The current year 1901 A. D. is 1071 M. E. It is likely he spent two years at Shahr before proceeding to Zaphâr.

The Muhammadan Faith has since greatly spread, and at the Census of 1891 the Muhammadans in Malabar, almost all of whom are Mâppilas, numbered 769,857 or over 29 per cent of the population. ${ }^{6}$ And the population increases rapidly.

The mosques of the Mâppilas are quite unlike those of any other Muhammadans. Here one sees no minarets. The temple architecture of Malabar was noticed by Ferguson to be that of Nepaul; Nothing like it exists between the two places. And the the Mâppila mosque is much in the style of the Hindu temple, even to adoption of the turret-like edifice which, among Hindus, is here peculiar to the temples of Śiva. The general use nowadays of German Mission-made tiles is bringing about, alas! A metamorphosis in the architecture of Hindu temples and Mâppila mosques, the picturesqueness disappearing altogether, and in a few years it may be difficult to find one of the old style. The mosque, though it may be little better than a hovel, is, however, always as grand as the community can make it, and once built it can never be removed, for the site is sacred ever afterwards. Every Mâppila would shed his blood rather than suffer any indignity to a mosque. It would be the case of the Malappuram shahîds all over again: for, once religious enthusiasm is aroused, death has no terrors, but only alluring smiles.

The Mâppilas are Sunnis, and claim to have had their religion from the fountain head. The chief priest in Malabar, the Valiya Tangal of Ponâni, styles himself Valiya Zarathingal' ${ }^{7}$ Sayid 'Ali bin Abdu'r-Rahmân Vali Tangal Ponâni, is a pure Arab by blood,
claims direct descent from the Prophet. Curiously enough he inherits his sacred office in the female line - his nephew and not his son is the successor - after the custom of Malabar, while his family property passes according to Muhammadan law. Other Mâppila priestly offices, even that of the Mahâdûm, the chief representative of learning, who confers religious titles and degrees, are inherited in the same manner; while, as all over South Malabar (among Mâppilas) property devolves in the usual way, sons, daughters, and widows receiving certain shares: sons an equal share; a widow with sons, an eighth of the whole; a widow without sons, a sixth of the whole; daughters, half a son's share.

The Nair tarwâd, in which the devolution of property is through the female line, is the most stable of all arrangements for the preservation of the family and the family property. The Mâppilas of South Malabar have followed this custom as regards certain priestly offices, but the Mâppilas of North Malabar follow it in respect of property. They have changed their creed, but not their custom of inheritance. In the North they are well off, as every circumstance of the tarwâd tends towards aggrandizement. In the South they are very poor, for they are extremely prolific, ${ }^{8}$ and they divide up their property in such a way that prosperity is impossible. Their prolificness and mode of inheritance are enough to destroy the most capable people in the world, situated as the Mâppilas are.

Not only are they prolific, but their numbers are increased largely every year by fresh adherents from the Hindus, as well as from the inferior races. In the decade preceding 1891 the Hindus increased by less than 8 per cent, while the Muhammadans increased over 15 per cent. No wonder the man of inferior caste is often induced towards the latter. The position of even the slavelike Cheruman is changed at once when he enters Islam; instead of his very presence carrying pollution to people within 100 yards of him, he can walk where he will and hold his head as high as the best, and what is more, every Mâppila will stick to him through thick and thin.
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With this introduction we may examine their war songs, and we will begin appropriately with one which illustrates their ideas as to how the dead may aid the living. It is entitled, "Shahîdu Mâla Pâttu" - a Garland of Songs about the Shahîds, the heroes of defence of the Malapuram. ${ }^{11}$ Mosque being indicated. The poet says his song is "A Hymn of Praise for the benefit of all mankind.... Its name is Kâliyath Shifa . . . . As a necklace for kings have I composed it. Those who wear this necklace here will be rewarded by God hereafter with a necklace of gold. I am always praying to God to bless those who repeat this song." He asks God to forgive orthographical errors for the sake of the Malapuram shahîds, and then, naming every ill and misfortune possible to man, asks that for the sake of the same intercessors he may come to no harm. He goes the length of asking that he may be "One of the great men who attend to the wants and defects of the house of God,"' and that he too may die a shahîd ! The song is also intended to be repeated amidst vows in times of sickness. Although any want may be supplied, any disease cured, wells filled, and even cholera driven away simply by invoking the Malapuram shahîds, it must not be supposed that these mighty beings are ever confused with God. "There is no God but God;" nevertheless there is nothing which these cannot do for man, for by mean's of their glorious death they have been invested with much power. Having given body and soul to God while in this world, they have earned the privilege of obtaining assent from God whenever they ask Him for anything on behalf of those on earth.

The poet's modest apology for his errors is not uncommon in the Mappilas' songs, and it will not be out of place to mention here for the sake of better appreciation of these that the Mappilas form no class with a fine literature of their own, but that they are

* Here we leave out 9 paragraphs (The Indian Antiquary November 1901 : 502505) from the original article. They are not directly related to the main theme of the article.
the most backward in the Madras Presidency in the matter of education. The poets are illiterate men in the sense that they could not even pass a Lower Primary examination in the Government Schools; and they have woven the facts and legends, which they have woven so strangely into their songs, from tradition and, partly no doubt, from the regular stream of communication with Arabia which is maintained until the present day.


## The War Songs

> No. I

The Song of the Malapuram Shahîds.
"In the name of God I begin this song. I pray to Muhammad the Prophet who is the cause of all created things. I pray also to his relatives and to the Ashabi army. I pray to all Mussalmans."

The poet goes on to say that "Abu Betir Siddik was the first true shahîd. Even the angels of God hold him in high respect. He was a true man and he never exposed his person to anyone until his death. May God always bless him."

Omar Bin Kanab is the next. He "held the Faith dearer than all his wealth and all his children. The dust in his hand was transformed to musk by the Most High, and the odour of that musk always pervaded his body." ${ }^{12}$
"Usman Bin Alvân is the third great shahîd. He had the Prophet's permission to admit anyone he pleased to heaven. He visits every place like the lightning of heaven. He is the most celebrated man in heaven or earth; and he married two of the Prophet's daughters."

Isman Ali is the fourth. "He is described as a tiger in Bait-Ul-Issa. The angels of death fear him. He was the son of Abdulla's brother, the most beloved of the Prophet and the husband of Fatima the Prophet's daughter, dearer to him than eyesight." A tremendous fighter! "His name is written 'Tiger' on the cot in Aesh" .... "He is the gate of the hall of wisdom. May God I always bless him."

The story of the Perumâl, the last king among kinglets of Malabar, and his voyage to Arabia where he met the Prophet are then told. Then we come to the destruction of the Malapuram Mosque, when 44 Mâppilas, the bravest of the brave, fought to death : parents, wives, children, tried to dissuade them, but to no purpose. The wives were told they would by their husbands' death in glory obtain salvation. But what about the present? "Do you not see the sky sustained without a pillar.... the frog in the deep recess of the rock, the chicken in the egg, and the child nourished in the womb? Is it reasonable that you will be helpless? Does a man in the grave think of his parents? When we are weighed in the balance who but God will help us? Can one's parents? If men permit sacrilege to their mosque all pains of hell await them: it is only by dying for the glory of God they can obtain heavenly bliss; and then they can bless and aid their families.
"Ho! ye brethren! The shahîds are most mighty ghosts and bhutas fear them. The wicked Eblis is their enemy. Those who sing their praise obtain salvation from God. Those who slightthem will suffer untold misery".... "Nothing is more pleasing to God than sacrficing one's body and soul in defence of God, and none are more honoured than these shahîds"..... "They did not become shahîds under compulsion but of their own faith and conviction; therefore God gave them a special place in heaven and a crown in Taj-il-Okar. Their bodies are always fragrant. God takes special care of them."

## No. II

## The Song of Alungal Kandi

Another of the songs was written by the popular Mâppila poet Alungal Kandi Môyankutti Vâidiâr, grandson of a convert from Hinduism, of the stock of the old Vêlan or Vâidiâr, a hereditary Hindu physician. The poem begins with extolling Mohammad, and tells how the king of Damascus was convinced of the truth of his mission when the Prophet made the moon rise at the wrong time, ascend the zenith, divide, and each half pass through the
sleeves of his coat. Then follows a version of the tale of Joseph and Potiphar's wife, and how the innocent minister ascended to heaven telling the king who suspected him that he would be pardoned if he accepted "the new Vêda !" which a prophet was then bringing to men from over the sea.

Regardless of chronology, the poet tells how Islam was brought to Kerala ${ }^{13}$ and how eventually a grand mosque was built at Malapuram. ${ }^{14}$ Mâppilas will not allow even an atom of the caadjan roof of the mosque to be burnt. They will fight to death for it, and they are glad of the opportunity. The poem continues:-
"The soul in our body is in the hand of God. Can we live for ever in this world? Must we not die once? Everything will die, but God alone will not. Such being the commandment of God we will have no excuse when we are brought before Him after death; so determine earnestly to fight and die. If we die fighting with the wicked men who attempt forcibly to burn this holy mosque, which is the house of God, we shall obtain complete salvation. The occasion to fight and die for the faith is like unto embarking in a vessel which has come to bear the believer to the shores of bliss. Therefore, embark! How well for you that such a vessel has come! It will bear you to the broad gates of heaven. Is it not for the arrival of such a vessel that we should pray?.... The pleasures of wealth, or family, are not equal to an atom of celestial happiness. Our most venerable Prophet has said that those who die in battle can see the houris who will come to witness the fight. There is nothing in this world to compare with the beauty of the houris. The splendour of the sun, of the moon, and of the lightning is darkness compared with the beauty of their hair which hangs over their shoulders. Their cheeks, eyes, face, eyebrows, forehead, head are incomparably lovely. Their lips are like corals; their teeth like the seeds of the thalimathalam; their breasts like cups of gold, the pomegranate, or like beautiful flowers. It is not possible for the mind to conceive the loveliness of their breasts and shoulders.... If they wash in the sea the salt becomes like honey, and as fragrant as attar. If they were to come down to earth and smile, the sun, moon and stars would be eclipsed. Mortals would die if they
but heard the music of their voice. When they wear red silk garments bordered with green lace of seventy folds, their skin, bones, and muscles can be seen through them. Such is the splendour of their body. If they clap their hands, the clang of their jewels will be heard at a distance of 500 years' journey. They clap their hands and dance and sing as they come like swans to the battle-field. If a human being were to see their beauty, their smile or their dance, he would die (with longing) on the spot. Gently they touch the wounds of those who die in battle, they rub away the blood and cure the pain; they kiss and embrace the martyrs, give them to drink of the sweet water of heaven and gratify their every wish. A horse caparisoned with carpets set with precious stones will be brought, and a voice will say:- 'Let my men mount; let them dance with celestial houries.' Then the celestial coverings will be placed on their heads; they mount the beautiful horses which will dance and leap and take them away to heaven, where they will live in unbounded joy."
"Such is the fate which awaits those who die fighting bravely. At the dissolution of the world they will be sped like lightning over the bridge across hell. In Heaven they will attend the marriage of Muhammad. They will be decorated with bunches of pearls and crowns of gold; they will sit on the tusk of Muhammad's elephant, and enjoy supreme happiness. It is impossible to describe the pleasures which await those who die fighting bravely without flinching. All their sins will be forgiven and God will listen to all their prayers."

Far otherwise is it with the coward. "All his virtuous actions are ignored. He incurs the wrath of God. He will be written down a renegade in the book of God. His prayers are vain. He , will die a sinner and be thrown into hell where fresh kinds of torture will be given him. In hell are countless myriads of scorpions, snakes and frightful dragons. It is a pit of everlasting fire." The pleasures of heaven and the pains of hell have been revealed to Muhammad "who in his turn taught his disciples. It is the learned Musaliars who now hold this knowledge."

Let it not be supposed that the above feelings are entirely sensual and erotic. On the contrary the Mappila's version of Islam has had a strong effect for good on his life and morality.

## No. III

## The Battle of Bedr

Another song by the same poet is Muhammad's famous Battle of Bedr, where he routed the Koreish; also a subject of endless interest to Mâppilas. They say that as the battle was fought on the 17th Ramazân in the 2nd year of the Hijra, it is a good day on which to die fighting. Curiously enough, the month of fasting, during which it is enjoined not to fight unless forced to do so, is the very one in which the Mâppila, the ultra strict follower of the Prophet according to his lights, chooses to go out to fight and die. The twelfth day of Ramazân is with them a good day on which to start out under devotion to death and it was selected in a last rising.

The poet describes how the Angel Gabriel told the Prophet that bliss awaited those of his followers who died fighting the infidel. The Prophet then tells them how they could gain Paradise and be met by the houris "whose eyes are like the waxing moon, whose cheeks are like the plantain's leaves who are soft as the petals of the young shoe-flower," by way of inspiring them with courage. The imagery is not quite so happy as before, for the necks of the huris when they walk "wave to and fro like the neck of a rutting elephant." But their "breast is like a lake where in are lotus flowers ,and they are always 16 years old and very amorous".... "They come like sporting elephants to bear away those who die in battle and strive with each other saying,"I will take him - I will take him.' The Prophet swore to his army that such happiness would be theirs if they died fighting bravely. "Omar was eating dates; when he heard this he cast them away. The Prophet asked why. He replied that he wished to waste no time in eating dates: "I wish to use my time for fighting;" and so saying he rushed like a lion among a flock of sheep, killed many and died fighting; he met the death
he wished for." The father fought against the son, for the bond of the faith is stronger than the bond of blood. The angels of death fought on the side of the Prophet and Koreish were defeated. ${ }^{15}$

## No. IV

## The Battle of Hunain

Muhammad the Prophet, the founder of Islam and the greatest of all the 123,999 prophets since the time of Adam, was born unto Amina by Abdulla. He was brought up at Mecca, the Queen of cities, the centre of the globe. The heathen Koreish began to speak of him as an imposter, for they feared he would destroy their religion; and they resolved to kill him. But Muhammad, warned by God, fled to Medîna.

And God said:- "Convert your own people first, then the aliens. If you are resisted, use the sword and make them embrace the true fiath." So the prophet took up the sword against the infidels and was always successful. He came to Mecca with a large army. The Koreish begged for peace for 20 months in order to remove from Mecca. A treaty was then drawn up and signed formally by both sides: no mercy to be given to those violating it. But the treacherous Koreish broke it, so the prophet took up the sword. Two hundred pilgrims taking shelter with the Koreish were treated kindly and then slain mercilessly. The Angel Gabriel related the tragedy to the prophet, who, calling his followers, said:-"Our treaty is broken, we must capture Mecca." Mecca was captured, the Koreish defeated and their idols destroyed, by the fourth minister Imam Ali, the prophet's son-in-law and his father's brother's son.

The Koreish resolved to seek the aid of Malik Bin Awauli, Lord of the monarchs of earth, saying, "he will defeat the prophet and prevent the spread of his religion. Eblis is his minister." They went to Nazareth, near Missea, where the king was, and saw Eblis, who thereupon drew up a document as follows:-"The followers of Muhammad have forced their way into the sacred temples and
destroyed all images, presented to us by kings of old and adorned with gems. Chief of these was Brâhma, more than 4,000 kôls in height. ${ }^{16}$. These have been our salvation, and now they are hacked to pieces. All persons young and old know this. If your highness does not extirpate the Mussalmans, their religion will be the only one in the world. Muhammad is the man for that. His face is more resplendent than the full moon. A lion approaching him openmouthed would be calmed by the sweet honey of his words. He is clever in witchcraft and all magic. He would be win over your highness. There is not his like among men or angels. We implore your highness to protect us. ${ }^{17}$ Who can endure to see their gods mutilated and thrown down? It is said by king that he has no equal in might."

So saying they threw off their coats and caps and lay in the dust, and wept. When he heard them, the king was speechless for an hour; then he roared like thunder, flung aside his crown, and bit his finger in his rage. He changed colour and his hair stood on end. Saying, "there never was done us such a wrong since the world began," he called his ministers to plan vengeance. They said "if we kill Muhammad and Imam Ali we will be famous, but if we fail, we must accept their religion." The king said:- "Be patient : we will see if he is so powerful." They answered :- "Slight him not. A glance of his eye was sufficient to fill a well, which has never diminished."

Then the king wished to subdue him in war, and wrote to call his warriors. The first letter was to Banitha Mimu:"Muhammad the Nebi and his son-in-law Imam Ali have seized Mecca and defiled it : we must wage war on him : come soon." He [Banitha] came with 10,000 armed men before the king, who was, pleased. The second letter was to Banihilan, who at once marched with 90,000 men. Many others were sent for in like manner. When all had assembled the king burst into tears. Another king enquired the cause and was told that the thought of the destruction of the gods was too distressful. The other king consoled him saying that King Urubath was equal to 10,000 Turks. So Urubath was called,
and he came with 20,000 men. Refreshments were served, and King Urubath recited a sloka [!] which meant:- "O king, dearer than the pupil of my eye, your charity has pervaded the world as a cooling shower, and tears have been shed by you, so I am prepared to draw blood from Muhammad and his son-in-law. Will the brass of Ashin prevail against us? We will kill him as timber."

The king was pleased, and said:-"Our gods are cut down, but their divine spirit remains. We propitiated them. They will favour us rather than our enemies who have desecrated them." So saying, the king went to the camp and ordered the heads of Muhammad and his son-in law to be cut off, and their followers to be brought in alive with handcuff so that they might be flayed or burnt with hot irons. The army replied they would do so. Then the king ordered his prime minister to open a barrel of liquor. The men drank more than they could contain and fought with each other like lunatics, forgetting their great purpose. Imish, an ascetic, appeared to them as an old Brahman (!). They asked his advi ce. He beat his breast and wept:- "Oh warriors, you have became shameful cowards. You come to fight with Muhammad but you have most shamefully indulged in liquor. Muhammad, taking advantage, has enticed some people from our side." Then he beat his breast again and wept. The army enquired who he was. He said he was (in Arabic) "The father of evil speakers" and his native place was Negith, a despicable Hell. They thanked him, and set out to fight. The ascetic clapped his hands and laughed. "You are brave warriors," said he, "but when you go to fight you should take with you your wives and children, all your relatives young and old, male and female, so that you may think of them".

Rebiath, a brave young warrior, said :- "You need not open your mouth to speak nonsense. Go away. A child would not heed you. You would tell us - If we are defeated, Muhammad will capture our women and kinsmen. Who are so hot after women as the Arabs? If our women fall into their hands we cannot receive them back." Then spoke Kola Baith:- "What ? Is Rebiath mad?

What the ascetic says is true. If we have our women with us we will feel vigorous and courageous. We can never withstand a long battle without them." The army consented, and the king ordered the families to be brought. They spread like an ocean. Mothers with crying babies, children carried on the necks of adults, old people with sticks in their hands. Women could not suckle their infants, and beat them; the bigger children cried for food ; there was confusion everywhere.

The king paused a moment ; then ordered the band to be played, the trumpets also. In the van of the army were kings with golden crowns on horseback, having 18 kinds of weapons. Then came camels, mules, conveyances, and the infantry armed with blowing instruments, noisy bells, 14 kinds of arrows, and swords. They reached a mountain and pitched their tents under it.

They saw other warriors encamped on the hill, their leader seated in their midst. He was a stout blind Kaffir, 800 years old, Duraita by name, the terror of his age, well versed in war; of profound spiritual knowledge, adept in witchcraft, astronomy, physiognomy and other sciences. He asked:-"What is that noise of babies and mothers in the midst of sounds like thunder?" He was told that King Malik had encamped there with his army, and their women and relatives. Thereupon he expressed a desire to see the king. The king came and salamed. Duraita asked who he was. The king then told his name and was asked to be seated. Duraita asked why he had come. He said Muhammad and his son-in-law had defiled their gods, so he had come with his army of 250,000 to overcome him. Duraita said the number was too small : there must be at least five lakhs of men. Malik's ministers displayed indifference and whispered in the king's ear that Muhammad had not more than 1,000 men. Then Duraita spoke in anger :- "Believe, me, you are not fit to engage Muhammad. Oh king ! Your minister deceives you. Come ; try a fight with my men, 100 in number. If you beat them, you can beat Muhammad." King Malik caught his hands and pacified him:-" Oh great man : be not angry; I will collect as many men as you want."

And he sent out messengers who brought 5 lakhs of men; then he continued his march. They reached the Honin hills and pitched their tents. Then Eblis appeared before Duraita and spoke of the coming battle, and told him he would be slain by a soldier of the prophet's army, Rebiath by name. Duraita was horror struck, but he consoled himself saying, "Oh god ! if this is my fate, I have no fear." The king heard this and was sorry; and he said:- "Eblis is a traitor heed him not; I will help you." Duraita was encouraged, and remained at the foot of the hills.

Now while the prophet was at Medina performing his ablutions and other religious services; seated at noon in the chief mosque, he saw a young man clad in silk and wearing priceless gems approaching on horseback accompanied by 2 men as a bodyguard. The youngman asked :- "Where is, Muhammad, protector of the world, with his ten beautiful colours? Imam Ali enquired why he wanted to know. The young man said :- "To pay my respects." A sayyid pointed out where the Lord of creation, more handsome than white pearls was seated. When he saw Muhammad who has no shadow of self on earth, the young man dismounted, and said respectfully :- "O Nebi ! ocean of charity, the magnanimous, the nearest thing to God as the string to the bow, I long wished to see you, and now I have the honour."

Some of his disciples arose and told the prophet the youth was one who had fled at the battle of Mecca and had been ordered to be killed, and touched their swords. When Muhammad saw this he said that Shaikhuvan should not be killed, although he is wicked: "we must know why he has forsaken his evil companions and come here." He said to Muhammad, who approached him :- "God created you and you have traversed the seven skies and above them. You are a great favourite of God. I have come to reveal my sorrow." The prophet told him to speak. "Oh prophet ! you have made the full moon to rise on the new moon night, taken hold of it and split it in two, joined the halves together and sent them back to the skies. You have converted many who saw this. Oh prophet ! our father, I have fought against thee and beg forgiveness. Thou hast produced peacocks out of granite and borne the world on the tip of
thy little finger. I pray thee bless me that I may fight against heretics." Muhammad stretched out his hand, held him and taught him prayer, and he became a Mussulman.

Shaikhuvan said:- "Oh prophet! Thou hast been laying at the feet of God for 14,000 years without raising thy head. King Malik with 5 lakhs of men has encamped on Mount Hunai to fight thee. Muhammad was thunderstruck. Then the angel of God came, and saluting the prophet, told him the news was true, and that he should at once fight King Malik, and he will have special indulgence in Heaven and Earth. The drums were then beaten, and the prophet explained God's message, saying those who fought for him would go to Heaven. He described Heaven thus:- "There are many pleasures in heaven, but something must be said of the celestial virgins. The beauty of their faces defies the disc of the setting sun, or of the moon. Their bodies are more brilliant than superior gold ; in fact, they are so lovely that God has never created and never will create their like. Their hair is blacker and more beautiful than the cuckoo or the wings of the beetle. The jewels on their heads are indescribable. Their eyes are ravishing, fascinating any man and filling him with lust. Their necks are more graceful than the deer's, neat and well shaped. Their mouth is like a fruit filled with honey. A drop of their spittle will turn the ocean into pure honey. Their noses are like pointed arrows. Their breasts of admirable shape, resemble two golden cups, are of full size and never fading beauty. Their bodies are well formed and polished. Their waists narrow, slender and charming. Their arms and legs are like the branches of the plaintain tree. It would take up many pages to describe their jewels, for they wear many. They never menstruate, and they are unceasingly lustful. Those of you who fight along with me and die in battle, will have houris such as I have described, besides other enjoyments."

The army asked Muhammad to lead on so that they might partake the pleasures he had described.. He sent them home to bid farewell to their families ${ }^{18}$ and return at 6o'clock the next morning to go to war. They were in all 1,060 men, and they offered prayers
to God. Then Muhammad sent his private secretary to bring from his house, banners, arms, armour, horses and other necessaries of war. This was done. Muhammad was mounted on a horse called Trubath...... They started for Medina, and camped near it. Muhammad gave the first banner to Suburi-bin alavan, the second to Abitharklophar, the third to Abbas, his uncle, the fourth to Magdhathi-bini Aso Dhul Kathi, the fifth to Khalithi binal Holith.... Each of these ten men recited a verse in Arabic when he received his flag. Then there were with Muhammad, in all 12,000 warriers, who had joined him in the plain. He set out for war together with his four ministers. When it was time to do so, they assembled for prayers, and then retired to their tents to sleep. But the first Minister Abu Bakr Siddik went to Muhammad's tent, and having obtained permission, entered and said the expedition was a splendid one as their army was composed of heroes had more than a match for the enemy's army of five lakhs of men.

Muhammad was displeased and repeated a religious mantram [!], exhaustive and deep, meaning that none, but God can do anything. He was uneasy and had little sleep, thinking of the words of the first minister. In the morning his uneasiness continued, and after prayer when he had mounted his throne, his father's elder brother Abbas came to him and asked the cause of his gloom. Muhammad said the words of the first minister were unsavoury, and he did not know what evil awaited them. Then the Angel Gabriel appeared before Muhammad and taught him two prayers to be repeated by the whole army. In the evening Muhammad saw a band of Kaffir soldiers, who said they were of the Vanibaya tribe (sect) and they were going to fight a certain king whose subjects they hated. He then prayed and retired to rest. And God's messenger appeared again before him and taught him a prayer (?) of deep meaning: briefly, that throughout the Hunai War many wonders would be worked by him (Muhammad), and God will avenge his enemies. He was filled with joy and thanked God.

The Kaffir soldiers hid behind the mountain and in the night their chief asked whether they knew the Arabs they had met.

They did not. He said they had conversed with Muhammad, the king of Mecca, who was waging war against their king : would any one volunteer to bring in the head of Muhammad? Some arose in answer, but their leader warned them saying Muhammad was powerful, an athlete and of extraordinary prudence. They said Muhammad's tent was in a lonely place; and two lion-like men went away saying that by the grace of God they would bring in his head. They saw him engaged in prayer under a tree, his hands placed on his belly, a mile distant from his army; and they hid in a hollow of the tree. Muhammad's sword was left leaning against the tree, and he was lying on his face praying. One of them took the sword thinking it was sharper than their own and aimed a blow at Muhammad's neck. But he saw them with the small eyes on his head, and prayed to God. And a branch of the tree bent down and the sword struck it, and stuck to it and to the man's hand. When he had finished his prayers he looked around and saw the two men lying on the ground. They begged for mercy, invoking his God. He raised them up and let them go, telling them God would punish them with everlasting hell. Ismanli, the lion, the fourth minister, was told by the prophet what had happened. Seized with passion, he begged leave to kill them twain and annihilate the whole army. The prophet said that God would arrange : he would do nothing without God's order. God had saved him from them, and he should likewise save them. He is answerable to God. As the two Kaffirs were going (to lie) to their king, a mighty wind swept them into the sea. The king and his army enquired in several countries what had become of them. Behold! their corpses were found in the sea.

Muhammad with his army encamped near the enemy, and looking round, asked whether any one would spy in the enemies' camp. A man called Raphi stood up and said he would go in the direct way there were hills, mountains, pits, trees, forests and many difficulties, besides guards were posted. Muhammad said though that way was a difficult one, Raphi should take it. Then Abbas, the uncle of Muhammad, said that Raphi had spoken truthfully. Muhammad said to Raphi that God would take him unto Himself. Again he explained what Heaven was. In it there were many
beautiful things, tables, chairs, mattresses, beds; different kinds of music, all sort of fruits, pure water; valuable, jewels for the celestial virgins. "God will give you all these." Then Raphi said he felt confident of all this happiness, but he was grieved to think that if he were killed he would not be able to return with news (!). While Muhammad was deep in thought the Angel Gabriel appeared and said to him that what he had promised Raphi had already been promised by God 14,000 years before. Moreover, God had sent him to say that Raphi would not be killed.

Raphi then started, and found the kings on their thrones and the army surrounding them. The old blind man [Duraita?] discovered his presence by means of astrology, and by the time Raphi had heard the kings conversing together as to the destruction of Muhammad, and ascertained the number of their flags; they were informed that a spy was in their midst. Search was at once made. Raphi prayed to God and Muhammad to save him. A surprising thing then happened. No one could see Raphi. Then they mocked the old blind astrologer, but he persisted he was right. The king told him to find the Arab or die on the spot. The old man asked each man to come in front of him and make a certain noise. Raphi was in great anxiety and prayed to God and Muhammad. A man asked him who he was, and he answered he was one of themselves. He was taken before the astrologer to whom he gave a false name. He was told to make the noise. Again he prayed toGod and Muhammad and made the noise so that the astrologer did not distinguish him. The king and his men again mocked the astrologer, and said no Arab had entered the camp. The astrologer swore by their gods that there had, and he would not eat until he had found him. He then asked the men to come in pairs, one on his right, one on his left, and make the noise. When Raphi made the noise the astrologer held his hand and asked him who he was. He said he was chief of the flagsmen. Was he sure? Yes. Then he was let off. The troops clapped their hands and said the old man was childish. The astrologer contended the Arab spy was among them, and that he was invisible through witchcraft.

When the king's army partook of food Raphi was served with the flesh of sheep and camels to eat, and toddy to drink. He carried it to where the mules were tied. After eating food this army was about to fall in for war when Daraita told them not to march. The king asked why not. He said they should hide under the slope of the hill and by a sudden rush fall on Muhammad's men before they could take up their arms : there was no other way to conquer such great warriors. So the king ordered Duraita to prepare the army for battle. The attack was to be made in five companies. Cavalry armed with swords and formed in four sections to be in front; each section to assist the others. Men with daggers, also formed in four sections to be behind the cavalry. Men with bows and arrows to be behind these again. Women and children to be in rear.

Naratha Maharishi, that is, Eblis, then told the king the men in front would not fight well if their women and children were so far away, so these were placed behind the men in fornt. Raphi returned to his camp, all the way invoking Divine help against the Kaffirs. He told Muhammad what he had seen. The Kaffirs were countless and they had 2,000 flags. Muhammad then said that there were as a rule 250 men for each flag, so there must be at least 5 lakhs of men ; and he ordered his men to start ; the enemy should not be kept waiting for them. He ordered one to go and see if the enemy stood ready. Report was brought that the enemy, horses, camels, mules, etc., with twice their number of men, also women and children, were there. Muhammad said that God's angel Dubri had told him of this, and gave the order to mount and prepare to attack the enemy at the foot of Mount Abuthasoli. The army marched to the hill and found there some small temples and big trees, and some men from the king's army who were doing puja [!] in the temples. The first minister took the priest before Muhammad who enquired whether the gods in the hill were equal to the great gods of Mecca, or were they greater. The priest replied they were related to the gods of Mecca. Muhammad asked why he worshipped those stones when he might worship the true God. He did not answer and Muhammad orderd him away. Some one said the priest
was a Kaffir, and Muhammad said such was God's will.
Muhammad then orderd Imam Ali to cut down a tree on the top of the hill. Imam Ali did so, and a column of smoke at once rose to the skies. He ran in fear to the prophet who said that 3 jinns were living in the tree and were now leaving it. Then Abbas came up and said there was a snake on the hill, so huge that only God knows its magnitude, and flames shot from its mouth. The prophet with a few followers went to see it. The Arabs began to run like sheep before the tiger. But the prophet said :- "Do not fear : stand behind me." They did so. The prophet looked at the serpent, it lowered its head and creeping towards him knocked its head on the ground, saying, "Oh prophet of worldwide renown, I am not a serpent, but a leader of the jinns. I am a Mussalman. There are Kaffirs and Mussalmans among the jinns. The prophet knows why we wander in the world : to bite and kill the prophet's enemies. Give me leave and I will destroy the king's army." Then the prophet said :- "We do not need you now. I will tell you if we do. Leave this place and may God bless you." The serpent fled to another country.

The prophet remained in the hill and next morning left for Hunain, the enemy's camp. The Kaffir king was startled, invoked his gods and ordered his army to pray, and to get into battle array. "God will bless you. If they are 12,000 , we are 500,000 ." The king called his minister called Musa, "Ho minister! Get up this tree and tell me the number of the enemy and their equipments.He climbed the tree and said :- "A man carrying a flag is in front. They come like lightning. Their horses are as if dancing." The king said:- "Who comes in front?" The minister replied: - "Two chiefs on horse-back, each carrying a flag." "Of what colour?" "One is white, and the other is yellow. Behind comes one with a green flag. All their turbans are green, and their coats are white. Both are very clever." "You know the people of Mecea," said the king, "who are they?" One is Abbas, the prophet's father's elder brother, the tiger of men ; a rich man. The other is Fakalu, a brave warrior." Looking again, the minister said :- "Oh king ! I see some-
thing very wonderful : a great warrior comes. His horse is like an eagle and he comes like a lion that has seen a deer. He looks as if he will kill us all." The king asked his name. The minister replied :- "Imam Ali, the fourth minister ; there, is none so brave in Muhammad's army." The king ordered him to look again. "Great king, I see one whom I am powerless to describe : my tongue fails : my eyes become dim. He will confound your army. His clothes shine like the sun at noon. He rides a huge horse. His beauty is beyond description. The sun and moon cannot be compared to him. His horse's hoofs touch the ground like thunder. His splendour fills the earth and the skies. The clouds are as an umbrella over his head." The king asked: - "Who is it ?" "Oh king! it is Muhammad the prophet." Then the king said sorrowfully :- "Ah God ! when they see him, my army will not be able to fight." The king and the minister then went to their tent.

The king cried out: - "The prophet has come with his army. Fear not. Be firm." The army answered.:- They are great sorcerers ; we are not able to fight them." An angel said:-"Fear not! Adron your god's and hold them before the army ; call out their names and pray, and you will succeed." Seeing that panic seized his army the king ordered liquor to be brought. The whole army drank, and taking their gods placed them in front. The king said:- "Fear not in battle: if you have any fear, you will lose." And he promised large rewards.

By this time the prophet's army came in sight. The prophet said :-"The enemy deceives us. They are in ambush by the hill." Then the Angels Gabriel and Michael came with a thousand angels and joined the prophet's army. The reason for their coming was this:- The Kaffirs numbered 5 lakhs and the Prophet's army but 12,000 . The Kaffirs looked at them and laughed, saying "We should not have brought so many." So the prophet's army was in fear, saying, "We are but a few, and they mock us." Then the prophet prayed to God who sent his angels who descended from the sky on aereal horses. They said:- "The Kaffirs lie in wait. We will go in front ; you come behind us. We can see them as fish
in a bottle of water. If you come with us they will perish." Then rushing at those who were concealed they killed them all. A few escaped and told the king on the hill top what had happened. Eblis came and took the king by the hand as he said:- "Have angels also come for the battle?" And he began to run. So the king said :"Who will help us if you run away ?" Eblis said :- I cannot fight against angels." The king implored him, but Eblis shook him off and fled. The king was thrown far and fell on a blind man's neck. The blind man asked:- "Who are you?" "I am the king." The blind man said:- "Will the king fall on a blind man's neck ? Liar!" and drew his sword to kill him. But the king swore by all his gods; and both went to the tent.

The two armies, fought. A mounted warrior of the king's army, armed with 18 weapons, rushed to the prophet's army and said:- "I am Akubath. Let Muhammad's army come on." The prophet called out Jabagir and said:- "Fight him. God will bless you." There was a desperate conflict. He cut Akubath and his horse in two with one blow. Another Kaffir rushed forward and he too was slain. So the Arab killed 15 Kaffirs. More Kaffirs ventured, but the Arab mocked them, making his horse dance. A valiant Kaffir Makmas said:-"Wretch! I will cleave your skull!" "Many wished to engage him, but the prophet prevented them saying he was a mighty warrior and called on his fourth minister Imam Ali, who went forward and said:- "I am Imam Ali! I broke your idols." He touched the Kaffir with his sword and as he fell, cut him in two. Another Kaffir came and fought for ten hours and was killed. Twelve others were killed.

Then the king called out his third minister. His helmet weighed 30 lbs . His sword was 14 cubits in length and he was as tall as a cocoanut tree, and as big as a hill. God never created such a human being. If he fell, 1,000 men would die at once. The Arabs were afraid to see him and prayed to God. The prophet himself was confounded, and said :- "Let the fourth minister meet him. There is no other help." There was hard fight and the fourth minister cut to pieces his 18 weapons and killed him. The prophet praised God.

The Kaffirs were about to fly, but the king rallied them; and then they said it was by witchcraft and not in fair fight that their hero was killed. A general battle took place, and the fourth minister and 130 Arabs were wounded. But the prophet touched them with his hands and they were at one healed. Suddenly the Arabs fled, for in the front rank of the Kaffirs were kings, and when they were killed the Arabs began to rifle their gems, upon which the Kaffirs sent volleys of rockets [!] amongst them. And there was another reason. The prophet's first minister, Abu-BakrSiddik said:- "The enemy are numberless; whereupon 8,000 of the prophet's army fled. Four thousand were left, and of these only 1,000 fought, the others merely looking on. One said :- "We arfe 4,000 while they are five lakhs: we will have to run." But a voice from Heaven said :- "Despair not! Let them be ten lakhs." Again they fought, but at last they began to fly. Then Eblis, assuming the form of the second minister, said:- "Ho ye Arabs ! Fly for your lives! You are in a boundless ocean of sorrow. There is no escape but in flight. The prophet is killed. Is there battle without a king?" The prophet's army fled, and there were but seven persons left, and of these, four were the ministers. These ran to the prophet and said:- "We are but seven persons against more than four lakhs. What can we do?" Then the prophet raised his hands towards heaven, lifted his eyes and prayed. He put on his armour and rode on his favourite vehicle. The four ministers stood beside him and God commanded 2,000 angels to descend at once to help the prophet. They came, looking like young men; their coats were white and their turbans were black. The earth shook as they alighted. They stood on 4 sides and ordered the minister to fight. All fought bravely and the enemy began to fly. The prophet asked a minister to recall his army. Patel said:- "Where can they be found? Call them!" The sound was carried by the air to the ears of the army, and they returned and begged for pardon, saying Eblis had deceived them. Laying their swords to their stomachs, the soldiers said they would kill themselves if not pardoned. An angel from God said they had spoken the truth.The ministers of the king said :- "We cannot defeat the Arabs. The four ministers of the prophet
are invincible." They caused our swords to fall, and their horses ran over our heads like lightning. They killed forty to our one. Three lakhs of our army are slain." Women and children dashed their heads on the ground and said to the king:- "Our husbands, fathers and brothers are killed: send us home."

The king ordered them to be fed. Then he mounted his war horse, and dressed in his brightest gems went out and challenged the prophet. The prophet sent a man Vazir to meet him. The king killed him and four others. A young warrior Jaffari, withe the prophet's permission went to meet him. It was the day after his wedding, and he was 16 years old. The king cut him together with his horse in pieces in the twinkling of an eye. One of his ministers told the king to go back ; he would fight in his stead and kill 12,000 Arabs. The Arabs said:- "There is no devil equal to him. With one blow he will kill 1,000 of us." The prophet sent Abdulla, but the Kaffir cut him in pieces. His brother Abdul Keriva went out, and he too was killed. No more Arabs ventured.

Seeing no more coming to meet him, he returned to his tent, and his wife said, "Where is the head of Ali?" He replied:- "I will give it to you to-morrow." She asked : "Is ali 100 cubits high?" "May be so. There is no such warrior in the prophet's army." "Do not approach or touch me : I will not be your wife until you bring the head of Ali." He was furious, and rushed out calling, "Ho ye prophet! send me your best man, or your whole army;" and he beat the ground. The prophet said:- "God will give special benefits to whoever kills the wretch. I guarantee it." An Amir went and was killed at once. The Kaffir cried :- "Where are your brave men? Suvar? Sayid? Where is the brave Talhat? Where is Abu Bakr? Where is Omar? Where is the world-renowned Ali ? My heart beats like the wave of ocean to fight the Ali. Oh Muhammad! where is your God!"An Arab, Athusamed, leaped forward but took him by the leg and dashed him to the ground.

Then the prophet said: - "Where is Imam Ali?" "He is fighting on the hill." "Let 500 take his place and send him here."

He came. The prophet prayed. The Kaffir asked:- "Oh beautiful youth, who are you ?" He replied:- "Imam Ali." The Kaffir said:"You are his slave. Send him to me and save your life." They fought for 3 days. On the 4th day Ali said:-"Embrace the prophet's faith or I kill you." The Kaffir said:- "You are brave. No one else could have fought me for 3 days." The Kaffir's wife watched the fight from a hill and sent her head dress by a slave, saying, "Cut, off the head of Ali, and smear this cloth with his blood, or never come near me again." Then they fought desperately for six days. On the seventh day Ali made a noise which shook the earth and the sky. The Kaffir was stunned, and Ali cut off his head. The prophet asked what was the army doing, and Ali replied it was standing still and the Kaffir army had fled.

The prophet ordered the dead to be counted, and it was found that 1,000 Ashabis had been slain. The Kaffirs told their king :- "For one of them that we kill they kill 1,000 . They believe they go to Heaven and do not fear death. Let us make peace. Our gods have not helped us. They have killed our brave men by witchcraft." The king was sad, and threw his crown on the ground. A vassal asked permission and went to the battle-field calling for the bravest of the prophet's men, ... him. An Arab went out, and the king killed him. Then the prophet ordered Imam Ali to fight the king. The king wounded him, but Ali mounted his horse and they fought for 24 hours. At night they separated. Again they met. At night Ali said:- "Oh king ! do not lose your life ; join the fourth religion. ${ }^{20}$ If you do, you will gain Heaven." The king said : - "If you defeat me, I will join your faith. Let us dismount and fight with our hands. If you are victorious I will join you." They wrestled. Ali caught the king by his belt and was about to throw him when he called out, "I am defeated : do not throw me." Ali took him to the prophet and the merciful prophet embraced him, and told him the secret of his faith. Seeing this the Kaffir army fled.

The king wrote and collected 30,000 more soldiers and ordered them to fight. They challenged the Arabs. A leader of the Kaffirs wounded an Arab, but the prophet gently touched his wounds and healed them. There was a general battle and neither
side prevailed. Meanwhile the prophet retired alone to a tree a mile distant to pray. A Kaffir approached, stealthily to kill him, and raised his sword. In an instant, there was a wall of fire protecting the prophet, and the Kaffir was aghast. The prophet finished his prayers and smiled, saying:- "Ho king ! fear not, but come before me." He came, and begged the prophet's mercy, and embraced his faith, and at once fought against the Kaffirs [sio]. The king was alarmed and sent a larger army to seize the prophet and his fourth minister Ali.

There was a combat between Shaibath and Rabiyath for 2 days and neither prevailed. The prophet prayed to God, and an eagle carried off the turban of Shaibath the Kaffir. Then Rabiyath cut off his head. A magic square in his turban had protected him. It was the Angel Gabriel who, in the form of an eagle, carried off his turban. The Kaffir army then fled in great fear. The king rallied his men and a dreadful battle ensued. For five days and nights it lasted. The Arabs were nearly overcome, when the prophet at the door of his tent prayed to God :- " Oh God, I never began anything without your command. It is said in the Koran that God helps those who carry out His commands. Give courage and strength to my soldiers. We cannot fight the Kaffirs who are coming like dark clouds." God granted the strength of thousand lions to Ali, and to all the others the strength of ... to 40 lions. for seven days the battle lasted, and still the Kaffirs did not give way. Then the .... minister made a sound which shook the earth and the skies, the sea and the hills. The Kaffirs became deaf and blind. The Kaffirs fled, and after them their king. The Arabs pursued and killed ... Then they returned to camp. One Arab did not return for he had gone to find the enemy's hiding place.

The prophet asked how many were killed. His minister replied:- "Three thousand" "Such is the will of God. They will obtain paradise." He then asked :- "How many Kaffirs?" His minister said:- "God alone can say". Ordering the corpses to be buried he enquired where the Kaffir's army lay hidden. The Kaffirs had taken shelter in the fort of a friendly king. The prophet ordered the spoil to be counted, and sent all the gold to a fort to be there
watched; and he commanded his army to march against the fort Tayif. The fort was taken and the king was captured. Imam Ali offered the captive king the prophet's faith or death. His offer was scorned, and he raised his sword to strike the king, when the prophet said :- "He is a king, and must not be killed". The prophet had his chains removed and let him free to go where he pleased. This act of mercy moved the king to tears. He fell at Muhammad's feet, and embraced his religion. The prophet thereupon restored to him all his wealth and possessions.

Note: - In conclusion I acknowledge with gratitude the invaluable assistance in translation given me by Mr. T. Kannan of Calicut.

## Notes :

1. This and much of what follows is taken from the articles just mentioned.
2. Nâzrânî, i.e., a Nazarene.

3 Qorò, chap. 54.
4 It will be remembered that the Portuguese grandees who visited Vijayanagar early in the sixteenth century, coming from the west coast, spoke of this potentate as the Samuri. Modern usage, through Portuguese, makes the word Zamorin.
5 Rowlandson's Thahafat-ul-Mujahidin, p.53, quoted in Logan's Manual of the Malabar District.

6 This includes the Laccadive Islands.
7 Valeaza-arathengal = belonging to the great shrine.
8 Much more so than Hindus. Many a man has 10 and 12 out of one wife; and I know of one, having 3 wives, who is blessed with 33 children.

9 The Cheruman, it may be said, is barely 5 ft .2 in . in height (the average for the North Malabar Tiyan being almost exactly 5 ft .5 in ., while the Nair is taller), much darker in colour, his nose is broader, and is cranial capacity is much smaller: his head length is $18^{\prime} 2 \mathrm{in}$. and the width $13^{\prime} 6$. Compare this with the Aryan Nambudri, 19'2 and $14^{\prime} 6$ !

10 The marked difference between a Mâppila and a Hindu is observable in other ways than those where fanatic fervour comes in view. All the kinds of work requiring pluck, energy, and sustained effort are done by Mâppilas. Mâppilas have done the heaviest work and earned the reputation of being the best workmen, steady, tractable, and never troublesome while well treated, in the building of the big iron bridges which the Madras Railway Company have thrown over the big rivers of the Madras Presidency; and in the goldmines of South India the best miners are said to be Mâppilas. They work as Hindus never do.

11 Malapuram lies 18 miles north of Tirûr on the Madras Railway and about 31 miles east of Calicut.

12 Extracts only are given of this song. I cannot give here more than a meagre outline of it, and the special characteristics of the Arab shahîds can be only alluded to in the briefest manner.

13 The old name for Malabar.
14 An absurdity is that the Perumal is compelled to do the Hajj or pilgrimage while Muhammad was alive. Muhammad was dead 200 years before Islam was brought to Malabar or the Perumal, the last emperor, went to Arabia.

15 The next song is given in full. Here as elsewhere the translation is necessarily somewhat free. The songs were first of all put into Malayalam and then into English. Though nearly every Mâppila understands them more or less few among them are capable of rendering them in the vernacular.
16 A kol is the carpenter's measure in Malabar; it corresponds, roughly, to a yard.

17 The poet has forgotten to tell us that the suppliants went before the king with the petition prepared by Eblis.

18 Mâppila (Mopla) fanatics always bid farewell to their families before going out to die
19 Chairs are very modern in Malabar!
20 The Mâppila call their religion the "Fourth Veda."

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