

MAPPILAPATTU; AS A SOURCE TO REACH OUT TO THE LIFE OF MAPPILAS OF MALABAR

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ABSTRACT

Mappilas, the Muslim community of the south-west coast of India have a unique place in the socio-cultural and historical arena of Kerala. The literary contributions of the *Mappilas* are often called as *Mappilapattu* or mappila songs. *Mappilapattu*, have been classified into different variants in accordance with different themes. In the beginning, *Mappilapattu* were written in long papers having a low width, such papers are known as 'safeena' in Arabic. These songs usually called as *safeenasongs*. The second group of Mappila songs is *malappattukal*, which narrates the extraordinary and brave life of men. Similarly, *padappattukal* describes the background and of the ideological struggles especially the anti-colonial struggles in Malabar. *Kissapattukal* narrates the different episodes of a story especially the stories of regional importance and Islamic expansion during prophet time and its background. *kessupattukal* articulated the feelings of love or love stories. *kathupattukal* (letter songs) explains the pain of separation of the couples. *Kallyanapattugal* (marriage song), the special branch of songs especially during the occasion of marriage day celebration. These all varieties expressed the inner feelings of a particular group of society. More often than not *mappilapattu* reflected the different aspects of individual life and social behavior. Indeed these literary contributions of the *Mappilas* left out a permanent insight on the Mappila life. So this is through the study of these songs we can reach out to the life of *Mappilas* of Malabar.

KEYWORDS: *Anti-Colonial Struggle, Amalgamation. Cultural Synthesis, Psychological Weapon*

INTRODUCTION

Mappilas, the Muslim community of the south-west coast of India has been played a very crucial role in order to shape the cultural life of modern Kerala. The *Mappilas* were primarily concentrated in the northern part of present-day Kerala state evolved as a result of the pre and post-Islamic Arab contacts. The '*Mappilas*', historically called *Moplahs*, is a combination of two Dravidian words, *Maha* means *great* and *pilla* means *child*. The offspring born to Arab fathers are given this honorific title as a mark of respect¹. Mappila Muslims of Malabar are known as *Malabaris* or *Malwari* in the Middle East and in Pakistan².

Kerala, land of cultural synthesis has been constituted an inspiring example of mixing up of different cultural elements by amalgamating different faces of cultural life. Folklore in its widest sense embraces tradition, folktales, folk songs, folk arts, folk festival, folk beliefs and beliefs in predictions about fate and magic. The unique feature of Kerala folklore traditions is that it is connected with many of the existing religious beliefs³. 'Folk Islam is the living practice of Islam among ordinary people as it has evolved over centuries⁴. *Mappilapattu* has two important aspects, first one narrated a separate part

related to beliefs, rituals, and customs. The secondly though it keeps its identity, always trying to explain the elements of cultural synthesis⁵. The Mappila folklore succeeds in absorbing multiple voices from various local, regional and national aspects⁶.

MAPPILAPATTU (MAPPILA SONGS)

Mappila songs are an integral part of all Mappila arts forms and are the base of all Mappila cultural life. The presence of *Baitugakal* (Arab songs) in Kerala can be traced back to fifth century AD. It gained momentum and attracted the Indian musical world during the period of AlaudheenKhilji (1296-1316)⁷. Mappila songs were written in Arabic- Malayalam script. Arab- Malayalam script is a blend of both Arab and colloquial Malayalam languages. Arab- Malayalam script has been a long history of six hundred years in Kerala⁸. All Quran translations, '*Hadish*' (life of Prophet Muhammad), *malappattukal*, *padappattukal*, marriage songs, love songs, *wayal*(religious sermons), *life thariks* (history of great personalities), mad rasa texts etc were published in Arab- Malayalam script. The first Arab- Malayalam printing press was started by ThikkukkilKunjahammad at Thalassery. The first Mappila song published in Arab- Malayalam script was '*Kappappattu*', which was written by KunjayanMusaliar. '*Kadhorakudharam*' by Sana ullaMaqdi, which was published in 1884, was the first Mappila literal text in Malayalam. After 1950s Mappila songs and other literal works were fully written in Malayalam, which reduced the wider use of Arab- Malayalam script

Many prominent *mappilapattu* composers are flourished in Kerala like MahakaviMoinkuttyVaidyar, KunjayanMusaliar, MoithuMusaliar, ChakkeeriMoitheenkutty, PulikottilHydru, NallalamBeeran, Punnayoorkulam T Bappu, and T Ubadetc are the few. The famous female Mappila composers were PK Hameela, PuthoorAmina, KundilKunjamina, Naduthopil V Ayisha, KT Amina, TA Rabiya, B Ayishakutty, CH Kunjayisha, ThiruvalurAyisha, and JameelaBeevi and many more. So there were always some scholars who interpret the songs so that it would be easy for all to get the implications and meanings of it. A total number of Mappila literary works is estimated to be around five thousand⁹.

Indeed *mappilapattu* is not a literary property of Mappilas alone. A work in which Mappilas holding a key role cannot be considered as Mappila literature. Any work may be said to be Mappila literature when it inculcates and combines together the exact feelings of Mappila life. A Mappila work always reflects the rhythms of both Arab and Kerala life style¹⁰ in general and Mappilas in particular. The different tunes used in Mappila songs are called *isalukal*. There are around one hundred *ishals* in practice. *Thonkal*, *Kappappattu*, *Miraaj*, *Komp*, *Pukainar*, *Oppana* is some of the major *ishals*. *Kampi* and *Kazhuth* are the major rhythms in *Mappilapattu*. Those Mappila songs which end in same rhythmic sounds are called '*walkampi*'. Similarly, Mappila songs which start with same rhythmic words are called '*thalakampi*'. Hence repetition of same rhythmic words is called *kampi*. Mappila songs generally follow these rules since its importance lies in its singing styles.

Classification of Mappila Songs

Mappila songs have been classified into different variants in accordance with different themes. In the beginning, Mappila songs were written in long papers having a low width, such papers are known as '*safeena*' in Arabic. These songs were called *safeenasongs*. Another version of Mappila song is *malappattukal*, which proclaims the good and brave life of holy men. Similarly, *padappattukal* describes the background and story of the holy wars, *kissapattukal* narrates different episodes of a full stories, *kessupattukal* articulated the feelings of love or love stories, *kathupattukal* (letter songs) explains the pain of separation of the couples. *Kallyanapattugal* (marriage song), the special branch of songs especially during the occasion of marriage day celebration. These all verities expressed the inner feelings of a particular group of society. Mo

re often than not mappilappattu reflected the different aspects of individual life and social behavior. Mappila song training centers were common in Malabar areas are known by the name as 'makkanikal'.

Malappattukal

Malappattukal is the most popular variant of Mappila songs. The term 'mala' is derived from the Arabic word 'moulid' meaning madahor eulogy of the holy men. So it is also called 'MadahaBaith'. It is otherwise called 'nerchapattukal' because it is organized as a part of 'nerchas' (offerings) in the names of holy men, Sufi saints and shuhadakkal (martyrs) in order to get rid of diseases, poverty and other sufferings through the blessings of God. The terms like 'eravukal' is commonly seen in malas. 'Eravukal' means prayers which show the practice of placing these holy persons as middlemen between the God and the prayed. Malappattukal has been broadly classified into seven¹¹.

Muhyudheen Mala

Muhyudheen Mala is the oldest malappattu was written by Khasi Muhammad in 1605, the very next year Shakespeare wrote the play 'Macbeth'. *Muhyudheen mala* praises the life of the great holy man Shaiq Muhyudheen Abdul Khadar Jeeelani (1078-1166), a Sufi saint of Baghdad. A simple language might be the reason for its record-breaking popularity. *Muhyudheen Mala* includes a total of three hundred and ten lines, 'AlifManikyam' (prayer) with one hundred fifty-two lines and *munajaths*. It is organized in such a way that it consists of a total of 582 words, which includes only 202 Arab words. It has used the rhythm called *kampi*, but totally free from rhythms like *kazhuthand walimmelkampi*.

Influence of Tamil language is a noteworthy feature in different malas. In many occasions, the Arab-Malayalam language used in the *Muhyudheen Mala* changed into 'manipravala' style, mainly because of the influence of 'Muhyudheen AandavarMalai'. During the sixteenth century, the 'Pulavar' community in Tamil Nadu was converted into Islam through 'Islamic Bhakthi Movement'. *Muhyudheen Mala* had been received a place equivalent that of Adhyatma Ramayana among Hindus¹². *Muhyudheen Mala* paved the way for the origin of a series of Malas in the Muslim community. *Muhyudheen Mala* is written in Arab eshal called 'khafeef'. Few verses reflecting the extraordinary powers of the central figure, verses like.

'kasamerunravilnadannangupokumbol

Kai viral chuttackikattinadannovar'

(Meaning: people believed in the miracle making powers of the Shaiks. The poem describes him as one who can use his finger as light during darkness).

Mappila society has been accepted its meanings in a real sense as blessings. In addition to the peripheral meaning, it has an inner meaning that Shaiq Muhyudheen tried to protect the community by wiping out the existing ignorance. The popularity of *Muhyudheen Mala* had resulted into the origin of two other malas like 'PuthiyaMuhyudheenMalas' was written by Nalakat Kunji Moyideen Kutty of Ponnani in the same eshal 'khafeef'. The second one was written by M.P Fakhreer Muhammad of Edava in 1910¹³.

Badar Mala

Badar Mala is next to *Muhyudheen Mala* written by Mampattil Kunjirayan. It praises the bravery and sacrifices of shuhadakkals (martyrs) who sacrificed their lives during the time of Badar. These great men are known as Badrengal. Bad

arMala explains that if any one prays or offers *nercha* in the name of these Badrengal surely the prayers will be accepted by the God. The practice of placing middlemen between the almighty and the prayed is called ‘*munajath*’ or ‘*eravuthehtham*’. During 1921 rebellion, at Pokottur, Muslim women had sung this BadarBaiths to encourage a man who was fighting against the British troops.

Nafeesath Mala

Nafeesath Mala is very popular among women. Nafeesath Mala deals with NafeesathulMisriya, she was the granddaughter of Fathima, the daughter of Prophet Muhammad. Nafeesath Mala is written by NalakathKunjimoideen. It is a common belief among Kerala Muslim women that delivery would be eased if one sings the Nafeesath Mala. It is organized both *kampi* and *valkampi*. In addition to the song, Nafeesath Mala includes two ‘munajaths’ and one Dua (prayer).

Rifai Mala

Rifa e Mala praises the life of AhmadulKabeerRifa e, the nephew of ShaiqMuhiyudheen Abdul KhadarJeelani, was written in the year 1812. The eshal and language of Rifa e Mala are more or less similar to Muhiyudheen Mala. Rifa e Mala includes the song, one munajath and one dua. During *kuthuratheeb*s (a devotional performance of Malabar Muslims) in Kerala are conducted in the name of the ShaiqRifa e. Singing Rifa e Mala and maintaining certain animals in the name of ShaiqRifa e is practiced even today in order to avoid the evil presence of snakes in Muslim houses.

Manjakkulam Mala

Manjakkulam Mala is written in the name of the so-called ManjakkulamOuliyaHusainarThangal, who lived at Manjakkulam near Palakkdu district of Kerala during the 18th century. The author of Manjakkulam Mala is unknown. HusainarThngal fought against the non-believers during the invasion of Tippu Sultan and became a martyr.

Mahamood Mala, Siddique Mala, and Hamzath Mala:

Mahamood Mala praises the life, teachings, and activities of Prophet Muhammad. The mala explain the birth, race, and life of the Prophet. It was written in the year 1872.

Siddique Mala praises the great rein of KhaleefaAboobackerSiddique. Siddique Mala is written by ManjaPiraAkat hu Abdul Azeez. The exact year of Siddique Mala is unknown.

Hamzath Mala praises the life history of HasrathHamza, the nephew of Prophet Muhammad’s father. Hamzath Mala is written by KodampiyakathKunjiSeethiKoyaThangal of Ponnani in 1879. The author wrote ‘Cheriyahamzath Mala’ and later ‘Valiyahamzath Mala’.

Kottuppalli Mala

Kottappalli Mala or ManaathParampilKunjumarakkarsShaheed praises the bravery and heroic death of ManaathParampilKunjumarakkars of Ponnani. He had fought against the atrocities of Portuguese against the Kerala Muslims. He was killed by the Portuguese when he saved a Christian nun. The incident took place on the very day of his marriage. The Portuguese cut the body into seven pieces and throw away to Veliyankodu, Manath, Thanur, Calicut, Wadakara, Beppur and Vypin. This is the theme of the mala. *Maqbaras* (tombs) were set up at all these places in the name of the martyr. ManaathParampilKunjumarakkarsShaheed is organized in such a way that it injects the spirit of sacrifices and the anti-colonial feeling among the readers. Later KT Muhammad wrote another mala in the name ‘KunjumarakkarsNerchappattu’.

ShaiqNoorudheen Mala, Abdu RahmanubnuOufKhissappattu and Mampuram Mala

ShaiqNoorudheen Mala praises the life of ShaiqNoorudheen, written in the same model as that of Muhiyudheen Mala.

Abdu RahmanubnuOufKhissappattu praises Abdu RahmanubnuOuf, a *sahabi* (companion of the Prophet). The mala is the one among the ancient songs ever written.

Mampuram Mala praises the great life of SayyidAlaviThangal, whose *maqbara* (tomb) is situated in the banks of Kadalundi River at Mampuram in Tirurangadi, Malappuram. It is written in the same eshal used in Nafeesath Mala.

PADAPPATTUKAL

Mappila songs describe the fame and glory of holy wars (*pada*) and about the men participated in it are called *Padappattukal*. It is classified into two- *padappattukal* based on wars and uprisings held within Kerala is the first category and *padappattukal* based on wars and uprising held outside Kerala.

*Padappattu Based on Events held in Kerala

MalappuramPadappattu

MalappuramPadappattu or Mathinithi Mala is written by MahakaviMoinkuttyVaidyar in the year 1879. MalappuramPadappattu assumes a unique place in this category. A class conflict between landlords and the workers on the matter of tax at the place called Poolakkamannu in Malappuram in 1720 is the main theme of it. During the conflict Mappila colony and mosque were brought under fire. Forty-four Mappilas lost life and the rest of the Mappilas including women and children were escaped from the colony due to fear of attack from the Nayars even without burying the dead. Later the brave warrior Jamal Mooppan of Valluwanadu and his friends performed the burial at Poolakkamannu. At present, the *Poolakkamannukhabarasthan* is a pilgrimage center, where the famous *Malappuramnercha* is conducted annually. Paranampi reconstructed the mosque and the problem was reconciled. *MalappuramPadappattu* includes sixty-eight eshals and four vampukal (kavitha in Malayalam)

Old CherorPadappattu and CherorChinth

Old CherorPadappattu was written by MammadKutty and Muhiyudheen of Cheror in Tiroor in 1842. MampuramSayyidAlaviThangal circulated a pamphlet called '*AssayfulBathar*' (strong sword) in which Thangal wanted the Muslims not to obey the wrong rules and orders of the landlords and kill those who would evict the tenants from the cultivable land. As a reaction, the British soldiers declared war against Thangal. Both parties met at Cheror in 1840. In the war, the British had lost a large number of soldiers. This is the main theme of it. *CherorChinth* was written by Quayyath of Parappanangadi. *CherorChinth* is also based on the Cheror conflict.

*Padappattu Based on Events Held Outside Kerala

BadarPadappattu and *UhduPadappattu*

BadarPadappattu praises the great *shuhadakkal* who martyred during the time of Badar led by the Prophet Mohammad held at the place of Badar in 624. Prophet Muhammad and 313 others killed thousands of the enemy and gained the victory. MoyinkuttyVaidyar, ChakkeeryMoitheenKutty and MA Moulavi wrote *BadarPadappattu* in 1876, 1907 and 1960, respectively. But the *BadarPadappattu* written by MahakaviMoyinkuttyVaidyar assumes much importance.

UhduPadappattu was written by MahakaviMoyinkuttyVaidyar in 1879. *UhduPadappattu* describes the Uhdu war at Uhdu in Madeena in 625 AD, in which seventy Muslims were killed and the Muslim troupes were defeated. In the war, HasrathHamza, the brother of Prophet's father was treacherously defeated and maltreated by the enemy, especially by a lady named *Hind*.

ChakkeeriBadarandFuthHushaam

ChakkeeriBadar or 'GaswathBadarul Kubra' stands next to the BadarPadappattu. *ChakkeeriBadar* was written by ChakkeeriMoitheenKuttyin in a very simple Arab-Malayalam word. *ChakkeeriMoitheenKutty* is known as the father of simplicity in Mappila songs. *ChakkeeriBadar* includes those areas of the Badar war which MahakaviMoinkuttyVaidyar didn't mention.

FuthHushaam is the masterpiece of ChettuvaiPareekutty. It describes the famous sham war. Sham was the old name of Syria.

HunainPadappattu and SakhumPadappattu

HunainPadappattu was written by MaliyekkalKunjahamad of Ponnani in 1875. *HunainPadappattu* describes the war of HunynDaathulHimaar with Prophet's group.

SakhumPadappattu is an ancient padappattu and hence *SakhumPadappattu* is also called '*thanthasakhum*'. *SakhumPadappattu* is written by Ummer et al. 'Sakhumpadaiporu', an Arab-Tamil song was popular among Tamils two hundred years before the *SakhumPadappattu* had written.

Karbala YudhaKavyam and MakkamFathah:

Karbala YudhaKavyam was written in two volumes by Parappil Muhammad Musaliar in 1883. The first volume of *Karbala YudhaKavyam* describes the incident of conditional transfer of power by Imam Hassan to Muawi. Later Muawi's son poisoned and killed Imam Hassan. The second volume is not yet explored.

MakkamFathah was written by MachingalathMoideenMulla in 1879. A detailed description of the difficulties faced by the Prophet during the *Hijra* time.

Khanthaq- ThabooqPadappattukal

Khanthaq- ThabooqPadappattukal describes the attack by *Khurayshee* (Tribal group in Arabia) troop against the Prophet in Madeena in 627 AD. *Khanthaq- ThabooqPadappattukal* was written by Noorudheen of Ponnani during 1820-1830.

Greece Padappattu

Greece Padappattu describes the Greece war during the period of the Turkey Caliph Abdul Hameed Khan. *Greece Padappattu* was written by Koilandi Ahmad in 1879. Greece was defeated by Turkey.

QUISSAPATTUKAL

Mappila songs describes the holy episodes in history and stories are called *Quissapattukal*. It is of two types; Quissapattukal based on the life history of Prophets and the second is Quissapattukal based on other holy histories or personalities.

KESSUPATTUKAL

Kessupattukal or love songs are an important variant of Mappila songs. Kessupattukal beautifully describes the feelings of bridegrooms. The feeling became acute when the bridegroom temporarily separated owing to migration in search of jobs. This separation gave birth to *Kathusongs* (letter songs). Kathupattukal gained momentum in the hands of the famous poet MoinkuttyVaidyar.

'BadarulMuneer-Husunul Jamal

MahakaviMoinkuttyVaidyar is considered to be the father of Kessupattukal. The famous Mappilapattu 'BadarulMuneer-Husunul Jamal' was written by the poet in 1872, when the poet was only 20 years of age. The song expresses the feelings of two lovers; Husunul Jamal, the Princess of the Kingdom Hind and BadarulMuneer, the son of the prime minister of Hind. It is for the first time in Malabar, a poet used such words in Mappilapattu. Hence the orthodox leaders summoned and warned these types of writings.

KALYANAPPATTUKAL

Kalyanappattukal or marriage songs assume a vital role in Malabar areas. Its importance can be traced back to the period of Prophet Muhammad and Arab tradition. On the day of marriage celebration both the parties engaged in different singing competitions. *Vazineelam, salamKavi, munajath, kallyanapattu, apapattu*etc are the different aspects of *Vattapattu*, special performing art within the Mappila communities during the marriage function.

*Mappilapattu*Indeed, a source of aspiration and amalgamation has been explained the immense feelings of Mappila communities especially related to their day to day life. Many historians have been agreed to the presence of literary and artistic traditions in the public sphere as well as in the socialization process of the community. They have used these songs very often as psychological weapons to fight against imperial power and strategized their movements in accordance with its rhythm. so in order to reach out the very existence of the Mappila community, Mappila songs are the desirable and inevitable sources.

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