

The background of the cover is a tropical beach scene. In the foreground, there are several palm trees with their fronds reaching towards the top of the frame. The middle ground shows a calm blue sea with three large, multi-masted sailing ships (galleons) with white sails. The sky is a clear, pale blue. The overall tone is peaceful and historical.

Cultural Heritage of
KNANAYA SYRIAN CHRISTIANS

Rev. Fr. JOSEPH KULATHRAMANNIL

ܟܬܒܐ ܒܝܪܝܫܐ

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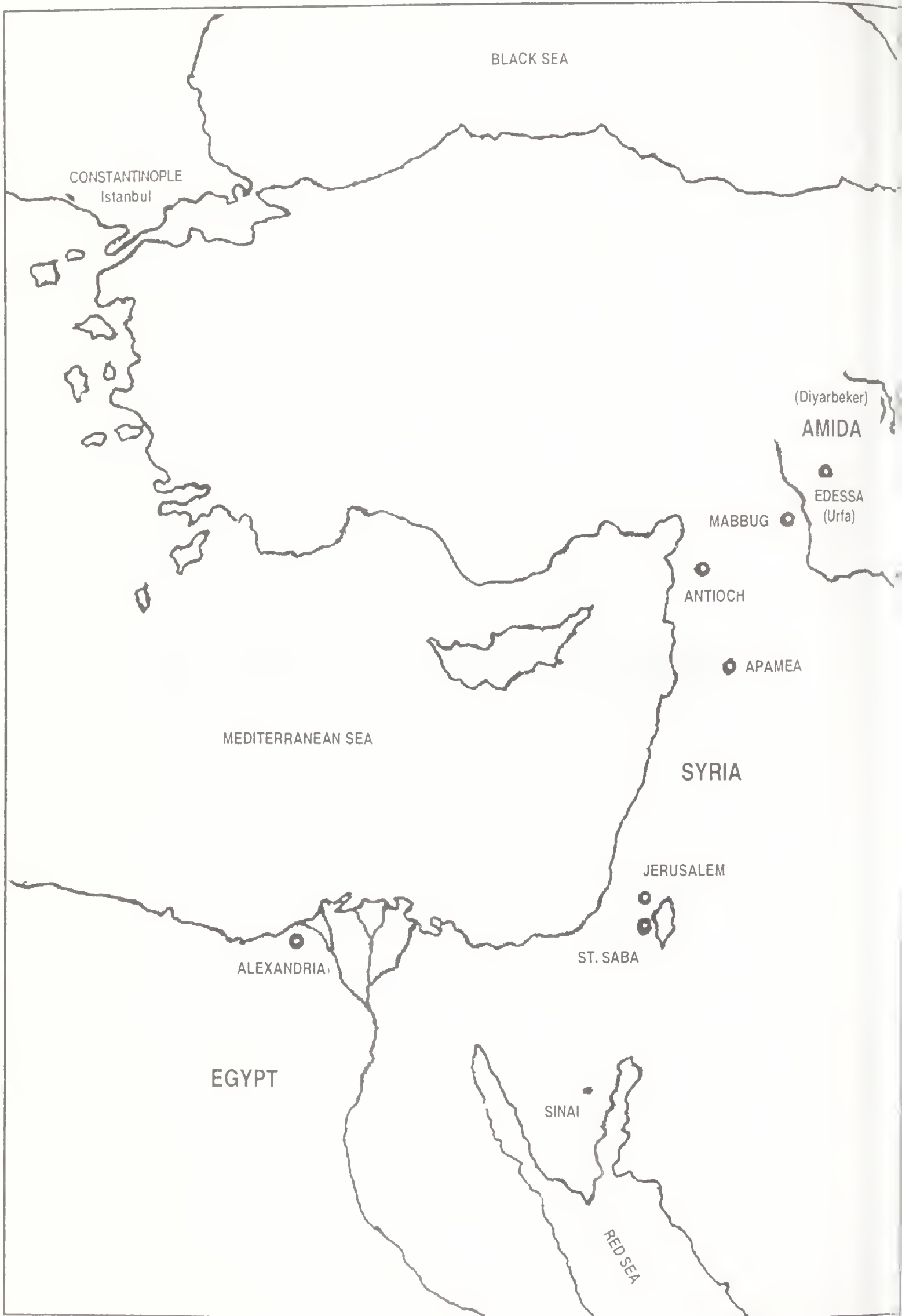
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Cultural Heritage of
KNANAYA SYRIAN CHRISTIANS



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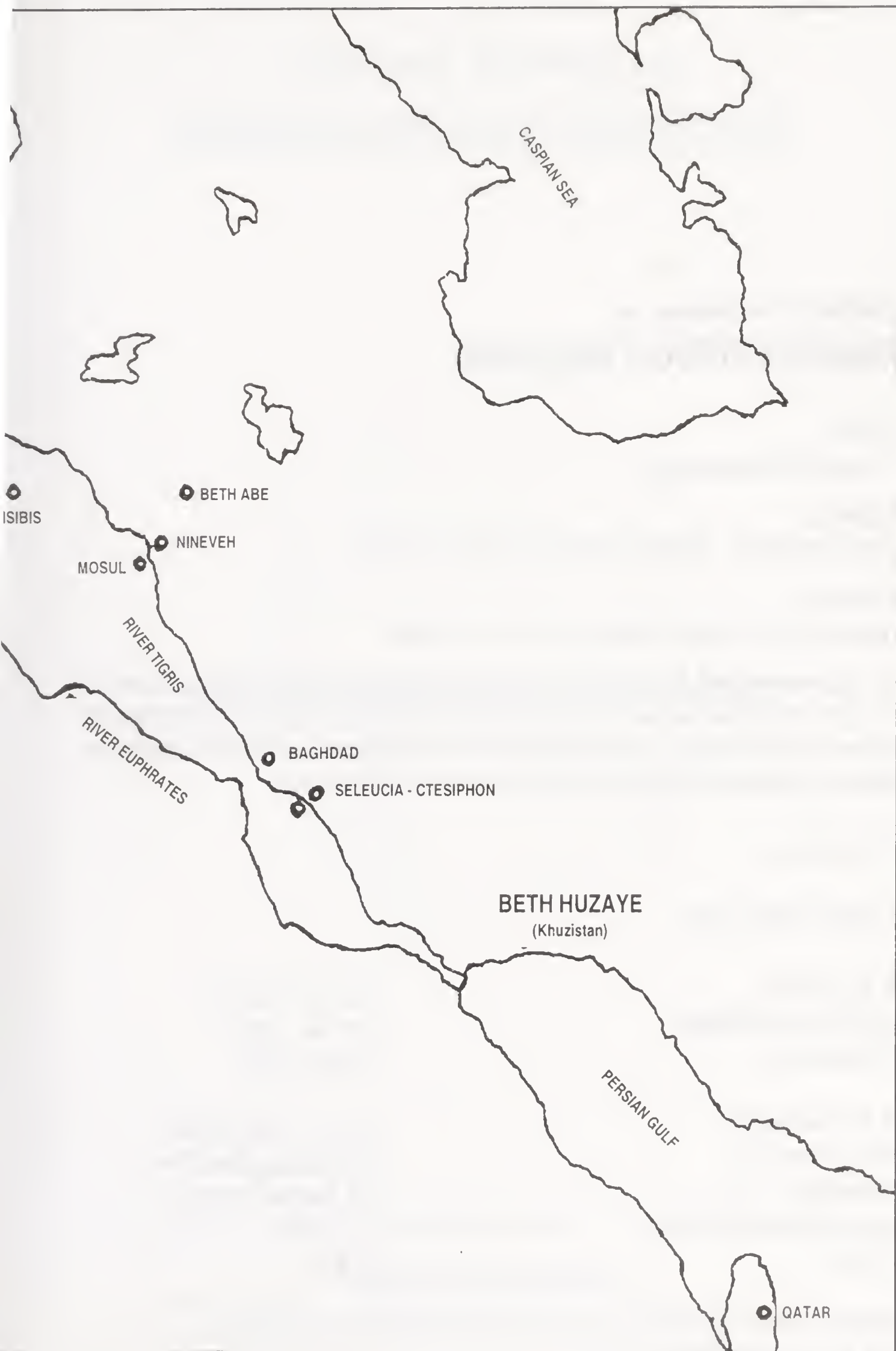
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Cultural Heritage of
KNANAYA SYRIAN CHRISTIANS

Author

Fr. Joseph Kulathramannil

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Cultural Heritage of
KNANAYA SYRIAN CHRISTIANS

Rev. Fr. JOSEPH KULATHRAMANNIL

Published By:

**Youth Association
St. Mary's Knanaya Church, Sharjah**

DEDICATION



Dedicated to the blessed memory of my beloved father the late Sri. Uthuppan Abraham, Kulathramannil who joined the glory of our Lord on - 19-07-99.

The Malankara Syrian Knanaya Diocese

MOR CLEMIS ABRAHAM
METROPOLITAN



Mor Ephraim Seminary
Chingavanam - 686 531
Kottayam, Kerala
Phone: (0481) 432544
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50th Year of the Metropolitan's Episcopal Consecration

No. 79/2000

08-11-2000



Blessings to our spiritual son Rev. Fr. Rajan Kulamada, Vicar of St. Mary's Knanaya Church Sharjah and the member of Knanaya Youth Association.

We are extremely happy to know that you are publishing a book on the "CULTURAL HERITAGE" of the Knanaya Community. It is indeed a boon to our spiritual children staying outside Kerala who are unable to understand Malayalam. We admonish all our spiritual children living abroad to propagate and promote this book for the better future of our coming generations.

We congratulate the author Rev. Fr. Joseph Kulathramannil and the members of Knanaya Youth Association who laboured to publish this book.

May God bless you all.

A handwritten signature in Arabic script, appearing to read 'Mor Clemis Abraham Metropolitan'.

CLEMIS METROPOLITAN



ܡܨܝܚܝܢܝܘܢ ܩܝܡܘܘܢܝܘܢܝܢ ܕܡܢܐܘܪܝܢܝܘܢܝܢ ܕܩܝܡܘܢܝܘܢܝܢ ܕܡܢܐܘܪܝܢܝܘܢܝܢ

ARCHDIOCESE OF THE SYRIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH FOR THE EASTERN UNITED STATES
PATRIARCHAL VICARATE



Father K.O. Joseph
Kulathramannil
Ranny P.O.
Pathanamthitta (Dist.)
Kerala, India

April 12, 2001

Dear Father Joseph:

May the peace and grace of our Lord be with you.

Thank you for your letter informing me of your new book "Cultural Heritage of the Knanaya Syrian Christians" in English. I wish to congratulate you and commend you for publishing this interesting and informative book about the cultural heritage of the Knanaya Syrian Christians. Not only will your book be in great demand and of great interest to the non-residents who do not speak the local language, but worldwide as well. I admire your enthusiasm for writing books on the Syrian Christians which will give the reader an insight into what the Syrian Christians are all about.

In closing, we convey to you our fatherly regards and prayerful wishes, extending to you paternal benediction.

Sincerely in Christ,

Mor Cyril Aphrem Karim

Mor Cyril Aphrem Karim
Archbishop

Encl:

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HIS HOLINESS IGNATIUS ZAKKA I
Patriarch of Universal Syrian Orthodox Church

PREFACE

In former centuries literacy was limited to a privileged few. So, many of the old communities have no authentic written histories. Their history was handed over to posterity through legends and folk lore. Naturally, folk lores undergo variations in the course of time.

The history of the christians in Kerala is no exception. There is a strong tradition in India that St. Thomas, the Apostle of Christ came to Kerala, preached the Gospel, baptised many people and established places of worship for them in coastal areas and the High Ranges. The tradition continues saying that he went over to the present Tamil Nadu and preached the Gospel, and that he was martyred at Mylapore and buried there. The Indian Christians, even today go on pilgrimage to the tomb at St. Thomas Hill, Chinna Malai, Chennai. But many Historians of the present day question the authenticity of the tradition.

There is another tradition about a "Syrian colonisation". According to this tradition, after the martyrdom of St. Thomas, the Apostle, the St. Thomas christians had no proper priests or efficient leaders for a long period. A Hindu sage, named Manikya Vachagar reconverted a good many of them. The others, who were distinguished by wooden crosses hung with threads, from their necks, were spiritually and socially in a dire plight. In the fourth century of the christian Era, a rich Syrian merchant, who had trade links with Kerala came to know of these so-called christians. He took it as a duty to uplift these fellow christians. He promised to help them. With the sanction of Cheraman Perumal, the then ruler of Kerala he brought in a group of about 400

people consisting of a bishop, two priests, a few deacons and 72 families. Cheraman Perumal gave them enough land to build houses and church in the village named Mahodar Patanam. The local christians accepted the colonisers as their benefactors, accepted their bishop, Mar Joseph of Urha as their bishop and also accepted their worship and rites. Hence the Christians of Kerala came to be known as Syrian Christians.

No historian can question this tradition since there is a community called Knanites, claiming to be the posterity of the colonisers. They zealously keep their racial purity and special customs; and call themselves the Knanites in honour of Knai Thommen, who led them to this country.

Some present day historians try to identify this Syrian colonisation with a group of foreigners who came to this land under Saphor and Phroth. But this argument cannot stand for the following reasons.

1. The Syrian colonisation was in the fourth century under Knai Thommen whereas the other under Saphor and Phroth, was in the 9th century.

2. Knai Thommen landed at Kodungallore, otherwise called Cranganore or Musiris whereas Saphor and followers landed at Kollam or Quilon in the south.

3. The former people are still keeping their identity and their settlements were around Cochin. There are no Knanaya settlements in or around Quilon. The latter settlers very soon entered into marriage with the local people and thus lost their identify.

As hinted earlier, the local christians accepted the doctrines and rites of the Knanites and came to be known as one church, the Syrian Christian church, but the Knanites kept their identity. In later centuries it became imperative that the Knanites, whose settlements extended south up to Kallissery near Chengannur, become a well knit community. Attempts were made in this direction and the Knanaya Diocese was sanctioned, not on geographical basis like the other dioceses, but on historical basis.

In this circumstance, exclusive history of the Knanaya community became a necessity. Many eminent persons contributed their mite in writing and publishing history books of the community. The earliest books of this kind were published in 1940s one by Joseph Chazhikaden, an efficient MLA of the State for several sessions, and another by T.Abraham Vazhayil. In the 1950's another concise history was published by P.I.Uthuppan, Puratheparambil, Ranni. In 1996 I wrote and published 'The History of the Knanaya Church.'

Now the history of the Knanaya Community is being written by a History professor, Rev. Fr.K.O. Joseph, Kulathramannil. He gave a copy of the work to me with a request to give corrections and suggestions for improvement. I diligently went through the work, but had no occasion to spend even a drop of ink. I gladly recommend this book for every Knanite.

A word about the author:- generally an appointment in a permanent vacancy in a college marks the end of studies of a post graduate. But the History professor Rev. Fr. K.O. Joseph is continuing his studies and researches, with special stress to church History. May I recall an incident in his life. In a meeting of the clergy of his diocese someone proposed that the long list of church fathers named with the fifth Thubden of the Holy Qurbana be deleted since we know very little about them. But Rev. Fr. Joseph could not accept it. He opined that our fore-fathers had included these names because of their valuable contributions to the church and that instead of deleting their names we should study about their contributions. But who is to do it? He took the responsibility on himself. His first published work in church History is short biographies and contributions of the Syrian Church fathers from Ignatius Noorono to Gregoriose Bar Ebraya. His second work in this series is "The Luminaries of the Syrian Church", short biographies and contributions of the luminaries in the horizon of the church in India and abroad.

The special characteristics of these two books are the knowledge the reader gets about the history of their times, an understanding of

the doctrines the fathers adhered to, an insight into the life of the fathers and an inspiration to follow Christ and serve the church in their foot marks.

In his latest book "The History of the Knanaya Community" he has done one thing his predecessors have omitted- a chapter on the leaders who got the insight to make Knanites a well-knit society and brought it to fruition.

I expect more valuable works from his pen. I pray God to give "my beloved Raju" (Professor Rev. Fr. K.O. Joseph) healthy and active long life and a burning inspiration to adorn his mother, The Syrian Church, with several precious gems.

P. M. Mathews Corepiscopa
Pulickavil

Eraviperoor

27th March 2001



PUBLISHER'S NOTE

It is with pleasure and gratitude we present this book on the Heritage and History of the Knanaya Syrian Christians in India written by Rev. Prof. K.O. Joseph Kulathramannil, St. Thomas College Ranni. His dissertation for the M.Phil Degree attracted my attention and it was my suggestion to prepare this volume for the benefit of our children and youth living outside Kerala. We hope that our younger generation will cordially welcome this and use this book to enrich their spiritual and religious life. A firm conviction about the heritage and history will strengthen the faith and commitment to work for the progress of the church and the community.

We are proud that the Knanaya Youth Association here was able to finance this project for the benefit of our community as a whole. We thank our brothers and sisters for their whole hearted support.

Our sincere thanks and indebtedness to his eminence Abraham Mor Clemis Chief Metropolitan for giving us his blessings and benediction.

We do appreciate the laudable work of the Rev. Fr. K.O. Joseph. We dedicate this book for the glory of God.

St. Mary's Knanaya Church, Sharjah

Rev. Fr. Rajan Kulamada (President)

Money Abraham, Thykoottathil (Secretary)



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PRO-VICE-CHANCELLOR

Ref No

Date 18-10-2000

FOREWORD

The Knanaya Syrian Christians of Kerala have a long chequered history. The history of the community dates back to 345 A.D. when a Syrian merchant named Thomas of Kana landed on the shores of Kerala accompanied by seventy two families consisting of about four hundred people with a bishop, priests and deacons. These immigrants spread along the Coast of Kerala and prospered under royal patronage. The community preserved its ethnic purity and identity over years. During the Portuguese reign of Kerala a group of Knanaya Syrian Christians accepted the overlordship of the Pope and left the fold. The ancient community in Kerala was thus divided into Knanaya Jacobite and the Knanaya Catholic Communities.

Rev. Fr. K.O. Joseph focussed his study on the socioeconomic and cultural contributions of the Knanaya Jacobite Community of Kerala. As a Parish priest of the community he laboured hard to collect materials from different sources. The non-availability of the main original sources forced him to depend on secondary sources for the completion of the work.

The chief merit of the book is that it unravels an ancient area of the religious history. It is a useful addition to the historical literature neglected by scholars in the past. Students and Researchers interested in religious history may find the work a useful guide for further studies.

Dr. M.O. KOSHY

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The Knanaya Syrian Community of Kerala has imprinted an indelible mark in the history of Kerala with its distinct peculiarities and unique features. The history of this community goes back to A.D.345 with the arrival of a community under Thomas of Kana. Although they came as a trading community, they soon became part and parcel of Kerala Society. They took care to preserve their own ethnic purity and identity which are being preserved even today. As this community was noted for its faithfulness, its members were invited by the local rulers of Kerala for the service of their kingdoms. The Knanaya community identified with the Syrian Christians of Kerala. As already stated the Knanaya community has made its impact in the socio-economic and cultural arena of the Kerala society.

Many a change has occurred in the presentation of historical themes in the light of modern historical evaluation. Importance should be given to changes at the grass-root level, not to superficial movements. In the field of church history also, what needs to be looked at and analysed are the nature of a society, spiritual and temporal achievements, reform and progressive activities and movements at the societal level. Unfortunately, what is often studied are the rulers, their power structures and the way authority and power are exercised. The prophetic mission of responding to and resisting oppression is the issue at stake. Once again, people seem to be caught up with insignificant concerns such as luxurious life style, power wielding, oratorical skills and other external manifestations of power and glory. When a swimmer

swims against the waves and goes up and down, one should not mistake it as the calibre of the swimmer. Some people do come and rise up in the tides of society. It is a society that creates leaders. We should study about the society that produced such leaders and the study must focus on the problems, sufferings and predicaments of them. In the completion of a church building, society plays a vital role. Small fellowships, congregations, dioceses, churches – all of them have a history of hardship, suffering and service of a people behind it. History ought to concentrate on the society and its people.

I must acknowledge the sincere cooperation of V. Rev. P.M. Mathew Corepiscopa Pulickavil for his thorough reading of this book and rendering comments and notes and for inspiring me for this work. He is always my guide and guardian. My respected teacher Prof. P. K. Skariah, Kunnathil Villa, Kottayam read the whole book and corrected the language. He spent a lot of his precious time and energy for this work. Prof. Mary Kurian, my dear colleague helped me with material and suggestions for the chapter on 'Formation of Knanaya Syrian Christians'. Rev. Dr. Deacon George Mathew, my young friend and the Executive Secretary of the National Council of Churches in India nourished me with his head and pen in the preparation of the section on 'Apostolic Faith'. My hearty thanks and gratitude to all of them.

My sincere thanks to my best beloved brother, Rev. Fr. Rajan Kulamada and the members of the Youth Association, St. Mary's Knanaya Church, Sharjah for sponsoring this book. I must express my indebtedness to Dr. C.C. Thomas, Dept. of English, S.B. College, Changanassery, and V. Rev. Dr. Kuriakose Corepiscopa Moolayil, Publication Officer, Syrian Orthodox Bible Society of India who helped me with the proof reading of the book in all possible ways. I am grateful to my teacher and sole supporter in all my academic works, Prof. Dr. M.O. Koshy, pro-Vice Chancellor, Kannur University who wrote a forward to this book and gave me all support. I also extend

my gratitude to Chev. Jacob Stephen who obliged me with personal interview regarding several issues that are dealt with in my book.

H.E. Abraham Mor Clemis Valiya Metropolitan, of the Knanaya Community blessed me and my work by issuing a Kalpana for this book. My humble thanks are due to him always.

H.E. Mor Cyril Aphrem Karim, Archbishop of the Syrian Orthodox Church for the Eastern United States inspired me greatly in all my efforts during my stay in Ireland. I wish to express my sincere gratitude for his Grace's paternal benediction.

I pray God to bless me and this work. I dedicate this book to the fond memory of my dear father, the late Uthuppan Abraham Kulathramannil who left for his heavenly abode on 19 July 1999.

In the service of our Lord

Fr. K.O. Joseph

Kulathramannil

THE PRELUDE

The Knanaya Syrian Christians in Kerala existed as a separate community from the time of their arrival (A.D.345). This immigrant community is known as 'southerners' or knanites everywhere in the world. It is believed that by the middle of the 4th century A.D. they reached Kerala under the leadership of Bishop Joseph of Urha with a few priests and seventy two families belonging to seven tribes and settled down in Malankara, having secured certain rights and privileges from the local rulers. Gradually they associated themselves with the local people in sharing the faith and became a part of the society in social, cultural and political life. They got the name 'Knanites' because they came with Thomas of Kana from Edessa. Thomas of Kana who had trade connections with the people of Malabar coast was the leader of the party that immigrated to Kerala. No one challenges the truth of this historical tradition because they are the living heritage and remnants of this immigration.

From the time of their immigration the Knanites live as a separate community with their own traditions, culture and observances which they preserve even today without any break, like the Jews. They very carefully maintain the heritage and tradition. The immigrants do not enter into marriage with the local people. When they started from 'Uraha' they were advised by their elders not to have inter-marriage with the locals which would spoil the sanctity of the race and attract them to the local Gods. The cause of Solomon's fall was his connection with women of other tribes whom he married. Those women worshipped their own gods. It is described in I Kings 11:1-8. The

advice continues to carefully observe this tradition so that the community does not scatter as a result of inter-marriages. The Knanaya community observes that advice and even to day they do not have such marriage connections. There are some other communities and tribes also in Kerala which do not have inter-communal marriages. In genesis 24 we read how Abraham the tribal patriarch, asks his elder servant (Eli-Ezer) not to take a girl from canaanites (gentile) as wife for his son, but to go and find a girl from his own community and from his own land. The elder son of Isaac married a woman from the local canaanites people, about which Isaac the father and Rebecca his mother were very unhappy and sent the younger son Jacob to the house of Laban from where he married Rahel and Leah (Genesis 28:1-3). This example is followed by Knanites, the descendants of Israel, even to day. Ezra the prophet reprimands those who married from outside in chapter 10:1 saying "you have done wrong by getting married from gentiles." So you have to repent and request forgiveness from God and get seperated from them". Knanites who accepted Christianity from Jews maintain this tradition carefully even today. The Knanites are a lot who have accepted the cultural change of the various centuries without breaking the tradition passed on to them by their forefathers. They hold fast to the fundamentals and at the same time imbibe the changes that happened from time to time. The traditions of the knanites are mainly connected with marriage. In the course of several centuries, changes have naturally taken place.

Observances in connection with Marriages

Betrothal rite is a unique practice of the knanites and is considered the first step of a marriage ceremony. The marriage is fixed in the Church in the presence of a priest by the relatives mostly fathers of both the bride and bridegroom by offering hands to each other. The family members of the bridegroom and bride are getting closer to each other by this hand offering of the fathers. This is a Jewish tradition. Collective responsibility, mutual respect, family unity and respect to elders are expected to be fostered by this act. A portion of the father's

wealth is given to the daughter at the time of betrothal. A lighted lamp is placed on the floor and prayers are offered before the money is given in the presence of invited relatives who are supposed to be witnesses of the function. The lighted lamp is the symbol of divine presence and the presence of the audience give solemnity to the whole procedure. Eli-ezar (steward) who went to fix the marriage of Isaac, ate food only after taking the decisions. In the same way betrothal feast takes place only after taking the main decisions.

There are specialities in the Knanite way of serving food at feasts. The most important dish is *pachor* (പാച്ചോർ) which is rice cooked in milk and jaggery. That is used for the 'Nullikkoda' (നുള്ളിക്കൊട) also. After serving rice on plantain leaves, the various curry items are served one by one. The first item is 'erissery' followed by ghee. Then meat curry is poured followed by roasted meat. Fish is served after vegetable curry after which *pulissery* (leavened curd) (പുളിശേരി) is given. The next item is *thoran* (തോരൻ) and loose curd. The Syrian Christian dessert item is a mix of plantain fruits, sugar and curd. This is a very unique sweet item in the Syrian Christian tradition.

In the homes of the bridegroom and bride there are two ceremonial acts associated with marriage, *Mylanchyideel* (മൈലഞ്ചിയിടീൽ) for the bride and '*chanthamcharth*' (ചന്തംച്ചാർത്ത്) for the bridegroom. The bridegroom's face is well shaved and he is to sit on a raised piece of wood (korandi), covered with white cloths. Then the elders of the bridegroom's family come forward and perform the Nullikkoda. Now even children do it and dilute the sanctity of the function. Mylanchyideel is to improve the bride's beauty, but it also symbolises the sins of the early fathers who when they became naked after sin, plucked leaves to cover their nakedness. It signifies also how Eve in the garden of Eden plucked the forbidden fruit with her hands walking towards the tree of life, ate the fruit and covered herself with sin and how the sin got forgiven. At the time of mylanchyideel traditional songs are sung commemorating the arrival of the knanites at Cranganur and their traditions.

There is also a custom of the goldsmith coming on the day before marriage with *Minnu* (മിന്നു). The goldsmith brings a plate in which there is 1¼ measure of rice and a betel leaf on which the 'minnu' is placed. The bridegroom's sister receives it from the goldsmith who is given special reward for it.

There are some specialities for the 'Minnu' of the Knanites. On a very small flat piece of gold 21 globular small pieces are arranged in the form of a cross. The globular pieces signify not only tribal importance but also the seven sacraments and Trinity multiplied. Seven long pieces of thread taken from the *Mantracody* (bridal costume) (മന്ത്രകോടി) also signify the same idea. Seven has a special importance in the Old Testament. Covering the face with head dress was a Jewish practice (Genesis 24.65) Mantrakody is used because of that practice.

The bride's mother and maternal uncle and grandmother hug the married couple and bless them. The bridegroom's people give *kacha* (കച്ച) (20 yards of long cloth) to the bride's people. When Abraham sent his servant to find a bride for his son Isaac from his own people, he placed his hands below the thigh and took pledge. When Thomas of Kana and friends were sent from Edessa to Malankara they hugged each other with love. '*Nadavili*' and '*Naluvakurava*' (നടവിളിയും നാലുനരക്കുരവയും) proclaim royal greatness. Members of the 'Panan' community used to come to Christian houses on marriage occasions and sing and they were given rewards for it. These are included in the seventy two privileges given to Knanites.

The marriage songs of the Knanites are not only greetings of marriage, but they contain the essence of many of the events described in The 'Old Testament'. On the day previous to the marriage at the Chanthamcharth and after the marriage, the married couple are asked to sit on Manarkolam and women on both sides stand in two groups singing marriage songs. Knanites have their own special food items for different occasions, like *churuttu* (ചുരുട്ട്), *Achappam* (അച്ചപ്പം), *Kuzhalappam* (കുഴലപ്പം), *Aoulosunda* (അവുലോസുണ്ട) etc. For passover they have a special *Indriappam* (ഇന്ദ്രിയപ്പം).

Ancient songs are valuable cultural property of the Knanites. Their very ancient history, customs, observances and religious traditions are described in these songs. It is not known who wrote these. The first printed book is the one by P.C. Lukas published in 1910 with the name '*Suriyanichristianikalude Purathanapattukal*'.

The ancient songs are of two kinds - male songs and female songs. Examples of male songs are *Margamkalipattu* (മാർഗ്ഗംകളിപ്പാട്ട്), *Parichamuttukalipattu* (പരിചമുട്ടുകളിപ്പാട്ട്), *vattakalipattu* (വട്ടകളിപ്പാട്ട്), *pallipattu* (പള്ളിപ്പാട്ട്) etc. Examples of the female songs are marriage songs and *Margamkalipattu*. Male songs are sung by men in rhythm and female songs are sung by women without rhythm. It is a matter of honour to the Knanites that the male songs were composed by Anjilimoottil Itty Thommen Kathanar. A lamp is placed at the centre and twelve men go round placing steps carefully together. Those songs are mostly about St. Thomas and his works. In *parichamuttukaly* youngsters with sword and shield in hands go round a lamp placed at the centre and practise warfare. The songs contain events in the lives of saints and martyrs. On the occasions of marriage and important festival days, historical truths are brought alive into the minds of people through such performances. All the rights and privileges received by Kana Thoma are enjoyed by all Christians. Sacraments, Syriac language, worship, official dress and administrative matters have all been obtained by the Malankara church from the Syrian tradition of Knanites. The name Syrian Christians is also received in this way.

In Malankara, the Antiochean form of worship came into being. In Rome, Alexandria, Greece, Armenia etc. liturgy of their own developed in their respective languages, but in Malankara liturgy came from Antioch through Knanites. Bishop Joseph who came to Malankara from Edessa became the bishop of the whole of Malankara. Those under his Jurisdiction were also called Syrian Christians because their liturgical language was Syriac.



I

HISTORICAL SOURCES OF KNANAYA SYRIAN CHRISTIANS

It is a fact that the history of ancient Kerala Christians is mainly on the basis of myths and legends. But history written on the basis of hearsay and legends without scientific analysis and proper historical sources can never be true history.

In our state, history as a separate branch has evolved only at a very later stage. Material and archaeological remains usually help the writing of early history. Memorials, Edicts, Monuments, literary works etc. greatly help the writing of history. The history of early Kerala Christians is solely based on traditions, legends and oral history handed over from generation to generation. We have scientifically dependable history only from the coming of the Portuguese in 1498. The architecture of the early Kerala churches is historically important. Both Kerala as well as alien features and influences are visible in them. The building of temples using bricks and wood in Kerala started only after 8th century A.D. The early churches in Kerala were built on the model of the temples. It is only after the coming of the Portuguese that churches began to be built in the Latin Style.

Ancient Copper Plates

1. It is believed that the earliest edict given to the Christians in Kerala was the one given on copper plates to Knai Thommen by the then ruler *Cheraman Perumal* in A.D. 345. Even though the original copper plates are lost the true translation of the same still remains.¹

2. Another historically important edict received by the Kerala Christians is the one given by the Chera King *Sthanu Ravi* in 849 A.D. This edict was given in connection with the granting of property to *Saphir Iso* for the construction of a church at *Karakeny Kollam*.

3. Another edict was given by the chera King *Rajasimha* (1023-43 A.D) This is known as "*Thazhakattu Palli Sasanam*". This concerns the granting of certain privileges and powers to two christian merchants, *Chathen Vaduken* and *Eravichathen* belonging to "*Manigramam*".

Literary sources

One of the literary sources which has helped greatly the writing of the history of early Christianity in Kerala is the travelogues by foreigners. One such authentic book is '*Topographia Indica Christiana*' by a West Asian visitor *Cosmos Indicopleustus* during the 6th century A.D. In this book the author gives a vivid description of Christians in India. The historian and geographer *Pliny*. (1st century A.D) an anonymous author *Periplus of the Erythrean sea* (1st century A.D), and *Ptolomy* (2nd century A.D.) through their descriptions have greatly helped the writings of the Kerala Christian history. They give clear descriptions of the early Christian centres which were also famous ports like *Muziris*, *Tyndis*, *Barace*, *Nilkindia* and the trade and commerce which existed in those days between Kerala and West Asia. It is clear that traders from West Asia who came to these ports permanently settled here due to favorable political and social conditions.

Archbishop *John of Monte Corvino*, who was a Roman Catholic missionary and the first Archbishop of Peking on his way to China

got down at Quilon (13th Century A.D.). He found that the Christians and Jews of Quilon were on a declining stage. Friar Odoric of Pordenone on his way to China in 1322 A.D. visited Quilon and has written about the trade existed there at that time.

Friar Jordanus of Severic came to Quilon in 1324 for missionary work among the Christians. He was later on appointed Bishop of Quilon. In his book *'Mirabilia Descriptia'* he describes about the spice trade of Quilon and the social prosperity of the Christians in the neighboring areas. He also praised the religious tolerance of the native kings.

John De Marignolli of Florance, on his way to China in 1347 A.D. got down at Quilon and served at St. George church as a priest for more than a year. From his travelogue also we understand about the Kerala Christians of those days.

When we come to the Portuguese period there are numerous historical writings about the Christians here.

Durate Barbosa was portuguese official here from 1500-1516 A.D. He has written about the social, religious and economic life of the Christians. The letters written by Jesuit missionaries who worked in Kerala also throw light on the life of the Christians here.

Diogo Gonsalves, a member of the society of Jesus, was engaged in missionary work based at Arathunkal who wrote the book *"Historia Do Malavar"* in 1615. In this book he gives an exhaustive description of the synod at *Udayamperoor (Diamper 1599)* which is a landmark in the history of Kerala Christians. The letters of Canter Visscher (1717-1723) the Dutch priest, also are very valuable.

The Margamkali songs, wedding songs of Knanaya Syrians and Pallipattukal (Church songs) of Syrian Christians are other sources that help the study of the history of Kerala Christians.²

Historical Source

'There is a definite tradition among Syrian Christians in India about the arrival at Cranganore in Malabar, now Kerala, of about

400 immigrant Christians from Syria (Edessa) led by Thomas the merchant.³

*Thomas of Kana (345) brought to Cranganore 400 Christians from Bagdad, Nineveh, and Jerusalem to live with the Christians of Malabar. Ruler of Cranganore, Cheraman Perumal, conferred privileges upon Thomas and his people. Among these people there were a bishop Joseph from Edessa and several priests and deacons.*⁴

*Thomas of Cana, Nestorian merchant is said to have arrived at Cranganore in the eighth or ninth century with colony of 400 Christians from Bagdad Nineveh and Jerusalem, including several priests deacons and bishop Joseph of Edessa.*⁵

*The tradition of the existing church is that a company of Christians from Bagdad, Nineveh and Jerusalem under orders from catholic archpriest at Urahai arrived in company with merchant Thomas in 745 A.D.*⁶

*And indeed the tradition of the existing church is that a company of Christians from Bagdad, Nineveh Jerusalem under orders from the catholic Arch priest at Urha who arrived in company with merchant Thomas in 745 A.D.*⁷

Having no books of ancient history of Knanaya Christians we mainly depend on the following sources in order to make a detailed study of the history of the Knanaya community.

1. The reports sent by European authorities here (from 16th century onwards) to their governmental and ecclesiastical authorities in Europe. Many of these reports are still preserved in the various archives of Europe, especially Lisbon, Rome, London and Paris.

2. The traditions and customs which are passed from generation to generation are carefully and strongly followed by the Knanites.

3. Special songs sung in connection with weddings and other festive occasions.

4. Historical accounts written by the historians of Kerala. They give details of the special traditions and customs of the Knanaya community which they might have derived from earlier written accounts, manuscripts and writings on palm leaves.

5. The copper plate inscriptions of the royal grant of land and privileges to the Knanaya community by the then ruler of Malabar. Having lost its original we have to depend on a translation of its contents made in the 16th century.

I a) Mar Jacob- was a Chaldean bishop who came to Malabar in 1503. In 1524 the houses and churches of the Christians of Cranganore were destroyed by fire in a conflict between Calicut and Cochin. There is evidence that Mar Jacob wrote a letter to the king of Portugal requesting him to help the Christians of Malabar. This disaster may be one of the reasons for the Knanites to move towards the south.

Mar Abraham. When Mar Abraham arrived in Malabar in 1556 the Knanites were very vehement in protecting him from the local King, who were trying to take Mar Abraham under custody due to Portuguese influence.

Fr. Gouvea-The secretary of Archbishop Menazes. He narrates the arrival of Thomas Cana, the granting of privileges recorded in copper plates, the story of legitimate and illegitimate children of Thomas Cana and also the Southist, Northist distinction.

He says that due to the influence of Thomas Cana the Christians were granted certain privileges like (a) wearing of golden flowers tied up with their hair.

(b) Travelling on elephants which was a privilege granted at that time only to the heirs of Kings.

(c) The privilege of sitting on carpet. According to Fr. Gouvea. Thomas Kana had two families. One on the southern side of Cranganore and the other one on the Northern side. On the Southern side he had his own wife and children and on the northern side he had

a Nair woman converted Christian as slave from whom also he had children.

Bishop Ros- He was a missionary among the Malabar Christians since 1585. Later he was appointed the Bishop of Angamali. He wrote a long report in 1604 gathering information from written and unwritten sources and also from the words of Christians as well as non Christians. The document is in the British Museum library. According to Ros, even before the arrival of Thomas Cana there were St. Thomas Christians in Malabar who had fled from Mailapore because of persecutions. Thomas Cana was highly influential and he had got royal privileges and grants in Cranganore from the then ruler. The descendants of Thomas Cana did not engage in marriage alliances with St. Thomas converts. Hence there were two Christian lineages. The rich and honorable descendants of Thomas Cana took the others under protection and when they tried to subject them as slaves, there arose disputes and quarrels. So the descendants of Thomas Cana built separate Churches in Kaduthuruthy and Kottayam. According to Bishop Ros, Thomas Cana's influence with the King greatly enhanced the positions of the Christians in Malabar and the Malabar Church greatly respected him. So his name was referred among the saints during the Holy mass.

Couto-Couto spent more than 15 years in India. In his book *Decadas-da Asia*, he speaks about Thomas Cana and his copper plates grant. According to him St. Thomas apostle preached both in Malabar and Mylapore. The Mylapore Christians fled to Malabar during persecution. In his opinion the arrival of Thomas Cana is in 811. According to him a group of Armenians with their wives accompanied Thomas Cana to Cranganore. Their descendants later began living in places like Diampar, Kottayam and Kaduthuruthy. Couto says that Thomas Cana built three churches in Cranganore and he was commemorated as a saint by the Christians of Cranganore. He believes that the copper plates disappeared from the factory of Cochin.

Veticutel Mathai Cathanar- So far we have seen the reports written by the foreigners. But we get an account of Malabar traditions with regard to the origin and development of the church in India from Veticutel Mathai Cathanar, a Jacobite priest. According to him the Knanaya immigration greatly improved the plight of the Malabar church. Thomas of Jerusalem first came to Malabar and met St. Thomas Christians who told him about their pathetic conditions. He gave them courage and went back to the Catholicose of the East who asked him to go back to Malabar. Accordingly Thomas of Jerusalem started to Malabar again with a bishop, presbyters and deacons and also with men and women from Jerusalem, Bagdad and Nineve. They landed at Malyomkare in the year 345. The Malabar Christians recognised them and took them to the king. The king was presented with many gifts at which he was pleased and granted them a very broad piece of land and all the royal honours which were written on copper plates.⁸

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II

WESTERLY TRADE

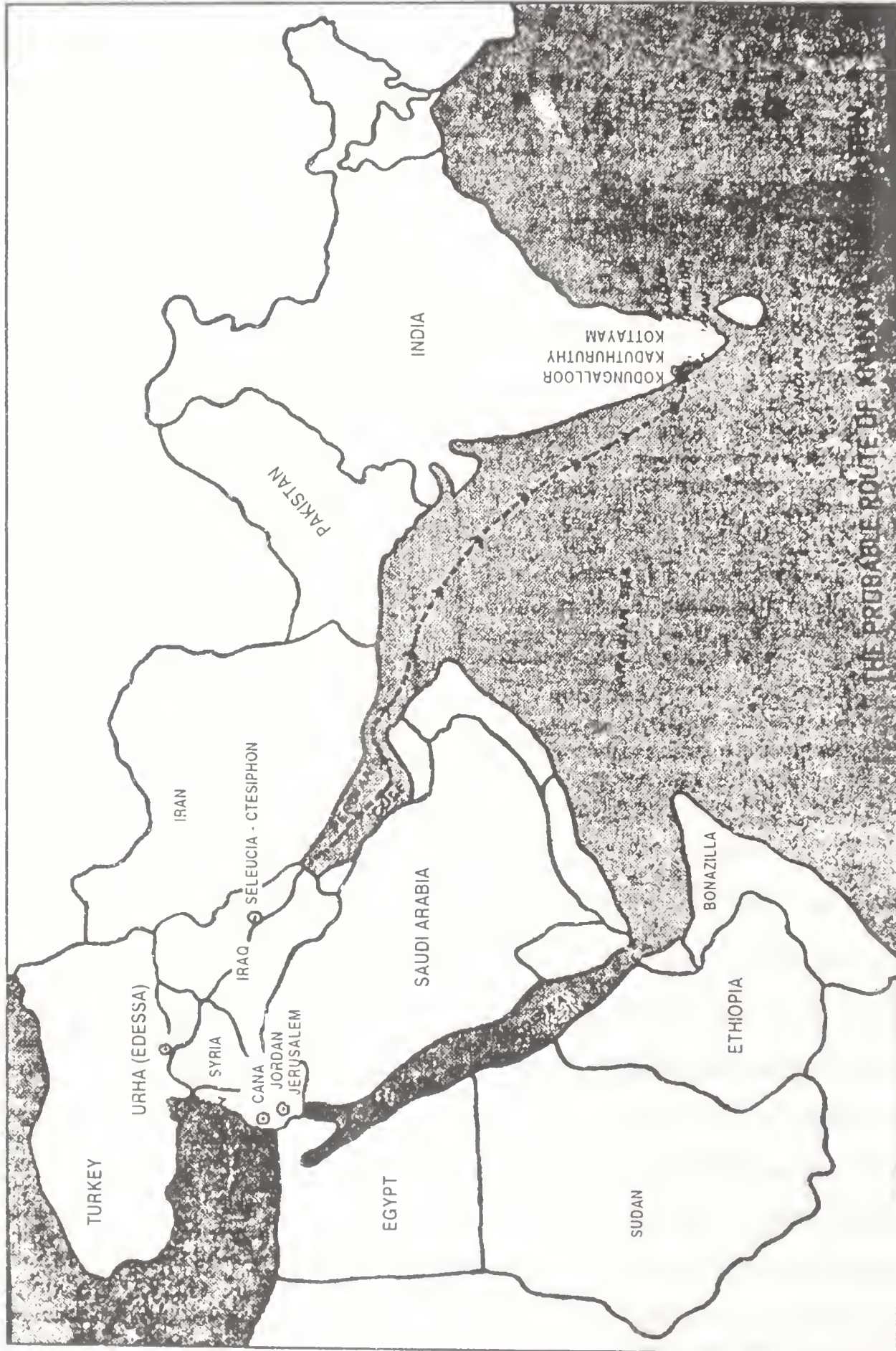
Kerala's westerly contact began from time immemorial. The scenic beauty of Kerala attracted foreigners to this land in the ancient past. From this paradise of exquisite beauty they had the availability of world famous spices – pepper, ginger, cardamom and cinnamon, commonly used by the affluent classes in Western Asia. This stabilised Kerala's trade relations with western countries. Most of this was the oceanic way. The proximity of oceans, lakes and rivers provided convenient harbours and other water transport systems.

Chiefly, the Assyrians, Babylonians, Phoenicians, Greeks, Jews, Romans and the Chinese had trade relations with Kerala. As a result Jewish, Christian and Islamic religions were propagated in Kerala, and thereby a new culture evolved in the land. The interchange of ideas between Europe and the Orient resulted in cultural progress. It is evident that the ancient Egyptians, Mesopotamians, Assyrians and Babylonians bought plenty of spices like cardamom and cinnamon from Kerala. Ancient Egyptians used the perfumes of the Orient for preserving the dead bodies of kings and Lords. In BC 1500 Queen Hatshepsut of Egypt sent a fleet of ships to the Red Sea to collect perfumes from the East. The city of Alexandria in Egypt was a great

trading centre of spices and perfumes in ancient times. The sacred oil and incense used in the church of Jerusalem were made with spices from the East. In those days such spices were produced only in Kerala. The centuries-old trade with Western Asia continued during the days of King Solomon. The Holy Bible records that King Solomon got ivory, peacocks, sandalwood and precious gems from Kerala. These articles were carried aboard the ship of Hiram from Ophir¹ which may be Beypur near Calicut, as quoted by Logan or may be Poovar, as pointed out by TK Velupillai.

The Greek navigators had great knowledge of India, its coasts and harbours. Megasthenese, the Greek ambassador in the court of Chandragupta Maurya, in his book '*Indica*', makes historical descriptions of the land. India's contact with the Persian Empire may have started before the period of King Cyrus. The frontiers of his Empire reached the Indian borders. His successor Darius extended the Empire upto North India. Later Alexander the Great defeated the Persians and conquered their Empire. In the battle of Jhelum Alexander subjugated King Porus of India. This invasion increased the European knowledge of Indian geography. The Greek conquest of Egypt made Alexandria a world trading centre, and promoted the trade from the Indian harbour of Muziris (Cranganore) as well.

There were several harbours such as Muziris, Thindis, Bakary, Nilkindia, Ophir and Naura in ancient Kerala² Natural calamities over the years destroyed them. Pliny, Periplus and Ptolomy in their writings describe these harbours. Cranganore from ancient times, had been the capital of the kings of Kerala and its greatest trading centre. Muziris has been described as Mahodayapattanam, Makodayapattanam and Thiruvachikulam in the Jewish copper plates and as Muchiri in the *Sangam* writings. Murichipattanam and Chaiva in '*Reguvamsa*' may also be Muziris. Varahamihara in his '*Brahadsamhitha*' writes about Murichipattanam. All historians agree that Muziris is Cranganore.



THE PROBABLE ROUTE OF KNANAYA

THE PROBABLE ROUTE OF KNANAYA IMMIGRATION

With the discovery of monsoon by Hippalus in AD 45, it was understood that ships from the Red Sea coast would reach Muziris in forty days, from the Red Sea coast near Aden crossing the Arabian Sea directly reaching the Kerala coast³. This helped the promotion of trade between the West and Kerala. From then onwards the Westerners kept sailing in ships from Aden to Cranganore and back. The harbour of Muziris was a trade point with the West much before the Christian Era. It was the meeting point of Jews, Christians and Muslims. The harbour of Muziris, the Gateway to Ancient India was later transformed into a great trading centre of Egyptians, Greeks and Romans. The development of this harbour, with the growth of Roman trade, has been recorded by Greek geographers and Tamil poets. Pliny speaks of Muziris as the most important Indian harbour. Periplus and Ptolomy describe several ships anchored at the harbour, the nearby trading areas, the broad streets, the temples and the royal palace, which were close to the harbour. There is a poetic description of the Greek ships laid with gold arriving in the Chera land and carrying away pepper and spices from the affluent harbour of Muziris, in the Tamil book "*Akananoor*". The busy pepper trade at Muziris has also been recorded in "*Purananur*". Pepper sacks were carried from local houses to the markets and in return boats carrying gold docked at the harbour of Muziris. Here the Chera King presented the foreign visitors with the valuable gifts of the land⁴. Till the 18th century when the Dutch expanded pepper cultivation to Java, pepper was available only in Kerala. Pepper is described as the Indian medicine in the Roman medical journals⁵. It was liked by the Greeks, and hence known as "Yavana Priya". Pepper was known to the Arabs, Syrians and Persians, also by the same name.

'Kottanora' must have been in the fertile river bed of "Pumpa", famous for pepper cultivation. In the same way 'Korka' or 'Porkai' recorded by the Portuguese and Dutch historians may have been the harbour of 'purakkadu'. Periplus of the first century AD writes about

the harbours of 'Naura' and 'Tindis'. He must have reached Muziris, crossing the other two harbours. He writes that Thindis is situated on the sea coast in the land of 'Kerabathros'. The harbour of 'Nelkindia' is further away from 'Muziris' in the land of the 'Pandiya's'. Naura is believed to be the present Kannur. There is a difference of opinion that Nilkindia may be either Niranam, Nakkida or Kallada. The observations of Periplus denote that Nelkindia harbour may have been Nakkida, as the west of which was ocean. Foreign ships involved in pepper trade anchored in this ancient harbour. Baris may have been the river Pampa. Pepper must have arrived in large quantities from the rural 'Kottanora to 'Boraka', according to the records of Periplus. This must have been Purakkadu⁶ also, according to several historians. Till the 18th century Purakkadu was an important harbour between Cochin and Quilon (Kollam). The most important commodity carried from Cranganore to the West, was pepper, as recorded by Sheif, the translator of Periplus. Pepper and spices from Kerala were indispensable to the Romans. Alaric, the Goth king (of 410 AD), demanded three thousand pounds of pepper in one of his treaties, as recorded by the famous historian 'Gibbon'⁷. In those days the only place where pepper was available was the Malabar coast. As the taste of the affluent classes for silk and pepper and such luxuries increased, the Roman trade with India developed further. Pliny observes that this trade with India resulted in a deficit of 487000 pounds for the Romans.

In the Apostolic Age, Cranganore was the harbour directly associated with the harbour of Alexandria. India was familiar to the Egyptians. It is historically proved that the contact between India and Western Asia existed from very early times. The Phoenicians and the Arabs sold Indian products to the people on the Red-Sea coast and the Mediteranian coast, as recorded by Herodotus. The excavations in Mesopotomian city 'Ur' revealed the temple of

Chandrika Devi built between BC 500-600. The teakwood used for the temple was brought from Kerala⁸. Today there are plenty of evidences for the trade between indus and Mesopotomia. There were small groups of Indian merchants in Mesopotomia. The discovery of several Indian seals from Mesopotomia confirms this fact. It is seen in 'Periplus' that in second century AD there was trade of teak wood and sandalwood between India and the Euphratis - Tigris basin.

There was an Augustian Church near Muziris where one thousand and two hundred Roman soldiers were maintained for the protection of Roman trade as seen in the Documents of Petinger Table⁹. There were several other foreign settlements like this. Since the arrival of the ships was not very often, the articles for trade were kept for long time in the godowns. Most of the present - day Syrian Christians are the successors of this trading community including even the Jews. Following the Babylonian captivity of BC 587 small groups of Jews came and settled in Cranganore. In the period of Vespasian, due to religious persecution and the destruction of Jerusalem, a large number of Jews migrated to the Malabar coast¹⁰. The Jewish settlements in Kerala were close to Syrian Christian settlements. 'Yudan kunnu' near Palayur church and 'yudankulam', confirm this point. Jews settled in Cochin also, as evident from the synagogue there. This may be the reason for the jewish traditions among the Syrian Christians. Like the Jews, Syrians and the Greeks also arrived and settled in the Malabar coast. Since foreign trade was highly profitable, the kings of Malabar showed toleration towards and consideration for the foreigners, and promoted foreign trade.

The wealth, and trading importance of Cranganur, and the availability of spices, attracted navigators from Phoenisia and Egypt. Kings of Kerala were known as 'Keralaputhras'. Ancient Tamil manuscripts record that the great harbour of Muziris was their capital. The Phoenician alphabet was propagated in South India through trade contact. "*Vattazhuthu*" found in ancient Tamil and Malayalam script

has been taken from Phoenician Alphabet. Dr Caldwell, a great linguist and scholar of South Indian languages, has established the similarity between Greek and Hebrew words and Tamil and Malayalam words. The words Tukia (Peacock) Almag (Sandal) Shenhabim (Ivory) and Cop (Monkey) found in Hebrew language are Dravidian words. The Hebrew terms for Cotton, Gulgulu and Amrith have been taken from Sanscrit. The word 'carpian' used by a Greek doctor in BC 400, is the derivation of the Malayalam word 'Karuva'. Ginger in Malayalam is termed 'sanchibar' in Greek¹¹. These evidences indicates the long, standing trade relation between South India and Western Asia. Strabo records that the Pandya king had sent a delegation at the coronation of Augustinos¹³. There is evidence of trade between Babylon and India during the period of Nebukhudnezer.

'Periplus of the Erithrean Sea', written in the first century AD describes Muziris as the wealthy capital of the Kerala puthras. The harbour Town was filled with Greek traders. It is 500 stadia from Tindis, and 20 stadia from the river mouth of Periyar. Periyar falls in the Arabian Sea near Cranganore, and the Town of Cranganore is situated on the coast. In 1341 the tide increased in Periyar, and the flooding of the river caused the decrease of depth in the Cranganoor harbour area. This lessened the importance of Cranganore and made the Cochin harbour grow in importance. Till then Cranganore was the foremost harbour in Kerala.

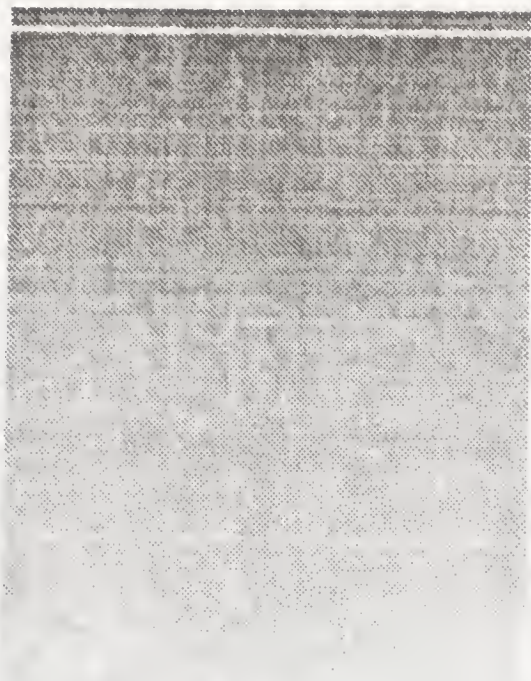
In the first century AD the material development of Kerala was due to this trade relation. The Roman gold coins discovered from different parts of Kerala are preserved in the Madras Museum and in the Numismatic section of the Travancore palace¹⁵. In 1837 about three hundred coins with the picture of Nero engraved on them were discovered from a river basin in Tirur village, about 16 miles from Cranganore. In 1842 five hundred and twenty three coins, with the pictures of Julius Augustus and Tiberius were excavated from the village of Vellayur in Coimbatore District. Due to the efforts of Cochin

archeological department twelve gold coins and seventy one silver coins were discovered from 'Eyal' in 1945¹⁶. In 1851 five head loads of Roman coins were discovered from Kottayam near Koothuparampu. Most of these Roman coins belong to the period between BC 117 and AD 123. In the Vazhappally edicts of King Rajasekhara (820-844 AD) mention is made of Dinarius coins. Other Places where Roman coins were discovered, are Valluvalli, Poonjar, Edamaruku and Niranam¹⁷. On the basis of these evidences it is proved that Roman coins were circulated in Kerala in the ancient past. In different ages Arabian coins and Ceylonese coins were also circulated. Roman coins were used for international trade. This fact has been recorded by Cosmose Indicopleustus in Christian Topography (AD 522).

The articles imported were coins, gems, embroidered cloth, muslin, coral mirrors, wine, copper, etc. Pepper from Kottanora, pearls, ivory, silk, diamonds, emerald and tortoise shells were exported. Though the trade with Rome declined from the fifth century, that with China continued. Some writers argue that Kerala had trade contact with China before the Greeks and the Romans. Chinese coins, discovered from Chandravally in first century BC denote trade between China and South India in the early times. The excavations at Cheramparampu near Thiruvanchikulam have brought to light several pieces of Chinese pottery. All this proves the fame of the South Indian harbour of Cranganore. Navigation and trade with Kerala might have attracted the foreign Christian traders to Kerala and prompted them to settle in the land. This led to the propagation of Christianity. Religious persecution against the Christians in the different parts of the world and the welcoming attitude of the kings of Malabar, and their promotion of trade, resulted in a large number of foreign settlements in Malabar. As a result Christian presence is seen in most of the important trading centres, like Cranganur, Mulamthuruthy, Kochi and Kollam.

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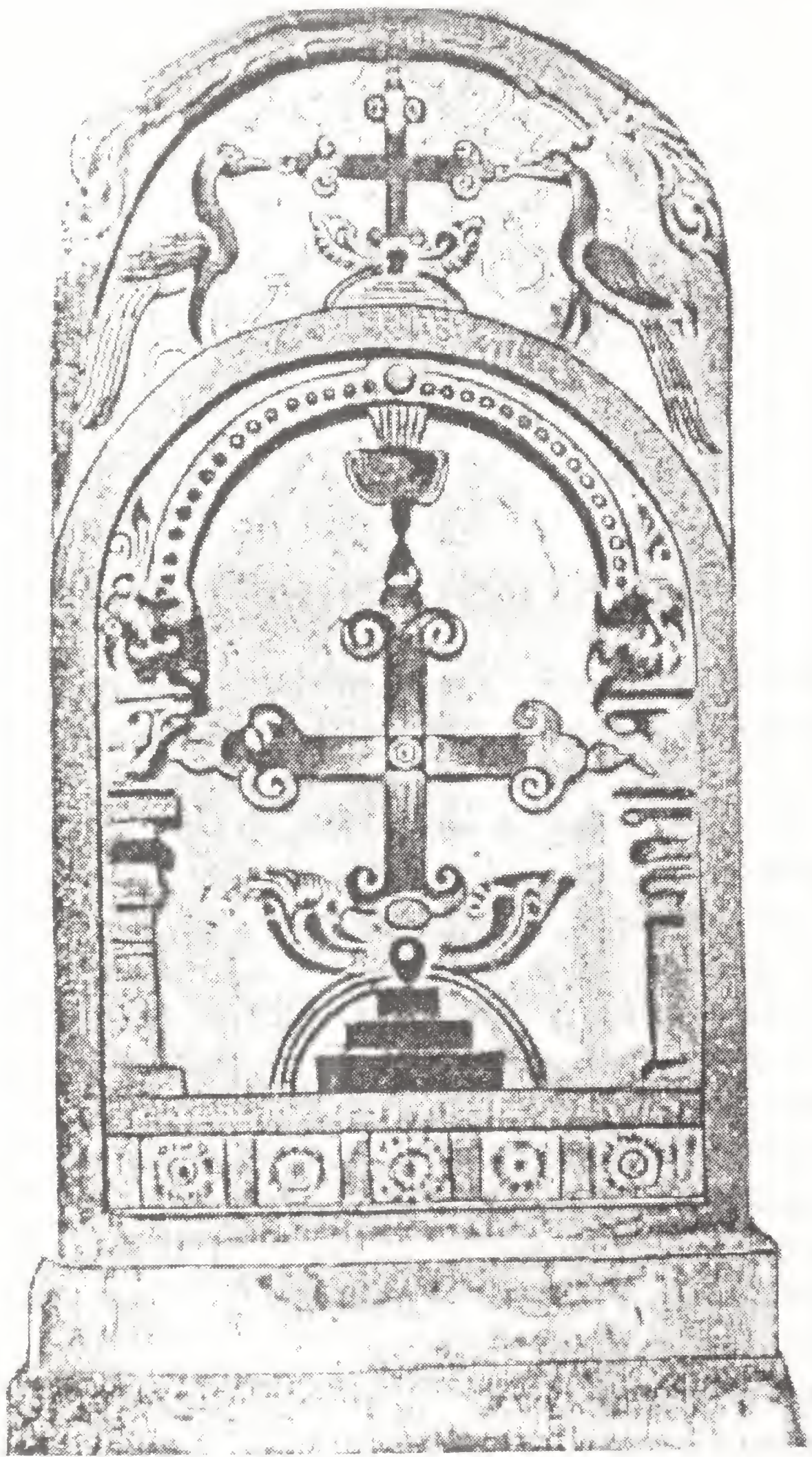


III

THE SYRIAN CHRISTIANS

The early part of the history of Christianity in Kerala is shrouded in mystery due to the paucity of evidences. In confronting the problem of the origin of the St Thomas Christians here, we are backed not with historical evidence but with tradition. According to the Indian tradition St Thomas, one of the disciples of Jesus Christ, came to Kerala. He first landed at Cranganore in 52 AD¹. He converted some Hindu families in Cranganore, Palayur, Quilon, and other places. He visited the Coromandel coast, and converted people there. Then he crossed over to China, and preached the Gospel there. He returned to India, and organised the Christians of Kerala under some guides (priests) from among the leading families he had converted². He established seven churches at Kodungalloor, Quilon, Palayur, Kokkamanagalam, Niranam, Chayal and Palur³. Then St Thomas went to Coromandal where he was lanced to death. His body was brought to the town of Mylapore, and was buried in a holy shrine there⁴.

The Christians converted by St Thomas in Kerala were known in the early centuries as St Thomas Christians in the ecclesiastical writings⁵. Contacts from the West Asian Churches, and the different immigrant groups, brought with them not only Syrian liturgy, traditions



PERSIAN CROSS IN OLD CHURCH AT KOTTAYAM.
About Tenth Century

and ecclesiastical orders but also the Syrian name for the Church in Kerala. All the major Syrian Churches still have the prefix "Syrian" to their names.

Following St Thomas, Pantenus, the head of the Alexandrian school of theology visited India in the latter part of the second century. He found the Gospel according to St Mathew written in Aramaic language⁶. In 345 AD a Syrian merchant named Thomas of Kana visited Kerala. He was accompanied by seventy two families consisting of about four hundred people, with a bishop, priests and deacons. The arrival of Thomas of Cana was a turning point in the history of the Malabar Church. It brought material and spiritual progress to the Christian community here⁷.

The Alexandrian traveller Cosmos Indicopleustus visited Kerala in 523 AD. He found here the existence of a flourishing Christian community, with clergy and bishops⁸. The Persian crosses of the eighth and the ninth centuries, still preserved in the Knanaya Syrian Orthodox Church of Kottayam, Kadamattom and in the Syrian Catholic Church at Muttuchira, are evidences to prove the presence of the Christian community there and their connection with the Syrian Church of Persia and Antioch.

In AD 822 or 823, a group of Christian traders came from Persia and settled in Kurakenikollam. These settlers were given a charter of privileges by Sthanu Ravi Varma⁹. The charter of privileges, contained in the Tharissappally copper plates, granted a piece of land and certain other privileges to Muruvan Sabrisho, the founder of the city of Quilon, for the Tarisha Church built at Quilon by Sabrisho. The Christians were exempted from paying certain taxes. The Church was given the right to administer the 'customs' in Quilon¹⁰. In the thirteenth century, Marcopolo, who visited this coast, referred to the prevalence of Nestorianism among the Malabar Christians¹¹. In 1348, Marignolli came to Kerala and found that the Christians were the masters of public weighing office¹².

In 1490, three Christians from India reached the Nestorian Catholicate and, as a result, a few Nestorian bishops were appointed to India. They came here and ordained priests and consecrated churches. They ruled over the Church till their death¹³. This was the state of affairs when the Portuguese arrived here.

The fifteenth century witnessed the arrival of the Portuguese in Kerala. The Kerala coast was divided into five principalities, viz., Cannanore, Calicut, Cochin, Kollam, and Travancore. The papal bull of Alexander VI, giving rights over the eastern continents, attracted the Portuguese to India¹⁴.

The Portuguese enterprise was a crusade against the Muslim menace¹⁵. As Islam was an obstacle to the spread of christianity for the Europeans, it was necessary for the Portuguese to destroy their trade and opposition. The main source of income to the serveral small states of Kerala, was trade. Hence they used to invite foreigners for trade, and for help in settling their internal quarrels and rivalries. Thus, there was no difficulty for the foreigners to come here. The easy and cheap availability of the precious "black gold" i.e., pepper, was their main attraction here.

The Metropolitans ordained by the Patriarch of Antioch ruled the Church for 1300 years¹⁶. According to the decision of the Council of Nicea, the Patriarch of Antioch was the supreme head of the Eastern Churches¹⁷. Nestorians who came to Malankara (Kerala) after the sixth century were received by the Church, believing that they too were under the Catholicose of Selecuea who was under Antioch. The manuscript copy of the Bible in Syriac given in 1807 to Dr Claudius Buchanan by bishop Mor Dionysius of the Malankara Church, which is now kept in Cambridge University library, proves the above fact.

In the New Testament of the Bible, the books are not divided into chapters and verses, like the Bible of the Westerners. But arrangements are made for readings for Sundays and festival days to suit the Jacobite beliefs, not the Nestorian faith. St Mary is addressed

as the "Mother of God", in that book. The Nestorians do not use that epithet. The readings from the Patriarch Severiose, are also given therein, which the Nestorians do not use¹⁸. James Hough in his book, *Christianity in India*, also says that the faith of the Malankara Christians is the faith of the Jacobites¹⁹. Collins in his book, 'Missionary Enterprise in the East', establishes the fact that Syrian Christians had their metropolitans ordained by the Patriarch of Antioch. In 1501, an Indian named Joseph went with Cabral to visit. Lisbon, Rome, etc. His meeting with Pope Alexander VI is documented in a book published in Portugese called NOVUS ORBIS or "Travels of Joseph the Indian" and it describes the position of the Church in Malankara. He says, "We are of the true faith... for we came from the place of Antioch where the followers of Christ were first called Christians²⁰. Dr Buchanan notes the first meeting of the Portuguese with the local Christians. The Portuguese were astonished to see a large number of Christians and their churches here. They asked the local Christians whether those churches belonged to the Pope. Their reply was, "Who is the Pope? We never heard of him²¹. Such are the views held by the Syrian Orthodox historians who trace the ancient connection of this Church to the Patriarchate of Antioch.

There are historians with the view that the pre-Portuguese Church in Kerala, was having allegiance to the Nestorian church in the Persian Empire and some others believe that the church had connections with the Catholic Church.

In the middle of the sixteenth century, the Portuguese established their power in Kerala, and with that they tried to attract the Syrian Christians to the Roman Catholic Church. Bishop Aluxo-de-Menezes from Goa was sent by the Patriarch of Rome to Kerala and he employed all means to attract the Syrian Christians²². For this purpose, an orphanage in Cranganore was converted into a theological seminary.

Archdeacon Geevarghese of the Pakalomattom family was in charge of the Kerala Church at that time. There were many obstacles

to the work of the Portuguese here – Syrian worship and the regular visits of the Syrian bishops from Antioch. Hence Menezes destroyed the books in Syriac, and prevented the visits of the Syrian bishops. The Archdeacon was compelled by Menezes to summon a synod to make the Christians accept his decisions. If any church failed to send its representatives, the properties of that church would be confiscated by the Cochin Government²³.

Accordingly, the Synod began in June 1599. The Portuguese Governor of Cochin with his bodyguards was present. 152 priests and 662 laymen were also present at the Synod. 267 decisions were made, well before the Synod by Menezes and were passed at the Synod and a few others were later added²⁴. After the Synod, Menezes himself visited many churches and tried his best to get the Synod's decision accepted by them. He also destroyed the liturgies and many Syriac documents. Manuscripts on ecclesiastical subjects were committed to the burning piles of flames²⁵.

The Syrian Christians who were persecuted by the Portuguese sent a representation to Antioch to get bishops²⁶. In 1653, Mor Athalla (Ignatius Simon Hidayathulla: 1640-1653) arrived at Surat. He was held by the Portuguese and was taken to Mylapore. Some Christians who went to Mylapore to visit the tomb of St Thomas, having heard of the incident, reported the matter to the Kerala Christians. Hidayathulla was then sent to Goa in a ship. When the ship reached Cochin, some Kerala Christians were there to save him from the custody of the Portuguese. Their leader was Anjilimootil Itty Thomman Cathanar. About 25000 people gathered at Cochin fort. The guards of the fort were frightened and closed the fort. The mammoth gathering of the Syrian Christians infuriated the Portuguese and it is believed that they tied a large stone around the neck of the blessed Patriarch and threw him into the depth of the sea. Some Catholic historians differ on this account and hold that Mor Athalla was taken to Goa and then to Lisbon, whereas some others say that Hidayathulla was burnt alive in Goa²⁷.

The crowd gathered at Mattamcherry took a pledge that neither they nor their succeeding generation would have any contact with the Portuguese. They tied a huge rope around the big cross of the Mattamcherry church and holding it in their hands, took an oath that they and their posterity would never accept the Roman Faith and that they would ever be loyal to the Throne of Antioch²⁸. It was Itty Thomman Cathanar who read the pledge to be repeated by the people. This is a very important incident in the history of the Church in Kerala. It was on 3rd January in 1653. Itty Thomman Cathnar fought a winning battle against the Portuguese. Kerala Church ought, at all times, to be grateful to this honourable priest. After the pledge of Coonan Cross, a general assembly of the Syrian Christians gathered at Alangad and decided to accept the Bull of Ahatalla and elected a four member committee including Itty Thomman Cathnar to look after the affairs of the Church²⁹.

When the news reached Rome, Pope Alexander VII sent some Carmalite missionaries to Malankara. These missionaries succeeded in changing the minds of Pallivettil Chandy Cathnar and Kadavil Chandy Cathnar who were with the Archdeacon till then³⁰. Though those two priests joined Roman missionaries, Itty Thomman Cathanar remained loyal to the Archdeacon, and was his great adviser. The head of the missionaries Joseph Sebastian succeeded in persuading the local kings to imprison Itty Thomman Cathnar and the Archdeacon. But they managed to escape from the prison. Otherwise they also would have been killed³¹.

With the advent of the Dutch, the Portuguese gradually withdrew from Kerala and the Syrian Christians slowly became free. The name of Itty Thomman ought to shine in golden letters in the annals of the history of the Church in Kerala as the one who saved the Church from the yoke of the Carmalite missionaries of the Roman Church.

Although the Portuguese could destroy the liturgy of the Syrians and create a division among them, they could not completely destroy

the community. They approached the Syrians at first with consideration. But later they tried every means to convert them to the Roman Faith, even through unfair methods and unchristian ways.

It was astonishing for the Portuguese to see Christians here with Hindu cultural heritage. The Christian churches in Kerala were built basically according to the Eastern Syrian plan, with ornamental carvings of the Hindu type³². The ancient churches like those at Kalluppara and Chengannur are examples of the structural designs of Hindu temples mixed with Christian thought. Later most of the indigenous churches were dismantled and were replaced with those built in the Portuguese model³³.

Processions were common during festivals which were similar to the processions in the temples. Parasoles which were the symbols of royalty were also used for the processions. Lamps hanging on iron chains as those hung in temples were used in Christian churches. Flag staffs were also seen near the western doors of the churches. Beating of drums and such other instruments in the typical Kerala way, was usual at festivals. 'Margamkali' and 'Chavittunatakam' were part and parcel of the festivities in the Christian churches. Most of the ancient churches in Kerala, and the Hindu temples and the Kovilakams, are seen to be situated very near to each other. The churches at Palayoor, Parvoor, Kaduthuruthy, Kallissery etc. are very close to Hindu temples. The nearness was not merely in their location, they had very intimate connections also. For important festivals there was the practice of sending elephants, lamps etc. to the temples from the churches until very recently³⁴. It can also be seen that the Nazaranis had exercised some powers in the administration of the temples. Of the eleven members of the governing body of the Anaprapal Bhagavathi temple, one was a Syrian Christian viz. Vallezhathu Panickar. The invitation sent from the temple to Vallezhathu Panickar in 918 ME, requesting him to be present at the temple festival is still carefully kept³⁵.

In olden days, the Syrian Christians used to serve the country along with the Brahmin and Nair communities. They used to go about bearing arms, and even took up the use of weapons as their profession. Only high caste people had the permission to move about with weapons all the time³⁶.

At the time of war, the kings of Kerala often asked for help from the chieftains and the Syrian bishops, which they rendered to the Kings through the vicars of the parishes, who collected the people for the purpose. There were Syrian Christians in the army of the Portuguese and the Dutch as well³⁷.

The Syrian Christians were given training in the use of weapons from the eighth year of age. They anoint their bodies with oil that made them pliant. When they went out they would have uncovered swords in their right hands and shields, in their left hands, and some of them would have guns as well. Though they used to carry weapons, they were, by nature, calm and peace loving. The Archdeacon who arrived in Cochin as per the invitation from Menezes, in February 1599, had three thousand Nazrani fighters with weapons and two Panickars³⁸. The Panickars were those who gave training in the use of weapons. The majority of the Syrians belonged to the Perumpadappu Kingdom which was one of the important Kerala Kingdoms. About the Christian soldiers of the Travancore King, reference can be seen in the history of the war between Travancore and Ampalapuzha³⁹. Kochu Tharakan of the Cholothy family, Ramamangalam, Moovattupuzha Taluk, was an army leader of the Cochin King in the Sixteenth century⁴⁰.

When Menezes visited many churches to bring the people under the Roman rule, he happened to see many Syrian Christians with arms.

That was objected to as unchristian in the Diamper Synod with the intention of making them unarmed⁴¹.

In olden days, there were many Syrian Christian families bearing the title "Panickar" who gave training to the army of the Kerala Kings



പതിനഞ്ചാം നൂറ്റാണ്ടിനു മുമ്പുള്ള ദേവാലയ മാതൃക
(കല്ലുപ്പാറപ്പള്ളി)



PICTURE OF AN
ANCIENT SYRIAN CHURCH IN KERALA

and chieftains. They were recruited from distant places by the Kings and were given money and land near the Kovilakam⁴².

There are many families in Travancore and Cochin having Panickar titles. With the spread of English education, many of them gave up the title which has a Hindu connotation. The women were given a small gold cross to wear round their necks tied with thread or chains like the *thali* of Hindus⁴³.

The Portuguese were able to destroy the cultural and the social heritage of the Keralites, to some extent. Before the coming of the Portuguese, the administrative set up of the Syrian Christians was democratic. The affairs of the churches were managed by the representative body or *pothuyogam*, presided over by the parish priest, who was elected by the *pothuyogam*, and ordained by the bishop. There were training centres attached to the parishes conducted by the Malpans who gave training in Bible, doctrines, and Syriac language. Those who got such training were later elected by the *pothuyogam* for ordination.

The bishops had only spiritual supervisory powers over the general body and the parish in general. The bishops were allowed to enter the churches only with the consent of the general body of the Churches⁴⁴. With the coming of the Portuguese, the bishops assumed power to rule. The Portuguese Archbishop Menezes summoned the meeting of the representatives of the churches so as to gain control over parishes with a view to establishing the fact that the consent of the laity and the priests was unnecessary⁴⁵. It was only after the Portuguese rule, the bishops took over "power to rule". The tragic event that followed the Portuguese reign in Kerala church was the unhappy episode of the split. One group left the traditional church to form the Roman Catholic church in Kerala.

A section of the Syrian Orthodox Church which came under the influence of the Portuguese missionaries joined them after the pledge

at Coonan Cross at Mattamcherry and consequently, there arose a split in the church. Mor Gregorioso, the Syrian bishop was deputed by the Patriarch of Antioch in the middle of the seventeenth century to lead the Syrian Jacobite adherents ⁴⁶.

He had brought with him the Syrian Christian order of worship and the necessary liturgy of the same tradition. It became very popular and is used by the church even today. Mor Gregorioso continued his work till his death and he was buried in the St. Thomas Jacobite church in North Paravur. Bishops were sent from Antioch from time to time by the supreme head of the Church in Antioch to help the Syrian Christians in Malankara.

In 1876, the Patriarch himself reached Malankara and divided the church into seven grand dioceses and made several arrangements for the smooth running of the Church ⁴⁷. He called together a synod including representatives from each parish church at Mulanthuruthy in Cochin. These arrangements went a long way towards the progress of the whole church. After some years, problems again sprang up and there occurred another split under the leadership of Bishop Ghevarghese Dionysius who was instrumental in inviting a deposed Patriarch to Malankara ⁴⁸. That Patriarch who had no ruling powers was prompted by Dionysius to establish a Catholicate here, thereby causing schism in the church. The result was the beginning of litigations in the church which is continuing. There arose a temporary truce in 1958 ⁴⁹. But that did not last long due to the mishandling of the church matters by the leadership which tried to manage things according to their own whims and fancies. The above mentioned leadership wanted the Patriarch, the supreme head, to keep himself aloof from the Malankara church matters in addition to the fact that the leadership did not give weight to the feelings of the majority who were still loyal to the Patriarch. The strength of the Orthodox church including both the factions was more than sixteen lakhs⁵⁰.

As already seen, the Roman Catholic church established its roots in Malabar with the advent of the Portuguese in the sixteenth century.

Their missionaries influenced the Syrian Christians to accept the Latin rites of worship. The Syrian Christians who were used to their most attractive forms of worship and were proud of their Syrian connections resisted this attempt which resulted in the famous Coonan Cross Pledge⁵¹, and in the consequent great schism. The Portuguese bishop who had plenty of money at his disposal, used it lavishly to bring the Syrian Christians under the Pope⁵².

The Syrian Catholic Church was, thus, able to establish its roots here. It has now two divisions viz. the Syro-Malabar and the Malankara Catholic. Now the majority of the Syrian Christians in Kerala belong to the Roman Catholic Church. Its members constitute those who joined the Catholic Church after the Coonan Cross Pledge⁵³. Now they have twenty one Metropolitan dioceses with twenty three bishops and about thirty lakhs of followers⁵⁴. The Malankara Catholic Church took shape with the joining of Bethany Mor Ivaniose to the Catholic Church with a few followers. The monastic movement at Bethany took the leading part in this respect. Mor Ivaniose of the Indian Orthodox Church and a few people with him decided to join the Catholic Church. They were admitted there in 1930. Their church was formed solely to admit the Syrian Christians, whose order of worship is still followed. They have now three dioceses with about three lakhs of people⁵⁵.

The Mar Thoma Church was an offshoot of the missionary efforts of the Anglican missionaries among the Jacobite Christians of Malankara. The Anglicans began their work in Kerala by the middle of the nineteenth century. It was named London Missionary Society as London was the head quarters of the Society. Another society named, The Church Mission society, was started in 1799. The Anglican Church also began its work in Malabar. Anglican missionaries, Dr. Carey (1808) and Claudius Buchanan (1766-1815) sent their report and as per their report, the Anglican Church got interested in the Syrian Church of Malabar, and their missionaries came here with their plans for reforms. Bishop Middleton of the Anglican Church took the lead in the discussions with the leaders of the Syrian Church in 1815

and offered their co-operation. The British Resident in Travancore contributed Rs.30000/- for the construction of the Kottayam Seminary building. The Travancore Government gave to the Syrian Church free of cost the spot for its construction. Benjamin Baily (1816) Fenn, Henry Baker (1819) and other Anglican missionaries began their work among the Jacobites and offered them financial help. The chance to work among the Syrians was profitably used by the missionaries⁵⁶ with the result that Protestant beliefs began spreading among the Syrian Christians. They succeeded in teaching the Syrian Christians about the so called wrong beliefs of the Syrians and even some clergy accepted their teachings. The prayer for the dead was opposed by the missionaries. The Protestant work, however, also met with opposition from the Syrian Christian leadership and a synod was called at Mavelikkara, which decided to stop all connection with the Anglican missionaries⁵⁷.

The leader of the four priests who opposed Bishop Palakkunnath Abraham Malpan was appointed by the missionaries to reform the liturgy. He was even paid for the work⁵⁸. The Holy Mass was offered on the basis of the liturgy reformed by Abraham Malpan who was on that account excommunicated. With the help of the missionaries, the son of the Malpan's brother was sent to the Patriarch in Mardin to be ordained bishop, who returned home as Mor Athanasius Mathews. With his coming the reformation work continued and litigations started in the Church. Mathews Mor Athanasius was excommunicated by the Patriarch and the judgement of the litigations went against the reformers. After the judgement Mor Athanasius could get only three churches⁵⁹. His followers gave shape to the reformed church which later took the name "The Mar Thoma Church". Its followers were mostly in Central Travancore. At present, it has churches and followers in and outside Kerala. The head of the Mar Thoma Church is the Mar Thoma Metropolitan. As per the record of 1993, the Church has about eight lakhs of followers and ten Metroplitan dioceses.

The Thozhiyoor Suriyani Sabha is also known as the Malabar Independent Church⁶⁰. In 1772, Bishop Gregorioso who came from Antioch ordained Kattumangattu Abraham Ramban as bishop and gave him the name Kuriakose. This action was disliked by Bishop Dionysius VI of the Malankara Church. Mor Kuriakose went to British Malabar, and settled down at Thozhiyoor. He had three successors who were ordained with the help of the Mar Thoma Church, though the Protestant teachings of the Mar Thoma Church were not accepted by them. The Thozhiyoor Church is centered around Kunnamkulam. It has a bishop and six parish churches.

The Church of South India which took shape as a result of the Anglican missionary work has several denominations viz. Presbyterians, Congregationalists, the Anglican Methodists etc. They got united in 1947 and became the Church of South India with four dioceses⁶¹.

The London Missionary Society or the diocese of South Kerala consists of the converts from Quilon, Trivandrum and Nagercoil⁶². The Madhya Kerala Maha Edavaka has its head quarters in Kottayam. The North Kerala Maha Edavaka, South Kerala and the Purva Kerala Edavakas were formed in addition⁶³.

Trichur is the centre of the Kerala Nestorians whose supreme head is the Patriarch in Iraq. A division occurred among them and the litigations are still going on. They have about 15000 followers in each group. They got the name "Nestorians from Nestor who was the Patriarch of Constantinople. The official name of this Church is 'The Chaldean Church of the East'. They are opposed to addressing St. Mary as "Mother of God"⁶⁴.

The Salvation Army was founded by William Booth (1829-1912), a Methodist priest in 1865. Helping the poor around him was the motivating factor for him⁶⁵. There are no sacraments and priests for them. They give importance to prayer, preaching and philanthropic activities. Workers from Madras came to Kerala in 1892 and propagated it. Trivandrum is their centre in Kerala with 500 branches.

They have started Leprosy hospitals in Nagercoil, Puthencruz, and Koratty. There are about a lakh of people in the Salvation Army⁶⁶.

The Pentecost organisation came into being as a result of the evangelical awakening within the Pentecost Church at the beginning of the 20th century. They give importance to the confession of faith and immersion baptism⁶⁷. These groups tend to work among the Syrian Christians instead of working among the non- christians. They go about converting ancient Syrian Christians to the Pentecost fold⁶⁸. They give baptism to the grown ups of other communities who are already baptized in other churches. They also believe in speaking in tongues and obtain the gift of the Holy Spirit through group songs, Prayers and shouting. Most of the groups do not allow their members to use medicine at the time of illness. They do not wear ornaments and do not believe in sacraments and priesthood.

The U.S.A is the source of inspiration to the Pentecost teaching, and the financial help from there, maintains most of their work. Some of these groups are Assemblies of God, Church of God, The Indian Pentecost, The Pentecost Mission etc. These are ever on the increase too.

The Brethren groups were the forerunners of the Pentecostal movement in Kerala. They themselves like to be called 'separatists' as they believe that they are separated from the world for Jesus. It first took shape in Plymoth in England⁶⁹. Its missionaries reached India in 1833. They have gospel camps and prayers with fasting. They have established a Bible School at Kumbanadu, a Bible Institute at Angamaly and a Medical Mission Hospital at Tiruvalla.

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IV

THE KNANAYA SYRIAN CHRISTIANS

The church in Kerala was in a state of disorder after the death of St. Thomas¹. They neither had a head nor a shepherd, to lead them. According to tradition, Thomas of Kana—Knai Thomman—a Syrian merchant visited Kerala in 345 A.D. He was disturbed by the then pathetic state of affairs of St. Thomas Christians in Kerala. He reported this to the Catholicose of Seleucia². The church authorities there decided to send a bishop with priests, deacons and a group of lay people, under the leadership of Thomas of Kana to help the St. Thomas Christians here. The Catholicose³ commissioned Thomas of Kana to lead a group of people to settle in Kerala. He gathered a group of 400 Syrian Christians from Jerusalem, Baghdad and Nineveh.⁴

There were deacons, priests and the bishop of Urha, Mor Joseph, among this group of settlers⁵. They arrived in Cranganore in 345 A.D. Some modern writers give a much later date for the arrival of Thomas of Kana. The Dutch writer Jacob Canter Vischer in his letters from Malabar published in 1743 gives the date of the arrival of Thomas of Kana as 745 A.D. James Hough refers to Thomas of Kana as an Armenian merchant who arrived in Kerala in 1780⁶. There is also a view that Thomas was a Nestorian bishop, and not a merchant, sent

by the Nestorian Patriarch about the year 900 A.D. Gouvea, the historian of Archbishop Menezes dated the arrival in the ninth century A.D.⁷

Thomas of Kana was well received in Cranganore⁸. His arrival was a turning point in the history of the Church of Kerala. He played a great role in the organisation and building up of the Church and the community at Cranganore. He exerted very great influence on the whole Christian community of Kerala and did a lot for the development of Syriac in Kerala. In all probability, they brought down Syriac liturgy and rituals to Kerala. Many Indian students visited the great college of Antioch for Syriac studies. This marked the beginning of a new connection between Malabar and the Middle East Churches. It paved the way for further arrival of prelates from both Baghdad and Antioch. They used Syriac as the liturgical language⁹. During ancient times, it had been called Aramaic¹⁰. It was also the official language of the Persian Empire from fourth century BC, and that of the Chaldean Empire from seventh century BC. The Holy Bible was partly written in Syriac¹¹.

Thomas of Kana established his settlement in the Periyar Delta and called it *Mahadevarpattanam*. Thomas of Kana and the settlers lived on the southern side of the river in Cranganore¹². They did not freely mix with the St. Thomas Christians who lived on the northern side.

They were an exclusive community and by custom avoided intermarriage with the local Christians. The Syrian Christians of Kerala consist of two distinct groups called the Thekkumbhagar (Southerners) and Vadakkumbhagar (Northerners) because their ancestors once lived in the southern and northern streets of Mahadevarpattanam¹³.

The rulers of Kerala permitted the foreign traders to build houses and places of worship. They were honoured with titles which were usually conferred only, on higher caste people. Moreover the traders were exempted from taxation. Thomas of Kana was given several honours and privileges¹⁴. The ruler of Cranganore, Cheraman Perumal,

is said to have conferred several privileges upon Thomas of Kana and the Christians, inscribed on copper plates¹⁵ H. Hosten observes: "Thomas of Kana himself appeared before the King and offered him presents. He requested the king to give land for him and his followers to live. Accordingly the King ordered to measure 264 elephant cubits of land to be given to them for ever. Sixty two houses were also immediately erected there with gardens and trees with their enclosures, paths, and inner yards. And he granted him seven kinds of musical instruments and all the honours necessary to walk like a king.

At the weddings, there is the custom of women to produce a jovial sound with their "finger in the mouth". The Perumal granted him forever the right to adorn the ground with carpets, use royal fans and apply double sandal marks on their arms and erect royal tents in any part of the kingdom.¹⁶

The Knanaya community kept their identity right from the time they arrived in Kerala. The advice given at the time of parting is observed by the Knanites even today. "When you reach India see that the relations are safeguarded, remember always the ten commandments and seven sacraments".¹⁷

The successors of Knai Thomman kept their purity by refusing to enter into marriage connections with the other christian communities. In the caste ridden society of Kerala, the immigrant Knanaya community could preserve its identity without much difficulty. The community followed different customs. They retained the titles and privileges and maintained the Church at Kodungalloor¹⁸.

During the time of immigration, Kodungalloor was the only place of settlement for the Knanaya community. With the passage of time, business and employment in the service of the King made the Knanaya community migrate to Udayamperoor, Kaduthuruthy, Mazhukeer, Chunkam and Kottayam¹⁹. They followed the river routes to reach these places. The local rulers admired their ability and loyalty. They were also able soldiers and fighters²⁰.

The Knanaya community flourished due to their business. Many of them were eminent businessmen. The local rulers realised the importance of the businessmen for the development of the Kingdom. The ruler of Thekkumkoor invited the members of the Knanaya community to Kottayam²¹.

But the situation changed with the arrival of the Portuguese towards the end of the fifteenth century. Their arrival threatened the Muslim monopoly of trade on the coast of Kerala. Besides, it shattered the friendly relations that existed between the Muslims and the Christians. The Portuguese interfered in the internal affairs of the local rulers. They supported the ruler of Cochin against the Zamorin of Calicut.

In 1524, there occurred a war between the Zamorin and Cochin. During the war, many of the churches were destroyed and many houses were burned down. The remaining members of the Knanaya community migrated to Mazhukkir, Kaduthuruthy, Udayamperoor and Kottayam²². The Knanites took with them, Venthemudy (Crown) to Chungam and the Persian Cross to Kottayam. They are still preserved in the Chungam and Kottayam Churches.

When the Portuguese came to Kerala in the fifteenth century, the Knanites had five churches at Udayamperoor, Kallissery, Kaduthuruthy, Chungam and Kottayam. The coming of the Portuguese rendered far reaching consequences in the spiritual and temporal life of the Syrian Christian of Kerala. The Portuguese expressed their reverence and appreciation to the local Christians who maintained their Christian faith without any support from the rulers. The Portuguese Christians retained their faith and Christian commitment largely by the support of royal patronage. Even though, the Portuguese well appreciated the local Christians for preserving their Christian faith, they expressed their fear that many of the customs and rituals observed by the local Christians were heathen and they stressed their feeling that the local worship was schismatic. The indigenous order of worship and the religious life of the local Christians were misunderstood.

The spiritual leadership of the local Christians was vested on the bishops appointed by the Patriarch of Antioch and the temporal administration carried out by the Archdeacon belonging to the Pakalomattom family to which the priestly succession was entrusted from the time of St. Thomas²³.

The Knanites believe that the sending of the bishops from Antioch was the fulfillment of the promise which the High priest gave at the time of departure²⁴. The Portuguese authority tried to impose papal authority given to the Portuguese King by the Pope to administer the Church in Portugal and its colonies²⁵. The Syrian Christians strongly opposed this move without any success. The Portuguese started Seminaries at Vipincotta and Kodungalloor to influence the clergy to change their oriental life style to that of the west. They made arrangements to prevent the entry of Syrian Fathers. Archbishop Menezes of Goa came to Kerala and influenced the King of Cochin and threatened the Archdeacon of the Church here and summoned a general body at Udayamperoor in 1599. The Synod of Diamper was only the success of money power of the Portuguese²⁶. Because of this, three churches shifted their stand to the Portuguese and to the Catholic side.

The revolt of the Indian Christians against the Portuguese and the Catholics ended in 1653 by the oath of the Coonan Cross separating the community into two factions. The Christians who maintained their ancient hierarchical connections and who maintained their oriental form of worship were led by Itty Thomman Cathanar, the eminent priest of the Knanaya community. He belonged to the Knanaya Church of Kallissery and his efficient leadership is one of the main reasons that helped to maintain the true faith of the Malankara Church²⁷. The general body convened at Alangad, as per the bull of Ahatalla, elected a four member committee to assist the Archdeacon²⁸. Itty Thomman Cathanar was the leading figure in the committee.

The news of the revolt in Kerala church prompted Pope Alexander VII to depute a group of Carmalite priests to Kerala. Friar Joseph who was one among them was appointed as the Vicar Apostolica. He followed in the line of Menezes, to bring the Kerala Church as a whole under Rome. He imprisoned Mar Thoma and his trusted supporter Itty Thomman Cathanar. By the prudence and valour of Itty Thomman Cathanar they escaped from captivity and led the people to free the Church from Roman invasion²⁹.

The coming of the Dutch in the seventeenth century was favourable to the Syrian Christians. The Dutch authority flourished at the expense of the Portuguese. Even then, the Portuguese were able to attract the majority of the Syrian Christians to the Roman fold. In 1661, the Dutch conquered Cranganore and subsequently they took Cochin in 1663. They ordered the Carmalite bishop Joseph to leave the place within ten days. In his place, Parambil Chandy Cathanar was appointed Vicar General. He continued till his death in 1679³⁰. Kallissery and Kottayam Parishes of the Knanaya Community continued their allegiance to the Patriarch of Antioch along with Archdeacon and Itty Thomman Cathanar.

When the Portuguese bishops got freedom to stay in Kerala in the eighteenth century, the Knanaya Catholics came under the rule of the Portuguese authority. During their period, they also struggled to get local bishops. During the period between 1838-1854, the authority of the Portuguese was curtailed and the Knanaya Catholics were under the authority of the Varapuzha bishopric. In 1885, Mackil Mathai cathanar of the Knanaya Catholics, was appointed the secretary of bishop Marsalinos Barardy. Bishop Marsalinos was in charge of Varapuzha. In 1887, Pope Leo VIII separated the Syrian Catholics from Varapuzha Archbishopric and established Kottayam and Trissur bishoprics. Bishop Lavinge who was in charge of Kottayam diocese appointed Mackil Mathai Cathnar the Vicar General. In 1896, the Syrian Catholics were brought under Trissur, Ernakulam and Changanacherry dioceses. The Knanaya Catholics then came under

the Changanacherry diocese. Mackil Mathai Cathanar was appointed bishop for this diocese. But the non- Knanites opposed this move³¹ and he went to Rome in 1911 and requested for a separate Knanaya diocese. Pope Pius X established the Kottayam diocese exclusively for the Knanaya Catholics and Mar Mathai Mackil³² was appointed its first bishop. In 1955, Pope Pius XII, by a separate bull brought under the Kottayam diocese, all the Knanites in the Syro-Malabar Church³³.

The Knanites who settled in Mazhukeer (Kallissery) and Kottayam area continued under the authority of the Archdeacon and Itty Thomman Cathanar in allegiance to the Patriarch of Antioch. Both of them struggled hard to bring Mar Gregorioso of Jerusalem to Kerala. He arrived in 1669 and revitalized the Syrian community to continue in their old traditional faith. He regularised Mar Thoma³⁴. The Syrian Christians contacted Antioch through the Dutch and in 1751, a group of clergy under the leadership of Mar Basaliose came to Kerala³⁵. In 1717, the Antiochean delegates Mor Ivaniose and Mor Gregorioso jointly consecrated Mar Thoma VI with the name Mor Dionysius. By this time, the Knanaya community established a Church in Ranny. Kottayil Kartha, local ruler, invited them to Ranny³⁶.

Under the influence of the British missionaries, a small group in the Knanaya community was attracted to the reformist movement. Kadavil Abraham Cathanar of the Kallissery church led this group. He got only very few supporters and with the arrival of Patriarch Peter III in 1876, the reformist group lost influence in the community³⁷.

During these centuries, the Knanites were under the authority of the Syrian Bishops. In 1865, E.M.Philip, a great historian and a renowned scholar who was a member of the Knanaya community served as the secretary of Joseph Mor Dionysius Metropolitan of the Syrian Christians. Later the Knanaya churches came under the administration of Parumala Mor Gregorioso Metropolitan of the Syrian diocese of Niranam. A special committee to deal with the affairs of the Knanites was established in 1882.

This Knanaya committee was fortunate to have E.M.Philip as its secretary. Malankara Syrian Metropolitan gave official acceptance to this Knanaya committee. Under the leadership of this committee, many reforms were introduced in the churches.

The Knanaya community actively co-operated with the Syrian Jacobites to fight against the reformist movement. The members of the Knanaya community were always in the forefront to defend the true faith of the Church.

Joseph and George who went to Babylone with Cabral to invite bishops to lead this church were Knanites³⁹. Itty Thomman Cathanar stood with Mar Thoma I to fight against the Portuguese. In 1908, the Knanites requested Patriarch Abdulla II, during his visit to Kerala, to give a separate diocese for the Knanites. This request of the Knanaya committee was accepted and in 1910, the Patriarch granted a separate diocese for the Knanites. In 1910 itself, Mor Serveriose Gheevarghese was consecrated as the first Knanaya Metropolitan⁴⁰. During his tenure, the number of churches increased and the Knanaya diocesan centre was established at Chingavanam. He was succeeded by Mor Dioscoros in 1926. It was during his period that the Knanites got the Patriarchal encyclical (Bull) affirming the individuality of the Knanites⁴¹.

On August 15, 1951 Vayala Abraham Kasisa was designated as the 3rd Metropolitan of the Knanaya diocese. It is his great achievement that a stable constitution was compiled for the community. It is in his reign that the residential school at Chingavanam, the U.P. School in Malabar and St. Thomas College under Ranny Valiapalli were started. When the Patriarch faction was in a crisis, His Grace provided good leadership. He became the Malankara Metropolitan in 1951. When there was a crisis in Alwaye he led the great march. More information on the social economic and administrative history of the community shall be provided in the second volume of this book.



PATRIARCH ABDULLA II



GHEEVARGHESE MOR SEVERIUS
First Metropolitan of the Knanaya Diocese

The Knanaya Catholic community progressed in various fields after the establishment of the Knanaya diocese. The establishment of the Malabar colony in 1940 was a great achievement of this diocese. This movement was led by bishop Choolaparambil. His successor Bishop Tharayil succeeded in establishing various educational institutions. Now the Knanaya Catholics have three first-grade colleges, seventeen high schools, fifteen Upper Primary Schools and forty six Lower Primary Schools. They run sixty nine Missionary Schools, 121 convents with 1036 nuns and 149 priests to lead the activities of the diocese⁴².

The Knanaya Jacobites have 75 churches, 75 priests, 20 nuns, 3 convents, and one High School and two U.P.Schools. The St.Thomas Church, Ranny under this diocese runs a first grade College, two High Schools and one Teacher Training School.

The Knanites of Kerala still practice their unique traditions and rituals. These customs are the special traits that keep them separate and distinct from other Christians in Kerala. Many of these rituals are still observed in connection with the marriage ceremony.

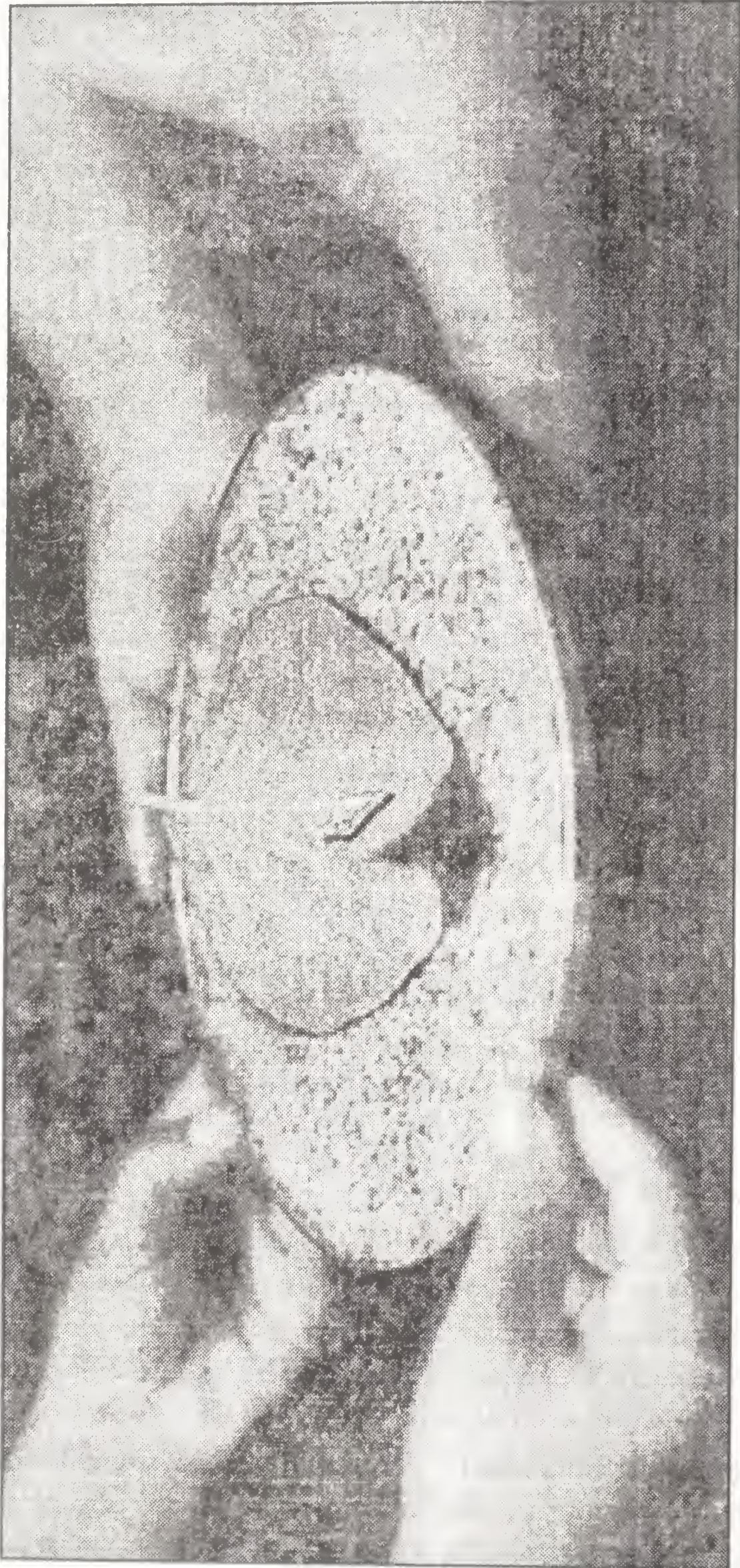
In all civilizations, we note the origin of literature in the form of ritual hymns and ballads. These songs were framed so as to be sung during festivals. These types of songs were prevalent among the "Nazrani Christians" of Kerala, especially among the Knanites from ancient times. The most important family festival is in connection with the marriage ceremony. These ceremonies were performed in four to five days. The ancient Knanaya song, sung on the occasion of the marriage figures in "*Mangalia Vattakali*"⁴³.

The night before the day of marriage is celebrated by the Knanites with special rituals. The bride or the bridegroom is seated amidst the relatives and is given the opportunity to receive prayers and blessings of the parents and the relatives. They give him or her, sweets as a token of love and affection. They all sing the special felicitation song

which starts with the praise of St. Thomas, the Patron saint of the Indian Christians⁴⁴. The songs traditionally transmitted through ages, depict the distinctive characteristics of the Knanites. The arrival of the Knanites under the leadership of Thomas of Kana, their contribution towards the strengthening of the Christian community here, the special privileges chartered by Cheraman Parumal for the Christian community, the special vows and pledges to keep the purity and faith etc. are reaffirmed in these traditional ballads.

A noteworthy feature of the traditional rituals is that they clearly portray the position and privileges given to the women folk of the community. The bride and the bridegroom are received into the house by the mother and sisters. The bride and bridegroom are blessed at the time of the first entry to the house after the marriage by the mother or the eldest sister. This blessing is done by signing the cross on the forehead with betal leaves using water taken in a '*thalika*' in which paddy is put⁴⁵. All these signify the reception of the couple with the fruits of the earth. The paddy and the water symbolise the fullness of life, the signing of the cross with betal leaves signals perfection and heavenly blessings. These special privileges given to women point to the equality and importance given to them in this community at a time when the women were not considered equal with men. "*Nadavili*" "*Vellavirippu*" "*Thalakettu*" "*Thalakuda*" are all done in remembrance of old privileges given by Cheraman Parumal⁴⁶.

The traditions of the Knanites are to a certain extent, influenced and moulded by Jewish customs, Indian rituals and Christian doctrines. When the Syrian Christian community was given special privileges, they were ranked among the higher classes in the society. This higher grading influenced them to adopt rituals of the Brahmins and imitate their life style. The Christianised form of "*Thalikettu*" or "*Minnuketu*", the special way of wearing the "*dothy*", and the double long cloth (braid) and the insistence of white clothes are pure



THALI

modifications of Brahmanic traditions. The pre-marital engagement is finalised in the presence of the priests in churches. The uncles of the bride and bridegroom take the oath of the betrothal in the church with special prayers. This act of marriage engagement is affirmed by prayers in the church and by holding together the arms of the uncles.

This refers to the proposed unification of the two families along with the unification of the couples. The collegiality, fellowship, friendship and the bond of love between the two families are affirmed by these acts. This also points to the fact that the marriage is not a mere contract between two persons, but it is also a strong relationship established between two families.

The parental share of the bride in the form of cash, gold or land is entrusted to the bridegroom on this occasion of betrothal. It is received not directly by the bride or bridegroom. This is carried out by the uncles on behalf of them. This also shows the family bonds of love and contracts.

Beautification of the bridegroom is a custom which prepares the bridegroom for the marriage. He is seated on the special seat decorated with white cloth and the barber formally cuts his hair and shaves his face⁴⁷. This is done ceremonially by the barber, seeking the permission publicly thrice. Afterwards, the bridegroom is carried by the uncles for the ceremonial bath. When the bridegroom is brought back duly dressed he is again seated in public. The elder sister brings sweetened rice and the eldest male starts the giving of the sweet. All relatives in turn perform this act as a token of blessings for a happy married life.

The bride's relatives gather in her house the night before the marriage to prepare her for the marriage. She is brought into the midst of the relatives assembled and is placed on an embroidered seat. The bride is brought in by her elder sister and the grand mother put *mylanchi* on her palms, nails and feet. This tradition is seen in many other communities as well. The main purpose of this is to beautify

the bride as the '*Mylanchi pattu*' says that the hands that plucked the forbidden fruit and the feet that walked towards the forbidden tree are cleansed by Mylanchi.

One of the main customs of the marriage is tying the *Minnu* around the neck of the bride by the bridegroom⁴⁸. This *Minnu* is made of gold in leaf shape with cross embossed with '21' dots.

The thread used to tie the *minnu* is made from seven threads taken from the bridal *sari*. These seven threads and '21' dots symbolise the seven sacraments of the church and '21' is the multiplication of this number with three, symbolising the trinitarian concept of God. The *Minnu* is brought to the bridegroom's house the day before the marriage by the goldsmith on a betal leaf spread over rice in a plate. The goldsmith is rewarded. The seven threads woven into one to tie the *minnu*, is considered as the privilege of brothers-in-law.

The utterance of '*Nada Nada*' denotes royal glory and pomp. It has been written by Barbora in his travelogue that this kind of *Nadanattu* was usual during the royal procession of Zamorin of Calicut⁴⁹. The bride and bridegroom are welcomed to the bridegrooms residence by his mother using paddy and betal leaf.

The betal leaf dipped in water is placed thrice on the forehead of the bridegroom and the bride, in the shape of the cross⁵⁰. It is similar to the Hindu custom of '*Arathi*,' paddy denoting prosperity and water, purification. After the marriage ceremony in the reception hall, the bride and the bridegroom are seated on special throne like chairs spread with a white cloth. The bride and bridegroom are seated on these by their uncles⁵¹. This is reminiscent of a similar Jewish custom.

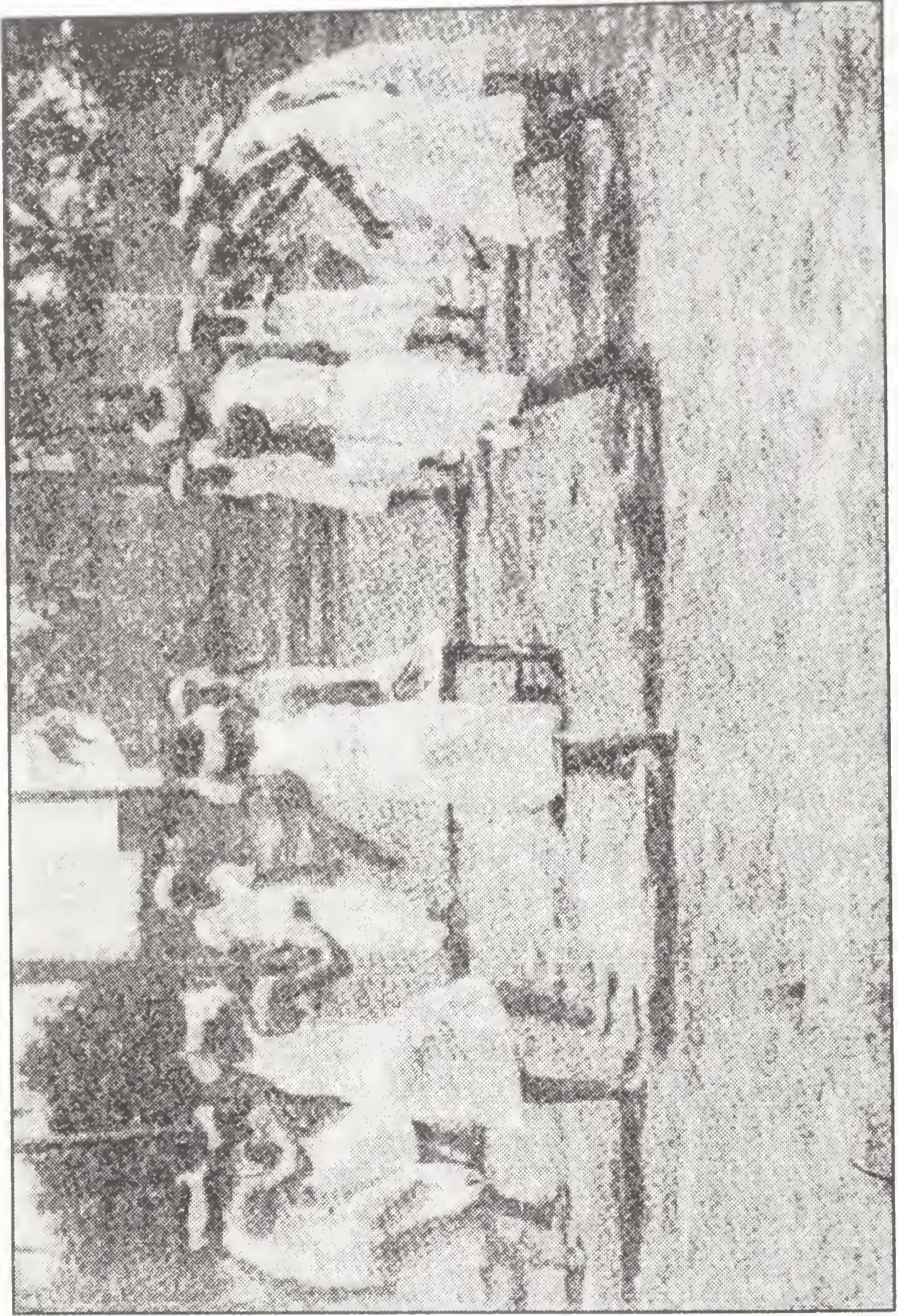
The bride's mother after getting the permission of the participants, places her hands crosswise on the head of the bride and bridegroom and gives them blessings. This is in commemoration of the benediction given by Jacob to Joseph and Reguvel to Sarah.

Wishing a happy and prosperous future life, the newly wedded couple are given milk and fruit by the bride's mother. When they sip milk added with fruit from the same cup, it shows that the bride and bridegroom are united to be one and the same and not two different personalities.

When the uncle, mother and maternal grandmother of the bride embrace and bless the bride and bridegroom, the relatives of the bridegroom give them presents. First of all, the uncle of the bride with a turban on his head (tying long towel on his head) seeks the permission of the participants and embraces the bridegroom first and then the bride moving his hands on both sides from waist to shoulder.⁵²

Margamkali was the most popular artistic performance prevalent among the Knanaya Syrian Christians⁵³. When they gather together in churches on occasions of festivals and patron's day, they perform this. All the members will assemble to see and hear their tradition-minted historic songs staged in dance form. This will, generally begin with a song dealing with the coming of St. Thomas and the coming of the Knanaites in the fourth century, their vows, heritages, privileges, and social commitments. Peter Marphaya has referred to this. Antony Govayo has written that the Syrian Christians performed this traditional songs in dance form before Archbishop Menezes, when he visited the churches in Kerala to convene the Udayamperoor synod. This has been performed along with the festivals and marriage celebrations from very early times. P.J.Thomas has written that none of their celebrations was completed without these performances. He holds that such an artistic performance was in vogue relation to St. Thomas in Urha. They acted the story of St.Thomas, depicted in the book 'The Act of St.Thomas' and when they came to Kerala, they brought this model here⁵⁴. Hence the Knanites believe that 'Margamkali' is their ancestral traditional art form.

It is believed that 'Margamkali' songs were composed by Itty Thomman Cathanar of Kallissery. Some writers are of the view that



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these songs were composed in the pre-Portuguese period. These songs are sure to have got modified in style and language when they passed through generations. The present form might have been formulated by Itty Thomman Cathanar⁵⁵. Peter Maffei recorded in 1558 that action songs and plays about St. Thomas were seen among the Syrian Christians.

"*Margam*" refers to the Christian way of life just as Sri Buddha advocated the eightfold path for moksha⁵⁶. This art form refers to the Christian way of life by which the Christians are saved to enjoy Christian truth and life. Margamkali is the preaching of the Gospel of Christianity and refers to their apostle St. Thomas who did this preaching. This Margamkali consists of fourteen "*padams*" or parts with four hundred lines. This, in short, is the dramatic narration of the activities of St. Thomas in India based on the ancient book by Bardasan which is kept in the British Museum. Twelve persons girdled and wearing head cap, bearing "Mayilpeeli" performed dance steps with clapping of the hands and loudly singing the song around a lighted lamp with eleven wicks. The light refers to Jesus Christ "I am the light of the world" and the twelve people stand for the twelve apostles. The bearing of the peacock tail symbolises the journey of St. Thomas in India⁵⁷.

There are other performances of the same art form, depicting the stories in other ancient songs of the Syrian Christians. "Hadusa" is an all India institution started with the aim of giving training in the study, research and development of the Christian Ranga Arts.

The Syriac word "Hadusa" is a fitting name for this, as it gives mental pleasure and joy. Its centre is Kottayam with the bishop of Kottayam as its patron. Eminent men take part in the activities of the "Hadusa".⁵⁹

Christian arts like 'Margamkali', 'Parichamuttukali', 'Chavittunatakam', 'Vattakali', church hymns and ancient ordinary songs are encouraged here. The aim is to bring all these under a scheme of

study and to encourage their use. The singers of 'Margamkali' are brought together and a scientific unity is achieved in rhythm and their sounds are taped with the help of musical instruments. The opinion of the masters of 'Margamkali' are given attention and their instruction regarding the movement of heads and legs during the singing of songs is taken into consideration. A book in two volumes is being prepared about Margamkali and its improvement. A course for the teachers in different parts of Kerala, lasting 34 days was held with their help. 'Margamkali' teams have participated in the Youth Festival celebrations in 21 educational districts of Kerala⁶⁰. Hadusa is trying to make Margamkali a subject for study in Kerala University and to make it an item for competitions.

A school for training in Parichamuttukali was organised and many masters of this art actively took part in this. Their songs have been recorded and a survey taken. A dance drama named "Thomman Kinan" was prepared with the help of the Knanaya Cultural Society and was played on August 29, 1985.

It has already been exhibited in different stages, with 28 Knanaya members taking part in it. It is acclaimed as a very good presentation of the Knanaya heritage by eminent persons. It has been an ongoing tradition for years that all Knanites gather together once a year to celebrate the anniversary of the ancient settlement. This gathering is an important factor which unites the Knanaya community. In this three day long meeting, the traditional Knanaya songs, Margamkali and other social and cultural programmes are conducted and thus preserved. Through the enactments of such programmes, the new generation is being made aware of the settlement and its distinct features.

An inter-religious meeting is an important aspect of this conference. Leaders of all religions participate in and speak at this function. This helps to foster religious harmony and also gives an

opportunity for the younger generation to learn from other religions as well. This particular meeting has been going on for the last five years. At a time when religious fundamentalism is on the increase, this inter-religious meeting has been functioning as a model for other communities.

Women's meeting is yet another salient feature of this gathering. Although, generally speaking, the status and plight of women are considered to be very poor in India, the Knanaya community accords special status and privileges to their womenfolk. In short, the Knanaya Colonization Anniversary is an affair which helps to further integrate the community and strengthen its community ties and bonds. It also contributes, as already seen, to the socio-cultural and religious well being of the society.

References

1. A.L. Ananthakrishna Ayyar, Anthropology of syrian Christians in Kerala, p.76
2. F.E. Keay, Op.cit.,p.18
3. As per Nicea Canon the Catholikose of selucia and the eastern region were under the Patriarch of Antioch, Jacob Mor Julius Metropolitan (trans.) Hudaya Canon, p.67
4. John Foster, The First Advanced Church History, p.113; William Logan Malabar, pp.203-'04
5. One of the ancient songs of the Knanaya Community records.
The catholics and Rembans (Monks) were all sorry
Who will now go in time to govern Malankara (Malabar)
One from those seated in the assembly answers:-
One of the twin-born must go to Malankara;
We are the sons and nephews of the same person, and knayi
Thomman made up his mind to go
Seventy two families go on board the ship.
There is Abuna (bishop), priest and Deacons.

And there are 400 persons, including men, women
By the blessing of Catholicos the ships sails through the sea.
The sea shore is thronged with shedding tears.
The ships sails through the waves of the red sea and the black-sea.
Mahadevar of the Malabar king was sighted and forthewith the sails were furled
Jacob Vellian Op.cit p.XI

6. James Hough, Op.cit, p.94

7. Mathew and Thomas, The Indian Churches of St. Thomas p.18

8. Another ancient song of knanites says;

Mor Joseph of Urha goes
Four priests are near him
There are many Deacons too
Sepoys are close to him,
And Thomman kinan is with him
You came and obtained a permit
And went there early
And held him by the hand to disembark
A royal palanquin plated with gold
He mounted, and sat down.
And proceeding in pomp, entered the fort.
In the fort was the perunal, the king
Jacob Vellian Op.citp.xiii

9. K.O. Joseph "Syriac Language in Kerala", Proceedings of the Indian History Congress, 1992, pp.186-87

10. The language spoken by Thomas of Kana and his followers was 'Aramaic'.

11. Abdul Ahad Ramban, Surianisabha Chaithram, 1, pp.8-10

12. Dr. C.V. Cherian, Op.cit., p.83

13. C. Achyutha Menon, Op.cit., pp.218-19

14. A.L. Ananthakrishna Ayyar, Op.cit., p.10

15. F.E. Keary Op.cit., pp.19-20

These copper plates existed when the portuguese arrived in Calicut in 1498. It is said that Mor Jacob the Syrian bishop entrusted this copper plates for safe

custody to the portuguese at Cochin, but through carelessness they were lost. Pothen, the Syrian Christians of Kerala p.22.

The Jesuit father Hosten believed that the plates having been taken to portugal by Franciscans, were now either in the Torre de Tombo of Lisbon, or in some old Franciscan monastery in portugal. But they are not available now.

16. Dr. C.V.Cherian Op.cit.,pp.80-81. For more details see appendix I
17. The ancient song says;
My children, shall we meet again after you to India?
Remember us always, that relationship may not sundered
Always hear the ten and the seven in mind.
Toney Mathew, knanayakarute kallyanapattukal (Mal.), p.20
18. Mathew Cherucheril, Kaduthuruthy Valliapally, p.XIII
19. N.K. Abraham (ed). Kallissery Palliyeude Charitram, p.13
20. Mathew Cherucheril Op.cit., p.107
21. E.M. Philip, Malankara Sabhayayude Rhasyapedakam (Mal.), p.2
22. Platinum Jubilee Souvenior Kottayam Diocese, 1988,p.35
23. E.M.Philip, Op.cit., pp.142-'43
24. This is remembered:
As occasion demands, good abuna (bishops)
I shall send you within twelve years
Jacob Vellian, Op.cit, p.VII
25. A.M. Mundadan, Op.cit., P.241
26. C.M. Agur., Op.cit, pp.48-49
27. Ittup Pukadiyil, Suriyni Sabhacharitram (Mal.) p.117
28. E.M. Philip, Op.cit., p. 149
David Daniel, The Orthodox Church of India p.114
29. James Hough, Op.cit., 11p.364
30. C.M. Agur, Op.cit., pp.61-62
31. Platinum Jubilee Souvenir of Kottayam Diocese 1986, p.44
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V

FORMATION OF KNANAYA SAMUDAYAM AND ITS LEADERS

Malankara Syrian Knanaya community is one of the ancient Christian communities of Kerala. Its history starts from 4th century A.D. and its customs and practices make the Knanaya Christians distinct from the other Christian communities. Malankara Sabha was given a new light and life by the Knanaya migration under Knai Thommen and Joseph Metropolitan of Edessa. (The synod at Nicea in A.D. 325 confirmed the administration of the Eastern Church under the Patriarch of Antioch. (Encyclopidia Britannica records it.)

With the permission of the Patriarch Osthathios, about 400 Knanaya families arrived at Cranganore¹. They were welcomed by the ruler who gave them accomodation and royal honours. This migration strengthened the Malankara Sabha. These Knanites who proved themselves in the field of trade and commerce were also loyal warriors. They built churches, carried on trade, served the government and became part and parcel of Kerala society. We have very few source of the ancient history of Kerala and so church historians also grope in darkness regarding this period. Cosmos Intecoplitus, the Alexandrian

missionary of 5th century A.D. records of seeing a Christian community in Kerala. This must have been the Knanites and the non Knanites. By the time of the arrival of Saphir Iso, the Kerala Christian community was much strengthened. Since the Portuguese period, there emerges a definite shape to Christian church history based on several sources.

In the early days of the migration, Knanites were mostly found at Cranganore. Gradually they moved on to places like Udayamperoor, Kaduthuruthy, Chunkam, Kottayam and Mazhukeer. The Portuguese promoted the construction of churches on the Western model as against the traditional temple model. The Archbishop of Goa Alexy Menezes convened the Synod at Udayamperoor and tried to impose his decisions with the help of the army. The Syrian Christians under the leadership of Angilimootil Ittythommen Cathanar protested against this and made the Coonan cross pledge. Whenever there was a crisis in Malankara the Knanaya community provided leadership to the Malankara church. It is only due to the leadership of Anjilimoottil Ittythommen Cathanar that Malankara Church escaped from the clutches of the Portuguese.

By the 19th century the Knanites moved on to Neelamperoor, Veliyanadu, Vakathanam, Thuruthicade and Kattodu and by the 20th century to the other parts of Kerala. They built churches and entered into agricultural and industrial activities.

With the arrival of the Portuguese, a section of the Malankara Church was converted to Roman Catholic belief along with some of the Knanites. Others continued their bond with the Patriarch of Antioch. Some of them were under the Niranam Diocese and some under the Kottayam Diocese.

With British influence in the 19th century, Bishop Mathews Mar Athanasiose of Palakunnam started the reform movement which brought a split in this church. Pulicottil Joseph Mar Dionysius, E.M. Philip known as Nazrani Simham and Malithra Elias Cathanar entered

the forefront in this period. E.M. Philip (Edavazhickal Pothachen) dedicated his life to conduct the cases of the church and protect the church. E.M. Philip braved financial problems and other crises in the church strongly. He was the secretary of the Malankara Association for a long period. In 1876 H.H. Moran Mor Ignatius Peter, the Patriarch arrived in Malankara and appointed Pulicottil Metropolitan as the Malankara Metropolitan. The Malankara Church was divided into seven dioceses and six other Metropolitans were also appointed. The Knanites came under Niranam, Kottayam and Kandanadu dioceses. The Malankara Jacobite Syrian Association was formed in which Malithra Elias Kathanar, Kunnumpurathu Kora Kurian, Ottathycal Mani, Parambithra Kuruvilla, Thundyil Chacko of Kallissery and Mammen Chacko of Kallamparambil Ranny, represented the Knanaya community. (Souvenir Knanaya Congress 1989).

Six years after the Mulanthuruthy Synod in 1882 Knanaya committee was formed under E.M. Philip. He was the first Secretary of the committee. The spiritual leadership was provided by Metropolitans of Malankara. Efforts were made by the committee for framing a constitution for the Knanaya Samudayam. By 1910 the Knanaya diocese was formed with Edavazhickal Gevarghese Mor Sevarios as the first Bishop. It was on August 28, 1910 that Partriarch Ignatius Abdulla II proclaimed him as Mor Severiose at the Vadakara Church. A plot was bought at Chingavanam for a Knanaya centre. The Knanaya association was formed with the representatives of the various churches. The system of annual collection (Anduvary) (ആണ്ടുവരി) was introduced for funding the diocese. The Severiose Fund provided loans for deserving students. He served the Church for 17 years. After him Mor Diascoros was made the Metropolitan. The women's centre at Kurichy and the girl's schools were started in his period. The Bull from Partriarch Elias III as to the independent Knanaya diocese under the Patriarch was received by Diascoros Metroplitan. After his tenure Thamarapallil Abraham Corepiscopa

and Purackal P.J. Thomas Corepiscopa were the administrators in the Knanaya diocese. A scheme called 'sparhae' was introduced by Thamarapallil Achen (those who take membership in this scheme have to contribute an amount and after their death every year memorial service will be conducted). The Knanaya Yuvajana Samajam adopted a constitution in the period of Purackal Achen. When H.G. Climese Metropolitan went to U.S.A for higher studies Purackal Achan served as the administrator.

The present shape of the samudayam has been achieved by the dedicated services rendered by several priests and many common men like 'Powothil Punnose of Mazhukeer, Palliampil Uthup, Mangalathil Uthup, Maliekel Mappilla and Povara Mappilla of Kallissery'. Among them a few great leaders are remembered herewith.

Anjilimootil Ittythommen Kathanar

Anjilimootil Ittythommen Kathanar is the earliest prominent leader of the Knanites. In the period between 1558 and 1599 he resisted the persecution of the Syrian churches by the Portuguese. He provided heroic leadership for ousting the Portuguese from Travancore and affirmed the bond of Syrian Christians with Antioch. He was the chief advisor of Thomas Arkadhiyakhon who was the leader of the Syrian Church after the Coonan Cross Pledge(കൂനൻ കുരിശ് സത്യം).

His unflinching loyalty and commitment to the Knanaya community are extremely praiseworthy. The Syrian Christians suffered great persecution from the Portuguese against which Itty Thommen Cathanar organised much protest. He was a man of perseverance and heroic leadership. His commitment to the community made him suffer great hardship in an age in which transport and communication facilities were minimal.

Hearing that his Holiness Hidayathulla was imprisoned and taken to Goa, Ittythommen Cathnar organised about 25000 Syrian Christians at Cochin. Such a massive crowd was brought to Cochin only because

of his heroic leadership. The Syrian Christians assembled in Cochin came to know that His Holiness was drowned in the sea in Cochin. Instead of a direct clash which would spill much blood the foresight of Itty Thommen Cathanar gave a different turn to the incident. A rope was tied to the cross. Everyone of the large gathering of Syrian Christians touched it and took the pledge that they would ever be loyal to the Patriarch of Antioch. But for this pledge and but for the leadership of this great and noble priest, the whole Syrian community would have been converted to Roman Catholic belief. This great incident of 1653 is known as "Coonan Cross Pledge".

He convened a meeting of the Syrian Christians at Alangattu Church. They decided to carry on the church administration as per the orders of Ahathulla Bava and formed a council of four members. Kadvil Chandy Cathanar, Anjilimoottil Itty Thommen Cathanar, Palliveetil Chandy Cathanar and Vengur Gevarghese Kathanar were members of the council. In a period in which catholics converted people to their belief offering money and gifts, Itty Thommen Cathanar resisted bravely.

Thomas Archadhiyakon and Itty Thommen Cathanar based their activities at Mulamthuruthy and Kandanadu. A declaration was issued by the king of Cochin for bringing both these leaders to the king. Godavarma the prince of Cochin with his army came to the church and overpowered Marthoma and Itty Thommen Cathanar. But they escaped from the prison impersonating as two people from Mulamthuruthy. The Hindu guards did not recognise them. Had they not escaped they would have had the fate of Ahathulla. It was the sharp intelligence of Itty Thommen and his able diplomacy that helped him in such a situation. Joseph Metran confiscated the properties of Marthoma. He burned the dress, the books in Syriac and the palanquine used by Marthoma.

Eventually the Portuguese hegemony declined and the Syrian Christians enjoyed more freedom. At the event of the murder of

Ahathulla, popular resistance was organised by Itty Thommen Cathanar. The scattered Malankara Syrian Christians were brought together by him. In spite of his several sufferings he worked hard to save the church from the persecution of the Portuguese. He wrote to the Patriarch to send a new Metropolitan for the Church. His dream was fulfilled by the arrival of Mor Gregorioso Metropolitan. There is no other leader of this period who dedicated his wealth, efforts and life for the progress of the Syrian Christians. The life and history of this great leader is a saga of selfless service. He has not been given the due importance by the community for which he dedicated his life.

Kalarickal Unnittan Master

Kalarickal Unnittan Master was born in a wealthy family in Ranny. His primary education was at C.M.S. School Kottayam. He graduated from Madras Christian College, and was the college mate of K.C. Mammen Mappillai. He joined as teacher at M.D. Seminary High School Kottayam. He was committed to his vocation and did not care for remuneration. He was a model teacher respected by the students. He was a strict disciplinarian and took efforts to mould the character of his students. He helped poor students financially. He contributed a substantial amount for the construction of M.D. Seminary High School.

He used to convene the meeting of Knanaya students and deacons every Sunday in his own house. He was the first person to organise the Knanaya Youth as a preliminary to Knanaya 'Yuvajana Samajam'. He was the first president of the organisation. He sowed the seeds of the forum which later grew and strengthened into the present Knanaya Congress. He was a man of leadership, foresight and great ideas. He died very young, at the age 27. His life and character are perfect models to be followed by the present Knanaya youths. Early leaders like him have enlightened the annals of Knanaya history. In writing of an early history of Knanaya leaders one cannot forget the name of Kalarickal Unnittan Master who rendered meritorious services to the community. He was the first graduate of this community. He was a

man of great potential and despite his early demise, he was a model teacher, a perfect leader and a man committed to the cause of his community.

Edavazhikal EM Philip

E.M. Philip is one of the foremost leaders of the Knanaya Community. He deserves the credit of being the architect of the Knanaya committee of which he was the first secretary. He also moulded the Knanaya Yuvajana Samajam (Youth Association) as early as 1909. For about a quarter of a century he was the secretary of the undivided Malankara Suriyani Church and for 32 years he was the secretary of Knanaya Samudayam. During this period he contributed a great deal to the progress and development of the community.

He was born in Edvazhikkal family Kottayam in 1857. He was the son of Edavazhikkal Kochumathew and Achampila. After his primary education he joined C.M.S. College in 1869 particularly to study English. He maintained a high academic standard and won the praise of his teachers. V. Rev. Philipose Corepiscopa desired to educate this young intelligent boy either in Bombay or Madras. He married Kunjachu at the age of 17, the daughter of Kundalimannil Kuruvilla in 1050 Edvam. The death of Rev. Philipose Corepiscopa caused a break in his studies. His father died in 1052. After his matriculation he worked at C.M.S College for a month. Most of the staff in the college were Anglicans and his dedication to his church forced him to leave the job. He became the editor of 'Pachima Tharaka Kerala Pathaka'.

In 1054 began the case against Palakunnathu Mathews Mar Athanasiose at the Alleppy court for the properties and wealth of Kottayam Suriyani Seminary. Malithara Elias Cathanar and Karickal Kuruvilla Abraham were entrusted with the conduct of the case. Since Kuruvilla Abraham was sick the responsibility was handed over to E.M.Philip. In this period he was appointed the headmaster of Cherthala District school. But he gave up the job as the Metropolitan insisted on the conduct of the case. While at Alleppy he had great

financial difficulty. He even had to starve. Pulikottil Metropolitan, E.M. Philip and Elias Kathanar suffered starvation in these days. He was the right hand of Pulikottil Metropolitan during this time. A European friend of Metropolitan, Mr. Dara, provided financial help for the case. Before the critical verdict was declared he had great mental stress on this issue. He believed that the success of the case was mainly due to the continuous prayer of the Metropolitan. The legal points for the success of the case were provided by E.M. Philip, according to the advocate Ramanatharayar.

A portrait was painted by Kilimanur Koithampuran as E.M. Philip reading out the verdict to the Metropolitan. Most of his life was dedicated for conducting the cases of the Malankara church. But his efforts were not properly appreciated. During this period the publications of the C.M.S Church were sarcastic of the Syrian Christians. In reply to that he started the paper 'Malankara Edavakapathrika'. Many articles on the Syrian Christians issues and their faith were published in the Pathrika. For 18 years he conducted the magazine with much financial difficulty, but finally gave it up. A great number of people came to accept the faith through the pathrika.

From 1060 the charge of the schools was given to him by the Metropolitan. He carried it out successfully. He was made the secretary of the managing committee and also the private secretary of the Metropolitan. At the arrival of H.H. Moran Mor Igantius Abdulla he accompanied the Metropolitan to Bombay. He was held in high esteem and great affection by Dionacius Metropolitan. He was perhaps the person most loved by the Metropolitan.

There was a dispute between the Southists and Northists (Knanites and non Knanites), (The thekkumbhagar and vadakkumbhagar). As a result of which the Manorama daily refused to publish the articles of Knanites. So E.M. Philip established a printing press at Kottayam and edited the newspaper 'Malayala Vinodini'. For five years he was the editor of the newspaper. He was not a man of revenge or hostility

to others. He was strongly committed to his community. It was his earnest desire to take the community to greater heights. In many a critical situation of the Malankara Church he provided brave leadership. He rendered selfless service in maintaining strongly the link between Malankara Church and the Patriarch of Antioch. He wrote several books including his biography, A Reminiscence "*Malankara Sabhaude Rehasiya Pedakam*" and "*The Indian Church of St. Thomas.*" The latter book has been appreciated and acclaimed by all church historians. This book has been a milestone for several later church historians. Other important books are '*Suriyani Madopdesa Palanam*' (സുറിയാനി മതോപദേശ പാലനം) and '*Pappayude Survadipathya Kudaram*' (പാപ്പായുടെ സർവ്വാധിപത്യ കൂടാരം). He was a potential leader of Malayali Memorial held at Kottayam in 1891. Thus he left his indelible mark not only in the spiritual field but also in the political and national circles. He is remembered today as the "*Nazrani Simham*". He left this world at the age of fiftyseven after leading a life of service and church activities.

Malithra Elias Cathanar

Malithra Elias Cathanar is among the less known of the early Knanaya leaders. He was born as the son of Cherian and Naitho in the Malithra family at Neelemperoor in A.D. 1847. He was baptised Elias by his Holiness Elias II, Patriarch of Antioch. He had the rare privilege of accompanying Moran Mor Ignatius Patriarch in his visits to the churches of Parur, Ayyampally, Tripunithara etc.

He had close relations with the Travancore royal family. Every time the royal family went to Vaikom temple by the waterways they stopped at Malithra home and conveyed their regards. The Malithra property was exempted from tax. He worked hard towards the construction of St. George Church in Trivandrum. He was the main organiser of the Mulamthuruthy Synod, convened by the Patriarch at Mulamthuruthi Mar Thoma Church. He was a close associate of Parumala Thirumeni.

He was the right hand of Bishop Mar Gregorioso of Parumala with whom he tried to settle several church disputes. He was respected even by the Hindus as seen in the song of Neelamperoor Pooram festival praises him. He brought poet Kottarathil Sankunny to the Malithra family house to translate prayers and canons from Syriac to Malayalam. He was the vicar of Neelamperoor, Kurichy and Chingavanam churches. At his demise in June 1902 Mar Gregorioso of Niranam diocese said "the wings of Malankara sabha have been broken". He was succeeded by three sons and three daughters. It is essential that we remember the services rendered by Malithra Achan to the diocese and the community.

Mor Severius

As the first Metropolitan of the Knanaya diocese Ghevarghese Mor Severius Metropolitan rendered valuable services to the community in general and to the diocese in particular. He was born in 1851 as the son of Philipose Kasisa, the vicar of Kottayam Valiapally and Kunjachi. Having completed his primary education he went to study theology. Edavazhickal family has produced many leaders including priests. He was the 10th priest of his family and it was only natural that this devout priest became the first Metropolitan of the Diocese. The great reformation movement in Malankara rocked the Knanaya Community. At Kottayam, Kallissery and Ranny many of the Knanites and some priests joined the new movement and created rift in the Churches. At Kottayam valiyapally this movement was strongly opposed by Rev. Fr. Philipose and his son. In 1875 he was made the Vicar General following the demise of Malithra Elias Cathanar. Very soon he was made the metropolitan of the community. He resided at Kottayam Valiyapalli and administered the Knanaya diocese. He was farsighted enough to realise that more than wealth, it was education that would lead the community to greater progress. He introduced several programmes for the education of the Knanaya students. He had great interest in missionary activities, and he

appointed evangelists to carry out theological teaching in the churches. Mission centres were founded at Chingavanam, Kallissery and Kattodu. The construction of Chingavanam seminary began in his period. This was later to become the Bishop's House, Mor Ephrem Seminary.

He was a source of love and selfless service to the community. Mor Severios Educational Fund is his great contribution to posterity. He served the community for seventeen years and the number of churches increased rapidly. He democratised the administration of the church. For this purpose he called a meeting of the parish representatives and formed the Knanaya Association which is the parliament of Knanaya diocese. "The Knanaya Association rules were compiled in 1918 which became a guideline to the present constitution. The initial problems of the Samudayam were ably and successfully tackled by the first great Metropolitan. He passed away on June 11, 1927.

Thomas Mar Dioskoros

Thomas Mor Dioskoros Metropolitan was a pious and dedicated Bishop of Knanaya diocese. Initially he assisted Mor Severiose Geevarghese Metropolitan and took over the administration of the diocese at the demise of Mor Severios. His father belonged to the family of "Thervalady" the family of the knights of thekkumkur royal family. His mother belonged to the famous Ottathycal family where his father resided, as there were no male members there.

Mor Dioskoros led a life of simplicity and piety. He was humorous and witty. In his administrative period the 'Patriarchal Bull No.42 was issued by "Patriarch Elias III". The Bull proclaimed that Knanaya diocese shall always be directly under the holy throne of Antioch. It is a significant document. The completion of Ephrem Seminary took place in his period. He provided leadership for the founding of Vanitha Mandirum at Kurichy and M.S. High School at Ranny. It is quite unfortunate that he later converted himself to the Roman catholic fold.

Thamarapallil Abraham Corepiscopa

Thamarapallil Abraham Corepiscopa is one of the foremost priests of the Knanaya community. He was born as the son of Kuruvilla Kochuthommen and Chachy. He was quiet and pious. His parents decided to make him a priest. His primary education was at Chengannur and high school education at Kottayam. In 1894 he became a priest after learning Syriac from Pazhaya Seminary Kottayam. He was made the vicar of Kallissery church. During the long period of his service he modified the church building. The church property was extended and schools were established under the church. He was very much interested in women's education. He arranged for the yearly memorial service of Anjilimootil Ittythommen Cathanar. In 1915 he was made the Vicar General of Knanaya Samudayam. Later he was made the Administrator of the Knanaya Church. He gave the leadership for the central fund amounting to one lakh rupees with the help of V.O. Markose, M.C. Korah Mundukottackal and K.T. Thomas Kelachandra. He organised missionary activities at Vakathanam, Kolladu, Nedumon and Kattodu. The constitution of the Samudayam was revised in his period as the administrator. He was the trustee of the Severiose Fund. He passed away on 25th October, 1947 at the age of 76.

Rev. P.J. Thomas Corepiscopa

V. Rev. P.J. Thomas the pioneer leader of the Knanaya community was born in Kollam Era 1077 as the only son of Purackal Rev. P.J. Joseph Corepiscopa and Paranickal Mariamma. His primary education was at Ranny and Kozhencerry. He became deacon in 1091 Kollam Era and married Annamma of Padinjarepurackal family at Kallissery.

His High School education was at Kottayam M.D. Seminary and he took his B.A. from U.C. College Alwaye and his M.A. from Madras Christian College. Though he was offered lecturership at U.C. College Alwaye, he decided to serve at M.S. School which was only a middle school at that time, respecting the wishes of his father

Rev. P.J. Joseph Corepiscopa. It was a very unattractive offer for a postgraduate. Priesthood was conferred on him by H.H. Mor Elias III, the Patriarch of Antioch and all the East, in 1013 Kollam era. He was made the Vicar General by bishop Dioskorose. He was mainly responsible for making M.S. Middle School a High School. In his time this school came to the forefront in academic excellence, sports and discipline. The achievements of the school inspired the founding of St. Thomas High School and M.S. Training School. He was an illustrious leader who left a great mark in the public life of the region. He had a vast group of friends from different communities.

From the period of late Thamarapllil Abraham Corepiscopa to the time of H.G. Abraham Mor Climese, the administration of the diocese was meritoriously managed by V. Rev. P.J. Thomas Corepiscopa. V. Rev. P.J. Thomas organised a comprehensive programme of visiting not only the big churches but also the smaller ones and made them feel part and parcel of this diocese. He was assisted by Rev. K.C. Mathew Konrackal in these visits. They travelled mostly on foot to the rural areas. The ever increasing dowry rate which created problems among the commons was controlled by Rev. P.J.Thomas. He organised a system whereby a part of the higher dowry amount was to be given to the fund for poor girl's marriage. He also strictly regulated the wasteful extravagance of church festivals. The Jacobite and Orthodox sections were brought together in a meeting held at Ephrem Seminary Chingavanam during his period with the aim of ending the dispute between the two. The meeting enhanced the prestige of the Knanaya Church among the Syrian Christians. A centralised constitution for the community was also moulded in his time. As an administrator he rendered quiet and selfless service to the community. Even from his student days he was actively involved in the Knanaya Students Association of which he was the secretary. He was the president of the Knanaya Yuvajana Samajam for twelve years. He has left his indelible imprint as the president of

the Knanaya Association, President of Women's Association, President of the Nazreth Asramum at Othera and as the Vicar General and Administrator. The PJT Hall and Library at Ranny is a fit memorial of this great leader.

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VI

SOCIAL ACTIVITIES

From ancient times, the nations of West Asia established trade contacts with the coast of Kerala. These trade contacts were responsible for the settlement of many communities in Kerala. The trading communities received the patronage of the rulers of Kerala. As trade was one of the main sources of income of the rulers of Kerala, they helped and protected the business communities, settled in their Kingdoms. Besides, the local rulers recognised and appreciated the faithfulness and the industrious nature of the Syrian Christian community¹. These favourable factors encouraged the immigration and settlement of Knai Thomman in Malabar.

The early Knanaya settlers established themselves in the city of Cranganore. As a business community, they flourished and prospered in course of time. The Knanaya Syrian Christians gained importance in trade and commerce after the decline of the Roman Empire. They exported pepper to foreign countries². The trade of pepper in the city of Kodungalloor was in the hands of these Syrian Christians. It was their monopoly in this trade that made the local rulers to invite them to their capitals and offer facilities for their settlements. The local rulers also permitted them to establish markets in their Kingdoms and to collect tolls from the people³.

The community received importance since there was no other community in Kerala that was engaged in trade. Because of trade, the community was responsible for the prosperity of the Kingdoms. The coffers of the rulers were filled with money due to their brisk trade. The Knanaites were also engaged in shipping. They brought several products noted for their medicinal value and distributed them in the country. This trading was a very honourable and responsible one. They worked hard for the prosperity of the Kingdoms⁴.

In 1524, there was a clash between the Muslims and the Jews in which many were killed⁵. This forced the Knanites to migrate from Kodungalloor towards the fertile regions in search of agriculture and business. They settled in Kaduthuruthy, Udayamperoor, Chungam and Kottayam⁶.

Their main occupation was agriculture and trade. The Knanaya settlers established "*Angadis*" at Kaduthuruthy, Kottayam and Ranny. Even today, Puthenangadi, Thazhathangadi and Valiyangadi in Kottayam, Pazhavangadi and Angadi in Ranny carry these names. As there was no trading caste in the Hindu hierarchy in Kerala, this trading community was well accepted in the field of commerce. This business community prospered with the passage of time. The Christian settlements were known as '*Compolams*', '*Angadis*', '*Theruvus*'⁷ etc. When the Portugese came to Kerala in the fifteenth century, they saw the Christian community engaged in trade and commerce. These Christians received charters and many rights from the rulers of Kerala for trade⁸. The Portugese were able to make one section of the Knanaya community to accept Roman Catholicism. Thereafter this group of people received the patronage of the Portugese. After the expulsion of the Portugese, the Dutch came to Kerala. The Dutch maintained cordial relations with the Syrian Christians⁹. The Knanites who opposed the Portugese were well received by the Dutch East India Company.

After the conquest of Cochin in 1795 by the English, the East India Company took over the protection of the Christians. The English

missionaries took advantage of this and used the opportunity to reform the Syrian Christian community. The Knanaya community opposed the reform movement and they moved into interior regions and concentrated on agriculture. They cultivated paddy, coconut, pepper and arecanut. They settled on the banks of rivers like the Meenachil, Pumba, and Manimala¹⁰.

The Knanaya community concentrated on trade and agriculture throughout the centuries. They worked hard and contributed their portion to the development of Kerala. Several members of the Knanaya community have been eminent industrialists, Planters, and agriculturists.

Educational and Charitable Activities

The spread of Western education in Kerala is to a great extent, due to the service of the Christian missionaries. They started schools, colleges and orientation centres for the benefit of the whole society. They gave equal opportunities to the backward communities as well as to the oppressed classes. The local Christians and the civil authorities followed the path of the Christian missionaries and started different educational institutions. In the long run, the whole society was reawakened in the field of education. At a time when the government and other social agencies were inactive in education, it was the Christian agencies that provided the necessary infra-structure for education. Besides, they also created social awareness in the people. In Kerala majority of the higher education centres, industrial training centres, nursing and other paramedical institutions are run by different Christian denominations.

The Knanaya community also realised the importance of education. They imparted education to the people irrespective of caste, creed and religion. The Catholic and the Syrian Orthodox factions have maintained colleges, schools, training schools, industrial training schools and nursing schools to cater to the needs of the public. Thousands of people have benefited through the educational agencies of the Knanaya

community. Many of the higher education centres in Kerala were established in towns and cities until very recently. Women's education was given importance.

St. Thomas College, Ranny established in the hilly area of Pathnamthitta District is giving opportunity for higher education to the dominant agricultural community. Had these institutions not been established in these areas, it is doubtless that hundreds of youngsters belonging to agricultural and poor families in these rural areas would have been deprived of higher education.

St. Thomas College, Ranny was founded under the leadership of St. Thomas Church Ranny in 1964¹². The whole community as well as the public gave financial support. The college commenced with 230 students and 10 teachers. It was upgraded in 1968 with the present strength of 2500 students, 87 members of teaching staff and 58 non-teaching ones. This college, situated in a hilly village, is catering to the needs of thousands of agriculturists and working class. Mor Severios Teachers Training School, Ranny was established in 1949 giving admission to 40 students a year¹³. This is the only training school for teachers run by the Knanaya community.

'Othera Nazareth Asramam' was started in August 1962 with ten poor and destitute children. It was built in the five acres of land donated by the late P.T. Mathew to the Knanaya Syrian Community¹⁴. The most important achievement of the Asramam is the Balamandiram (Children's Home) where at present there are sixty children studying in various standards from 1 to 10 and 3 in the Balawadi and 4 children studying for the Industrial Technical Certificate course. The Balamandiram is functioning with the help of World Vision of India. The children take part in arts and physical exercises and competitions. They also get practical experience in agriculture and cattle-rearing.

The Nazareth Asramam family counseling centre is the only institution in Pathanamthitta Taluk where solution is sought for such evils like family quarrels, torturing of women, drinking, mental stress,

children's problems etc. through expert counselling with the help of the Central Social Welfare Board¹⁵. A branch of the centre has been started at Eraviperoor for the benefit of the public. Many cases are registered at the centre every year and several discussion classes and seminars are conducted. Eminent clergymen are visiting the centre to lead the discussions.

Five crushes have been instituted at Velianad, Neelamperoor, Thiruvan-vandoor and Othara where about 150 children are being cared for and training is given to their mothers in nursing their young ones.

The Asramam and the Welfare Board together organise ten day's camp for the rural women and impress in their minds ideas about child welfare, health, nutritious food, self employment and other issues pertaining to women and society.

Girls who are financially backward and have failed in the Secondary School Leaving Certificate Examination are given free coaching with the help of the central social welfare board to enable them to write the examination again successfully. Child survival and child development programmes are to protect and save pregnant women and their children.

Stenography course is offered at the Asramam Industrial Training Centre. This Industrial Training Centre recognised by National Council for Vocational Training levies only a nominal fee from the students. It is a great relief for the poor children of the neighbourhood. High percentage of pass has been recorded by the Industrial Training Centre so far.

The Asramam also tries to bring the rural women under an organisation and now there are 12 such Samajams which try to make women self-sufficient by giving them work experience in various fields with the help of central welfare board.

With a view to making the Ashramam self sufficient 3.5 acres of land is now planted with rubber¹⁶. Cows of the best category and

poultry farms, vegetable gardens, beehives and hares also help to make the Asrama self supporting.

The first Metropolitan of the Malankara Syrian Knanaya Samudayam started an education fund to help the poor students of the community to attain higher education. From the time of inception hundreds of individuals have benefited by this. In 1922 this fund was started with a capital amount of Rs.2002/- and is now having an asset of 454282/47. A special trait of this fund is that the benefactor is expected to repay the amount after he gets a job¹⁷.

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VII

KNANAYA CHRISTIANS TODAY

Knanaaya Suvisesha Samajam

Knanaaya Suvisesha Samajam was formed in 1936. But twice the annual meeting was not held. The diamond jubilee of the association was held only in 1998. In April, 1936 under the leadership of the young priest Rev. Kuriakose Charuvuparampil and T.O. Philip Thamarapallil, about 40 youths from Kallissery, Eraviperoor and Ranny assembled in Ranny. They spent one day in prayer and meditation. By the inspiration of the Holy Spirit they decided to have an evangelical association. According to the decision taken, a prayer meeting was held at M.S. High School Ranny from August 31 to Sept. 2nd¹. In that gathering about 65 people from seven churches assembled. In that prayer meeting the first step of the formulation of the By-law of Suvisesha Samajam was taken. Rev. Fr. Kuriakose Charuvuparambil was elected president and T.O. Philip Thamarapallil who was an active spiritual worker, became the secretary of the Samajam.

In the above nine churches Sunday prayer groups and Women's Associations were organised and three leaders were elected for each of them. Another important decision taken was that during Onam vacation an assembly should be held for prayer and meditation. When

H.G. Clemise Metropolitan took over the charge of the Knanaya diocese, a constitution of the Suvishesha Samajam was introduced and the Metropolitan became the president of the Samajam. Rev. Fr. C.P.Kuriakose became the vice president. In 1956 when Rev. Fr. Kuriakose retired from the post, Rev. Fr. K.C.Thomas Kaniyamalil took over the charge. Rev. Fr. K.C. Thomas Kaniyamalil was a good meditation leader. After him the following priests became vice presidents, Fr. K.C.Thomas, V.Rev. M.C. Samuel Moozhiyil, V. Rev. M. K. Thomas Manalithra, Fr. P.J. Abraham Parackamannil V. Rev. N.K. Abraham Madukkolil, Fr. Abraham Thomas Valiyaveetilpadickal, Fr. C.K. Mathews and V.Rev. P.M. Mathews.

On July 29, 1953 the founder secretary T.O Philip passed away. He was the real soul of Suvishesha Samajam. In 1953-54 Rev. Dn. Mathew Pulickavil was appointed secretary. That year the training programme for Sundayschool teachers began. Thereafter the activities of the Sunday school were held under the Samajam. During the time of Abraham Mathew, Samajam took steps in social activities and it still continues under the leadership of Rev. Fr. C.K.Mathew Cherumadakala and Mathew Abraham Ambalappattu.²

Under the auspices of the Samajam more than thirty evangelical workers serve in several parishes. On the first Friday of each month and the following Saturdays and Sundays parish missions work in different parishes. They gather on the fourth Saturday of the month for prayer and for discussions on biblical topics and acquire more knowledge. Contributions are collected from members of the Samajam every month and utilized for such purposes.

Knanaya Sunday School Samajam

Knanaya Sunday School Samajam has been functioning since 1936 in the Knanaya diocese. It began under the guidance and leadership of Suvishesha Samajam. In the beginning it was under the leadership of A.K. Abraham Alummoovil Kallissery. He was appointed the travelling secretary of the Sunday School Samajam³. In 1951 when

Mor Clemise Abraham Metropolitan took over the charge of the Knanaya diocese, Sundayschool Samajam became very active. It was decided to give Christian education to children from five to eighteen.

V. Rev. P.M. Mathew Pulickavil was given the responsibility of the Suvisesha Samajam and Sri. K.K. Thomas Kuzhiparampil was appointed secretary of the Sundayschool Samajam. In 1954 a special training class for Sunday school teachers was held in Kallissery. In 1955 the whole diocese was divided into three districts and one Sunday school inspector was appointed for each. From 1957 to 1978 P.P. Chacko Pallathra was the Sunday school secretary. He rendered valuable services to enrich the Sunday School Samajam. Since 1951 Kudosetho¹ Sunday has been accepted as Sunday School Day. On that day all Sunday School teachers and students have their confession after which they receive the Holy *Qurbano* (Communion). From 1960 onwards centralised examination system was introduced. In 1963 textbooks for standard one to ten were prepared by Rev. Fr. V.C. Geevarghese at the instruction of the Metropolitan. Later these books became the approved textbooks of Malankara Sunday School Association. Following the peace in the church in 1958, Sri. P.P. Chacko was appointed Director of the Knanaya Sunday School Association.

In 1979 Fr. P.M. Mathew Pulickavil was appointed Director and Fr. C.K. Mathews was appointed secretary of the Sunday School Samajam. They published textbooks for every class. Now every year the Sunday School Association conducts special meetings for students. This helps the students to dedicate themselves to the service of our Lord. Since 1999 Fr. Rajan Kulamada serves as Director and Fr. Mathew Kuruvilla Erithipattu is the secretary.⁴

Knanaya Vanitha Mandiram, Kurichy

During the tenure of H.G: Dioskoros Metropolitan '*Vanitha Mandiram*', an institute for the spiritual progress of women, was started. This institution was constituted for the uplift of women in

spiritual and social fields. H.H. Patriarch Elias III laid the foundation stone of the Vanitha Mandirum in 1931. Parayil Mannamma, Malithra Achamma, Edavazhickal Achamma and Enchalithra Ruth were the first inmates of the Vanitha Mandiram. A girl's High school is functioning there. The first manager of the school was E.P.Mathew Edavazhickal. After getting government recognition Rev. Fr. P.T. Thomas Peedikayil was the first headmaster. During the early days, day to day functioning of the institution was conducted by getting donations from the public.

On Sept. 21, 1967 Pallathra Mariamma and Thythra Chachiamma were professed as sisters by H.G. Clemis Metropolitan. Now there are fourteen sisters staying at the Vanitha Mandiram, ministring the Lord. KanaThoma Hostel Kottayam, Working Women's Hostel at Vadapuram and Kottayam and English Medium Schools at Vadapuram and Kurichy are some of the institutions functioning under the Vanitha Mandiram. Since 1977 Rev.Sr. Shyno has been serving as the Mother Superior. An orphanage has been functioning under the leadership of the sisters since 1970. It began with ten children and at present 20 of them are living there and they are getting proper education.⁵

Knanaya Student's Association

While Kalarickal Unnittan Master was teaching at M.D. School, he used to convene the meetings of Knanaya students on Sundays at his house. He tried to mould them as people who would be of service to the society. Eventually an association of the Knanaya students was first formed during the 1920s at Kottayam. Very few students were studying at that time in CMS College and M.D. Seminary School. But later the association was defunct for many decades. The rebirth of the Knanaya Students Association was in 1961, when a meeting of the Knanaya students studying at the various colleges in and around Kottayam, was held at the sole initiative of the late Chev. V.O. Abraham. at his residence. A committee consisting of Chev. V.O. Abraham (President) Prof. K.K. Abraham Koipurath (Vice President) Philip

Kuruvilla Aronnil (Secretary) Ammukkutty Malel (Joint Secretary) P.K. Skaria Kunnathil, T.J. Zachariah Thattampampil, M.P. Jacob Manimaleth, Baby Jacob Vackamattom and Jai Kuruvilla Nediyooshathil was formed.⁶

Soon the activities of the Association were expanded to Changanacherry and Thiruvalla colleges due to the zealous working of the committee. Fr. A.P. Joseph Anjilimootil and Fr. M.K. Thomas Manalithra gave impetus to the students campaign. During this period regular meetings, one-day conferences and seminars were conducted.

After Chev. V.O. Abraham Dr. T.S. Thomas took charge as president of the association and it continued to function well among our students. In 1987 Pallyampil Chinnamma Mathew was the President and Pullazhiyil Chacko Punnuse was the Secretary. The Association activities were enhanced in this period.

After their tenure the Association became inactive and in 1991 with the blessings of our bishop Abraham Mar Clemis Metropolitan the association was activated by Fr. Joseph Kulathramannil as President and Dias Idikkula as Secretary and by a team of very enthusiastic students. The activities during this time included leadership camps, seminars and meetings.⁷ Branches based in all colleges were started and the activities were organised under three zones, coordinated by the central leadership. The Association is still working very effectively among our students. During this time eminent teachers such as Prof. Baby Abraham Pullikkavil, E.T. Abraham Ezhimayil, Prof. Mathew Jacob Thelapurathu, Prof. M.C. Korah Melal and Prof. Mary Kurian provided guidance and leadership to the student community. The Association is still working very effectively among our students aiming at the educational, social and cultural uplift of our youngsters.

Knanaya Congress

In 1901 the young men of the Knanaya community in and around Kottayam under the leadership of Kalarickal Unnittan Master met at

Unnittan Master's residence at Kottayam and formed an association aimed at the spiritual, educational, social and cultural development of the Knanaya youth in particular and the Knanaya community in general. The Founder President of the Association named as 'Knanaya Yuvajana Samajam' was Kalarical Unnittan Master and the Founder Secretary was K.C. Abraham Kallampampil.⁸ After the untimely death of Unnittan Master in 1902, at the invitation of E.M. Philip Edavazhickal our young men studying at the various institutions in Kottayam and Thiruvalla met and decided to conduct the official inauguration of the Samajam. Accordingly the official inauguration of the Samajam took place at Kottayam Valiyapalli in 1908. E.M. Philip was chosen as the President and K.C. Abraham continued as the secretary. Branches of the Samajam were organised in the various Knanaya parishes. The early enthusiasts included Dn. Skariah Malithra Dn. Abraham Thazhathu Dn. P.J. Thomas Purackal, P. Cherian Parayil, V.J. Chacko Vayala, M.J. Joseph Mallusseril, K.J. Kochukorah Kalarickal, Thomas Mozhacherry, Abraham Kodathu, I.M. Thomas Edasseril, T. Joseph Vazhayil E.P. Mathew Edvazhickal.

The annual meeting of the Samajam was conducted every year in one or other of the Knanaya Churches and it used to be a general festival for the Knanaya community. In 1947 at the annual meeting held at Ranny, bye-laws were adopted which was approved in 1948 by the then Knanaya administrator Rev. Fr. P.J. Thomas Purackal through his circular No. 49.

In 1985 according to the wish of our Bishop H.E. Clemise Abraham Metropolitan, in order to bring the Knanaya community as a whole under one association, the name of the Samajam was changed to '*Knanaya Congress*' and its first president was Fr. K.J. Jacob Kochuthazhathu other members of the first Knanaya Congress Committee were Jacob Stephen, C.T. Joseph, Adv. Kurian Joseph (Vice Presidents), Adv. Rajan Markose (General secretary), Elias Skariah and Roy Kavalacakal (Joint Secretaries).⁹

Knanaya Congress provides an extensive social forum where people of the community could come together. It is the meeting place and the venue for social interaction. It is a family meet where people across the country and even from outside the country come together. The traditions, church songs "purathana pattukal" and Margamkali etc. are staged and remembered. It is a great social occasion convened once a year whereby the customs and age old manners are handed over to the younger generation. The youth have an occasion to meet one another. The Knanaya Congress is an effective platform for

The following are the former Presidents: M/s Kalarickal Unnittan Master, E.M. Philip, V. Rev. Skariah Corepiscopa Malithra, V. Rev. P.J. Thomas Corepiscopa Purackal, Rev. Fr. Markose Kelachnadra, Rev. Kuriakose Cheruvuparampil, Rev. Fr. Jacob Kuriackal, Rev. Abraham Vayala, Rev. E.O Mathews Edasserith, Rev. Fr. K.C. Mathews Kuttolamadam, Fr. P.I. Abraham Parackamannil, Fr. M.K. Thomas Manalithra, Fr. A.P. Joseph Anjilimoottil Fr. P.E. Abraham Parakunnumpuram.

Former Vice Presidents are M/s Kurian Joseph Kunnirickal, T.T. Kuruvilla Thamarapallil, K.K. Kuriakose Kampakkalunkal, Jacob Sstephen Valanjanthuruthu, C.T. Jacob Kelachandra, P.P. Andrews Pallathra.

Former General Secretaries are M/S K.C Abraham Kallamparampil, V.O. Markose Vathakkattu, Dn. Joseph Mozhacheril, V.T. Abraham Vazhayil, M.I. Abraham Manimalathu, Dn. P.J. Thomas Purackal, I.M. Abraham Edasseril, K.K. Chacko Kallemannil, Dn. E.O. Mathews Edasserith. Dn. V. Abraham Vayala, Jacob Stephen Valanjanthuruthil, Joseph Kurivilla Palakudiyil, M.A. Chacko Manimalathu, P.M. Punnose Puthenveetil, P.E. Skariah Parayil. M.A. Zachariah Malithra Dn. Abraham Thomas Vazhayil. P.J. Thomas Purackal, E.T. Lukose Edavazhickal, Jacob P. Thomas Purackal, Prof. P.K. Skariah Kunnathil, Abraham Lukose Vazhayil, C.T. Philip Kelachandra, T.O. Philip Thattaniath, E.U. Philip Edavazhickal².

transferring value systems and beliefs of the elder generation directly to the younger generation. The programmes of the Knanaya Congress reiterate and affirm the traditions of the Knanaya community. The programmes are mainly for three days and one session is reserved for the women in the community. They get ample opportunity to reveal their potential. Several women leaders provide able leadership to the womenfolk of the community. There are special sessions for the student community. Great public speakers and national leaders are invited to the meeting. On the whole it is a colourful and joyous occasion for the community.

Social and Political Leaders

The Syrian Knanaya community has contributed lavishly to public life. Before, during and after Independence many Knanites left their foot-prints in the social political and cultural fields of Kerala and outside.

Mr. V.O. Markose had been Minister in Travancore Cochin cabinet. He was very active in political and social fields and was a member of the three-member committee appointed for the unification of Travancore and Cochin.

Mr. Vayala Idikkulia was an ardent politician and social worker. He was member of Travancore, Travancore-Cochin and Kerala Legislative Assemblies. He was one of the outstanding founderleaders of 'Kerala Congress'.

Mr. Jacob Zachariah, Kunnirikal represented Ranni constituency in the Kerala Assembly during 1970-76, Prof. K.A. Mathew, Kuttivelil was the Principal of St. Thomas College, Ranni till 1983 and represented Ranni and Kalloopara Assembly constituencies. He also served as Minister in the Kerala cabinet. He was a member of the Kerala Public Service Commission as well.

Mr. George, Kelachandra, who rose to leadership in Karnataka was MLA and minister in Karnataka.

Mr. Skariah Thomas Kalathil represented Kottayam constituency in the Indian Parliament.

Mr. Raju Abraham, Kandanattu now represents Ranni constituency in Kerala Assembly.

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VIII

BEGINNING OF THE KNANAYA PARISHES

It was a wonder for the Portuguese to see Christians here with Hindu culture¹. The Christian Churches in Kerala were built basically according to the Eastern Syrian plan with ornamental carvings of the Hindu type². The ancient Churches like Kalloopara and Chengannur are examples for structural designs of Hindu temples mixed with christian thought. Later most of the Churches were dismantled and built on the Portuguese model.

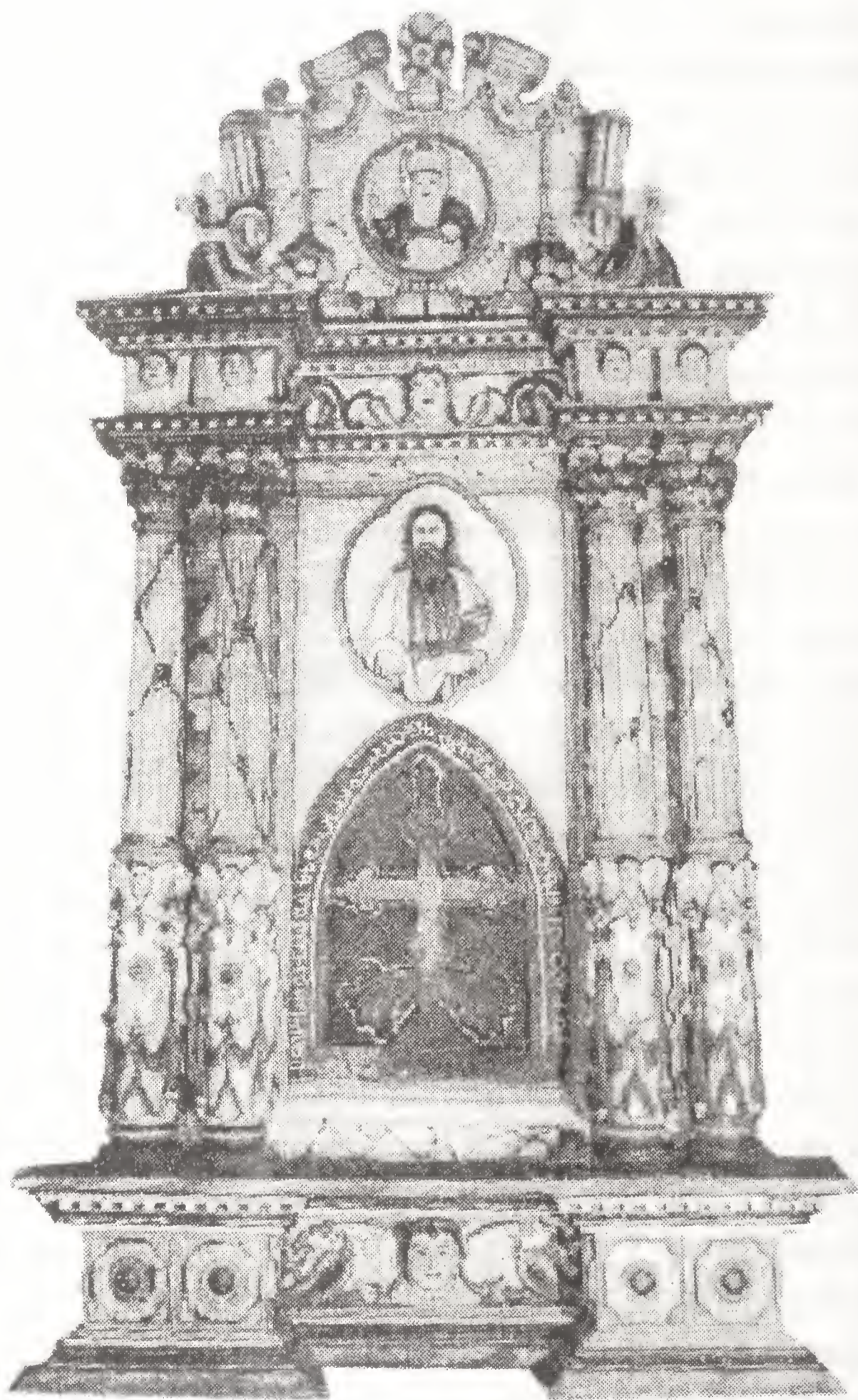
Processions were common for festivals which were similar to the processions in the temples. Parasoles which were the symbols of royalty were also used for the processions³. Lamps hanging on iron chains as those hung in temples were used in the Churches. Flag staffs were also seen near the western door of the Churches. Beating of drums and such other items in the typical Kerala way was usual during festivals. 'Margamkali', and 'Chavittunatakam' were seen during festivals in Christian Churches⁴. Most of the ancient Churches in Kerala and the Hindu Temples and Kovilakams are seen to be situated very near to each other. The Churches at Palayoor, Paravur, Kaduthuruthy, Kallissery etc are very near to the Hindu Temples. The nearness was not merely in their situation, they had very close

connections too. For important festivals, there was the practice of sending elephants, lamps etc. to the temples from the Churches till very recent times. It can be seen that in some places the Nazranis (Syrian Christians) had exercised some powers in the administration of the temples. Of the eleven members of the governing body of the Anaparampal Bagavathi temple one was a Syrian Christian viz Vallezhathu Panicker. The invitation sent from the temple to Vellezhathu Panicker in 918 M.E requesting him to be present at the temple festival is still carefully kept⁵.

Before the coming of the Portuguese the administrative setup of the Syrian Christian Churches were in toto democratic. The affairs of the churches were managed by the representative body or pothuyogam presided over by the parish priest. There were training centres attached to the parishes that were conducted by the Malpans (gurus or teachers) who gave training in Bible doctrines and Syriac language. Those who got such training were later elected by the general body meeting for ordination. (The Bishops had only spiritual supervisory powers over the general body and the parish in general). The Bishops were allowed to visit Churches only with the consent of the general body of the Church⁶. With the arrival of the Portuguese the Bishops got power to rule. The Portuguese Archbishop Menazes summoned the meeting of the representatives of the Church so as to gain control over parishes. It was only with the Portuguese rule that the Bishops got 'power to rule'. The tragic event that followed the portuguese rule in Kerala Church was the unhappy episode of the split. One group left the traditional Church to form the Roman catholic Church.

Kottayam Valiya Palli

The Knanaya Syrian Christians, who migrated to Kerala during the middle of the fourth century. A.D., are believed to have founded their first Church at Kaduthuruthy in the 16th Century. The Kottayam Valiyapalli is the first Church of those who migrated from Kaduthuruthi



കന്നനായ സമുദായത്തിന്റെ വിശ്വാസ പൈതൃകം വിളിച്ചോതുന്ന
കോട്ടയം വലിയപള്ളിയിലെ ചരിത്രപ്രസിദ്ധമായ
പേർഷ്യൻ കുരിശ്

to Kottayam. This ancient church, with a Persian cross inside and very rare ornamental sculptures, used to be the place of worship for all Christians of central Travancore for a long time. It now belongs to the Knanaya Jacobite Syrian Christians.

The King of Thekkumkur Dynasty gave the Knanites a plot at Vattarkunnu to construct a church with the motive of enhancing the progress and prosperity of the Kingdom. The Knanites were known for their trade connections in those ancient days. Construction of the church began in 1725.⁷

Allotment of the plot was in the name of Rev Fr. Mathew of Moozhiyil family, who was the first priest of the church. The document was written in the old Naanam Moonam script, a copy of which is given in the third and fourth pages of '*Malankara Sabhayude Rahasya Pedakam*', a reminiscence written by the well-known church historian E.M.Philip.

The first building was constructed with timber. Ornamental work was beautifully carved on the wooden pillars which remained there till 1061, when the Poomukham (western face of the building) was demolished. The reconstruction of the entire edifice was completed on 12 Kumbhom 752.⁸

The canopy of the main altar has many paintings drawn with the juice of green leaves. The crosses seen inside the two side madbahas on the north and south are in Persian style. Around them are writings in the ancient Persian language. One of the crosses is big and the other small. On the big cross could be seen writings in Syriac (Estrangela script). A cross of this type was dug out from St. Thomas Mount near Mylapore by the Portuguese in 1547, with writings similar to those on the cross in Valiya Palli. These crosses are called Persian crosses since the writings on them are in Pahlavi language. It is for this reason that some modern historians think that the Knanaya migration took place in the eighth century.⁹

Around the altars are many ornamental pieces of work. The frames of the main doors are made of granite rock. The steps are also made of granite and the inscriptions seen on them are in ancient languages. There are sculptural works inside the church though many of them have disappeared with the passage of time and in the course of the general reconstructions made from time to time.

The church bell is unique. It is huge and its sound can be heard at a distance of 5 kilometres. The tongue of the bell is attached to a wheel which, when turned with the help of a very strong chord, makes the bell ring.

Priests rose in the church mostly from the family of the first one, Moozhiyil Rev. Fr. Mathew. The Moozhiyil family had migrated to Kottayam from Kaduthuruthy and settled down in Edavazhibhagom and Valiangadi making the Chala Street. Those who settled down at Edavazhibhagom are now the Edavazhickal family. His Grace Most Rev. Severius, the first Knanaya bishop and the famous historian E.M. Philip were members of this family.

The church and the parishoners were under the Patriarch of Antioch, having discarded the Catholic faith and power. In course of time, the Catholics left the church and built another for themselves in 997. The non-Knanites who were once members of the church are now the parishoners of the Kottayam Cheriya Palli.¹⁰

St. Mary's Church Mazhukeer (Sunk in oblivion)

"The Church built in Mazhukeer was there for thirty years when at the time of the flood it was removed from there to the hilly area and by the will of God there arose a church at Kallissery which had no equal."¹¹

The above words give the meaning of an extract from the song of Kallissery Church. It is clear from it that Mazhukeer church was built at least thirty years before Kallissery church and that religious worship existed there. This fact was not taken into account at the time of calculating the period of the construction of the church.¹²

The earlier chapters have described the trade connections between Kerala and Western Asia and about the Knanites emigration. Kodungalloor was from early times an important Indian port city. It was the first Knanite centre. Pepper was the main produce that they had for trade for which they migrated to other parts of Kerala. They gradually settled down in Mulamthuruthy, Kaduthuruthy, Udayamperoor and Mazhukeer and spread to the south. In 1524 there occurred a fight (war) between Muslims and Jews when many people were killed. Christians and Jews from Kodungalloor went as far south as Kaduthuruthy and Mazhukeer in search of convenient places for cultivation and trade. Tiruvalla, Mazhukeer and places lying between the rivers Pampa and Manimala were found to be fertile for agriculture and farming. In olden days rivers were used for travel by boats and the river banks were found good to settle down.

The Pampa is as important a river as the Periyar. The author of *Periplus of the Erythraean Sea* referred to it in chapter one. He describes the harbours 'Nilkindia' and 'Bakary'. Muziris is on the bank of the Periyar. Nilkindia is 500 stadia away from Muziris. That is in Pandya Kingdom. Bakary is 150 stadia away. Tindis Panthalayini may be Kollam. Nilkindia is Nakkda of today. Bakary is Purakadu. Historians say that the river Baris is Pampa¹³. The land near Pampa river is quite good for pepper cultivation. The famous Sabirimala and Aranmula temples are on the banks of the Pampa. It is generally believed that Sabarimala temple was a budhist temple in ancient days. Groups of merchants from Pandianadu used to have trade connections via Nilakkal. The parishioners of the old Chengannur church were in touch with Nilakkal¹⁴. The Knanites of the early days were members of this parish. It is therefore no wonder that Knanites settled in the famous Pampa valley and Nakkada (port) harbour area. Chengannur old Syrian church is on the bank of the river Pampa. It is probable that the Knanites who were members of the old church had settled there long before.

The land lying between the Pampa and Manimala rivers was fertile and suited for cultivation. So more Knanites arrived there. They took part in church service in the old Chengannur church. Special consideration was given to the Knanites who worshipped there. Powathil Punnose was an important person among them. At a marriage party in the church Powathil Punnose and his people failing to get special privilege became angry and returned with the determination to get a new church built for them at Mazhukeer. It is said in the history of Kallissery church that they found a place on the bank of the 'Varattar', a tributary of the Pampa. It was on the eastern side of Mazhukeer near Thrikal Temple, that the church was built. The place is now known as Palliayyam, (Church compound).

The first Vicar of Mazhukeer church is said to have been a certain Rev. Fr. Mathai who conducted services there for thirty years according to the song of Kallissery church (when was it is not known for certain. May be from the time that Knanites left Kodungallur and settled at Kaduthuruthy.)

The flood that happened thirty years after the church was built changed the course of Varattar river resulting in the fall of the roof of the church which flowed with the current. However the local people joined together and succeeded in dragging the roof to the hilly place near Arattuferry (ആരട്ടുകടവ്) and built it there. That hill is known as Pallimala at present¹⁵. The late Rev. Fr. Madukolil Abraham and Rev. Fr. E.O. Mathews Edasserithu wanted to buy the place and tried, but did not succeed. Now Pallimala belongs to the Catholic church. It is near the Arattu Kadavu (ferry) of Srivallabha Temple. How long services were conducted at the hill place is not certain. There is no evidence regarding that. If that period is also taken into account, it can be believed to be the mother church of Knanaya Jacobites in the locality.

From very early times the Arat festival in Tiruvalla temple was at the ferry near Pallimala. That ferry is even today known as Arattukadavu. Quarrels between the residents on either side of the

river were very common in those days. Most of the Knanaya Syrians lived on the southern side of the Varattar. The prominent potties (Nampoothiris) residing on the northern side set fire to the church and destroyed it. Consequently the Christians on the southern side joined together and found out the site of the present Kallissery church. The compound is near Azhekavil Temple. The ancients did not find any difficulty in building temples and churches near to each other because there was religious toleration in those days.

In 1953 Mazhukeer church was rebuilt. When the soil for the foundation of the new church was taken from Kawanal ferry, remnants of the old church were found there. The foundation of the old church, broken bricks and many small crosses were discovered. That proves that there were old tombs there with small crosses on them. These were deposited at the foundation of the new church. When the work of the new church was progressing the people saw the ancient things. Some of those people live even today and when they remember these facts they feel so very happy. It was the renovation of the old church that happened in 1953. Church utensils including the silver cup and vessels used for worship and stone cross must have flowed with the flood. If those who are interested in the study of ancient times make an attempt to study about the area from Kavanal Kadavu to Pallimala they may succeed in discovering more such things. People with no interest in the study of ancient history, being traditionally traders, do not generally pay attention to such things.

St. Mary's Church, Kallissery

The song of Kallissery church describes how the leaders got permission to build the church. They went to see the Thampuran of Moothedathu Vanjipuzhamadam to request for permission. The thampuran was a minor. So they approached the mother (Thampuratty) who was looking after all the matters. Her manager had also requested for the same compound. So the clever mother said that the compound can be given to those who can present gold dust to the madam. When

they heard it they were greatly disappointed and left. Later the leaders Uthup Palliampil, Mangalthil Uthup, Maliekal Mappilla, Powara Mapilla and Powathil Mappilla, again discussed the matter and thought of finding out another suitable place for the church and dispersed. The aged mother of Palliampil Uthup enquired about the matter and comforted them saying that she would find a solution to the problem. In the morning Palliampil Uthup again called the others and they decided to see the Thampuratti. In the morning the old mother gave a grass basket containing gold dust to her son and they went and presented it to the Thampuratti. This is described in the ancient song of Kallissery church¹⁶.

The church thus built came to be known by the name of the compound. The area around the church became Kallissery. There is no place with that name in revenue records. This compound is in Umayattukara. The nearby villages are Mazhukkeer up and Mazhukkeer down.¹⁷ People who lived in the 18 villages from Ramankeri to Ranny were members of the church and not of Kottayam Valiapalli.

The famous Angilimoottil Itty Thomman Kathanar, who is a 'silver star' of the Malankara Syrian church was the vicar of this church. That priest who occupies a prominent place in the history of the church, once fought for the true faith and was the cause for the Koonan Cross Pledge which prevented the Portuguese and Roman Catholics from advancing and spreading. He is justly known as the 'Second Yacob Burdana' who zealously guarded the Syrian Church from enemies. Any church history without him would be incomplete.¹⁸

The common belief that Kallissery church was started in 1580 was accepted without taking the first thirty years in Mazhukeer and a few years at Pallimala into consideration. It was in 1550 that Kottayam Valiapalli was built. Because no one knows when the 30 years begin, common sense requires us to believe that Mazhukeer church was there before 1550. Moreover, the three days Lent is

observed in Knanaya church only at Kaduthuruthy and Kallissery on a big scale. It may be that just as Jonah was saved from the sea, the Knanites believed that God saved them. Hence the observance of three days Lent. This observance is only in the two above mentioned churches. It can be believed that those who came from Kodungalloor may have started the church at Mazhukeer just as some of them started the church at Kaduthuruthy. The stone cross in front of Kallissery church and the picture of St. Mary there are also believed to be very ancient.

St. Thomas Valiyapalli, Ranny

The Knanaya residents in Ranny, who were members of the Kallissery Church founded St. Thomas Valiapalli in Ranni in 1742 A.D. Now it is the biggest parish in Knanaya diocese and the first Christian Church in Ranny. 'Kottayil Karthakkanmar' who were really the rulers of Ranny in those days gave the spot named 'Devarkunnu' for the establishment of the Church in the name of St. Thomas accepting gold dust nominally in return without any future taxation.

Many years ago a member of the Kannathmury family went to Mylapore to see the tomb of St. Thomas. On the way his relations and businessmen who were with him tried to persuade him return to Ranny due to the tediousness of the travel, but they did not succeed. At last they agreed to build a church in Ranny in the name of St. Thomas and brought him back. Accordingly, the work of the church building started at Devarkunnu near the river Pampa. He did not even go home when the construction was in progress and it is believed that he died and was buried there.¹⁹

The old church building was demolished in 1901 and a new one was built which was sanctified by the saintly bishop Mor Gregoriose of Parumala. In 1999 it was again renovated and the present building came into existence.

The cross on the main road side on the west of the church was constructed at the expense of a pious woman of the Karamkuttiyil

family. The big stone cross on the east was built by the Kaippuzha family in 1780.

A manuscript Syriac Bible which was used here for 70 years was presented to historian Cludius Buchanan who visited the church in 1806. This is now kept in Cambridge University Library. It is a matter of pride for Knanites that the original of the handwritten Bible translated into Malayalam by Kayamkulam Philipose Remban, which was printed in Bombay and published there, was the first Malayalam Bible and that it was given from Ranny Valiapalli.²⁰ H.H. Patriarch Peter III, Elias III, Jacob III and the present Partriarch Zakka I visited the church which is the mother of all the churches in Ranny. The parishioners of the church have a broad outlook which resulted in the establishment at Ranny of first grade college, two high schools, a teachers, a training school and one Middle School, for the education of all the residents of Ranni. The Church has been able to produce eminent people in political, social and religious fields. Mor Clemis Abraham Valiya Metropolitan, present Knanaya bishop, and MLAs Vayala Iducula, Jacob Zacharia Kunnirickal, Raju Abraham Kandanattu are all products of this church. Prof. K.A. Mathew MLA also was a member of the parish.

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3. Ibid P, 43.
4. Dr. P.J.Thomas, Malayalasaahithyavum Christianikalum. P, 3.
5. George Varghese, Malankara Nazranikalude Jathulkrishtavum, Rajayasevanavum. PP, 47, 48.

6. Dr. P.J. Thomas OP: cit PP, 316, 317.
7. E.M. Philip, Rehasiya Pedakam- 1956, P, 3.
8. Ibid P, 4.
9. Fr. Joseph Kulathramannil, Kottayam Valiapally, Vision, Vol.No.1, April-1993 P, 4.
10. Ibid P, 4.
11. History of Kallissery Church, 1958, P, 56.
12. K.K. Ramachandran Nair, Kerala Charithrasakalanga, 1969, P, 99.
13. Jacob Philip, Chengannur Pazhaya Suriyanipalli - 1992, Article - I
14. Op.cit, p, 12.
15. Ibid P, 56.
16. Joseph Kulathramannil, Kudasa Smaranika - 1998, P, 23.
17. Joseph Kulathramannil, Suriyanisabha Jyothisukal - 1996, PP, 9,10.
18. Quarter Millenary Souvenir, Ranni Valiyapalli, 1993 P, 10.
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IX

THE APOSTOLIC FAITH OF THE SYRIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH

Introduction

The faith of the Universal Syrian Orthodox Church is one of the most ancient and the richest. It has been handed down through generations and has stood the test of time. It is biblically based and supported by apostolic traditions. The centrality of the faith of the Syrian Orthodox Church lies in the belief in the Triune God.

THE HOLY TRINITY

God is primarily conceived of as three in one; the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Although there are three distinct persons with individual entities, it is still one Godhead. This is a mystery and therefore not fully comprehensible to human intelligence. Although there are only a few direct references to the Trinity in the Bible (Matt. 28:19; Jn. 14:16,17 etc), there are a few passages that do point to the reality and operation of the Triune God. (Jn: 6:23; Jn: 1:1, Mk. 3:29; Jn. 6:9; Mk. 14:62; Rom. 8:26 etc).

Church Fathers compare the Triune God to a nuclear family. The Holy Trinity is like a family characterised by mutual relationship of love, equality and sharing. The prayers and songs of the feast of Pentecost in the Syrian Orthodox Tradition contain the thrust of the Church's teaching on the Holy Trinity.

THE INCARNATION

One of the important doctrines of the Church is that of the incarnation, The word becoming flesh (Jn. 1:14) It is the belief that the second person of the Holy Trinity, the Son, in the fullness of time became a human being without sin while remaining fully God. It is a mystery that God used Virgin Mary to be instrument of this mysterious intervention of God in human history. It is believed that from the very moment of conception Jesus was fully human and divine. Godhead and humanity were joined together in one person. The divine and human natures were indivisibly united. The Son of Man was truly the Son God.

God's incarnation in Jesus Christ was part of the divine plan of salvation. God had to become human so that human beings could reach divinity. To save humanity of its sin (atonement) God decided to become human and give his life on the cross. Thus, the goal of incarnation was to restore the image and likeness of God in humanity which had been lost due to sin. The incarnation brought humanity back to God. In St. Paul's words, God was in Christ reconciling the world into himself (2 Cor. 5:19).

The Holy Sacraments

Dr. Kurian Corepiscopa defines sacraments as the visible acts of invisible means of grace, which our Lord ordered and instituted as necessary for the salvation of the human race".¹ The Syrian Orthodox Church believes in seven Sacraments which, according to the Church, were commanded and instituted by our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, himself the greatest of all sacraments. The holy sacraments are the channels through which God's grace is conveyed to human beings.

The following are the seven sacraments: Baptism, Confirmation (Anointing of Holy Mooron), Eucharist, Confession, Ordination, Matrimony and the Unction of the sick.

Baptism: As in the case of all other sacraments, baptism was also commanded by Jesus Christ (Mt. 28: 19). In the early Church, it was through baptism that new members were admitted to the Church. (See Acts 2:38-41; 1 Cr 1:13; Acts. 10:47; 19:3, Rom. 6:3 etc). The real meaning of baptism is explained by St. Paul when he says that through baptism, we die and rise up with Jesus Christ. In other words, baptism is the way we identify with and participate in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ (Rom 6:1). We are adopted and thus become the children of God through the act of Baptism. As Jesus died and resurrected once and for all, baptism is also done once and for all and therefore it cannot be repeated. This is clearly said in the Nicean creed as well.

Infant Baptism

The Syrian Orthodox Church believes, as do most of the other Episcopal Churches, in infant baptism. Although there are no direct references for or against child baptism it has strong biblical foundation. Mk. 16:16 (Believe and be baptised...) is often quoted to argue that children are not able to believe and therefore cannot be baptised. For one thing, the authenticity of this verse in the gospel of mark is in question. Many scholars believe that this section, called the longer ending (Mk. 16:9-16), was a later addition and was not part of the original gospel of Mark. Even if we grant it for argument's sake, it is clear that the evangelist was addressing the gentiles who were not believers in Christ. When they left their old faiths, they were required to believe in Christ before they could be baptised. There is nothing unnatural about it. Even today, if some one leaves his/her faith and accepts Jesus Christ, he or she will be baptised irrespective of his or her age.

There are several instances in the Bible where we are told that several families were baptised by Apostles. Cornelius and his family

were baptised (Acts 10:48). Other examples are Ludia and family (Acts 16:15). The prison keeper and family (Acts 16:33); Crispus and family (Acts 18:8) and stephan's family (1 Cor. 1 : 16).

It would be illogical to assume that these families were without children. The Greek word for 'family' in fact denotes the adults, the infants and even their servants not slaves. Moreover, baptism as all the other, sacraments are not experiments to test one's faith, but means of receiving God's grace. There are several passages in the Bible to prove that children are able to receive God's grace. On more than one occasion, Jesus Christ blessed children. Even before their birth, while in the womb, children received God's blessings and grace. Jeremiah (Jer. 1:5), John (Lk. 1:15, 41) David (Ps.71:6) etc. are good examples.

The godfather or godmother takes the responsibility to bring up the infant in the Christian faith. On behalf of the child, the mediator takes a pledge towards this effect and declares the faith in Jesus Christ and renounces satan. The Bible also teaches us that God can bless some one as a result of someone else's faith. For instance, John rejoiced in the mother's womb due to his mothers (Elizabeth) faith (L.k 1:41). Jairus' daughter got back her life on account or her father's faith (Mk. 5:21). Other examples are Mt. 9:2; M.k 9:24, Mt. 8:5-18; Mt. 15:5-21 etc.

Holy Mooron

Baptism is incomplete without the anointing of the Holy oil ("Mooron") on the candidate. In the Syrian Orthodox Church, the sacraments of baptism and Holy Mooron are administered together. The anointing of the person by the Holy oil represents the coming of the Holy spirit.

In the old Testament tradition, priests and kings had to be anointed with Holy oil (See Lev. 6:20; 8:10; 10:7, 1 Sam 10:3, 16:18, 1 Kings 1 :39). Moses was instructed by Yahweh to consecrate the Holy Oil (Ex. 30:22)

The acts of the Apostles testify that the anointing of the Holy spirit has to be received by the baptised (Act 8:14, 19:6) While in the western Churches, anointing of the Holy oil (Confirmation) is postponed to a later age after one's baptism, in the Eastern tradition, it is due at the time of baptism and it has strong base in the early Church. Tertullian who lived in the 2nd century. AD said:

“After this (baptism), having come out from the bath, we are anointed with a blessed unction according to the ancient rule...”²

Confession

As sin is a reality in this world, remission of sin is imperative. During his earthly life, Jesus Christ forgave sins of many who went to him. Jesus Christ also gave authority to forgive sins in his name to his apostles. (Ref. Mt 18:18; 16:18, 19; Jn. 20:21-23). The apostles exercised this authority and forgave sins on many occasions (Acts. 19:18; Jn. 1 :9). In the Syrian orthodox Church, this apostolic authority is bestowed on to the priests. It is the apostolic succession which grants the clergy in the Church the authority to forgive sin. The sacrament of confession also has a therapeutic/healing effect on the one who confesses his or her sins. The priest on account of his apostolic tradition and succession, acts as the representative of Jesus Christ. The sacrament of confession was instituted by Christ Jesus on the day of resurrection itself. Breathing the spirit of God on to his disciples he told them.

“Who so-ever sins you remit, they shall be remitted, and who so-ever sins you retain, they shall be retained”. (Jn. 20:21-23).

St Cyprian urged believers to confess sins to their priests. He said:

“Confess this (sin) to the priest in a straight forward manner and in sorrow making an open declaration, of conscience”.³

The Holy Eucharist

The Holy Eucharist is known as the “Queen of Sacraments” In SYRIAC, it is called “Qurbano” which means “nearness”. The faithful

come nearer to God through their participation in the Holy Communion. It also means “sacrifice”, denoting the supreme sacrifice of Jesus Christ on the cross. All other sacraments are completed by the Holy Eucharist.

The sacrament of the Holy Eucharist was also instituted by Jesus Christ himself. The night before his death on the cross, Jesus Christ gathered them in the Upper Room of Mark. There Jesus blessed bread and wine and shared it with his disciples. The bread and the wine are considered as the broken body and, shed blood of Jesus Christ. Jn. 6 is an explication of the mystery of the Holy communion. Partaking in the body and blood of Christ is required for the salvation of humanity. The divine commandment to us is to commemorate the sacrament until Christ comes again.

The early Church continued the tradition of breaking of bread in its fellowship. St. Paul also exhorts the Church about the importance of communion at the Lord’s Table in his letter to the Corinthians (1 Cor. 10 : 16; 11 : 29). According to the faith of the Syrian Orthodox Church, the elements used in the sacrament, bread and wine, become the body and blood of Jesus Christ. It is not mere symbolic representation. When Jesus broke the bread, blessed and gave it to his disciples he told them that it was his body itself. He did not say that it represented his body. How do the elements get transformed into the real body and blood of Christ is a real mystery which is beyond our comprehension. It is possible through the word of God and the power of the Holy Spirit. The words of the institution are found in the Gospels (See Mt. 26:26-28; M.k, 14:22-24 ; Lk. 22:19-20; and also in 1 Cor. 11 : 23-29).

The liturgy of the Holy Eucharist is one of the richest traditions of the Syrian Orthodox Church. The most celebrated liturgy in the Orthodox tradition is the rite of St. James. Almost all other rites are derived from this Rite.

The faithful are required to prepare themselves to receive holy communion. It involves prayers, confession of sins, and fasting. The

receipients of the Eucharist experience spiritual nourishment and eternal life.

Holy Orders

Holy Orders refer to the sacrament of priesthood or ordination. People receive God's grace and authority to act as God's representatives on this earth as priests.

Jesus Christ chose and appointed twelve apostles and mandated them with the authority to exercise spiritual ministry. The apostles handed over this authority (priesthood) by consecrating (bishops) and by ordaining presbyters (priests) and deacons. Priests are appointed as Ambassadors of Jesus Christ (2 Cor. 5 : 20). Not every one is called to this gift of grace. As St. Paul says, one does not take it for oneself. (Heb. 5 : 4). The ordained people are a special lot who have received the laying on of hands from Jesus Christ through these apostles.

Priesthood existed in the Old Testament tradition as well. We read in Genesis 14 : 1-20, that Malchisadekh, the priest of the Most High offered sacrifice with bread and wine. In the Levitical priesthood, there were High Priests, priests and levites. Their reponsibilities and functions were clearly defined and demacrated (Lev. 16:1-7; Num. 3:4, 13:3-6, 3:7-9) etc.

The new Testament states that deacons were ordained. (Acts 6:6.) Stephen was one of them. The word 'deacon' means 'servant', and deacons were ordained to serve at the table. 'Elders' or presbyters ("Kasiso: in Syriac) were also ordained to minister to the local congregations (see Acts. 10:30; 16:23 ; 20:17; 1 Tim. 5 :17 etc). The order of bishops also was instituted in the early Church. They were known as 'Presidents' or "Overseers". (Acts 20:17,28; Tit. 1 :7-9; 1. Tim. 3:1-7; 5:17-20). Laying on of hands was integral to the of act of ordination. It is the prerogative of Bishops to ordain priests and deacons, (Tit. 1 :5; Tim. 5:22) to give orders (1 Tim. 3:1-13); to lay hands upon (1 Tin. 5:22).

The Holy Matrimony

For Christians, marriage also is a sacred sacrament, through which a man and a woman are united by God. Marriage also was ordained by God. God saw, when creation was over, that it was not good for Adam, to be alone and 'Eve' was created as a partner for him. As we read in Mt. 19:5-6; Jesus Christ affirmed the importance of the sacrament of matrimony.

The sanctity of marriage is such that the Church instructs the couple that the contract of marriage should be kept for ever, that they should be faithful to each other till their death. Marriage is not considered to be breakable. Because marriage is not simply a contract, but a divine sacrament and hence the bond of marriage must be kept for ever. The relationship between a husband and a wife should be modelled after the relationship between Christ and his bride, the Church. (See Eph. 5:2-23). It should be based on mutual love and is supposed to be permanent. What God has Joined, let no one else put assunder...." (Mt. 19:6). Based on this commandment, the Syrian Orthodox Church does not permit divorce.

The Anointing of the Sick

The anointing of sick people by priest has been observed as a sacrament by the Christian Church from the time of its birth. St. James describes it in his letter (5 : 13-15). The apostles, during their ministry, anointed and healed the sick on many occasions. This sacrament is instituted for the healing of the sick. The priest while applying the Holy Oil on the body of the sick persons prays. "Through this oil and by God's most tender mercy, may the Lord forgive your sins you have committed by sight, hearing". This sacrament can be administered as and when required by a person in a time of sickness, as it is instituted with the purpose of bringing about healing to the sick.

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1. Kurian Kaniampampil, The Syrian Orthodox Church, Tiruvalla, 1989, p, 20.
2. Ibid P, 30.
3. Ibid P, 41.

GLOSSARY

Angadi	-	Market
Cathanar	-	Priest
Chavittunadakam	-	A christian folk lore drama adapted from the west
Compolams	-	Market
Hadusa	-	Happiness
Karuvapatta	-	Cinnamon
Malpan	-	Syriac word for teacher
Mangalia Vattakali	-	Ceremony conducted on the previous day of marriage
Minnukettu	-	Tying the cross around the neck
Milanchi pattu	-	Song at the smearing of the Henna
Milanchy	-	Henna
Margam	-	Way
Margamkali	-	Folk dance
Maha Edavaka	-	Grand Diocese
MISSERROR	-	I feel pity
Nazranis	-	Christians
Nadavili	-	Cheering
Panicker	-	Title for who teach the use of weapon
Patriarch	-	Head of the church
Parichamuttukali	-	A gladiatorial dance
Puthenangadi	-	New market
Pazhavangadi	-	Old market
Tali	-	A neck ornament tied as marriage badge
Thalikettu	-	Tying of thali at marriage
Thazhakuda	-	Decorated silken umbrella
Theruvu	-	Street
Thiruhridaya	-	Sacret Heart
Thalakuda	-	A kind of umbrella
Venthenmudy	-	Crown
Vellavirippu	-	Spreading of white cloth.

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APPENDIX : I

TRANSLATION OF COPPER PLATES

May coquarangon be prosperous, enjoy long life and live one hundred thousand years, servant of God, strong, true, just full of good works, reasonable, powerful, over the whole earth, happy, conquering, glorious rightly prosperous in the ministry of God, in Malavar, in the great city of the great idol. While he reigned at the time of Mercury of February, on the seventh day of the month of March, before the full moon, the same king, coquarangon being in Carnelur, there arrived in a ship Thomas Cananeo.

chief man, who had resolved to see the uttermost part of the East. And some men, seeing him as he arrived, went to inform the king. And the king himself came and saw and called the said chief man Thomas, and he disembarked and came before the king, who spoke graciously to him; and to honour him he gave him in surname his own name calling him Coquarangon Cananeo. And he received this honour from the king and went to rest in his place. And the king gave him the city of Magodayarpatnam for ever. And the said king, being in his great prosperity, went one day to hunt in the forest, and the same king surrounded the whole forest. And he called in haste for Thomas, who came and stood before the king in a lucky hour. And the king questioned the soothsayer. And the king afterwards spoke to Thomas, (saying) that he would build a city in that forest. And he answered to the king, first making reverence, and said: "I desire this forest for myself." And the king granted it to him and gave it for ever. And at once the next day, he cleared the forest and cast his eyes on it in the same year, on the eleventh of April, and gave it as an inheritance to Thomas at the time and year aforesaid, in the king name, who laid the brick for the church and for the house of Thomas Cananeo, and made there a city for all (of them), and entered the church and there made prayer the same day. After these things, Thomas himself

went to the king palaces and offered him presents, and afterwards he asked the king to give them land to him. And his descendent; and he measured two hundred sixty four elephant cubits.. and gave them to Thomas and his descenants for ever; and at the same time sixty -two houses which immediately were erected there and gardens and trees, with their enclosures, and with their paths and boundaries and inner yards. And he granted him seven kinds of musical instruments, and all honours, and to speak (?) and to walk like a king, and that at the weddings the women might give a certain signal with their finger in their mouth, and he granted him distinct weeight, and to adorn the ground with clothes, and he granted the royal fans, and to double the sandal (mark) on the arm, and a royal tent (2 or 3 words not deciphered) in every part of the kingdom for ever, and besides five tributes to Thomas and to his lineage and to his confederates, for men, and for women, and for all his relative, and to the children of his law for ever. The said king gave it in his name.

Witness: these persons:

Codaxericanden

Cherucaraprotachatencomeren, the King's Chief door-keeper

Areundencounden, the King's councillor

Amen atecoundenguerulen, Captain of the army.

Chirumalp (or?) tatiriucramen-Comeren,

Regedor of the East side in Malavar,

Perru (1) Ualatiataadi (ten),..... Singer (?)

of the said King.

Perubal (atia) tacottocoude, guard of the King's port (?) (gate?)

Bichremen Chingunen (de Carturte) the said king's chamberlain

Anan iperumcouil, Scrivevener of (all?) the affairs, with his own hand wrote this scaled (? sedilat (a) ?) and also lucky writing.

Translation by Fr. Hosten. Kerala Society Papers. .

Series 4, pp. 180-182

ചെല്ലപ്പടിന്റെ പരിഭാഷ

“ദേവന്മാരുടെ ദിവ്യദാസനും, ബലവാനും സത്യവാനും നീതിമാനും സൽക്കർമ്മ പരിപൂർണ്ണനും, വിവേകിയും, ഭൂമി മുഴുവൻമേലും ശക്തിയുള്ളവനും, സൗഭാഗ്യവും വിജയവും മഹിമയും പൂണ്ടവനും, ദേവന്മാരുടെ സേവയിൽ നേരംവണ്ണം ഐശ്വര്യം ഉള്ളവനും ആയ കോച്ചേരകോൻ (Cocurangon) മലമണ്ഡലത്തു മഹാദേവർ പട്ടണത്തു വിജയിക്കുമാറാക, ദീർഘായുസ്സോടെ നൂറായിരത്താണ്ടിരിക്കുമാറാക.

മേല്പടി കോച്ചേരകോൻ പെരുമാൾ വാഴുംകാലം മീനമാസം ഏഴാം തീയതി ബുധനാഴ്ച ശുക്ല ചതുർദശിനാൾ അവൻ കൊടുങ്ങല്ലൂർ ഇരുന്നരുളുമ്പോൾ, പൗരസ്ത്യദേശത്തിന്റെ അങ്ങേയറ്റത്തെ ഭാഗങ്ങൾ കാണണമെന്നുറച്ച് ക്നായി തൊമ്മൻ എന്ന നസ്രാണി കപ്പലേൽ വന്നിറങ്ങി. അവൻ വന്നപ്രകാരം ചിലർ കണ്ട് പെരുമാളോടുണർത്തിച്ചു. പെരുമാൾ തന്നെ എഴുന്നള്ളി കണ്ട് മേല്പടി തൊമ്മൻ മാപ്പിളയ്ക്ക് ആളയച്ചാറെ അവൻ കരയിറങ്ങി പെരുമാൾ തിരുമുമ്പിൽ വന്നു, പെരുമാൾ അവനോടു സംസാരിച്ചരുളുകയും ചെയ്തു. അവനെ ബഹുമാനിക്കുന്നതിന് കോച്ചേരകോൻ കാനായൻ (Cocurangon Cananeo) എന്ന് തന്റെ സ്വന്തം പേർ അദ്ദേഹം അവനു കൊടുത്തു. പെരുമാളിങ്കൽ നിന്ന് ഈ പദവി വാങ്ങി അവൻ തന്റെ ഇടത്ത് സ്വസ്ഥമായിരിപ്പാൻ പോയി. പെരുമാൾ അവന് എന്നേക്കുമായി മഹാദേവർ പട്ടണം എന്ന നഗരി കൊടുക്കുകയും ചെയ്തു.

മേല്പടി പെരുമാൾ ഈ വലിയ ഐശ്വര്യത്തിൽ ഇരിക്കയിൽ ഒരുനാൾ വനത്തിൽ വേട്ടയാടാൻ പോയി. പെരുമാൾ കാടൊക്കെയും വളഞ്ഞു. അവൻ തൊമ്മനെ ബദ്ധപ്പെട്ടു വിളിച്ചിട്ട് നല്ലനേരത്ത് അവൻ പെരുമാളിന്റെ മുമ്പിൽ വന്നു നിന്നു. പെരുമാൾ ജ്യോത്സനോടു ചോദിച്ചതിന്റെ ശേഷം, ആ വനത്തിൽ അവൻ ഒരു പട്ടണം കെട്ടണമെന്നു കല്പിക്കുകയും ചെയ്തു.

അവൻ വണങ്ങി പെരുമാളോട് ഈ അടവി അടിയത്തിനു തന്നെ വേണം എന്നുത്തരം പറഞ്ഞു. പെരുമാൾ അത് അവന് എക്കാലത്തേക്കും വിട്ടുപോയി കൊടുക്കുകയും ചെയ്തു.

അനന്തരം വേറൊരുനാൾ അവൻ കാടുതെളിച്ച്, മേല്പടി ആണ്ട് മേടമാസം പതിനൊന്നാം തീയതി രൂക്കൺപാർത്ത്, ഒരു നല്ല നാളിൽ നല്ല നേരത്തു പെരുമാളിന്റെ പേരിൽ അത് അവന് അവകാശമായി കൊടുത്തു. പള്ളിക്കും

ക്നായിത്തൊമ്മന്റെ വീട്ടിനും പെരുമാൾ ഒന്നാം കല്ലിട്ടു. അവിടെ അവൻ എല്ലാവർക്കുമായി ഒരു പട്ടണം കെട്ടി പള്ളിയിൽ കേറി അന്നുതന്നെ അതിൽ പ്രാർത്ഥിക്കുകയും ചെയ്തു.

ഈ കാര്യങ്ങളുടെ ശേഷം തൊമ്മൻ തന്നെ പെരുമാളുടെ തൃപ്പാദത്തിങ്കൽ ചെന്ന് തിരുമുൽക്കാഴ്ചവെച്ച് തനിക്കും തന്റെ സന്തതികൾക്കുമായി ആ ഭൂമി കൊടുക്കണമെന്ന് പെരുമാളോടപേക്ഷിച്ചു.

അദ്ദേഹം ആനക്കോലാൽ 264 കോൽ അളന്ന് തിരിച്ച്, അവിടെ ഉടൻ പണിത 62 [രോസ് മെത്രാന്റെ റിപ്പോർട്ടിൽ മറ്റു രണ്ടു സ്ഥലത്ത് 72 എന്നു കാണുന്നുണ്ട് (Fr. J.K.)] വീടുകളോടും അയലുകളും അവയുടെ വഴികളും അതിരുകളും അകമുറ്റങ്ങളും ഉൾപ്പെട്ട പറമ്പുകളോടും കൂടെ തൊമ്മനും അവന്റെ സന്തതികൾക്കുമായി എന്നെന്നേക്കും കൊടുത്തു.

ഏഴുവിധ വാദ്യങ്ങളും, സകല പദവികളും പല്ലക്കിൽ യാത്രയും രാജാക്കന്മാരുടെ സ്ത്രീകളുടേതുപോലെ കല്യാണങ്ങൾക്കു പെണ്ണുങ്ങളുടെ കുരവയും അദ്ദേഹം അവനു കൊടുത്തു. സ്ഥാനമാനവും (dignity) നിലത്തു പരവതാനികൾ വിരിക്കുന്നതിനും, മെതിയടി ഇടുന്നതിനും, പന്തലിടുന്നതിനും, ആനമേൽ കേറിപോകുന്നതിനും ഉള്ള അവകാശവും കൂടെ അദ്ദേഹം ദാനം ചെയ്തു.

എന്നിടേ, തൊമ്മനും അവന്റെ സന്തതിയ്ക്കും അവന്റെ കൂട്ടക്കാർ ആണുങ്ങൾക്കും പെണ്ണുങ്ങൾക്കും, അവന്റെ സകല ബന്ധുക്കൾക്കും, അവന്റെ മതക്കാർക്കും അഞ്ചുവകക്കരം എന്നെന്നേക്കുമായി പെരുമാൾ കൊടുത്തു.

മേല്പടി പെരുമാളുടെ ഒപ്പ്,

ഈ പ്രദാനമാർഗ്ഗം ഇതിനു സാക്ഷി:-

- കോടശ്ശേരി കണ്ടൻ
- ചെറുകടപ്രത്തു ചാത്തൻ കൊമരൻ (ദാരപാലകൻ)
- അച്ചുതൻ കണ്ടൻ (ആലോചനക്കാരൻ)
- അമേനാട്ടു കണ്ടൻ കേരളൻ (പടത്തലവൻ)
- ചെറുമലപ്രത്തു ത്രിവിക്രമൻ കൊമരൻ (കിഴക്കൻ ദേശാധികാരി)
- പെരുവള്ളനാട്ടു ആതിത്തൻ ചിങ്ങൻ (ഗായകൻ)
- പെരുവള്ളനാട്ടു ചാത്തൻ കൊമരൻ (തുറമുഖ പാലകൻ)
- കടുത്തുരുത്തി വിക്രമൻ ചിങ്ങൻ (കൊട്ടാര കാര്യക്കാരൻ)
- ഐരാണിപ്പെരുങ്കോവിൽ (എഴുത്തുകാരൻ)

APPENDIX II

HIS HOLINESS MORAN MAR IGNATIUS ELIAS III THE PATRIARCH OF THE HOLY THRONE OF ANTIOCH AND OF ALL THE EAST

No. 42

(SEAL)

Apostolic blessings and God's Grace be showered on your fore heads our spiritual sons, Mar-Diascorus, Thomas Metropolitan, our spiritual sons Cor Episcopas, Vicar General, Vicar, Arch Deacons, Trustees of the Churches, elders of the community and all other members of the Knanaya Churches.

May this blessings be through the prayers of our Holy Mother Mary and of all the Saints of our churches.

Our beloved spiritual Sons,

Even though we wished several times to come over to Malabar and see all of you in person after we assumed the charge of the Holy Patriarchial Throne at Antioch in the year of our Lord 1917, by God's will and pleasure, our desire has materialized only at present. We have reached your country some eleven months back and was confined more than three month in your Seminary and rest of the period in some of your Churches. We had therefore ample occasion to see all of you in person and remain happily with you all and understand your problems. The love regard and the respect you had expressed and shown to us are indications of your absolute and traditional faith to Holy Throne of Antioch for which we extol, the greatness of our Lord the all powerful. In the year of our Lord 345, your forefathers together with Bishop Joseph Of Uraha and his Ecclesiastical assis-

tants set foot and settled down in this part of the country. From that day onwards we know that you remained and still remains as a separate community and church in Malabar. We know that due to the absences of the Ecclesiastical Head, a person from your own community you remained under the different Dioceses in Malankara for an interim period subject of course to the provisions contained in your constitution. But later in the year of our Lord 1910 in response to your requisition to our able and wise predecessor the late lamented Abdaloha II Elias Ignatius Patriarch, he was kind enough in issuing a Bull declaring all of your churches to remain under one diocese. He further Ordained and appointed as your Diocesan Metropolitan the late lamented Mar Savarios Gheevarghese, During his reign for a period of 17 years as Metropolitan the number of churches and Kasseesas of your community had increased very much and the missionary works in your community had progressed to a very great extent. We also understand that during his period of administration a Seminary was started and several Schools were opened. Over and above those good acts, the late Mor Savarios had taken several steps for the proper and better administration of your community. The time honoured Knanaya Committee was enlarged in its jurisdiction and it has now taken the new form, the presents Knanaya Association.

We are glad to understand that for the proper and best administration of your community, your Association had codified several Rules and Regulations; We further understand that a capital fund was raised to meet the Educational expenses of the poor children of your community and also had taken several for the betterment of your clergy. For these and other benevolent and proper acts done at the behest of late Mar Savarios We pray our Lord to shower His benevolent blessings on him. We had ordained and appointed Mor Diascorus as his successor in the year of our Lord 1926 and we are glad to understand that he correctly follows the footsteps of his predecessor. We would further like to see him taking more energetic and enthusiastic steps for the betterment of your community in its various activities.

We believed that the Knanaya community as a whole is standing united as one church paying homage and owing allegiance and absolute faith in the Holy Throne of Antioch and the community is keeping aloof from the internal quarrels of the Malankara Jacobite church, is surely because of the act of our predecessor who had wisely allowed your churches to be formed as a separate and independent Diocese. Following his imprimatoure in this behalf, for the everlasting interest and future wellbeing of the Knanaya Community We also feel it necessary that for your interest, you shall remain likewise. Therefore as per the submission made before us by the knanaya Association by its resolution passed at Neelamperoor church on 13th and 14th of Thulam and also considering the special features and tradition of your community, We hereby declare and reaffirm that Knanaya community shall remain as one diocese with independent administration. We also reaffirm and declare that all the Knanaya churches and it's parishners shall not join any other diocese but shall ever remain as members of the Knanaya Diocese.

A person selected by the Knanaya Association and who is approved by the Holy Throne of Antioch shall be ordained and appointed as Metropolitan for your diocese.

Irrespective of the provisions contained in the constitution of the Malankara Church, the Knanaya Diocese shall have full liberty and right of its own to have it's Metropolitan get elected and ordained by the Holy throne of Antioch. He shall administer the diocese according to the tradition and accepting the principles enunciated in our canon directly but subject to the supremacy of the Holy throne of Antioch. The constitution of the Knanaya Association was read over to me and we are very much pleased to hear those provisions, and we hereby give assent to the provisions thereof. It is only just and proper that the Metropolitan shall administer the affairs of the diocese in consultation with the working committee and he may as far as possible pay attention to the written requisitions and resolutions passed by the Knanaya Committee and the Knanaya Association.

By God's grace we are pleased to promulgate certain Rules and procedure for the ordination of your clergy as per our canon, at the same time taking also into consideration the relevant factors of the modern times. We have no objection in soliciting the esteemed suggestion of your Association in the matter.

In this context we also earnestly urge your responsibility to establish a seminary and Dayara. We hope you all will whole - heartedly co-operate in the completion of this Vanitha Mandiram (Women's Building) named after our Saint Mary Magdalen, for which I had laid the foundation stone.

This would be sufficient at present for the love and affection you had shown to us May God the Almighty bless you all, irrespective of big or small, in all your actions.

Our Father which art in heaven etc.etc.etc

1932 Makaram 26,
Kallissery Church.

(Small seal)

APPENDIX - III

ANCIENT SONGS

When of yore to immigrate to Malankara
The gentlemen Tomman Kinan essayed - Verily.
The king's sons belonging to seventy-two families-
These good citizens, four hundred,
Embarked by the grace of the Catholicos - Verily
The foreigner who came entered Cranganore,
He entered. and when he visited the Chera King, in plenty
He presented gold and coral and pearls and obtained the country.
He came, at an auspicious time endeavoured, and gained his end. Verily
That his greatness may be manifest in all the world around,
He gave him marks of honour - the fivefold band, the eighteen castes.
The horn, the flute the peacock feather fan, the conch, the canopy, - Verily.
The gold crown and all other good ornaments.
He gave him marks of honour: the walking - cloth, the day - time lamp,
The seven kinds of royal musical instruments, and three lingua cheers, - Verily
Drums and lingual cheers and all good pomp
The king with pleasure gave,
And all these did Tomman kinan accept, _ Verily
He got also the copper - plate deed fittingly engraved.
The marks of honour which the Kings King gave
Last for all the days of the existence of the sun and the moon.- Verily
For all the days of the existence of the sun and moon.



Have you forsaken us-day, oh Lord?
To-day we have none behind to support us;
We have neither city nor language;
Our beauty will lie only in our ornaments:

Your jurisdiction must be extended to our abode.
 The lord, on hearing this request,
 Was filled with joy, and he answered:-
 As occasion demands, good abuns (= bishops)
 I shall send you within twelve years.
 The seventy-two families of seven clans,
 You must go united.
 My children, go you in joy
 With jacket, veil, rosary and cloth for the head,
 Chain, wristlet, and beautiful cross
 And good provision got together,
 They went in a multitude some distance with umbrellas,
 Then, when they reached the sea-shore to go on board,
 Friends, masters, and relatives all
 Embrace one another kindly.
 Tears are on the chest, and it is wet;
 None is witness but God.
 My children, shall we meet again after you go to India?
 Remember us always, that relationship may not be sundered.
 Always bear the ten and the seven in mind;
 Do not turn away (from the faith).
 By the grace of God
 The three ships sail side by side.

(another tune)

By the will of the Triune God St. Thonas (is) in Mylapore.
 Without mishaps we arrived in Cranganore.
 In the land of the Malabar king our reputation to-day
 Must be fittingly recognised by the monarch.
 At the sight of the king the heart was gladdened.
 To clear the way for the king the heirs of St. Thomas
 I found you to-day not transgressing the commandments.
 They offered presents of coins and good gems.
 Give us according to our presents, and write in the presence of witnessess.
 We were given enough religious privileges;

The Malabar monarch that day engraves on a copper-plate.
The king went, and saw the land and gave it away.
In the year Soval after the birth of the Lord,
The honoured Kinayi Thomman received the copper-plate document.
Willingly did carpenters come and build a church and city.
After having lived in comfort for some time,
To our joy there came two ships in the outer sea.

Strophe VI.

To preach the religion to Coromandel and Malabar
Men were appointed in good Mylapore.
To preach the religion except in Coromandel
The Tarisas (Christians) failed, and Bagudasi (Bagdad) heard of it.
The Catholicos was sorry and his heart grew weary.
In all the eight directions--in Pandya's land, and in Coromanadel (= in Cholas land)
and in China--
The sole truth was spread according to the way of St. Thomas.
May Jesus help those who did so!

Strophe VII.

The Catholicos and the Rampans (monks) were all sorry.
Who will now go in time to govern Malankara (Malabar?)
One from those seated in the assembly answers:--
One of the twin-born must go to Malankara;
We are the sons and nephews of the same person.
And Kinayi Tomman made up his mind to go.
Seventy--two families go on board the ship;
There is abunan (-- bishop), priests and deacons;
And there are 400 persons, including men and women.
By the blessing of Catholicos the ship sails through the sea.
The sea-shore is thronged with (people) shedding tears.
The ship sails through the waves of the red sea and the black sea
Mahodevar of the Malabar King was sighted and forthwith the sails were furled.

Strophe VIII

The foreigner (Thomas Cana) saw the King and received land:
The noble city and church were finished.
Those who heard of this came and entered the fort.
Saw the good abundan (--bishop) and received his blessing.
In the good city of Jerusalem.
In the land where emeralds and pearls grow
Of the lord, resplendent as a dancing peacock,
The complexion, I may say, resembles gold of ten and a half carats.
He speaks like a Chinese flute:
He is not lacking at all in religious zeal.
That noble lord wants to go and govern Malabar:
He started by Bava's (the Father's) command;
He obtained his permission and forthwith set out on his journey.

(Another tune)

He was given high social rank.
He was given the several privileges of a Catholicos.
And he was fittingly sent off with regal musical instruments.
In his holy hand he received the Book,
The holy Catholicos, according to the custom instituted by St. Thomas

(Another tune)

He went to Urha and obtained permission.
He received the good signent ruby.
In his wish he was in Cochin, in excellence he was in Rome.

(Another tune)

Together they started and embarked in a shirp,
Set sail in the direction of Malabar.
And landed in Cranganore.
On their sighting the Cochin harbour,
Eighteen salutes were fired.
When he enters the city gate, after the fring of the salutes.
The sepoys they give a shout,

And all their limbs languish.
On the royal palanquin a flag was raised.
And in it sat Raja Varma.
Chempakasseri also is with him.
And the king of Vettattunad too.
Mar Joseph of Urha goes.
Four priests are near him,
There are many deacons too.
Sepoys are close to him,
And Thomman Kinan is with him.
You came and obtained a permit,
And went there early,
And held him by the hand to disembark.
A royal palanquin plated with gold
He mounted, and sat down,
And proceeding in pomp, entered the fort.
In the fort was the Perumal, the King.

(Another tune)

The daytime-lamp, the foot-cloth, and regal musical instruments.
We have come with the desire to govern Malabar.
Longing to see my children well.

(Another tune)

By the grace of the loving Mother,
He slowly got ready and to the king of the soalr race
Narrated the facts,
And obtained a house and compond and slaves.
Those who visited him bowed and received his blessing.
And wearing the mitre, he governed three years.

Jacob Vallian (ed) Symposium on Knanites PP, VII-XIII

APPENDIX -IV

Veticutel Mathai Cathanar wrote a consolidated history of the Malankara Church in Syriac in about 1710. A copy of the same is kept in the Legden Academy Library. The portion about the Knanaya immigration in that book is quoted below, [Translated by Fr. H. Hosten SJ in *Indian Antiquary*, V. 56 (1927), pp. 42-43]

“(vs. 21.) At the same time, a vision appeared by night to the metropolitan of Edessa. He arose in the morning and went to the Catholicus of the East, and told him of the vision which he had seen. When the Catholicus had heard it, he sent messengers to all the churches and monasteries and cities of the diocese and called the people to his presence. And when many flocks had met with their bishops and merchants, he related to them what the Bishop had seen, and they spoke together (*et collocuti sunt*). Then, one of them arose, to wit a merchant called Thomas of Jerusalem, who answered, saying: “Behold, I have ere now heard a report about Malabar and India from foreign countries and men.” The Catholicus, hearing his answer, rose from his seat, went to him, embraced him lovingly, and thus addressed him: “I entreat thee, my very dear son, to go to Malabar, to visit the inhabitants of the country, and to tell me what has befallen them”. Accordingly, that occasion offering. Thomas of Jerusalem set out for Malabar, and, coming to Moljomkare, he saw the Thomas Christians; and they were mutually pleased, the Christians telling him about their affairs. (vs. 31) Which when Thomas had heard, he gave them courage and exhorted them with kind words; and straightway he embarked and returned to his country. Back in his country, he went to the Catholicus and said to him: “Lo! I have seen with my eyes the Thomas Christians, and we spoke together and were mutually pleased. I left them hopeful and returned.” The Catholicus, hearing these words, answered thus: “Although I am ready to lay down my life for them, I ask you to be pleased to tell me what those children of

mine most wish me to do.” Then he stated to the Catholicus what the Malabar brethren desired. Therefore, not long after, yea in those very days, with the help of the adorable God and by order of the Catholicus of the East, Thomas of Jerusalem, the merchant, went forth again, and with him the Bishop who had seen the vision, and at the same time presbyters and deacons, and also men and women, young men and maidens, from Jerusalem and Bagdad and Ninive, and they entered a ship and left for Malabar, where they landed at Moljomkare in the year 345 of the Lord.

(*vs. 41*) The Malabars at once recognised them, and they came together for advice to the brethren who had arrived, which done, they went to serkun, the king of the whole of Malabar, and presented him with gifts. And the king was pleased with them (the gifts?) and said to them: “I shall give you what ever you ask of me.” And he gave them the land which they desired, a very long and very broad piece of ground; besides, he granted them all the royal honours, which were written on copper-plates. Lo! these plates are preserved among us to this day. Having received all this from the king, they returned to Moljomkare to build a church and town. And they built a church in the country of Kuramaklur which they had received in gift from the king, and there they crected a town of 472 houses from east to west on both sides, and they duly inhabited it. Now, in those days and subsequently Syrian Fathers used to come by order of the Catholicus of the East, and they took care of the district of India and Malabar, (*vs. 51*) while the Syrian spread from that town.”

APPENDIX V

(Chapter IV)

THE JEWISH COPPER - PLATES OF COCHIN

Script: Vatteluttu

Language: Old Malayalam

Malayalam Transliteration

First Plate, First Side

1. സ്വസ്തിശ്രീ / കോകോൻമൈ കൊണ്ട്യാൻ കോശ്രീ പാർകരൻ
2. ഇരവിവൻമർ തിരുവടി പലനൂറായിര
3. ത്താൻടുമ് ചെങ്ക്കോല് നടത്തിയാളാ നിന്നറയാൻ
4. ടു ഇരണ്മാമാണ്ടൈക്കെതിർ മുപ്പത്തൊന്നാമാണ്ടു മു
5. യിറി ക്കോട്ടു ഇരുന്തരുളിയ നാള പിരസാതിച്ചരു
6. ളിയ പിരസാതമാവതു/ഇറസ്സുപ്പു ഇറപ്പാനുക്കു
7. അഞ്ചുവണ്ണമുദ് വെടിയാലുദ് വായനത്താലു
8. മ് പാകുടമുദ് അഞ്ചുവണ്ണ പ്പെറുദ് പകല്വി
9. ഉക്കുദ് പാവാടൈയുദ് അന്തോ ഉകമുദ് കുടൈയുദ്

First Plate, Second Side

10. വടുകപ്പരെയുദ് കാകാളമുദ് ഇടുപടിയുദ് തോരണമുദ് തോ
11. രണവിതാനമുദ് ചരവുമ്മിക്കുദ് എഴുപത്തിരണ്ടു വിടു
12. പേറുദ് കുടക് കൊടുത്തോമ് / ഉല്കുന് തുലാക്കുലിയു
13. മ് വിട്ടോമ് / മറുദ് നകരത്തില് കുടികള് കോയില്ക്കു
14. ഇറുക്കമതു ഇവന് ഇറാമൈയുദ് പൊറുമതു പെറവുദ്
15. ആകയ്ചെപ്പേട്ടോടുമ് ചെയ്തു കൊടുത്തോമ് / അഞ്ചുവണ്ണ
16. മ് ഉടൈയ ഇറസ്സുപ്പു ഇറപ്പാനുക്കുദ് ഇവന് സന്തതി ആണ്
17. മക്കള്ക്കുദ് പെണ്മക്കള്ക്കുദ് ഇവന് മരുമക്കള്ക്കു
18. മ് പെണ്മക്കളെ കൊണ്ട് മരുമക്കള്ക്കുദ് സന്തതിപ്പിര
19. കിരിതി ഉലകുദ് ചന്തിരനുമ് ഉളളളവുദ് അഞ്ചുവണ്ണമ് സ

Second Plate, First Side

20. ന്തതിപ്പിരകിരിതി / ശ്രീ / ഇപ്പരി അറിവേന് വേണാടു
21. ടൈയ കോവർത്തന മാത്താൻടന് / ഇപ്പരി അറിവേന് വേണ്
22. പലിനാടുടൈയ മാനവേപലമാനവിയന് / ഇപ്പരി അറിവേ
23. ന് ഏറാളനാടുടൈയ മാനവേപലമാനവിയന് / ഇപ്പരി
24. അറിവേന് വളളുവനാടുടൈയ ഇരായ രഞ്ചാത്തന് / ഇപ്പ
25. റി അറിവേന് നെടുമ് പുരൈയൂർനാടുടൈയ കോതൈയിരവി / ഇ
26. പ്പരി അറിവേന് കിഴപ്പടൈ നായകമ് ചെയ്യിന്റ മുർക്ക
27. ണ്ചാത്തന് / വന്റലൈ ചേരിക്കണ്ടന് കുന്റപ്പോഴനായ കിഴ
28. വായ്ക്കേള്പ്പാനെഴുത്തു/

English Translation:

"Hail Prosperity! This is the gift that His Majesty, King of Kings, *Sri Bhaskara Ravi Varman*, Who is to wield sceptre for several thousands years, was pleased to make during the thirty sixth year opposite to the second year of his reign, on the day when he was pleased to reside at *Muyirikkode*.

"We have granted to *Joseph Rabban, Ancuvannam*, tolls by the boat and by carts, *Ancuvannam* dues, the right to employ day lamp decorative cloth, palanquin, umbrella, kettledrum, trumpet, gateway, arch, arched roof, weapon and the rest of the seventy two privileges.

We have remitted duty and weighing fee.

"Moreover, according to this copper-plate grant given to him, he shall be exempted from payments made by other settlers in the town to the king, but he shall enjoy what they enjoy.

"To Joseph Rabban, proprietor of *Ancuvannam*, his male and female issues, nephews, and sons-in-law, *Ancuvannam* shall belong by hereditary succession. *Ancuvannam* shall belong to them by hereditary succession as long as the world, sun and moon endure -

"Prosperity!

This is attested by *Govarthana Marthanda*, Governor of *Venadu*

This is attested by *Kota Cirikantan*, Governor of *Vempalinadu*

This is attested by *Manavepala Manaviyan*, Governor of *Eralanadu*

This is attested by *Rayiran Chattan*, Governor of *Valluvanadu*

This is attested by *Kota Ravi*, Governor of *Nedumpurayurnadu*

This is attested by *Murkkan Chattan*, Commander of the Eastern Forces.

This writing is executed by *Vanralacheri Kantan*

Kunrappolan, the officer who takes down oral communication.

Notes: *Ko*=King or His Majesty. This is the formal title of the sovereign. *Konmai Kontan Ko*=King of Kings. *Pala noorayirattantum.....*= It was customary to state that the king was destined to rule for many thousands of years. See the Syrian copper-plates of *Sthanu Ravi* also. *Irantam antaikkettir muppattaram antu*=The year thirty six after the second year. It was customary to split up the regnal year into two or three parts. *Muyirikkode*=*Muciri* or *Muziris*. The term 'kode' meaning town is added to *Muyiri*. It appears that the Jewish settlement in *Kodungallur* (Cranganore) stood on the site of the old *Muciri* or *Muziris*. *Pakalvilakku*=*Daylamp*. The privileges enumerated here were enjoyed by the aristocracy in Kerala. *Ulkku*=Duty. *Tulakkuli*=Weighing fee. *Marumakkal*=Nephews. *Penmakkalaikkonta marumakkal*=This term literally means nephews by marriage. The term 'marumakkal' is used in Malayalam for nephews and sons-in-law alike. It was customary in Kerala for the male to marry the daughter of his uncle. In fact it was almost a right for the male. The specific statement that nephews inherited the title of *Ancuvannam* shows that the matrilineal order of succession was prevalent in Kerala and that it was also accepted by the Jewish settlers in Kerala. *Ippari ariven.....*=The first five witnesses mentioned here are the governors of the *Cera* period also. In addition to them the commander of the Eastern Forces was also present as witness here. Therefore it is clear that these feudatories and the military official had met in the capital as a war council in the wake of the aggression started by *Rajaraja Cola*. *Kilvay Kelappan*= This was often misinterpreted as a personal name i.e. *Kelappan* of *Kilvay* house. In fact this is an official title meaning "the person who listens to royal words" i.e. the official who records oral communication. Compare this with the official mentioned as *Kettuviliyan* in the *Muccunti* mosque inscription.

APPENDIX -VI

LIST OF PARISH CHURCHES

St.No.	Name of the Church	Year Founded
1.	St. Mary's Valiapally Kottayam	1550 A.D.
2.	St. Mary's Kallissery	1580 "
3.	St. Thomas Valiapally, Ranny	1742
4.	St. George, Neelamperoor	1842
5.	St. Steephen's, Veliyanadu	1861
6.	St. Jacobs, Ramamangalam	1860
7.	St. Simon's, Puthussery, Vakathanam	1870
8.	St. John's Thuruthicadu	1872
9.	St. John's Dayara Church, Chingavanam	1880
10.	St. John's Puthenpally	1891
11.	St. Mary's Eraviperoor	1893
12.	St. Marys Mannar	1894
13.	St. Mary's Kattodu	1902
14.	St. Kuriakose, Aythala	1905
15.	St. Mary's Bethalahem Veliyanadu	1912
16.	St. Mary's Thengeli	1913
17.	Mar Ignatios Church, Kurichy	1913
18.	St. Mary's Salem Church, Chingavanam	1926
19.	St. Mary's Tiruvanvandur	1928
20.	St. Mary's Jerusalem Church, Kuttoor	1929
21.	St. Thomas Kurisupally, Mannamaruthi	1942
22.	St. Mary's West Othara	1949
23.	St. Mary's Velluthuruthy	1950
24.	St. Ignatios Pattoor, Thiruvanandapuram	1950
25.	St. Thomas Kurisupally, Edakulam	1950
26.	St. Mary's Jerusalem, Channanicadu	1953
27.	St. Mary's Mazhukeer	1953
28.	St. Mary's Vechuchira	1955
29.	St. George Kurisupally, Ozhuvanpara	1956
30.	St. Mary's Anaprampal	1956
31.	St. George Mampizhakary	1957
32.	St. Mary's Naranammozhi	1958
33.	Mar Yuhanon Mabdonno Church, Ennicadu	1960
34.	St. George, Seethathodu	1964
35.	St. George, Venpala	1967

36.	Mar Pathrose-Poulose, Kanjamgadu	1967
37.	St. Mary's Pallikuth, - Nilambure	1969
38.	St. George, Kavalam	1970
39.	St. Mary's Chulliyodu	1970
40.	St. George - Anchani, Ranni	1971
41.	St. George Vallamkulam South	1972
42.	St. George Nelliampathy	1972
43.	St. Mary's, Irangal	1974
44.	St. John's, Vadapuram	1974
45.	St. Mary's - Pullarikunnu - Kottayam	1974
46.	St. George - Kanamala	1975
47.	St. Mary's - Valakode Punalur	1976
48.	St. George - Gurunathanmannu	1978
49.	St. Magdalana Mariam Chappel, Kurichy	1979
50.	St. Mary's Chappel, Vaikom	1980
51.	St. Mary's Ernakulam	1981
52.	St. Mary's - Nenmara	1983
53.	St. Mary's - Bethel Vallamkulam	1983
54.	St. Mary's - Prapoi Malabar	1984
55.	St. John's - Muthuvam	1985
56.	St. Peters, New Delhi	1987
57.	St. Mary's - Kurisupally Cherukulanji	1989
58.	St. George - Mulakamthuruthy	1912
59.	St. Mary's - Puttadi - Iduki	1994
60.	St. George - Madanthamannu	1994
61.	St. George - Mission Church, Veliyanadu	1897
62.	Knanaya Church, Bombay	1994
63.	St. George Chappel - Eara	
64.	St. Mary's Chappel - Ittiyapara	
65.	St. Mary's Church - Sharjah	

CHURCH OF AMERICA

1. St. Peter's Church - Newyork
2. St. Stephen's Church - Boston
3. St. Mary's Church - Hartford
4. St. Mary's Church - Philladelphia
5. St. John's Church - Houston
6. St. Thomas Church - Dallas
7. St. Ignatious Church - Toronto, Canada
8. St. Thomas Church - Edmonton Alberta, Canada
9. St. Thomas Church - Newjercy
10. St. Thomas Congregation in Florida



APPENDIX -VII

**THE CENTRES OF KNANAYA SYRIAN ORTHODOX
COMMUNITY IN KERALA**

KASARGODE(DIST)

1. Kangamgadu

KANNUR

2. Payyanoor
3. Prapoi
4. Muthuvam

MALAPPURAM

5. Nilampoor
6. Pallikuth
7. Vadapuram

PALAKKAD

8. Nenmara
9. Mannarkad

ERNAKULAM

10. Ramamangalam
11. Ernakulam

IDUKKY

12. Puttadi
13. Kattappana

KOTTAYAM

14. Chengalam
15. Kottayam
16. Chingavanam
17. Channanicadu
18. Velluthuruthy
19. Vakathanam
20. Kuruchy
21. Neelamperoor
22. Earra

ALAPPUZHA

23. Veliyanadu
24. Mapizhakary
25. Kavalam
26. Anaprampal

PATHANAMTHITTA

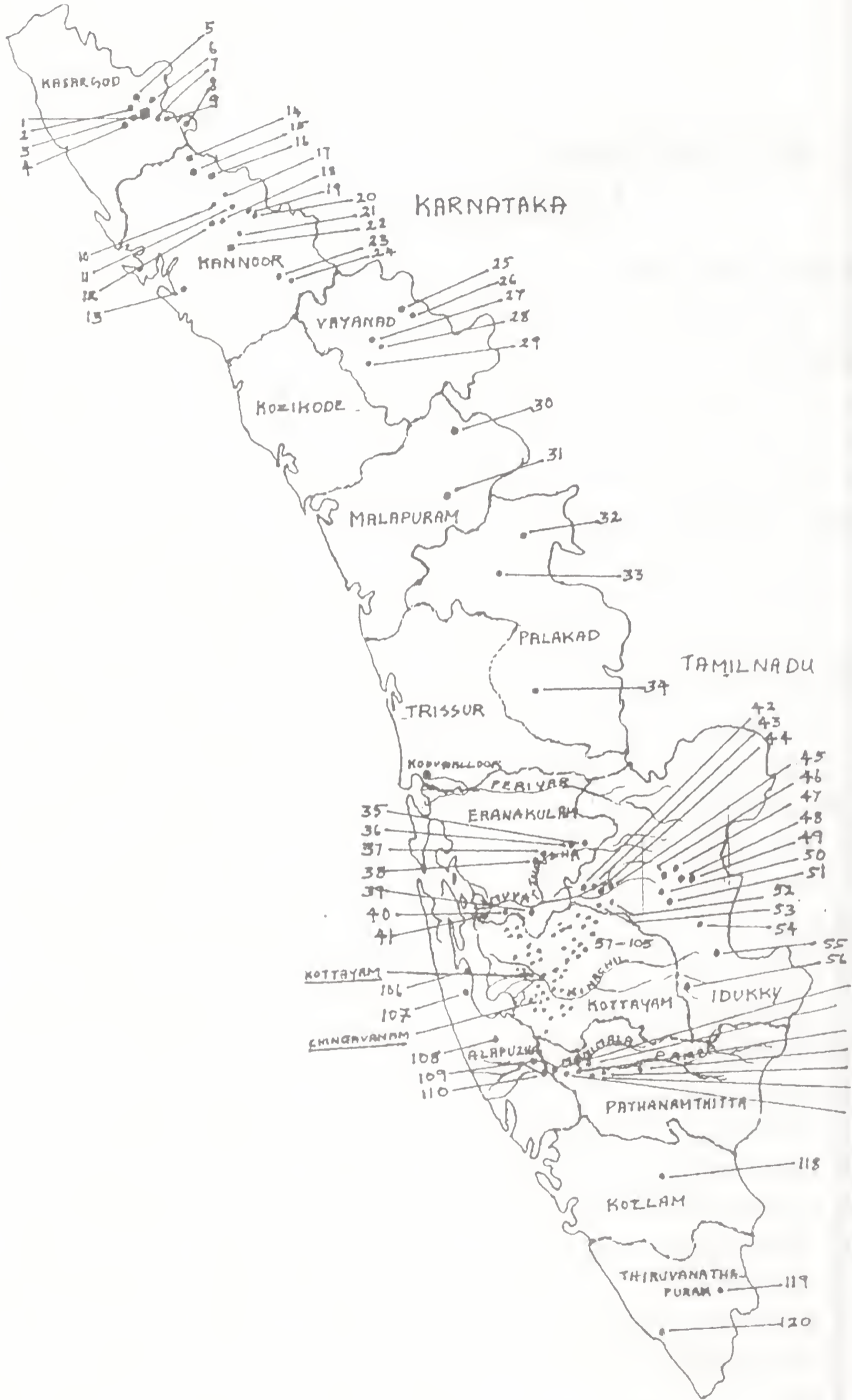
27. Kallissery
28. Mazhukeer
29. Thiruvanvandoor
30. Thengely
31. Mannar
32. Venpala
33. Kuttoor
34. Othera
35. Kattode
36. Eraviperoor
37. Ennikadu
38. Thuruthikadu
39. Ranny
40. Aythla
41. Anchani
42. Cherukulangi
43. Ozhuvanpara
44. Vechuchira
45. Kanamala
46. Edakulam
47. Naranammozhi
48. Seethathodu
49. Gurunathanmannu

KOLLAM

50. Punaloor

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

51. Pattoor



THE CENTERS OF KNANAYA CUMMUNITY IN KERALA

KASARGODE(DIST)

1. Rajapuram
2. Airode
3. Chullikara
4. Udayamchal
5. Kottody
6. Pookayam
7. Malakalle
8. Ranipuram
9. Kallar

KANNUR

10. Panniyal
11. Payyavoor - Kandakassery
12. Kottoor Vayal
13. Kannoor Barmariyam
14. Kanavayal
15. Manjakade
16. Cherupara
17. Payyavoor Town.
18. Alex Nagar
19. Chamathachal
20. Nechiyode
21. Michaelgiri
22. Madampam
23. Arayangad
24. Pothukuzhy

VAYANADU

25. Perikalloor
26. Kappiset
27. Thettamala
28. Pulinjal
29. Achom.

MALAPPURAM

30. Munderi
31. Nilampoor

PALAKADE

32. Attapadi
33. Mannarkad
34. Mandalam Dam

ERNAKULAM

35. Paramaancherry
36. Varapetty
37. Ramamangalam (N)
38. Ramamangalam (S)
39. Piravom
40. Mangadapally
41. Thottara

IDUKKY

42. Marika
43. Vadakummury
44. Chunkom (Thodupuzha)
45. Muttom
46. Poothakali
47. Baisonvalley
48. Rajakad
49. Senapathi
50. Thellithode
51. Padamukom
52. Mrala
53. Karimkunnam
54. Kattapana
55. Chakkupallom
56. Peermede

KOTTAYAM

57. Velloor
58. Brahmamangalam
59. Arunoottimangalam
60. Njizhoor
61. Poozhikol
62. Kaduthuruthy
63. Eravimangalam
64. Kurupumthara
65. Kallara - (New)
66. Memurry
67. Manjoor
68. Makudalayam
69. Kallara (Old)
70. Kurumulloor
71. Nendoor
72. Kaipuzha
73. Palathuruth
74. Olassa
75. Malloosserry
76. S.H. Mount (Nattassery)
77. Kumarakom
78. Chengalam
79. Thazhathangady (Kottayam)
80. Puthuvely
81. Veliyannoor
82. Amanakara
83. Areekara
84. Pious Mount
85. Monipally
86. Uzhavoor
87. Edakoly
88. Paingalam
89. Cherpungal
90. Maridom
91. Kinangoor

92. Koodalloor
93. Kattachira
94. Ettumannoor
95. Kidandoor (South)
96. Punnathura
97. Mattakara
98. Neerikad
99. Peroor
100. Kumaranaloor
101. Nattassery (East)
102. Kottayam
103. Chingavanam
104. Pachira
105. Vakathanam

ALAPUZHA

106. Kannamkara
107. Charamangalam
108. Veliyanade
109. Thiruvanvandoor
110. Kallissery - Mazhukeer

PATHANAMTHITTA

111. Thengely
112. Thuruthikad
113. Kattode
114. Ranny
115. Eraviperoor
116. Othara
117. Kuttoor

KOLLAM

118. Punaloor

THIRUVANATHAPURAM

119. Vithura
120. Thiruvanathapuram

APPENDIX -VIII

THE CONSTITUTION OF THE MALANKARA SYRIAN KNANAYA SAMUDAYAM

CHAPTER-I INTRODUCTION

PREAMBLE:

WHEREAS it has been felt that the Constitution of the Malankara Syrian Knanaya Samudayam which consists of domiciles in to the Malayalam Speaking area from Cana in the year 345 A.D and of those who have been accepting the Supremacy of the Holy Apostolic Throne of Antioch and all the East and who are observing the holy faith and doctrine maintained by such Throne, is to be codified and modernised the following rules are laid down:-

1. Short Title:- These Rules shall be called the Constitution of the Malankara syrian Knanaya Samudayam.
2. Commencement:- It shall be deemed to have been implemented by the Metropolitan of the Malankara Syrian Knanaya Bhadrāsana from 1st January 1952.
3. Definitions:- If there is nothing contradictory to the context and topic in these rules.
 - a) 'Edavaka' is deemed to be the group of people who are members of the church in the Malankara Knanaya Bhadrāsana Edavaka. A Kurisupally will be taken along with the head church, without considering it has a separate Edavaka.
 - b) A group of Edavakas shall be called, Bhadrāsana Edavaka and the common group of all Knanaya People in these Bhadrāsana edavaka is termed herein as 'Samudayam'.

- c) "Metropolitan" shall mean the Metropolitan as contained in Rule 82. In the absence of a Metropolitan, the word Metropolitan in these rules shall include the administrator appointed under Rule 86.
- d) Bhadrāsana Secretary shall mean the Secretary of the Metropolitan.
- e) Vicar shall be the priest (Kaseesa) who has been appointed in writing by the Metropolitan for the administration of the 'Edavaka'.
- f) Helping priest shall mean the priest (Kaseesa) who has been appointed in writing for a period of less than one month in anticipation of Metropolitan's consent for the purpose of helping the Vicar and be under the Vicar.
- g) "Decan" shall include msrono, korooyo, evufadeeyakono, msamsono.
- h) 'Sexton' shall be the person appointed by the Vicar for looking after the church and its premises.
- i) "Association" and "Knanaya Committee" shall respectively be the Malankara Syrian Knanaya Association and the Executive Committee as described in Chapter Six of this Constitution.
- j) "Year" shall be the Christian Calender Year.
- k) "Rupee" shall mean Indian Rupee.
- l) Singular terms shall include plurals and individuals shall include groups as well.





Cultural Heritage of **Knanaya Syrian Christians**

Fr. Joseph Kulathramannil

Rev. Fr. Joseph Kulathramannil M.A., M.Phil, Lecturer in History, St.Thomas College, Ranny, had his special studies in the field of social work and humanities at the Holy Ghost College, Dublin. Being a member of the Knanaya Community, and an ardent student of the Syrian Orthodox history, he has studied in depth the history of the Syrian Orthodox Church and particularly the unique traditions of the Knanaya Community. He has authored 'Suriyani Sabha Pithakkanmar', 'Suriyani Sabha Jyothisuka', 'History of St. Mary's Church, Mazhukkeer', and published articles on church history. He edited the memoir titled 'Atmeeya Guru Sreshtan' as a tribute to his Syriac malpan the late Mor Julius Jacob Manjinikkara. This volume is an adapted version of his unpublished thesis on Knanaya heritage. This will prove to be a boon to all Syrian Christians.

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