

Conclusion

Plan of Conclusion

This concluding chapter tries to tie up the whole thesis and walk back through the paths that we travelled. While doing so, it also deals with limitations of the present study and tries to trace a future path through possible work around the area.

This was an attempt to study contemporary *Mappila* educational institutions and cultural practices to understand the construction of *Mappila* Muslim male identity in the Malabar in the southern part of Kerala. The study mainly focused on two periods such as 1970s and 1990s. The 1970s is considered as the period which strengthened the visibility of the *Mappila* community in the public realm of Kerala through Gulf migration. The 1990s built up a Muslim identity feeling among *Mappilas* because of various reasons. This feeling lead to the community to a Muslim identity which is religious in nature.

The present research had mainly focused on three aspects of community; the *Mappila* Muslim traditional educational system, Letter songs or Dubai Kathupaatus and Home cinema. The traditional educational system got much attention and change after 1970s as the aftermath of migration and the financial stability of the community. Dubai letter songs emerged as a new *Mappilappattu* sub genre devoted to migration. The Home Cinema in one way is connected to migration because it thematically dealt the pathetic condition of the migrant's life abroad and their family who was left behind in Kerala. In another way, it connected to the 1990s building up of Muslim religious identity also. The directors had a feeling that we need

our own cinema to defend the mainstream Malayalam films' negative representation of the Muslim community.

In the first chapter, we discussed the traditional educational systems of *Mappila* community such as *Othupalli*, *Madrassa* and *Dars* education. This chapter focused on the everyday lives of religious students (*Musliyar Kutty*) and the disciplining of the self. Making of social boundary is the important one for this self disciplining. Controlling of the body through self disciplining is the proposed aim of this system to make a perfect religious man, who is considered as the future religious leader of the community. Segregated life in a fully male centric space, controlling them from having any contact with women, restrictions in the communication of juniors and seniors, especially in the case of "*Amrad*" and the absolute and unquestioning respect reserved for the teacher, and unwritten rules, punishments etc practiced in this system to make a *Mappila* religious man. The recent phenomenon called "*Vanitha Shareeath Colleges*" (Women's Shareeath colleges) are also practicing the same pattern apparently to make an "Islamised Women" to "nurture" a religious future generation and train a woman to be the "peaceful and educated" companion in a religious family. They are also female segregated spaces with a lot of restrictions.

The letter song is a very important sub genre of *Mappilappattu* which emerged from the ash of migration. It has a very special connection to migrant husband and their wife. Through the cassette revolution it domesticated the feelings of separated wives and migrant husbands. *Kathupattu* can be seen as representing the private memory of the community. This chapter was an attempt to read a new gender history of the community. This genre emerged in the second half of the 19th century and proliferated in early 20th century. This chapter did not give much attention to these early letter songs but traced this history to give the context to the

emergence of the genre. The chapter begins with the community history using poems that discuss the community connection to diasporas or journeys. *Muhyadheen Mala* and *Kappappattu* as the early texts considered to build this connection. In this chapter three important elements of letter songs such as desire/love, separation/longing and doubts/jealousy are described.

The final chapter is on Home Cinema, a didactic religious cinema which emerged after 1990s. As a cinema it mostly dealt with the social and emotional issues of the Muslim community who are the migrant population of Kerala. The very purposes of the Home Cinema were to reform community and give an Islamic direction to them. Islamisation of the movies was the unspoken aim of the directors. One can observe the difference between male and female in these movies. In the general context, Muslims are considered as the Other, but in these movies we can see the women as the internal Other. The role of the women is restricted to a very limited role. As a cinema which is argued to be an alternative for the “main stream” movies, it still follows the same pattern of the sidelining of women. Most of the roles of women in these movies are restricted to some categories such as “a migrant’s wife” who is seeking an extra marital relation, “a mother in-law” who is fond of gold and always quarrelling with the daughter in law and other male members and “a divorced sister” who is always quarrelling with family members and trying to get into an extra marital relationship. At the same time, male members are portrayed as saviors of the family. The male who are in support of these women are not considered as a man. As a movie emerged to save the community from the so called “deviant” channel revolution or serial revolution, Home Cinema also played/represented the same role of women using a religious mask.

Limitations of the Present Study

As a study to examine the production of *Mappila* male identity this study has many limitations. The present study highlighted on education and letter songs and Home Cinema. All these three has a material to do a separate research independently. In the education chapter I could use very limited resources and I mainly used my own connections to get the details of the system. Letter song has a huge history and even before and after S A Jameel's Dubai letter songs, a bunch of songs had circulated among the community. But the present study focused only on his iconic songs because of its popularity and the impact in the community. Home Cinema mainly focused on Salam Kodyathoor's Movie because he is considered as the founder of this genre and the only one director with a huge success stories. Historical representation of the *Mappila* community is an important area to learn the production of man and woman, but here I focused mainly on the contemporary context. In Kerala we have a lot of religious organizations such as *Sunni* organizations, *Mujahid* organizations and *Jamaat-e-Islami* etc, who are directly supporting the making of various kinds of masculinities, this study didn't even touch that area. Muslim magazines are also playing a major role in the production men and women, but that is also not yet discussed.

Suggestions for Further Studies

The present study could not touch many areas that are important for the production a religious male identity. So, I suggest some of the areas for further studies to get a more nuanced understanding of *Mappila* men. A study on the Muslim organisations who are currently working in Kerala such as Sunni Students Federation (SSF) and Samastha Kerala Sunni Students Federation (SKSSF) both of them run by Sunni factions of Kerala AP Sunnis,

lead by Kanthapuram AP Aboobacker Musliyar, and EK Sunnis led by late EK Aboobacker Musliyar, Mujahid Students Movement (MSM) and Students Islamic Organisation (SIO) etc would give us a new direction in the mentioned area. Studies on journals published by the above mentioned organizations would also serve as a rare area of study.