THE HADRAMIS OF MAMBURAM (MALABAR): BRIDGING SPIRITUALISM AND RESISTANCE



Shrine of Sayyid Alawi



Sayyid Fazl

The role of religious leaders in Islam is centrally important, yet intentionally loosely defined. Unlike many other faith traditions, Islam has no formal priesthood, no inherited caste or family with exclusive spiritual power, and no sacraments that set certain individuals apart from their fellows. There is also no tradition of monasticism; indeed, it is common for those regarded as religious leaders to mingle with the general population, often holding various occupational roles within society.

As observed by Shah Waliyullah (1703–1762), individuals possessing religious knowledge—whether acquired through revelation, wisdom, or visions—are recognized by the community as having gifts of leadership and signs of grace. They are followed because their guidance fulfills the central Islamic requirement of commanding what is right and forbidding what is wrong.[1]

While Muslims may be predisposed to accord this authority to Sayyids—those descended from the Prophet Muhammad or a saintly lineage—or to those in established judicial and educational positions, the true basis of authority remains personal knowledge. It is the pious

embodiment of this knowledge that allows these men to serve as exemplars to their peers and as communal representatives to the wider world.

With the arrival of the Europeans in the Indian sub-continent the responsibility of the *ulama* and *sayyids* became manifold, that in the face of European onslaughts, the community found its only hope in them. The *fatwas* of the *'ulama* or the spiritual consolation or encouragement of *sayyids* assumed importance in political sphere also. They had, of course, no coercive power, and they wouldn't deal with a whole range of issues related to the organization of the state, but they were however, to become a vehicle for disseminating even more detailed guidance in minute concerns of every day life of the individuals as well as the society.

Politically the importance of *fatwa* lay in declaring *jihad* aginst the oppressors - the landlords and the Europeans. So to the Europeans and the landlords, the *fatwa* was a call to the religiously conscientious Muslims to mobilize the community in the absence of any powerful war lord, and to make them rise in defiance of the foreign power.[2] The British authorities often referred to all those people whom they found arousing the public against the British in the name of the religion as *'ulama* unless those people were known to them as professional soldiers, landlords, civil servants or the like.[3]

As mentioned above, in the absence of a centralized Muslim political authority in Malabar, sayyids and *ulama* played a pivotal role in shaping Mappila society. As key economic and political allies of the Zamorins of Calicut, the sayyids were highly respected, and their religious and judicial verdicts were honored.Sayyids migrated from distant lands to Indian ocean regions.

Hadrami Sayyids, also known as Hadrami Sada, are a subgroup of the Hadharami people, who are an Arabic-speaking ethnic group indigenous to the Hadhramaut region in eastern Yemen. They are descendants of Husayn ibn Ali (the grandson of the Prophet Muhammad), forming a respected religious aristocracy within Hadhrami society. This lineage grants them the title of "Sayyid" or "Sada," and they are often led by figures known as Munsibs, who serve as religious leaders and are sometimes regarded as saints.

Hadrami Sayyids traditionally avoid trade, manual labor, or agriculture, instead focusing on scholarly, spiritual, and leadership roles, while employing others for practical work.However, later many of them turned to trade along with spiritual activities. The broader Hadharami population follows Sunni Islam of the Shafi'i school and has a long history of seafaring and trade, leading to extensive migrations across the Indian Ocean basin.

Their connection to Malabar stems from centuries of migration, part of a larger Hadrami diaspora driven by factors like poverty in Yemen, missionary zeal, political instability, and trade opportunities. These movements began in pre-Islamic times but became more pronounced from the 16th century onward, with significant waves in the 18th to early 20th centuries.

The first recorded arrival of a Hadrami Sayyid in Malabar was in 1703, when Sayyid Abdu Rahman al Hydross, reached Calicut and then moved to Ponnani for higher studies and settled there. In 1766, Sayyid Sheikh Jifri/Jufri migrated to Calicut where he was welcomed by

the Zamorin (ruler) of Calicut. Over time, around 40 Sayyid families from Hadhramaut (and some from Central Asia) settled in Kerala, including notable ones like Jifri, Bafaqih, Ba Alwi, Saqaf, Jamalullail, Haddad and others.

In Malabar, Hadrami Sayyids integrated deeply into local society, often receiving land and homes from native rulers, and marrying into elite families. They played multifaceted roles as scholars, Sufi mystics, traders, community arbitrators, and advisors to rulers, which helped them gain significant influence. Key figures include Mamburam Sayyid Alawi (also known as Mamburam Tangal, born in 1166 /1752 in Tarim, (Yemen), a social reformer who established mosques and revived religious practices, and his son Sayyid Fazl, who resisted British colonialism and was exiled for his efforts. Their presence enriched Malabar's Islamic traditions by promoting the Shafi'i school of jurisprudence, Ash'ari theology, and a balanced form of Sufism (neo-Sufism) that combined scholarship with mysticism.

The Hadramis introduced practices like the recitation of Ratib al-Haddad (a Sufi ritual composed by Abdullah b. Alawi al-Haddad in the 17th-18th century), which became widespread in mosques and homes. Additionally, their graves turned into pilgrimage sites, fostering spiritual connections and cultural traditions centered on seeking blessings (*baraka*). Overall, this migration transformed the religious, social, and cultural landscape of Kerala's Muslim community, blending Arab influences with local customs in areas like education, culture and daily rituals.

The Zamorins provided them with lands and endowments to ensure their comfortable livelihood, reflecting their esteemed status. This favorable attitude of the Zamorin toward Muslims attracted the Hadrami sayyid, Shaikh Sayyid Jifri /Jufri,[4] to settle in Calicut. He was warmly received by Manavikraman, the Zamorin, alongside Muhyaddin ibn Abdussalam, the qazi of Calicut. The Zamorin encouraged Shaikh Jifri to establish residence in Calicut, granting him land and a house near the Kuttichira pond, with an exemption from all taxes.[5]

Following Shaikh Jifri, his brother Hasan Jifri arrived in Calicut in 1754 and later settled in Tirurangadi. Subsequently, more members of the Jifri and other Ba Alawi sayyid families migrated to Malabar, establishing settlements in various regions, including Koilandy, Pantalayani, Kadalundi, Ponnani, Malappuram, Parappanangadi, Tirurangadi, Chaliyam, Kuttayi, Chavakkad, Kannur, Valapatanam, Kappad, Kochi, and Kollam. Koilandy emerged as a significant center for Hadhrami sayyid families. In these locations, the Sayyids established Sufi centers, providing spiritual guidance and support to the local populace, thereby strengthening the religious and social fabric of the Mappila community.

Until the advent of British rule, the Mappila religious leadership’s call for *jihad* against European colonialists, particularly the Portuguese, was overwhelmingly embraced in Malabar. When the British established their authority, the *ulama* of Malabar, like their counterparts in North India, predominantly advocated resistance against the colonial government. However, the circumstances in Malabar differed significantly from those in North India. During the Portuguese invasion, Malabar was governed not by a Muslim ruler, as in the north, but by the Zamorins and other Hindu rajas, who extended tolerance and protection to their Muslim subjects. This led the

religious leadership to regard the Zamorin's territory as *dar al-Islam* (House of Islam), and the Portuguese persecution provided ample justification for declaring *jihad* against the invaders.

In 1792, the British occupied Malabar, displacing the Mysorean rule of Tipu Sultan. Similar to North India, where the British supplanted Mughal authority, in Malabar, their victory was over a Muslim power. This transition clearly transformed Malabar from *dar al-Islam* to *dar al-harb* (House of War) in the eyes of the Mappila religious leadership. Like their Hanafi counterparts in North India, the Mappila *ulama*, who followed the Shafi'i school of Islamic law, considered Malabar under British rule as *dar al-harb*.[6] Unlike the Hanafi Muslims of North India, the Mappilas adhered to the Shafi'i school and sought religious guidance from Shafi'i scholars, many of whom were immigrants from Hadhramaut and Southern Arabia. These leaders frequently consulted Yemeni jurists for religious verdicts to guide their community.

Saif- al Battar, the *fatwa* said to be issued by Sayyid Alawi (1166/1753-1260/1844) of Mambram,[7] and *Uddat al Umara* [8] compiled byhis son Sayyid Fazl are important sources to study the attitude of the Mappila religious leadership towards the British rule. Quoting *Tuhfa* of Ibn Hajar,[9] Sayyid Alawi insists that, if an Islamic country is attacked by the infidels, it is incumbent up on all Muslims to resist the enemy with all his efforts to save the country.[10] The author refers the Europeans (*Afranj*) as the worst disbelievers[11] and prevents the Muslims, in appointing the Christians as domestic servants (*ahilla*) because they will not seek good in their master.[12]

Quoting Qur-ānic verses and prophetic traditions the author asserts: Since the *Kuffār* (the British) had entered the country all the Muslims despite the old and women up on whom the participation in the fight is not compulsory should take part in the fight.[13] The Muslims who remain as subjects under the European rule and satisfy with it, are sinners and are liable to exemplary punishment, even though they seek the welfare of Muslims through Christian rule.[14] To praise the European rulers and to pray for their welfare is a sin which needed repentance and if a Muslim praise the Christian religion over his own, he is a *kāfir,* that a Muslim cannot praise a debauchee.[15]

If one simply says that the laws of the Christians are of justice, he becomes a heretic, because *shariath* is the only code of proper justice. If one says so unintentionally and for temporary gains, it is prohibited, though not disbelief. If a country basically belongs to the Christians and not usurped from any Muslim ruler, then for Muslims it is permissible to seek job in such a country and to engage in trade activities. But if the country is occupied from any Muslim power no Muslim should be allowed to serve or hold business there.[16]

If a Muslim got his religious freedom in the country occupied by the infidels and he thinks that with that much freedom, he can maintain and expose his religion, even then, it is recommended for him to migrate to a Muslim country or *dar -al Islam,* because it is foolish to think that in such a territory one can expose his religion and exalt the law of *shari'ath.* If one is confident that he can fight away the enemy to restore the prestige of the faith, then it is better to remain there and to fight with the enemy with the best of his ability. If he is not confident of his success in the fight, *hijra or* migration to a *dar-al Islam is* incumbent up on him.[17] The *fatwa* also define the international position of Muslims under the Ottoman Sultanat. In the *Saif al-Battar the* author praises Sultan Abdul Majid (1839-1869) and offers prayers for him.[18]

The influence of Sayyid Alawi Tangal and his son Sayyid Fazl over the Mappilas are vividly recorded by the European scholars. In the words of S.F.Dale, "In personal terms they laid claim to and generally have been accorded a special mark of respect, the *taqbil,* the privilege of having the hand or knee kissed by the devout Muslims and a variant of this ceremony was perhaps the most important feature of the pilgrimage which Mappilas made daily to Mamburam during the life time of Sayyid Alawi and his son Sayyid Fazl. The ceremony itself visibly demonstrated one of the reasons why lower caste Malayali Hindus were persuaded to convert to Islam. The Mamburam Tangal transmitted sanctity through physical contact with his fellow Muslims, and in this sense at least the Mappilas can be said to have constituted a genuine confessional community, whatever social differences divided individual families."[19]

The tomb of Sayyid Alawi developed into a centre of pilgrimage to both Muslims and Hindus, particularly to the lower caste. Contact with the Tangal and his blessings developed a sense of optimism and strong will among the Mappilas to fight against an oppressor and to save their bosom faith. The immediate incident which provoked Sayyid Alawi was a landlord-British conspiracy to create a Hindu - Muslim conflict. In Muttiyara, three kilometres away from Mamburam, a group of *goonda*s sent by a landlord spat on the clothes which the Muslims had spread near the mosque after washing.

The action naturally provoked the Muslims and they turned against the miscreants and this led to a minor clash. The incident reached the ears of Sayyid Alawi who advised the Muslims to keep restraint. The conspiracy became evident when the British troops made an unexpected attack on the mosque and shot at the Mappilas who were sitting there. The Muslims under Kaithakath Marakkar Kutty retaliated the British troops at the spot and in the encounter eleven Mappilas including the leader were killed.[20] The Muttiyara incident wounded the feelings of the Mappilas who took every step to counter-act the landlord-British conspiracy.

Mr. Dale points out that Sayyid Alawi, doesn't appear to have actively organized armed resistance to the British or the Hindu dominated society, but he is known to have hated the British and evidently offered his sanctified prestige in support of such actions by others.[21] But the *fatwa, Saif-al Battar* propagated by Sayyid Alawi and his participation in the Cherur fight of 1843 clearly shows that Sayyid Alawi not only offered "his sanctified prestige" but also actively organized armed resistance against the landlord- British conspiracy.[22]

Thus the leadership of Sayyid Alawi Tangal was responsible to a great extent, for the growth of militancy among the Mappilas during the British rule. The first hint of the role of Sayyid Alawi in the out breaks reached the authorities when two of his supporters including the sword bearer of Manjery Attan Kurikkal, were captured from the Tirurangadi Mosque.[23] The authorities couldn't take any action aganist the Tangal, for fear of provoking a religious resistance. In April 1817 Collector James Vanghan reported to the Madras government that "any attempt to seize the Tangal by force would be attended with the most dreadful consequences, no less than a general rise of the Mappila population, every one of whom have for common use a long and dangerous knife...."[24]

The authorities also pointed out to the relationship existed between Sayyid Alawi and Attan Kurikkal. After Kurikkal had been killed and his lands had been escheated to the government, his son with a force of about hundred Mappilas made an attempt to seize and

occupy these lands. The government found that the rebels had the blessings of the Tangal. Though the rebellion was suppressed and the rebels were arrested, the Collector feared that the involvement of the Tangal might lead to further consequences.

The involvement of Sayyid Alawi in the rebellions and his leadership to the fighters, however, gave a new turn to the nature of the out breaks. Unlike the earlier revolts in which religion had played only a minor role, the religious elements dominated the scene and the rebellions assumed the shape of a holy war.[25] In the words of Dale, "they were, in fact initially inspired and sanctioned by the Mambram Tangals, who addresed the Mappilas as an Islamic community and not only expressed economic and social grievances in religious terms but also attached more purely religious or doctrinal issues".[26] Now the outbreaks were performed in the highly stylized ritual of the "suicidal *Jihad".* Sayyid 'Alawi was also known as Taramal Tangal[27] or Tirurangadi Tangal.[28]

The authorities kept no doubt regarding the influence of Tangal in the anti British outbreaks. To quote Innes, the Collector of Malabar, "Tirurangadi for many years past been the centre of Mappila fanaticism and the Mamburam or Taramal Tangal had been its high priest."[29] Earlier Logan, the British Collector of Malabar during the out breaks had pointed out the same opinion: *"*The Arab Tangal or High priest who was generally credited with having incited the Mappilas to commit these outrages. The Thangal died shortly afterwards and was buried at the Mamburam mosque situated on the river bank opposite to Tirurangadi. Fanatics who intent to commit outrages and those who committed them do as a rule even now proceed to the mosque to pray at the Tangal's shrine.[30]

When Sayyid Alawi died on 7 Muharram 1260/29 January 1844 he was succeeded by his son Sayyid Fazl(1240/ 1824- 1318/1901), who followed the foot-steps of his father in his antagonism towards the British. He wrote books and issued *fatwas* to make the people conscious of the consequences of the British rule or the rule of *kuffār* as he often referred. The officials at the same time alleged that he and his father "have been at the bottom of most of the outbreaks."[31] According to C. Kanaran, Deputy Collector, it was Sayyid Fazl's favourite texts in his Friday oration at the mosque at Mamburam, where he was the leading thangal from 1844-1852, that it was no sin but a merit to kill *a jenmi* who evicted (any of his tenant)."[32] Sayyid FazI collected and compiled all the Qur-anic verses and traditions of Prophet Muhammad in the name Al *Qawl-al Mukhtār fil Man'i an Takhyir-al Kuffār (The Selected Statements to Prevent the Preference to the Infidels).*[33] He also propagated the *Saif-al Battār,* the *fatwa,* against the British, through the mosques and his disciples were sent to different parts of Malabar to spread the doctrine of *jihād.*

Mr. T.L. Strange, the judge of Sadar Adalat appointed by the Britsh government on 17 February 1852 to submit a report on the outrages, found fanaticism to be the root cause of all the unrest and put the responsibility up on "the notorious Sayed Fazl of Arab extraction" for all the disturbances.[34] To quote the report of Magistrate "the fanatics then and now considered it almost essential to success in their enterprise that they should have visited and prayed at Taramal Tangal's tomb and kissed the hand of the Tangal living in the house close by. So great an ascendancy had Saiyid Fazl at this time attained that the Mappilas regarded him as imbued with a portion of divinity"[35] He continues: "They swear by his foot as their most solemn oath. Earth on which he spat or walked is treasured up. Marvellous stories are told of his supernatural knowledge. His

blessing is supremely prized. And even among the higher class of Mappilas his wish was regarded as a command and no consideration of economy was allowed to stand in the way of its being gratified"[36]. "On the very day(17 Feb.) that the government appointed Mr. Strange as Special Commissioner, Mr. Conolly, the Malabar Collector and Magistrate, reported that 10,000 to 12,000 Mappilas great number of whom were armed, met at Tirurangadi and held a close conclave with the Thangal on rumour being spread that he was at once to be made prisoner and disgraced"[37] It was thought necessary to have religious sanction and to receive the blessings of Mamburam Tangal, or some other Mappila divines to undertake a holy war. His injunctions and *fatwas* were strictly followed without question and even the loyalist Mappilas approached him with due respect. All the *ulama* Including the Makhdums of Ponnani, accepted him as their supreme spiritual guide. Sayyid Fazl issued *a fatwa* to the effect that the *jenmi* who oppress the people and disgrace the religion should be murdered.[38] He patronized the festival*(nērcha)* held in memory of the martyrs of the Cherur fight and it gave the Mappilas an inspiration for succeeding *jihāds*.

T.L.Strange in his report endorsed the repressive measures recommended by Conolly, the Collector who was planning to suppress the revolt with an iron hand. Conolly was arguing for long with Madras government that Sayyid Fazl should be banished from the state to prevent the revolt. Conolly, viewed Sayyid Fazl Pookoya Tangal, as a significant threat to British colonial authority in Malabar. This perception stemmed from a series of Mappila revolts in the late 1840s and early 1850s, which Conolly and other British officials attributed to Fazal's influence, despite lacking concrete evidence directly linking him to the uprisings. In correspondence dated January 29, 1852, to T. Pycroft, Conolly described Fazal as "in every respect a dangerous person" and expressed frustration that the police were "powerless against him" due to his significant following, estimated at 10,000–12,000 supporters by February 1852.

Conolly's primary objective was to neutralize Fazl's influence, which he believed incited rebellions against British taxation, land policies, and their alliances with Hindu landlords. His initial plan was to deport Fazl to Arabia, preferably through negotiation to avoid escalating tensions. On February 21, 1852, Conolly sent a confidential emissary to assure Fazl that rumors of his forcible seizure were exaggerated and that no final orders had been issued, indicating an attempt to de-escalate while keeping deportation on the table. However, if negotiations failed, Conolly was prepared to use force to arrest him, as he believed Fazl's presence in Malabar fueled unrest.

The Madras Government initially hesitated to endorse Conolly's recommendation for deportation, likely due to the potential backlash from the Mappila community and the lack of definitive proof of Fazal's direct involvement in the revolts. The T.L. Strange Commission, which investigated the Mappila revolts, also influenced the broader context, highlighting underlying issues like colonial property laws and tensions with local landlords. Despite this, Conolly remained resolute, insisting on deportation at any cost, driven by his conviction that Fazl's leadership posed an ongoing threat to British control.[39]

Ultimately, Fazl preempted any arrest by fleeing to Arabia on March 19, 1852, with 57 family members and servants, transferring his family's property to a relative before leaving.[40] This move likely diffused immediate tensions but did not end the unrest. Conolly's hardline stance, particularly his role in Fazl's exile, provoked significant resentment among the Mappila community. Through his action, the Collector was adding fuel to the fire, that his own fate was decided by the issue. His

stringent measures already had brought the fury of Mappilas against him, and now it was intensified with the banishment of Sayyid Fazl.

When justice was denied completely from all sides, the Mappilas became desperate and resorted to 'suicidal' attacks and individual terrorism. Collector Conolly was murdered in his well guarded bunglow at Calicut between 8 and 9 PM on 11th september 1855.[41] The British officials who led the repressive measures also were not spared by the Mappilas. Among the murdered there was Captain Platt who advocated artillery attack against the Tirurangadi mosque.

The antagonistic relationship between the British and Sayyid Fazl continued even after his deportation. His attempt to retain the governorship of Zafar was frustrated by British intervention in 1879.[40] Sayyid Fazl had advised the Mappilas, not to respect the oppressive land lords and forbade even the use of traditional honorific titles when addressing the *jenmis* and the Nairs.[42]

Sayyid Fazl had left no single dominant figure to succeed him at Mambram. But he had left a number of disciples who were influenced by his personality and doctrines. One Pocker Kutty Musliyar who had been associated with the shrine at Mamburam continued the preaching *jihād* and he was known to have been in personal contact with some of the Mappilas who martyred themselves following the murder of a Namboothiri *jenmi* family.[43] Kunhikoya Tangal, a relative of Mamburam Tangal and one of the rebel leaders had the following statement: "My reason for joining these people arise from the dictates of religion; for when a member of Muslamans is in trouble and in danger it is for us Sayeds to join and die with them. Seeing their grievous state, I, thinking of the face of God, joined them.[44]

Another Ba Alawi Sayyid Husain Shihab Tangal of Panakkad (1239/1823-24-1302/1884-85) a contemporary of Sayyid Fazl was another prominent leader who encouraged rebellion against the British imperialism. Husain Shihab was a disciple of Sayyid Alawi Tangal. He was born as the son of Sayyid 'Ali Shihabuddin and was educated at Malappuram, Tanur and Ponnani. He served as the *q*āzi of Tirurangadi and Malappuram. He joined with Sayyid Fazl in his anti - British campaign and issued *fatwas* to that effect.

The deportation of Sayyid Fazl and the repressive measures of the authorities couldn't change his mind. He encouraged the rebels with his blessings and the authorities got direct evidence for the involvement of the Tangal in the out break of 1882 under Kalangadan Kutty Hassan. He was arrested and copies of *fatwa* issued by him were confiscated. He was sentenced for life imprisonment and remained in the Central jail of Vellore till his death.[45]

Prayer at the tombs of saints like Sayyid Alawi, and *Shahids* played as a stimulant and inspired the participants in *jihād.*[45] The intending *shahids* used to visit the shrine at Mamburam before they set out to fight and they took their pledge before the shrine. It was a significant practice rooted in Islamic traditions of visiting graves to remember death, seek forgiveness for the deceased, and draw spiritual inspiration. For the Mappila fighters, these visits honoured revered figures like Sayyids and fallen martyrs, reinforcing their resolve in the anti-colonial struggle.

While aligned with practices like reciting Quranic verses and making prayer, the practice must be understood within the Mappilas' Sufi-influenced Shafi'i tradition and the broader socio-

political context of the rebellion. Those who couldn't go to the tomb of Sayyid Alawi, satisfied with prayers at the tombs nearby sayyids or martyres. The assasins of Conolly, prayed at the shrine at Mamburam before their plot to invoke the blessings of Sayyid Alawi who has been buried in the tomb.

The religious leadership of Sayyid Alawi and his successors and the political conditions of the time created far reaching changes in the social and religious life of the community in the later half of the nineteenth century. The popular form of Sufism became deep rooted in the community and it brought among them solidarity and social unity. This facilitated their mass mobilization against the common enemy.

The community which had been suffering already through the illegal eviction and the exorbitant rents due to the injustice of landlord-British conspiracy, now found asylum in the new leadership. At the same time the hatred of the community towards the landlords increased so much so that they no more accepted the superior position maintained by the landlords in the society and became reluctant to respect them.

Sayyid FazI while attempting to heighten the awareness of the identity of the Mappilas and increase their independence from the dominant Hindu castes issued *fatwas* which refuted the superiority of the landlords and the caste Hindus. He told the Mappilas that they shouldn't plough on Friday and forbade the using of honorific titles or *achāra vākku* while addressing the high castes.[46] The Mappilas readily followed the injunctions with letter and spirit, and some of them it is said, have even gone beyond the instructions and broke the ploughs of Nairs who would not cease work on Friday.[47]

Sayyid Abdulla Koya Tangal (d.1908), the nephew and the successor of Sayyid Fazl, tried to maintain a policy of reconciliation with the authorities and tried to put and end to the outbreaks. Like Karamat 'Ali in Bengal, 'Abdulla Koya tried to reform the Sunni Islam by maintaining a peaceful relationship with the British. He started a journal called *Hidāyat al lkhwān,* which was the first of its kind in Arabic Malayalam. Through the publication he made aware the community of the importance of modern education and urged them to put an end to the hostile activities aganist the British authority.[48]

In the 1921 Rebellion, which served as the major peasant insurgency in Malabar, the Sayyids and the Ulama provided critical leadership. Chembrasseri Tangal, Seethi Koya Tangal, and Konnara Tangal were among the prominent Sayyids who led the uprising. The *Ulama*, including various Sayyids, appealed to the Mappilas to defend their faith, circulating fatwas and pamphlets to incite the people to insurrection. This mobilization undoubtedly disposed the Mappilas toward the social and political goals implicit in the concept of a Khilafat kingdom.

Sir William Vincent, the Home Member of the Government of India, underscored this influence in a speech to the Madras Legislative Assembly on February 8, 1922, where he attributed the primary responsibility for the rebellion to the *Ulama*. However, while the Ulama possessed the power to incite the Mappilas to revolt, they often found it impossible to restrain the violence once it had commenced. This lack of control was evident during the disturbances at Manjeri, where a Mappila rebel reportedly retorted that they would not remain silent even if the Mamburam Tangal himself were to rise from his grave and order them not to create a

disturbance. Despite such moments of defiance, the Mappilas remained deeply concerned with obtaining religious sanction for their actions.

Seeking the blessings of the *Ulama* and Sayyids was viewed as a spiritual guarantee, often regarded as a certificate to paradise, even in the face of defeat or death. At Mamburam, while the successors of Sayyid Fazl were generally less interested in the rebellion and often remained loyal to the authorities, the rebels continued the tradition of visiting the shrine to seek blessings, a practice that had become a widely accepted and essential part of their revolutionary identity.

NOTES:

1. Shah Waliyullah*, Hujjathullahi al Baligha, quoted in,* M. Mujeeb*, The Indian Muslims,* London,1967,p. 29
2. *Fatwa is* a verdict or a decision on a point of law by the learned doctors of Islam. The *fatwa* document is a conventional form and varied little over the centuries. It is headed by a pious invocation in Arabic often written in a very involved and stylized manner and varying from period to period. *Encyclopaedia of Islam,* ed. Brill, Leiden, 1983, Vol. IV, p.86
3. Barbara Daly Metcalf, *Islamic Revival in British India, Deoband, 1860-1900,* Princeton, 1982, P. 51 fn; Wilfred Cantwell Smith, in C.H. Philips, ed., *Politics and .Society in India,* London, 1963. pp. *47-49*
4. Mushirul Haque, op. cit.,p. 2
5. He was born at Tarim in 1139/1726-27 and by the age of twenty attained the perfection of knowledge. He was initiated to the Qadiri order by Muhammad b. Hāmid b. Shaikh 'Abdullah [Trimingham puts the year of the death of Shaikh 'Abdullah as 1720 (Trimingham, op.cit., p.216)]. If it is correct Shaikh Jifri had no chance of meetig him because he was born seven years after the death of 'Abdulla) and to Ba'Alawi order by 'Abdullah al Haddād, Shaikh 'Abdu Rahnan, *Kawkabiddurriyya fi Manaqibi Qutub Shaikh Jifri,* Published by the Author, 1329/1911 .p.2
6. The estblishment of Mysorean rule was merely a political change for Mappilas and they never regarded it as the establishment of an Islamic rule over the rule of the infidels. The religious leadership also found no difference between the rule of the Zamorins and that of the the Mysoreans. Despite the fact that the former being a Hindu rule and the latter a Muslim, to the Mappilas Malabar under both the regims was *dar-al Islam.* Since the Mysorean rulers were Muslims and they continued the existing, religious freedom as before, the leadership never thought of any confrontation with the Mysoreans, though to the Zamorins and his allies, the new rule had brought ill will and inconvenience. The revolt of Attan Kurikkal and his supporters against the Mysorean power was a part of land lords' reaction against the new revenue experiments and was neither sanctioned by the religion nor supported by the religious leaders. When the Mysoreans replaced the traditonal system with their new policies, the Mappilas as well as the low caste Hindus were elevated to a status of equal citizenship in social and economic pursuits. The disappointed and disgraced land lords who had fled to the south, were waiting for an opportunity to return and revenge. The British authority who had replaced the mysoreans not only brought back the traditional system but also gave maximum powers to the land lords to harass the tenants. The Mappilas, till now enjoying considerable freedom, were again brought under the weight of land lordism. They were denied of their economic and religious existence and the Mappila leadership at last found rebellion against the land lords, the only way to save themselves from the plight. The reactions which were primarily aimed at the land lords, ultimately turned against the British government, with whose support the land lords exploited their Mappila tenants.
7. Sayyid Alawi (1752-53 -1844-45)' (Sayyid Alawi, belonging to Mouladdaweeela branch of Hadrami Sayyids came to be known as Mamburam Tanga], for his house was situated at Mamburam on the northern bank of Kadalundi river , just opposite to the Tirurangadi Mosque standing high on the south bank of the river. Born at Tarim as the son of Muhammad b. Sahl Mawladdawila, Sayyid Alawi became an orphan at an early age. When he reached the age of 17 years he migrated to Malabar and established

his seat at Mamburam. After his death in 1844-45 he was buried in the mausoleum complex there. He was succeeded by his son Sayyid Fazl who followed the footsteps of his father. The tomb of Sayyid Alawi is venerated by Mappilas and it acted as a medium of inspiration during the Mappila out breaks. For a detailed study of Mambram Tangal, see, K.K. Muhammad Abdul Karim, *Hasarath Mambram Sayyid Alawi Tangal,* Tirurangadi, 1975

8. Sayyid Fazl had included *Saif al Battar* in his *'Uddat al Uamara ' wal Hukkam li Ihanat-al Kafarata wa 'Abadat al Asnam(Requirements for Leaders and Rulers to Prevent Disbelief and Idolatory),* Egypt, 1273/ 1856. The book was prohibited in Malabar by Conolly, the Collector, Sayyid Fazl,(ed.), *Uddat...,* p.25
9. Ibid., p.28
10. Ibid., p. 29
11. Ibid., p.26
12. Ibid., p. 29
13. Ibid., pp.30-31
14. Ibid., p. 39
15. Ibid.p.39
16. Ibid. p.34
17. Ibid.
18. S.F. Dale, *The Mappilas of Malabar*, (1498-1922, Oxford, 1980,p. 114
19. O. Muttukkoya Tangal, *Mambram Maqam,* Tirurangadi, 1989, pp.24-25. A *nercha* festival is held every year in the name of the martyrs of Muttiyara.)
20. S.F. Dale, *The Mappilas of Malabar,* p. 116
21. See C.M. Muhammad Moulawi, *Britante Parajayam Athava Cherur Chinth,* Published by the Author, n.d.pp. 2-23. The Cherur fight was against one Kaprat Panikkar of Cherur near Vengara. Panikkar was the landlord of the area and he, with the support of the British, disgraced the Mappilas, most of whom were converts from lower castes. They placed their grievance before Sayyid 'Alawi Tangal with whose blessings they took to fight against the Panikkar. It is said that within no time Tangal himself reached the spot miraculously and actively participated in the battle. Panikkar was assisted by sixty British soldiers of Vth Madras regiment under Captain Leader. According to the British Version four of them were killed in the battle while the Muslim sources put the number as twenty. The bodies of Muslims who lost their life in the battle were taken by the British soldiers to Tirurangadi with the intention of cremating them, but at the protest of the Mappilas they left the bodies there and the Mappilas themselves buried them in Manthani Paramba near Tirurangadi.The authorities prohibited the Mappilas in visiting these graves. In the fight seven Mappilas lost their life. They are: Puwwadan Moideen, Punadakkapuram Moideen, Punthirunthi Ismail, Pattarakkadavil Husain, Mussakkutty , Ali Hassan, and Cholakkal Bukhari. For details of the Cherur fight, see, R.G. Burton, Mappila Rebellions", *Journal* of the *United Services Institute of India, C.N.* Ahamad Moulawi, K.K.Muhammad Abdul Karim, *Mahathya Mappila Sahitya Pairambaryam* op.cit. pp. 178-179 & 389-392; C.M. Muhammad *Moulawi, Britante Parājayam,* op.cit; O. Muttukoya *Tangal, Mamburam Maqam,* op.cit., pp.25-26; K.K.Muhammad Abdul Karim, *Hasarath Mamburam Sayyid Alawi Tangal,* Tirurangadi,1975
22. S.F.Dale, *The Mappilas of 'Malabar,* p.116
23. Tamil Nadu Archives, *Malabar District Records, Police, 1817.* pp. 435-6.
24. In the early revolts led by Attan Kurikkal and Unni Musa, the religion had played only a minor role. Their fight was mainly for personal ends rather than a holy war.
25. S.F.Dale, *The Mappilasof Malabar,*p. 119
26. Logan, *Malabar Manual, Superintendent. Govt., Press. Madras. 1951,*
27. VoI.I,p.67
28. Ibid ., p. 87
29. C.A. Innes, Malabar: Madras District Gazetteers. *Superintendent, Government Press. Madras, 1951.(First Published in 1908 edited by F.B. Evans and republished in 1933*, p. 79

30. Logan, *Malabar Manual,* Vol. I, P. 557.
31. Minute of J. Grose, Member Council of Governor of Madras I8 August. 1893, *Madras judicial proceedings,* No. 1567, 30 September 1896, p.131.Conrad Wood.op.cit..p.45
32. Information given by C. Kanaran, Deputy Collector of Malabar to W. Logan. Govt. of Madras, *Malabar Special Commission,* 1880-82, Vol. II, p, 48
33. For the full text see his Uddat….., pp.92-165
34. Logan, *Malabar Manual,* Vol.I .,p. 567
35. Magistrate's Report, dated on 29 November 1851, Ibid., p.567
36. Ibid
37. Ibid. India Office Library, *Moplah Outrages Correspondence,* Vol. IV, p. 441
38. Logan, *Malabar Manual,* Vol.I .,p. 567
39. See Innes, op.cit.,p.80.
40. K.K. Muhammad Abdul Karim, *Hazrath Mamburam....* op.cit.pp.64-70
41. India Office Library, *Moplah Outrages Correspondence,* 1V, p.276
42. India Office Library, *Moplah Outrages Correspondence,* Vol. IV, p. 336, S.F. Dale, *The Mappilas of Malabar*, p. 135
43. *Correspondence on Mappila Outrages in Malabar, (1849-1853).* Vol. 1. p.32
44. C.K.Karim, *Kerala Muslim Charithram Sthithivivara kanakku Directory,* op.cit.,Vol.111, p.258
45. Innes, op.cit., p.79
46. India Office Library, *Mappila Outrages Correspondence,* Vol. IV, p.276
47. Conolly to Secretary, Judicial, 11 Feb. 1852, *Madras Judicial Proceedings,* No. 125, 20 Feb. 1852, p.696.
48. C.K.Karim, *Kerala Muslim History, Statistics and Directory*, Charithram Publications, Kochi, 1991, p.248
49. Speech of Sir, W.Vincent, Home Member, Govt. of India, 8 February 1922, *Madras Legislative Assembly Debates, Official Report,* 1922, V01.II. Part II, p. 2279,
50. *Times* of *India,* 27 August 1991, Conrad Wood. *The Moplah Rebellion, and its Genesis,* Delhi,1982, p.198