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Edited by
**Jacob Thekeparampil
Thomas Koonammakkal
Baby Varghese**

With the Assistance of
Metropolitan Mar Aprem, Assad Sauma, Sebastian P. Brock,
J.P. Deschler, F.B. Chatonnet, A. Desreumaux, R.Y. Ebied,
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L. Van Rompey, J.W. Watt, Cornelia B. Horn, Muriel Debié,
D. Winkler, Jiffy F. Mekkattukulam, Shabo Talay, E. Vergani

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All correspondences regarding the Review should be addressed to:
**The Editors, The Harp, SEERI, Baker Hill,
Kottayam - 686 001, Kerala, India
Phone : 0091 481 2564333, 2560856.**
E-mail: seeri@bsnl.in & maeri@dataone.in
www.seeri.org

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Martin Thomas Antony

I

ALENGAD SLIVA: THE NEGLECTED JEWEL OF THE ANCIENT CHRISTIAN SETTLEMENT IN ALENGAD AND THE MOST ANCIENT CHRISTIAN ARTEFACT OF MALABAR, SOUTH INDIA

1. Introduction

Alengad Sliva¹ is an ancient Persian Cross discovered in Kerala in 1931. It is a granite bas relief cross with pahlavi inscriptions. There are a number of similar plain Crosses with three bud like arrangements at the ends of the arms with a floral design on the base and a descending dove on the top found in South India. This family of plain Crosses are called Persian Crosses, on account of the inscriptions in Pahlavi, a middle Persian language. These Crosses denote the strong connection of the Christians of Malabar coast of India with Christianity in the Persian Empire- the Church of the East and a definite Pahlavi phase of the East Syrian Christianity of Malabar².

Alengad is a village in Ernakulam District in the South Indian State of Kerala, 7 km from Aluva and 19 km from Kodungalloor. Saint Mary's Church at Alengad is an ancient church established in the 14th century AD dedicated to Saint Mary, the Mother of the Lord Isho Misiha.³ In ancient accounts, Alengad was called 'Mangate'.⁴

Discovery of the Alengad Sliva

Alengad Cross was discovered by Rev. Fr. Joseph C Panjikaren in 1931 found lying on the wayside unrecognised. (20 January 1931) People thought it as a mile stone. This Cross was then placed in a wayside shrine near the Church at Alengad.

Alangad in the Nasrani History

Alengad is the birthplace of Mar Joseph Kariattil who was consecrated as the Archbishop of Kodungallur (Cranganore) in 1783 AD for the Catholics of the Syro Chaldean rite in Malabar but died in Goa under dubious circumstances before arriving in his See in Kerala.⁵ It was in Alengad, the Archdeacon⁶ Thomas Parambil was "consecrated" by 12 Cathanaars⁷ as the Bishop for Saint Thomas Christians -Mar Thoma I, after the historical Alengad yogam⁸ - the Synod of the Saint Thomas Christians. This event, along with the Coonan Cross oath, was a Great revolt against the Portuguese Colonial Missionary enterprise in India, marking a milestone in the history of Saint Thomas Christians of Malabar. (This could have been the very first rebellion against the European Colonial powers from native Indians.) Even though canonically this act was not correct, it showed the great pride and courage of the Saint Thomas Christians of Malabar. In 1598 AD, having no ecclesiastical authority over the Church of Saint Thomas Christians, the Portuguese Archbishop Alexis Dom Menezis of Goa, visited Alengad, as part of his visitation to most of the Saint Thomas Christian Churches in Malabar, in a bid to take over the community under the Portuguese Padruado rule. In 1701, Mar Anjelos Francis was consecrated as

a Bishop for Saint Thomas Christians by a Chaldean Bishop Mar Simon at Alengad, as the rest of the Roman Catholic Padruado Bishops refused to consecrate him, even when Mar Anjelus Francis was appointed by the Pope⁹.

2. Historical accounts about Alengad

Bernard Thomas

Alengad Church and the Christian settlement are mentioned in many ancient historical accounts. Rev. Fr. Bernard of Saint Thomas has written that Alengad church was founded in the 14th century AD with the support of the King of Alengad who donated land and property to the Church. The King has set aside ‘60 para nilam’ - about 6 acres of land- for the expenses of the lighting of lamps in the church. Certain documents also describe a property known as Thalakoothu nilam (property for head ailments) donated by the King to the Church after prayers in the church cured the Queen of serious headaches.¹⁰

Antonio De Gouvea

Antonio De Gouvea has written about Alengad in connection with the visit of Archbishop Alexis Dom Menesis. Gouvea described that Alengad was a big settlement of Christians. He visited Alengad Church during the time of a fierce war between Alengad and Parur. The Archbishop consoled the Christians in the Church and taught about the Roman Church and that the Roman Pontiff was the Head of the Church in the world and the Vicar of Jesus Christ.¹¹

Raulini Johannus Facundus Raulin and Paulinos De Bartholomew

Raulini Johannus Facundus Raulin in 1740 AD and Paulinus De Bartholomeo in 1790 AD mentions Saint Mary’s Church at Alengad as well as the Jesuit and Carmelite houses there.¹²

Abraham Hyacinthe Anquetil -Duperron

In 1750 AD, French Orientalist Abraham Hyacinthe Anquetil Duperron visited Alengad. He calls the church at Alengad as “the most beautiful church in Malabar”. He also describes an altar dedicated to the exaltation of Holy Cross on the top of a nearby hillock.¹³

3. Pahlavi inscribed granite Crosses of South India

A Pahlavi inscribed granite Cross was found by Portuguese Missionaries in the ruins of the ancient Church at Mailappur in 1547 AD. This was not a surprise at that time as there were several similar Crosses in Malabar as witnessed by Joseph the Indian¹⁴, Antonio Gouvea¹⁵ and Duarte Barbosa¹⁶. In AD 1873, the inscriptions found on these Crosses caught attention of A C Burnell and he discovered that these were Pahlavi inscriptions. This led to interest in the two Pahlavi inscribed Crosses of Kottayam “Valiyapalli” during that time. The rest of the Pahlavi inscribed Crosses had by this time disappeared. Research into these inscriptions led to the discovery of more Crosses in the region; in St George’s Church at Kadamattom in 1923 AD¹⁷, at Ruha D Kudisha Church at Muttuchira in 1925 AD¹⁸, and at Gervasis and Proctasis Church Kothanallur, Kottayam in 1987 AD¹⁹. In 2001 AD, another Pahlavi Cross was found in Goa in Agassim²⁰.

Crosses of Saint Thomas the Apostle - The Miraculous Sliva of Kodungallur

These Crosses were called by the local Saint Thomas Christians as Saint Thomas’ Crosses as recorded by the early Portuguese writers in the sixteenth century.²¹ The local Christians had an oral tradition that the Apostle Thomas arrived in Kodungallur and erected Churches and installed a Cross there. This could be only an oral tradition based on the retrojection of the practice of veneration of Crosses in the post Apostolic period. This famous Cross was called the miraculous Cross because it was said to have played several

miracles to the Christians and the gentiles as well. The local Kings had a great veneration to this cross and they sent oil to be lighted in front of the Cross. Antonio Gouvea has narrated that a Cross was placed in a wayside chapel with only one side open with railings and Archbishop Alexis Dom Menesis celebrated a solemn Mass in front of this Cross. From this we can assume that this Cross was placed in the altar of that chapel. Gouvea also describes a miraculous visual allusion while the Archbishop celebrated the Holy Mass²². This famous Cross is not seen today. B T Anklesaria comments that the Cross found at Alengad was taken from Kodungallur (Cranganore) without specifying any source for the information.²³

4 The Burnt Sliva of Alengad

During the visits of the Archbishop Menesis at Alengad, Gouvea narrates that there was a small chapel dedicated to the Holy Cross on a nearby hillock. Du Perron also describes the same.²⁴

Gouvea describes the burning the Christian settlements in Alengad by the suicide squads of the Kingdom of Parur. They burned the settlements, but the fire stopped at a Cross placed on the road made of sticks, (could be bamboo) with small crosses made of coconut leaf fronds hanging from its arms. This site was visited by the King of Mangate on the next day and acclaimed that “the God of the Christians did not want that the fire should touch its sign.” Gouvea also narrates a miracle of another Cross placed in the altar on the top of a nearby hill where the Cross and the altar that was made of stick- again probably bamboo sticks-which survived when the whole chapel and roof burnt down.²⁵ We can assume that the whole Church was made of bamboo sticks probably plastered with clay and cow dung in that time period. Here, the Cross was placed in the altar that was made of bamboo. Miraculously, the altar with the Cross was preserved while the rest of the Church was burnt down. Most probably, this Cross that was placed in the altar was the Alengad Sliva.

We have witnesses of Gouvea²⁶, and also of Du Perron²⁷ commenting on the shrine on the top of a nearby hill in Alengad dedicated to the Holy Cross. On close inspection, we can see marks of burning and charring on the lower third of the Alengad Sliva. Anklesaria clearly mentions the crack formed on the Cross.²⁸ This is also seen even today at the marks of charring. Now, we can assume that this crack and charring are evidence of this Cross being burnt in a fire. Therefore, Alengad Sliva could be the Sliva that was kept in the altar of the small shrine in Alengad dedicated to the Holy Cross that was burnt down.

We have many ancient Churches dedicated to Mar Sliva such as Mapranam (AD 928)²⁹, Alleppey, Chennamangalam,³⁰ Cherpunkal³¹ Manjapra³², Purakkad³³ and many more. We have examples of ancient churches with similar Crosses placed in the altar as recorded in churches in Muttuchira³⁴, Quilon³⁵, Kumari Muttom³⁶ and so on. Therefore, we can assume that this Shrine dedicated to The Holy Cross on the top of a nearby hillock of Alengad could be a very ancient shrine, rather older than the Alengad Church.

5. Pahlavi Inscriptions on these Crosses

The Pahlavi inscriptions on these Crosses have been studied by many experts. A C Burnell (1873), Dr Martin Haug (1874), Prof Baron De Harlez (1892), Dr E W West (1896) and Dastur Darab Peshotan Sanjana (1914) deciphered and translated the inscriptions by studying the Mailppore Cross and the two Kottayam Crosses. Later, Dr. J J Modi wrote in 1924 about these inscriptions, after studying the Cross at Kadamattom and again in 1926 after studying the Muttuchira Cross.³⁷

Readings of different scholars³⁸

For ease for understanding and comparison, I have put the reading of Pahlavi inscription word by word with number for identification and the translation after that. I could not get the word

by word reading of Dr Martin Haug. Dr E W West reviewed his own reading from 1874 and gave a new reading in 1896. The reading of Baron De Harlez and the translation was given in French. I have translated it to English language using Google translate. Dastur Darab P Sanjana gave four readings and translations.

A C Burnell (AD 1878)

(1) *min amn* (2) *mshiha* (3) *af alha-f* (4) *mdm* (6) *af rshd-i* (7) *aj* (8) *asar bukht* (9) *yin rijya* (10) *mn* (11) *vu drd i* (12) *dnmn* (The numbers denote the number of word).

(In punishment (?) by the cross (was) the suffering of this one: (He) who (is) the true Christ and the God above , and guide ever pure.)

Dr Martin Haug (AD 1874)

(Who believes in the Messiah and God above and in the Holy Ghost is redeemed through the grace of him who bore the cross.)

Dr E W West (AD 1874)

(1) *mun amen* (2) *meshikha-i* (3) *avaksha-i* (4) *madam* (6) *afras* (7) *aj* (8) *khar bukht* (9) *sulda i* (10) *min* (11) *van va dard i* (12) *denmau*

(What freed the true Messiah, the forgiving, the upraising from hardship ? The crucifixion from the true, and the anguish of this.

Dr. E W West (amendment of reading in AD 1896)

(He) whom the suffering of the self same Messiah, the forgiving and upraising , (has) saved, (is) offering the plea whose origin (was) the agony of this.

Baron De Harlez (AD 1892)

(1) *mun amen* (2) *mesiha i* (3) *avakhsha i* (5) *madam* (6) *afras* (7) *aj* (8) *asar bokht* (9) *yin razya* (10) *min* (11) *van dart i* (12) *denman*

French language- *Celui qui (est) le vrai Messie le reconciliateur, le ressuscitant a jamais, purifie (sanctifie) par la vertu (provenant) du crucifiement de lui (ou, du crucifiement celui-ci, ce qu'on voit ici)*

English translation-One who (is) the true Messiah the Reconciler, raising him ever purifies (sanctified) by virtue (from) the crucifixion of him (or of the crucifixion it, what we see here)

Dastur Darab Peshotan Sanjana (AD 1914- 4 readings)

(9) Rish-razya (10) min (11) van dard (12) dena 1 mun hemn (2) meshiha (3) apakhsha i (3) madam (6) afra (7) i (8) Chahar-bukht

(9) Rish-razya (10) min (11) van dard (12) dena (1) mun hemn (2) Meshiha (3) apakhsha i (5) madam (6) Aprahim (7) i (8) Chahar-bukht

(1) Mun hemn (2) Meshiha (3) apakhsha i (4) madam (5) afraji (7) i (8) chahar bokht (9) rish razya (10) min (11) van dard (12) dena

(9) Rasul-ish Yeh (10) min (11) van dard (12) dena

Such (was) the affliction (*dard*) of the wounding and spearing (*rish-razya*) of him on the Cross (*min van*), who (was) faithful (*hemn*) Meshiha, a forgiver, of superior dignity the descendant of Chahar -bukht

This (was) the affliction (*dard*) of the spearing and wounding of him on (*min*) the cross who (was) the faithful Meshiha, the merciful one, the descendant of the Great Abraham, (who was) the descendant of Chahar- bokht

He of whom the faithful Meshiha (was) a forgiver, (was) highly exalted; he (was) redeemed from the four (regions of hell) ; this (was due to) the affliction of the spearing and wounding (of Meshiha) on the cross.

This (was) the affliction on the cross even of the messenger of Jehovah

Dr J J Modi in **AD1923-26**

(9) Li zibah vai (10) min (11) Ninav val (12) denman (1) Napisht
(2) Mar Shapur (3) Li (mun) ahrob (5) Mashiah (6) avakhshah
(7) i min (8) khar bokht

I, a beautiful bird from Nineveh, (have come) to this (country)
Written by Mar Shapur. Holy Messiah, the forgiver, freed me from
thorn (affliction)

C P T Winkworth

C P T Winkworth published a detailed study about all these inscriptions in 1929.³⁹ Winkworth studied all these Crosses except the ones in Alengad and Goa. He also consulted with Dr Ernest Herzfeld who was well known for his extensive work in Persia.⁴⁰ Winkworth proposed that all these inscriptions are copies of an original, based on the finding that a few letters are upside down and a word as mirror image, raising the possibility that the copiers used a series of rubbings or estampages to cut the new inscription where, the reverse side of the rubbing was used to produce the mirror image of a word and rubbing put on wrong way to create the upside down letters. He proposed that the smaller one of the two Crosses of Kottayam “Valiya palli” was the model for Kadamattam Cross, even the Mailappore Cross could be a copy of the smaller Kottayam Cross based on the calligraphic appearances. This theory was generally accepted in the Seventeenth International Congress of Orientalists in Oxford, 1928.⁴¹

Interpretations of Winkworth

‘My Lord Christ, have mercy upon Afras, son of Chaharbukht, the Syrian who cut this’.⁴²

The revised interpretation by Winkworth 1930⁴³

‘My Lord Christ, have mercy upon Afras, son of Chaharbukht, the syrian who preserved this.’

‘My Lord Christ, have mercy upon Afras, son of Chaharbukht who put it around.’

Recent Interpretations

W B Henning. **1958**

MRH-mn msyh ph s d QDM Y ch rbwt T Gywrgys MNW wn rt ZNH

Our Lord Jesus Christ, have mercy about son of Chaharbuxt, son of George who erects this.⁴⁴

Gerd Gropp **1970**

May our Lord the Messiah have mercy on Gabriel, son of Chaharbokht, grandson of Durzad who made this (Cross).⁴⁵

Philippe Gignoux. **1995**

May our Lord the Messiah have mercy upon Sabriso, son of Chaharboxt the deft, who sculpted this (Cross).⁴⁶

Carlo G Cereti, Luca M Olivieri, Fr Joseph Vazhuthanapalli-(CICAR-CASI)2002

MR Hmm msyh phs d QDM spys<x> Y ch rbwht Y swlzydy MNW bw(y)lt ZNE

Our Lord Christ, have pity on Sabriso, son of Caharboxt, son of Suray who bore (brought ?) this (cross)⁴⁷

6. Epigraphy of Alengad Sliva

Alengad Sliva was extensively studied by eminent Pahlavi Scholar B T Anklesaria in 1958 AD. The initial researchers studied the inscriptions of different Crosses but only three Crosses were available- the Mailappur Cross and two Kottayam Valiya palli Crosses. Later, more Crosses were found at Muttuchira and

Kadamattom. CPT Winkworth analysed all these Crosses, but the Alengad Sliva was not discovered yet.

Mr B T Anklesaria had the opportunity to study all the Crosses and to consider all the previous interpretations during his reading. Anklesaria read the inscription on Alengad Sliva, carefully analysing the reading of other scholars word by word and letter by letter, and came to the conclusion presented below.

(1) *Mo-la-he* (Lord) (2) *Masiha* (anointed) (3) *Awa-khsai-ch* (savior too) (4) *u* (and) (5) *madam* (supreme) (6) *apras* (revelation) (7) *ich* (too/of) (8) *cha-ar-b-ap* (four apostles) (9) *Su-riha* (Syrians) (10) *man-u* (whom) (11) *bo-kht* (saved) (12) *dan-he* (this)⁴⁸

Mr Anklesaria discusses that from the time of Artakhsir i Papakan (226-230AD) up to the time of Narsih Sahpur (293-302AD), no conjuncts were used in Pahlavi inscriptions, except for occasional intentional or unintentional writing together of ‘an’. From the time of Sahpuhr the III (383-388AD) the conjuncts ‘an’ and ‘ph’ started appearing in coin legends (coin inscriptions) The conjuncts ‘at’ and ‘ap’ on the coins of Khusru Kavut (488-531 AD) and ‘khv’, ‘ru’ and ‘ap’ on the coins of Khusru Kavatan, ‘ra’ or ‘rh’ on the coins of Varahran VI and the conjunct ‘ache’ as in the word ‘*molache*’ in our Sliva inscriptions are found in the coins of Hormazd IV (579-590 AD), Khusru II (590- 628 AD) and Yazdkart III (632-641 and 641-651 AD in exile) but never seen in MS Pahlavi⁴⁹. In the Pahlavi inscriptions of these Crosses, there exist a large number of conjuncts. It has to be noted that these inscriptions use a mode of orthography found later in Pahlavi MSS. The oldest Pahlavi manuscript known to exist was written in the eighth century AD.⁵⁰

Anklesaria comments that the inscriptions on these Crosses are similar with only minor variations, some of the variations could be decorative modifications at the beginning and end. He thinks that the oldest of these Crosses could have been erected in, or

soon after or earlier to the time of Sasanian Emperor Sahrpuhr II (340AD), but could not be earlier than the Paikuli inscription of King Nars-ahi (293-302AD)⁵¹ But it is not clear why he made an assumption that the latest date could be 340 AD or immediately after that year when there are features of orthography of Pahlavi MSS, the earliest that is still extant is of 8th century AD.

7. Alengad Cross, the most ancient one

Anklesaria calls the Cross found at Alengad as Cranganore Cross in his article without any specific references and comments that the Cross at Alengad is the oldest, as it is the only Cross where we can find the ninth word '*suriha*' inscribed without any faults and also the conjunct '*ich*' is written distinctly at the end of the third word- '*awakhs—aisch*' and in the seventh word '*afras—ich*'. The conjunct '*ich*' is distinctly cut in the smaller Kottayam Cross also. The '*ch*' of the eighth word '*chahar-bap*' is connected to the '*ich*' of the 7th word probably by mistake in both Kottayam Crosses but in Alengad Sliva, it is correctly cut separate from 7th word. The Alengad Cross is the only one in which the fourth word, the conjunction 'u' prefixed to 'madam'.

In the Alengad Sliva, in the eighth word '*ch-arb-o-ap-o-o*', two dots are found over the letter '*r*' which the engravers of Kottayam Crosses thought that these are to be attached to the letter '*r*' and cut it '*har*' instead of '*ar*', thus altering the word '*ch-ar*' to '*ch-har*'.⁵²

Anklesaria has clearly noted the crack on the Alengad Sliva. This was probably formed by the fire as mentioned earlier. The crack is found on the lower part of the Sliva extending from the word '*b-o-ap*' on the left side breaking the '*a*' in the first part of the conjunct '*ap*' and the horizontal line of the letter '*b*' below the conjunct '*ap*' to the first letter '*b*' of the eleventh word '*b-o-kh-t-o*', making this '*b*' appear like '*v*' with a line under the letters '*o-kh-t*'. This '*b*' is cut distinctly in the two Kottayam Crosses, the

Mount Cross and the Muttuchira Cross. Thus, it appears that even when there is a degradation of the quality of many letters in other copies from Alengad Cross, the degradation due to this crack found in Alengad is not copied to the rest of the copies. This is evidence that the Alengad Sliva was copied before the crack was formed, validating the assumption that this crack was formed during the fire in AD 1603 as described by Gouvea.

8.Age of these Inscriptions

The age of these inscriptions has been fixed at about 7th or 8th century AD by most of the Pahlavi experts. As the conjunct ‘ache’ is found from 579 AD but not seen used in 8th century Pahlavi MSS, we have to assume that the inscriptions could belong to a period between 6th to 8th century AD.

As mentioned earlier, these Pahlavi inscribed Sliva-s are pointing towards a Pahlavi phase of the Church of Saint Thomas Christians in Malabar, when the Thomas Christians were hierarchically dependent on the Church of Fars which used Pahlavi as their liturgical language. Chronicles of Seert narrates that Mana, the Bishop of Rewardushir (Fars- South Persia) wrote religious discourses, canticles and hymns in the Pahlavi language and translated the works of Diodore and Theodore of Mopseustia into Syriac and sent them to India and the islands of the sea in 470 AD.⁵³ It was Patriarch Iso Yahb III (650-660 AD) or his successor Sliba Zcha (714-728 AD) who raised the Church of India to a Metropolitan See directly under the Patriarch of Selusia- Ctesiphon.⁵⁴ Therefore, the Pahlavi phase might have extended a period from the 5th century AD to the 8th century AD and these Crosses might have been erected during this period, or brought to Malabar later by the Persian immigrants. If it was the Persian immigrants who brought a Sliva with Pahlavi inscriptions and they, or the local Christians made copies of it, then the age of the inscriptions may not be pertinent to the history of the Church of the Christians of Saint Thomas.

9. Conclusion

Alengad Sliva seems to be the oldest Pahlavi inscribed Crosses of South India and the rest of the Crosses are copies of it. Thus, Alengad Sliva is the most ancient Christian artefact found in South India and is the most valuable antiquity of the Nasrani Syrian Christian Community of Malabar. This Sliva was venerated by the forefathers of the Christian settlement in Alengad during the period of Antonio de Gouvea and Archbishop Alexis De Menesis, but later neglected and dumped on the wayside without knowing what it is, until rediscovered by Rev Fr. Joseph Panjikkaren in 1931 AD.

This Sliva was adorned in the *Madbha* of a shrine in Alengad, as recorded by the early Portuguese writers which was the custom of the native Christians. This shrine was made of bamboo and clay. Therefore, this shrine that was dedicated to the Holy Cross could have been the oldest Church of the Christian settlement in Alengad rather than the Saint Mary's Church that was made of stones. We know that many of the ancient Churches of Saint Thomas Christians that were made of bamboo and clay were rebuilt by the Portuguese with stones. Thus, this Sliva was the symbol of worship of the ancient Christian settlement of Alengad.

If this Cross was the Burnt Cross of Alengad, then the Sliva described by Gouvea in Kodungallur (Cranganore) town in front of which the Archbishop Menesis celebrated a solemn mass is still missing, could be hidden somewhere in the locality. There is scope for more investigations and excavations in the area.

Recently, the Christian Community of Alengad built a brand new Church, demolishing the old one. It is sad that this invaluable memento, which was the most adorned Christian imagery of the local Christians before the introduction of various statues of Saints and statues of Misiha on the Cross, is still neglected in a chapel on the side of the road, unprotected.

The Syro Malabar Major Archiepiscopal Church has a duty to protect and preserve this most ancient symbol of worship that

evolved amongst the local Christian community. The Holy Synod should take special interest in setting up a Christian Archaeology Centre to conduct further research and excavations to find the missing Crosses like the one described by Antonio Gouvea and to protect and preserve the existing monuments.



Alengad Sliva

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- 1 *Sliva* is a Syriac word for Cross. Alengad Sliva is a granite bas relief plain Cross with Pahlavi inscriptions. It has a floral arrangements in the base and a descending dove touching the top of the Cross.
 - 2 PIUS MALEKKANDATHIL, Christian communitis of Saint Thomas Tradition in Maharashtra and its neighbourhood in mid sixth century,

- paper presented in the National Seminar on The Identity of the St. Thomas Catholic Migrants held from 12th to 15th September 2013 at Animation and Renewal Centre, Panvel, Diocese of Kalyan, in connection with the Silver Jubilee Celebration of the Kalyan Diocese, <http://www.nasrani.net/2014/01/21/christian-communities-of-st-thomas-tradition-in-maharashtra/>
- 3 BERNARD THOMAS, *Mar Thoma Kristhyanikal*, (Book published in Malayalam language- Saint Thomas Christians) Mar Thoma Sreeha Press, Palai, 1916 p 325. (The History of The saint Thomas Christians by Rev Fr Bernard of Saint Thomas T O C D)
 - 4 PIUS MALEKKANDATHIL, *Jornada of Dom Alexis De Menezes: A Portuguese Account of the Sixteenth Century Malabar*, LRC Publications, Kochi, 2003, p 594.
 - 5 *Angamaly Padiyola-01.02.1787 AD*, page 3 of the copy, *Varthamana pusthakam*, PAREMMAKKAL THOMMAN CATHANAAR, Oriental Institute of Religious Studies India Publications, reprint 1989 p480-481.
 - 6 Archdeacon was the most privileged position among the Thomas Christians. A native Cathanaar holds this dignity which is next only to the Archbishop. He was the temporal head of the Church in Malabar. The Archdeacon of All India had certain ceremonial role also in enthroning the local King. Even when Archbishop Mar Abraham was present, Pope Gregory XIII has sent five Papal briefs to the Archdeacon, recognising the dignity of this title among the Nasrani community. (Rev Dr Xavier Koodapuzha, *Bharatha sabha Charithram- History of the Church in India-p301*, Rev Dr Xavier Koodapuzha, *Mar Thoma Nasrani Sabha Vijnana Kosham-Encyclopaedia of Saint Thomas Christian Church- p124.*) The Apostolic Commissary and Later the Archbishop, Joseph Sebastiani wrote "Among the Christians of Saint Thomas, the position of the Archdeacon is next to the Archbishop. It is a very ancient privileged position which comes down in succession .It is a great dignity as it is according to the Greek (Eastern) Church. There is no other indigenous dignity neither secular nor religious, greater than Archdeacon, who is considered to be the prince and Head of the Saint Thomas Christians" Archives of the Congregation of Propaganda Fide, Rome, *Scritti riferitti nel Congr., General, Vol 233, f.111* (Xavier Koodapuzha, *Bharatha Sabha Charithram*, pp 301-302)
 - 7 The Syrian Christian Priests were called Cathanaars. It may be a Malabar version of the Syriac word Kassessa. In the Portuguese

- documents, the word Kassanar is used. (Rev Dr Xavier Koodapuzha, *Marthoma Sabha Vijnana Kosham*, p208
- 8 XAVIER KOODAPUZHA, *Mar Thoma Nasrani Sabha Vijnana Kosham*, (Encyclopaedia of Saint Thomas Christians,)p 126
- 9 PAREMMAKKAL THOMMAN CATHANAAR, *Varthamana Pusthakam*, Janatha Services Thevara, reprint 1987 OIRSI p45.
- 10 BERNARD THOMAS, Opus cit. pp 325-326.
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- 12 JOANNES FACUNDUS RAULIN, *Historis Ecclesiae Malabaricae cum Diamperitana Synodo*, Rome, 1745,p 428 cited by PIUS MELEKKANDATHIL, *Jornada of Dom Alexis De Menesis: A Portuguese Account of the Sixteenth Century Malabar*, LRC Publications Cochin, 2003 p136, PAULINUS DE BARTHOLOMEW, *India Orientalis Christiana*, Roma, 1794,p 267.cited by PIUS MALEKKANDATHIL ,Opus cit p 136.
- Raulin was the former Superior General of the Order of the Hermites of Saint Augustine, translated the acts of the Synod of Diamper from Portuguese into Latin. As an introduction, he wrote a summary of the Jordana and a short History of Christianity in India. (PIUS MALEKKANDATHIL, Opus cit. pxxi)
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- 14 ANTONY VALLAVANTHARA, *India in 1500 AD*, Gorgias Press, pp166-167, 231
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- 17 J J MODI, *A Christian Cross with a Pahlavi Inscription recently discovered in the Travancore State*, *Journal of the Bombay Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society*, vol II, August 1926, pp 1-18.
- 18 H HOSTEN S J, *Antiquities from San Thome and Mailappore*, The Diocese of Mailappore, p341
- 19 JOSEPH VAZHUTHANAPALLI, *Archaeology of Mar Sliba*, Oriental Institute of Religious Studies India Publications, Kottayam, p 16 foot note 30
- 20 COSME JOS COSTA, *Apostolic Christianity in Goa and in the West Coast*, Xavarian Publication Society, 2009, p 75.

- 21 PIUS MALEKKANDATHIL, Opus cit. p216, also foot note 177 on p 216- (Page 138 of Gouvea's original work mentions about several crosses found inside the churches are called as Saint Thomas Crosses).
- PIUS MALEKKANDATHIL, Opus cit. pp244-245 and also foot note 190 on p 245
- 22 PIUS MALEKKANDATHIL, opus cit. pp 216-217
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- 25 PIUS MALEKKANDATHIL, Opus cit. p359
- 26 PIUS MALEKKANDATHIL, Opus. cit p359.
- 27 See foot notes 12 and 19 above.
- 28 B T ANKLESARIA, Opus cit., p82
- 29 <http://www.smcim.org/church/mapranam/article/299> accessed on 01/01/2014
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- 31 BERNARD THOMAS Opus cit p305
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II

MUTTUCHIRA SLIVA AND LITHIC INSCRIPTIONS: LANDMARK MONUMENTS OF SAINT THOMAS CHRISTIANS OF INDIA

The ancient Christians of the Malabar Coast of India are known as the Saint Thomas Christians. They are also known locally as 'The Nasranis'. They were ecclesiastically connected to the Church of the East, also known as the East Syrian Church which at its peak extended from Mesopotamia to China through Arabia, India and Central Asia.. The Eastern Church was separated from the rest of the Christendom from time of the Synod of Ephesus. This was mainly due to political reasons but doctrinal differences like 'Nestorianism' was also accused on the Eastern Church. The so called 'Nestorianism' seems to be a misunderstanding due to the expression of the faith using certain ambiguous terms in the Greek language. Dr Adrian Fortescue writes 'we saw that Greek words used in the Nestorian controversy are sometimes ambiguous and add to the confusion by the fact that we are not always sure what the people who use them mean .'¹ With the works of Babai, the Great of 6th century² and the visit of Patriarch Ishoyahb II (628-643 AD) to Antioch in the 7th century³, the doctrinal differences became reconciled, but due to geographical and political reasons, the Church of the East continued to be alienated from the rest of the Christendom.

Interference with the Christianity of the West

With the Crusades in the medieval period, the Churches in the East caught attention of the Religio political interests of the European Christianity. Missionaries from the Europe were sent to Babylon and the rest of the East. Their tactic was to begin a friendly relationship with the native Churches and then subjugate them. This resulted in divisions and revolts. Eventually, in Babylon, the Church of the East (The East Syrian Church) was divided into the Chaldean and Assyrian Churches whereas in Malabar, India, the Church of Saint Thomas Christians divided into several fragments due to the interference of multiple colonial forces.

The ancient Church at Muttuchira in South India portrays certain landmark monuments describing the early friendly phase and the later subjugation phase of these relationship- the Muttuchira inscriptions and the Muttuchira Sliva.

Muttuchira

Muttuchira is a village in the Kottayam District located in the South Indian State of Kerala. Muttuchira was called 'Nayappalli' in ancient records⁴. According to local tradition, the Christian settlement of Muttuchira was established in the sixth century⁵. Antonio Gouvea, the Portuguese traveller who accompanied Alexis De Menezes, the Archbishop of Goa, documented Menezes' visit of Muttuchira in AD 1599. Gouvea used the term Nayapili to denote Muttuchira.⁶ In the British Museum Sloane MS 9907, probably written in around 1676 AD, mentions Muttuchira Church as "the Church of 'Spiritu Sancto' (Latin word for Holy Spirit) with the following villages and bazars annexed: Coddi heli, Param poram, Perium paddy, Tanara chera, Cheri Omellur, May mure, Nin dure, Herle nelha cara"⁷.

These places have been identified as Kulavely, Parampram, Thiruvanpady, Thamarachira, Cheriomelloor, Memury, Neendoor and Eravimamngalakkara⁸.

Johannes Facundus Raulin⁹ in 1740s in his book 'Historia Ecclesia Malabaricae' uses the term Muttieri. Anquetil Du Perron, a French Scholar and Orientalist in January 1758, mentions about the Catholic church of Holy Ghost at Muttiera and its oratory of Saint Sebastian had been burnt by the Raja of Travancore¹⁰. Local tradition mentions that the Church was attacked by the parchave or Padshaw. Paulinus De Bartholomew, an Austrian Missionary and an orientalist who was in Kerala during 1774-1789 period also mentions about the Holy Ghost Church of Muttiera and the oratory of Saint Sebastian.¹¹

The Churches of Muttuchira

Muttuchira village has several churches. The main church of Muttuchira, the Ruha D'Qudisha Forane Church compound has two church buildings face to face with the Open air Rock Cross in the middle. The Church on the western side of the open air Cross is the main church now. It was built in AD 1854-58 (Kollam Era 1930-1033)¹² when Rev Fr Kurian Parampil was the vicar.(1859-85).¹³ The Church on the eastern side is the old church which was also called Ruha D' Qudisha church but later, in AD 1925, it was renamed as Church of Saint Francis of Assissi. It was from this church, the Pahlavi inscribed Granite Cross was discovered in AD 1923 during renovation. This Church was probably built in AD 1528 by Mar Denha and Mar Jacob Abuna (Mar Avu) based on the Muttuchira Lithic inscriptions.

Another Church located on north side of the road is called 'Karottu Church'- Church of Saint Sebastian, also called 'prasu palli' with a small open air Rock Cross in front. A little away on the eastern side of all these Churches, there is an ancient open air Rock cross and a Chapel of Saint Anthony. There was an ancient Church in the same location dedicated to Mar Sliva (Holy Cross).

There is a Chapel of Saint Teresa on the western side of the main church complex near the road.

Muttuchira Church is historically important. Archdeacon Jacob of Muttuchira was a native of Muttuchira and was based in this church until his death. He was buried in the Church of Saint Francis of Assisi. He was appointed as Archdeacon by Mar Simon, the Chaldean Bishop who arrived in Malabar in 1576 AD¹⁴ during the time of Mar Abraham, as a rival. Mar Simon was sent to Rome but Archdeacon Jacob had followers until his death in 1596.¹⁵

Bishop Chandy Parambil (Palliveetil Chandy Metran) celebrated his first Pontifical Mass at Muttuchira Church in AD 1663.¹⁶ Saint Alphonsa of India spent her early years in Muttuchira parish¹⁷. Saint Alphonsa of India was brought up in her mother's house, the Muricken family of Muttuchira.

Archdeacon Jacob of Muttuchira

In 1576 AD, Mar Simon, a Bishop from Babylon arrived in Kerala¹⁸ as a rival to Mar Abraham, the Chaldean Catholic Bishop who was in Kerala already¹⁹. Mar Simon was based at Kaduthuruthy and caused a schism among the Thomas Christians. As Mar Abraham had already made certain latinisation, many Christians followed Mar Simon. Two Franciscan Missionaries who arrived from Malacca and Macao in 1583 AD, tactically collaborated with Mar Simon and sent him to Rome²⁰. It has been documented that Mar Simon, accompanied by a Franciscan missionary arrived in Rome in December 1584²¹. He was sent to Lisbon and kept in a Franciscan Friary and died in 1599AD²². Before he left to Rome, Mar Simon appointed Cathanar Jacob of Muttuchira as his Archdeacon. Cathanar Jacob was of Nadackal family²³. It was this Cathanar Jacob who built the old Church of Ruha D' Qudisha which was renamed as the Church of Saint Francis of Assisi and the Church of Saint Sebastian in Muttuchira.

Paul J Madathil, a local journalist during the period 1925 AD gives a different version, based on the local tradition that Fr Jacob, who was an administrator of a diocese in France or Portugal built

these churches. It has to be noted that even when Mar Simon was in custody in Portugal, he was in constant touch with Cathanar Jacob through letters in which Mar Simon styled himself as the Metropolitan of India²⁴. Archdeacon Jacob maintained his authority even when Mar Simon was in Lisbon. He refused to accept the Gregorian Calendar, taught his followers to recite the Chaldean Divine Office, consecrated altars, chalices etc²⁵. Thus, Cathanar Jacob was an Archdeacon/administrator of Mar Simon who was in Lisbon and received regular letters and instructions from Lisbon. This might be the reason why people later assumed that he was an Archdeacon/administrator of a Bishop/diocese in Portugal.

Archdeacon Jacob refused to accept Mar Abraham and continued his activities to uphold the Chaldean way of life. Archbishop Menezes wrote to him that Mar Simon has been convicted in Rome and not in his orders now, asking Archdeacon Jacob to submit to the Papal authority and even offered large promises and favours.²⁶ Archdeacon Jacob died in AD 1596.²⁷

Paul J Madathil, based on the local traditions, comments that Cathanaar Jacob built the Saint Sebastian's Church- the Prasu Church of Muttuchira and rebuilt the old Church of Ruha D' Qudisha as the Church of Saint Francis of Assissi. Besides, he also built Churches at Kothanalloor, Elanji, and another local Church. Paul J Madathil also confirms the local tradition that Cathanar Jacob was buried in the Church of Saint Francis of Assissi. This information has been confirmed by Mr Karottu C. George, a local historian and a Headmaster at Muttuchira in 1925 AD.²⁸

Muttuchira Lithic Inscriptions

Muttuchira lithic inscriptions are early Malayalam inscriptions - Vattezhuthu - Nanam Monum - on a granite tablet found in Muttuchira. The 'Muttuchira inscriptions' are inscriptions narrating about the installation of the free standing Cross and the Pahlavi inscribed bas relief cross-The 'Muttuchira Sliva'. The inscriptions

are on a rectangular granite slab in two sections divided by a vertical line in between. According to Mr T K Joseph²⁹, this inscription must be of AD 1581 or later. This tablet has been the subject of extensive research by many scholars. This granite slab was found on the western wall of the ground floor room of the two storey building attached to the northern side of the old Church of the Holy Ghost. The upper story was used as the Priest's Home and the ground floor was used as the sacristy.³⁰

T. K. Joseph

Mr. T K Joseph was an eminent historian and was the Secretary of the Kerala Society that was formed modelled on the Royal Asiatic Society.

Mr. T. K. Joseph examined the inscription on 25 September 1929.³¹ The left half of the inscription reads - *maaran echo michiyha perannittu 1528 math ee nelathu chuddamana tiliva niruthi, thampurante kalpanayal mar thana mar avu kee varukeethu pirathiyum kooda. Ithinte chezham porathukal desathu poyi thante marumagan mathai pathiriyum kooda.*

The right half reads - *Michiyha pirannittu 1580 matham kanni njyar 13 nu mar thilivayude perunnaalku ee mar thiliva edutha marathil pothinju niruthi, mar chemayon methranum pathiri yakobum. kaalam ithu 18 am nu perunnalkku ee uthira kurishu vachu. 1581 matham meenam njayar 19 am nu thukka velli azhcha naal ikaringal thiliva niruthi.*

The translation of the left half

By the command of the Thamburan (King of Kaduthuruthy? Or is it the Lord Almighty?) in AD 1528 Mar Thana (Mar Denha) and Mar Avu along with Giwargis Padre, installed this Holy Cross in this place. After this, Giwargis padre went to Portugal along with

his nephew Mathai padre. (In AD 1580, Kanni 13 Sunday, on the day of the feast of Holy Cross, this Mar Sliva was erected covered in wood (?), by Bishop Mar Simon and Jacob Padre. Same year, on the day of 18th on the day of the feast, this bleeding Cross was installed. AD 1581 Meenam month on the 29th Friday Good Friday, this granite Cross was installed.)

Translation of the right half

On September 13 (a Syrian date), 1580 A.D. on the feast of the Holy Cross, this Holy Cross was installed, covered with wood and set up by Bishop Mar Simon and Father Jacob. In the same year, on the feast of the 18th (Dec 18th) this bleeding Cross (resembling the bleeding Cross of Mailappore) was installed. This granite Cross was set up on Good Friday, 29th March 1581.

Mr. A. S. Ramanatha Ayyar, the Superintendent of Archaeology, Tranvancore State

First section

Line 1:	Maaron Eecho Mishi
Line 2:	yha perannitte 152
Line 3:	8 maathe ee nelathu shudda
Line 4:	m ana thiliva iru
Line 5:	thi thampurante kalp
Line 6:	anayal Maar Thana Mara
Line 7:	yu keevarkeethu miruthi
Line 8:	yum kooda ithin
Line 9:	nte chelam porthakaal
Line 10:	thesathu poo(y) thante
Line 11:	marumakan mathaai paa
Line 12:	thiriyum kooda

Second section

Line 1:	Michiyha perannittu 1
Line 2:	580 mathe kanni njayir
Line 3:	13 thiyati maru tilivaade
Line 4:	perunnaalkke ee maar thili
Line 5:	va eduthu manthil(marthil) po
Line 6:	tinje niruthi maru chema
Line 7:	on mettharanum pati
Line 8:	ri Yakkobum + kanni
Line 9:	te 18 thiyati perunnaalke ee
Line 10:	thara kuriche vechchu + 15
Line 11:	81 mathe mina njayar 2
Line 12:	9 thiyati tukkavelli alch
Line 13:	cha naal ee kkaringal tiliva
Line 14:	niruthi

This is almost as read by Mr. T. K. Joseph.

The translation of first half:

In A.D. 1528, a Holy Cross was installed on this land by Mar Thana, Mar Avoo and Geevarghese miruthi (? pathiri) with the order of the Lord. After this, along with his nephew Mathai pathiri, he went to Portugal.

Second half:

AD 1580 in the month Kanni 13 th Sunday, on the day of the feast of Holy Cross, this Holy Cross was erected covered with (wood ? sand?) by Bishop Mar Simon and padre Yakkob.

On Kanni 18th on the day of the feast, installed this thara cross?
Uthira kurisu- bleeding Cross.

In 1581 in the month Meenam 29th on the day of Good Friday,
installed this granite Cross.

This granite slab inscriptions talk about events that happened in AD 1528 along with 1580 and 1581. We can understand that in AD 1528, a cross was installed on the ground by two Bishops Mar Denha and Probably Mar (Jacob) Abuna³² along with Geevarghese, with the order of the Lord ? King ? God ? (All the celebrations of the Thomas Christians begin with the phrase- 'With the order of the Lord Isho Mishiha'- example - Pukdanakon- Pukdane da Mishiha in the Holy Qurbana, similar phrases are seen in the order of marriage also). This could be similar, with the order of our Lord, this Cross was placed in this land by Mar Denha and Mar Aboona, along with Geevarghese, who left for Portugal with his nephew Mathai pathiri. This could mean that they blessed the land in preparation to build a church there. They might have received permission from the local King.

The term pathiri used here is very interesting, as at such an early period of contact with the Portuguese, did the Saint Thomas Christians use the term Padre instead of the traditional term Cathanaar? Was this Geevargese a foreign padre? If he was a foreign padre, then his name would have been George rather than Geevarghese, a rather Syriac name. Or, what we are reading as pathiri could be something else. The travel to Portugal means the Saint Thomas Christian community was in good friendship with the Portuguese Missionaries.

The second half is about events in AD 1580-81 period. In Line 1-6, it says, on Kanni 13 Sunday, on the day of the feast of the Holy Cross, this Holy Cross was erected and covered with wood? Sand - (marathil-manthil). Or is it something else that we read as marathil/ manthil? Is it talking about placing the Pahlavi inscribed

Cross on a wooden frame? Or it may mean that the Pahlavi cross was covered with the new wooden 'raredos' (rathaal) which was taken down in AD 1923 when the Sliva was rediscovered.

Line 6-8 talks about presence of Bishop Mar Simon and Yakkob. We know that Mar Simon in AD 1581 was the Chaldean Bishop who arrived in AD 1576 as a rival to Mar Abraham. His Archdeacon was Cathanar Jacob, who was a native of Muttuchira. We have to assume that this part of the inscription is talking about Mar Simon and Archdeacon Jacob of Muttuchira.

Lines 8-14 : On Kanniite 18- could be a Syriac month for December 18- on the day of the feast of Holy Cross, installed this thara kurichu. (There are a few interpretations for this ee thara kurishu. Initially it was considered thara- metal, or pithala- brass or chithra- ornamental. The researchers initially thought it was mentioning about the bell metal cross of Muttuchira. But later, Mr T K Joseph came up with the reading uthira kurishu meaning ruthira kurishu- bleeding cross). It has to be noted that, here, instead of Tiliva (Sliva) as used before, the inscribers are using the word 'kurish' which came from Portuguese language. The inscribers have used both 'Sliva' and 'kurish' here.

This slab is a very important monument in the Nasrani history. It narrates the installation the crosses in Muttuchira, both the free standing granite cross and the uthira kurishu- replica of bleeding cross- the Saint Thomas Cross. This is agreeing with the witnesses of early Portuguese writers and other sources that the Mar Thoma Sliva was the only religious symbol adorned in the altars of our Churches before the arrival of the Portuguese Missionaries. It shows a number of points to show a close collaboration with the foreign missionaries- usage of the word cross instead of Sliva, usage of the word padre instead of Cathanaar, and the event of two Priests travelling to Portugal. These denote the friendly phase of the relation of Saint Thomas Christians with the Western Missionaries.

Muttuchira Sliva

An ancient Pahlavi inscribed granite Cross was discovered at Muttuchira Church in AD 1923. This was a granite tablet with a 'bas relief' Cross and resembles the 'miraculous Cross of Mailappore' in the design, with a round arch and the steps and a floral arrangement in the bottom like a lotus and a descending dove on the top but unlike the Mailappore Cross, it has no pillars or dolphins on the sides. It is about 2 feet 8 inches in length with 2 feet wide and about 5 inches in thickness. There found on the outer edge, inscriptions in two lines that had been mutilated and a few letters are visible on the left side for about 24 inches in length. The outer line of inscription has been confirmed as Pahlavi as in all the rest of the Pahlavi inscribed crosses of South India- the 'Mar Thoma Sliva'. The inner lines of inscriptions are illegible.³³ They could be ornamentations rather than inscriptions.

The inscriptions on Muttuchira Sliva

The Muttuchira Sliva bears Pahlavi inscriptions around the round arch edge on a narrow belt. But the belt of the tablet on which the inscriptions were made was badly mutilated but only a length of 24 inches from the left upright limb escaped the damage.³⁴ There is another smaller belt runs inside this outer belt with some illegible inscriptions. Mr. B. T. Anklesaria identified this inscription also as Pahlavi and deciphered the inner inscription as 'Lord Messiah the supreme...' while the outer inscription as similar to the rest of the Pahlavi inscribed Crosses of South India³⁵. Professor F. C. Burkitt of the Cambridge University comments that the outer inscription that remains reads as "The Syrian who cut this". Professor Burkitt also comments that the inner inscription could be Syriac but due to the mutilation of the stone and reading from a photograph, he could not confirm anything³⁶.

Systematic mutilation of the inscriptions?

On the rediscovery of this 'sliva' in 1923 AD, Paul Madathil

wrote that at the time the wooden 'raredos' (rathaal) was pulled down, only not more than one span of the inscription was damaged.³⁷

H. Hosten commented about this as follows: "If only one span was damaged, it would follow that the rest of the damage was carried out systematically with a view to do away with the inscription and the decoration at the foot. It will be an evil day for Malabar Archaeology and history when such methods can be considered proper, whatever the intension may be or the cause to be benefitted. The cause to be benefitted might be the theory of Nestorianism...."³⁸

Discovery of the Sliva

The accidental discovery of this Cross was reported by eminent personalities of the time like Mr. A. S. Ramanatha Iyyer, Superintendent of Archaeology, State of Travancore, Mr T K Joseph⁴⁰ an eminent historian, Mr Paul Madathil⁴¹, a local journalist, Rev Fr Jacob Murickan, a former Vicar of the Ruha D' Qudisha Forane Church at Muttuchira, Rev Fr. Joseph Pedyekkal⁴² who was the vicar of the Church in Athirampuzha and former Vicar of Muttuchira Church 1912-1915, Mr V C George⁴³, a local historian, Mr. Karottu C. George of Muttuchira-Malayalam novelist and a Headmaster at Muttuchira., Mr George P Murickel⁴⁴, a local historian and journalist.

Mr. Paul Madathil who had written an article in the local vernacular news paper, reported a detailed account of the discovery. The Cross was found in the old Church which was dedicated to Ruha D' Qudisha, being renovated and rededicated to Saint Francis of Assisi in AD 1925 period. This old church is still present dedicated to Saint Francis of Assisi in front of the main Church opposite to the open air rock cross situated east to west with the altar on the east end.

The old Church stood east west with the 'madbaha' (altar) on the east. It had three 'madbahas', a central main altar and two side altars. The Pahlavi inscribed cross was found built into the wall of the northern altar at a height of about 7 feet from the floor, when the

wooden 'raredos' (rathaal) was taken down as part of renovation. The 'raredos' was built over a wooden frame covering the Pahlavi inscribed cross. This may be what the Muttuchira Lithic inscription of AD 1580 describes as 'marathil pothinju' meaning covered with wood.

Rev Fr. Joseph Peediyekkal, a former vicar of Muttuchira Church (1912-1915), reported that "The Persian Cross is said to have been covered over by a wooden framework. It was on this framework, an altar was erected and thus the cross lay buried for many years under the altar wall, till it was recently discovered on the occasion of the rebuilding of the Church"⁴⁵.

Mr. A. S. Ramanatha Iyyer, the then Superintendent of Archaeology of the State of Travancore visited the Church on learning about this discovery, reported in Travancore Archaeological Series that " I was told that this church was originally called the Church of the Holy Ghost (Syriac Ruha D' Qudisha) and that it was proposed to rechristen it on completion (of renovation) as the Church of Saint Francis of Assisi. The tablet Cross (Pahlavi inscribed bas relief cross on granite) appears to have been brought hither from centuries ago from another old church which had probably existed elsewhere nearby and it was found in the foundation of the altar of this chapel, when the flooring was raked up during the repairs "⁴⁶

It seems that Mr. Ramanatha Iyyer gives a little bit different version of the finding. He has visited the site and did investigations. He seems to be a Tamil speaking man, as he has deciphered the 'vattezhuthu' inscriptions in Tamil and also use Tamil pronunciation for Muttuchira - 'Muttusira'. There could be an element of language barrier behind this slightly different version stating that the cross was found on the foundation when he floor was raked up. Two tombs were found when the floor was raked up which has been reported by Mr George P Murickel and also Rev. Fr. Pediyekkal. Neither Mr. Murickel nor Mr.V. C. George gives an exact description of the discovery.

It seems that Paul Madathil's version could be right as he was a native and might have been present when the discovery was made or definitely confirmed with witnesses, as he reported that there were many witnesses.

The Muttuchira Lithic inscriptions describes about setting up of this church and the cross in AD 1528 and 1581. Therefore, this church in the name of Ruha D' Qudisha which became the Church of Saint Francis of Assisi was founded in AD 1528. It also talks about setting up of the 'uthira kurishu'- bleeding Cross- the Mar Thoma Sliva in AD 1581 and also of another granite Cross- Karingal tiliva- most probably an open air rock cross.

This means, after about 53 years of the building of the church, they found the ancient Pahlavi inscribed Cross and installed it on the side altar. Where did that come from?

The origin of the Pahlavi Inscribed Cross- the Mar Thoma Sliva

Mr. Ramanatha Iyyer reports that this Cross was brought to this church from another ancient church nearby. This could have been a local tradition of that time. So, there was another much older church nearby.

There are several possibilities.

1 The Church of the Ruha D' Qudisha which was renamed as Church of Saint Francis of Assisi was the first ever church of Muttuchira.

The local tradition says they had an ancient church founded in 6th century AD. Setting up of a Cross on the ground by two Bishops as described in the Muttuchira Lithic inscriptions could be the blessing of the ground for a new Church. That means their ancient Church was not in this property. The local tradition states that the ancient Church was a little east of this property at a place 'Kurisummodu' means 'near the cross' where there is still an ancient open air cross. The Chapel of Saint Anthony is also in this place.

If this was a brand new church that was built in 1528 AD, the Cross could have been brand new or brought from elsewhere. Could be from a nearby place or from far away places like Kodungalloor as the Kottayam valiya palli crosses. Here, there is no local traditions to support this theory.

2 The construction in AD 1528- 1581 was a renovation/ demolition and reconstruction of an old church. Then this Cross could have been from the old church.

3 There was an ancient church at Muttuchira and for some reasons, they built a new church nearby and brought the old cross here. This is what Mr. Iyyer reports in his article in Travancore Archaeological series Vol. 7 part 2.⁴⁷ Mr George P. Murickel reports that 'it is supposed that the cross was taken to the church from a certain part of Muttuchira itself where now stands the chapel of Saint Anthony.'⁴⁸

Now, it is clear that there was another ancient Church at Muttuchira where now stands the Chapel of Saint Anthony! Rev Fr Jacob Muricken, the Vicar of Muttuchira Church at the time enlists a number of Churches and chapels around Muttuchira Church⁴⁹. He confirms that there was a chapel on the eastern side of the main Church at Muttuchira and the Church of Saint Francis of Assisi which stands in front of the main Church, dedicated to Saint Anthony but the old name was Holy Cross.

Therefore, there was an ancient Church dedicated to Holy Cross- Mar Sliva at Muttuchira which was demolished and renamed as the Chapel of Saint Anthony. Mr George P Murickel also reports that the 'pahlavi inscribed cross' was taken from this chapel of Saint Anthony.

Ancient Mar Sliva Church of Muttuchira

Now, the picture is clear. The most ancient Church at Muttuchira was a Mar Sliva Church where the Pahlavi inscribed Cross- Mar

Sliva was placed. In AD 1528, a new Church was built at the eastern side of the present Church complex dedicated to Ruha D' Qudisha and the Pahlavi inscribed Cross was installed in the altar in AD 1581. Later at some time, the church was renovated and a new wooden altar- 'raredos' (raathaal) was built over the Pahlavi inscribed cross. This could be what the Muttuchira Lithic inscription describes as 'marathil pothinju' in AD 1581. The local faithful renovated the old Ruha D' Qudisha Church and renamed it as Church of Saint Francis of Assisi in AD 1925. During this renovation, the Pahlavi inscribed Cross was accidentally found. By this time, the present day Ruha D Kudisha church was already built and the Pahlavi inscribed cross was placed on the inside of the facade of the Church⁵⁰. Now, this Cross has been placed on the side altar of the main Church at Muttuchira.

It is quite interesting to note that there was an ancient Church dedicated to Mar Sliva at Muttuchira with an ancient Sliva. As recorded by early Portuguese writers, this Sliva might have been kept in the 'madbaha' as we have seen recorded in Kodungalloor, Mailappore, Kumarimuttam, Alengad and Kollam.

The Madbaha adorned with only the Mar Thoma Sliva- the ancient tradition of Malabar

Before the arrival of the European Missionaries, in the Churches of Saint Thomas Christians, the 'madbaha' was adored with only a plain cross. These plain Crosses were all in the model of the Pahlavi inscribed granite Crosse of Mailappore - the Saint Thomas Crosses. This has been witnessed by many authors, mostly the early Portuguese writers.

1. Duarte Barbosa. 1514 A.D.

Duarte Barbosa was a Portuguese traveller who came with Cabral in AD 1498. He continued exploring the South India and wrote a book narrating the description of Malabar and the Coromandel Coast of South India in AD 1517. Barbosa describes

the tradition of Crosses in the 'madbaha' of the Churches of Saint Thomas Christians. Barbosa confirms that these Crosses were plain Crosses. Barbosa narrates clearly about Crosses in the Churches at Quilon and Kumarimuttam near Cape Comorin.

2. Antonio Gouvea 1599 A.D.

Antonio Gouvea accompanied Archbishop Alexis De Menezes during his visits to the Churches of Saint Thomas Christians. He clearly documented that all of the Churches of Saint Thomas Christians were adored with plain crosses like that of miracle of S. Thomae.⁵¹ The accounts of Gouvea clearly witnesses two points about the ecclesiastical milieu at the time period before the infamous synod of Diamper- Saint Thomas Christians used Mar Thoma Sliva-Saint Thomas Crosses only in their 'madbaha' when the Portuguese arrived and the native Christians called these Crosses as 'Saint Thomas Crosses'.

Gouvea uses the term 'Cruz de Sam Thomae' meaning Crosses of Saint Thomas. According to Rev Dr Pius Malekkandathil, the Portuguese documents with the term 'Sam Thome' is usually used to denote Saint Thomas the Apostle and 'S Thomae' is used to denote City of Saint Thomas means Mailappore. Therefore, Gouvea really meant it as Crosses of Saint Thomas⁵². It does not mean that these Crosses were erected by Saint Thomas the Apostle but could mean these are the Crosses of the Christians of Saint Thomas. Gouvea also mentions about the traditional belief of the local Christians that the Cross at Cranganore in front of which Archbishop Alexis De Menezes celebrated a solemn mass was placed there by Saint Thomas the Apostle himself.⁵³ As we know that the custom of venerating the Cross was started in the later period only, this oral tradition could be a retrojection of later developments to the apostolic times.

3. Joseph, the Indian Cathanar 1503 A.D.

Joseph, the Indian Priest who visited Rome and Venice in AD 1502 gave a narration to the Signoria of Venice about the religio-

cultural, political and even geography of South India. Joseph's narrations were published in different European languages. These accounts are probably the first native witness recorded in the history about the Saint Thomas Christians and South India.

Joseph narrated that the Saint Thomas Christians had only plain crosses in their churches, no statues. They also had a Cross on the courtyard of the churches⁵⁴. Joseph was mentioning about the tradition of Crosses only in the madbaha (altar) and also about the standing crosses of the Churches of Kerala.

Other antiquities of Muttuchira

Tomb stones

Mr. Paul Madathil reported that there were two tombs in the old church-the Saint Francis Church. They were found when the floor was dug up. They were below the basements of the north and south walls of the altar, symmetrically placed, at a depth of 4 feet from the basement. Mr Paul commented that these tombs could be older than the walls and may not be directly under the wall.⁵⁵ Rev Fr. Peediyekkal commented that those tombs were of Father Jacob (Archdeacon Jacob) and his mother.⁵⁶

Inscriptions at Muttuchira-List of H. Hosten

Rev. Henry Hosten reports of 9 lithic inscriptions found from Muttuchira Church.

1. Inscription of events of AD 1828
2. Inscription of events of AD 1580-81 Both these are on a single stone that we have already discussed.
3. Granite slab inscribed in AD 1593 says on Sunday 7th Dhanu 769 KE, the soul of Fra Chacko was taken, Amen. (TKJ 20/09/1926)
4. Inscribed in AD 1628 Kollam Era 803

5. Unknown of Kollam Era ?804
6. AD 1630 Kollam Era 806
7. AD 1642-43 Kollam Era 818
- 8 AD 1660 Kollam Era 835
9. Unknown Kollam Era ?*48

There are many others also, many are seen built into the wall of the Church of saint Francis of Assisi as supports for the beams⁵⁷.

Inscriptions of Muttuchira- List of A. S. Ramanatha Ayyar

Inscription on the pedestal of the open air rock cross in front of the main Church

- Line 1: Mishiya perannitte 1623 lu kaalam sesare
 Line 2: thu kollam ...thu kanni jnayar karinkal
 Line 3: kurishu iruthi kalluve...ithu maathu than ...kanakku pe...)

Translation: After the birth of Mishiha, 1623 period- ? sesare this is Kollam Erain the month Kanni Sunday, this granite was erected. Stone? ... in the account of mathu....⁵⁸

Some other inscriptions

Rest of the inscriptions are funerary inscription but many letters and words are illegible. Examples of readings of the fragments which are legible are :⁵⁹

1. kallar veli mathuven kuriyathinte alam mayi thampurante managunathaale eduthukku-
2. Kollam... matham mithine jnayar uyirine kongade le adappu kuriathinu nallavazhi cheythu
3. kumbhu..nu palehan thareerhu mariathinte alam meyu thampurante managunathaale eduthu
4. kollam...nu makaram yu mathu ee aype ittere alame nallame eduthu.

5. kollam...maruthu meena mathamhale kanakkin vanthasemi alachanaal kadapurathe eliza anamale yadu neram nallavzhikke edakoodi.

Crosses found in Muttuchira

Cross No. 1: The Pahlavi inscribed granite bas relief Cross- The Muttuchira Sliva.

Cross No. 2: The open air Rock Cross in front of the main Church- The Ruha D' Qhudisha Forane Church at Muttuchira. It has an inscription in the pedestal beginning with KE 799 (AD 1623-24)⁶⁰

Cross No. 3: The miniature bas relief cross on the base of the base of the Cross No 2 in the design of Muttuchira Sliva.

Cross No. 4: Brass Cross. This was a silver coated brass cross used in processions. There was no inscriptions but had decorations on the surface. This cross was melted off in 1919 AD.⁶¹

Cross No. 5: Wooden Cross apparently present on the 'raredos' of the old Church (presently Saint Francis Church in front of the Main Church) behind which, the Muttuchira Sliva was found in AD 1925. This Cross has been destroyed.

Cross No. 6: Open air Cross found in Muttuchira Angadi near the Saint Anthony's Chapel

Cross No. 7: Open air Cross near Saint Sebastian's Church.

Churches and Chapels in Muttuchira. (Rev Fr Jacob Murickan's numbering system)

Church No. 1: Old name- Church of Ruha D' Qudisha. New name- Church of Saint Francis of Assisi; Probably built in 1528 AD according to the Muttuchira inscriptions.

Church No. 2: The main Church of Muttuchira today, the Ruha D' Qudisha Forane Church, Muttuchira where the Muttuchira Sliva has been recently installed. This was built probably in 1859-1885.⁶²

Church No. 3: Saint Sebastian's Church- also called 'Prasu Church' with a small open air Cross in front.

Chapel (a): Old name Mar Sliva, new name Saint Anthony's. There is a masonry open air Cross- Cross No 6.

Chapel (b): Saint Teresa's or Flower of Jesus.

Conclusion

Muttuchira Church is an ancient Church in Malabar. The very first Church of the Christian settlement in Muttuchira was Mar Sliva Church at Muttuchira situated somewhere near the Kurisummoodu where the Muttuchira Sliva was adored in the altar. The Muttuchira Sliva was taken from this Church and placed in the newly built Ruha D' Qudisha old Church- the Church of Saint Francis of Assisi in the eastern side of the present Church complex probably in 1580AD. Later, during renovations, the Muttuchira Sliva was neglected and a new raredos (rathaal) was built over it. In 1923 AD, during the renovations, the Sliva was accidentally rediscovered, but the then authorities tried to mutilate the inscription for fear of accusations of Nestorianism. It was again neglected and replaced in the new Ruha D' Qudisha Church in a very unimportant place- back side of the wall of the facade in a corner, probably because of the interests of the Archaeological Department of the then Government of Travancore. Now, this invaluable monument of Saint Thomas Christians has been placed in a side altar of the main Church. Thus, the Muttuchira Sliva, the Pahlavi inscribed Cross is an invaluable monument of the Christian community that was the symbol of veneration of the ancient Christian settlement of Muttuchira.

Muttuchira inscription is another landmark monument which is an evidence of the initial friendly and collaborative relations of the Church of Saint Thomas Christians and the Western Missionaries. It also narrates installation of the Mar Thoma Sliva in the altar and the open air Rock Cross.

Covering the Muttuchira Sliva with a new 'raredos' (rathaal) is an evidence of subjugation by the missionaries to take away our age old traditions and to wipe out our ancient Syriac Christian heritage and force the community to conform with the Roman rite.

It is glad to see that the neglected Muttuchira Sliva has been placed in a much honourable place, on the side altar recently. The Christian community has a duty to protect and preserve their ancient monuments. There is scope for setting up a Museum for portraying these very important monuments and to do further investigations to study about the inscribed tablets built into the wall of the Church of Saint Francis Assisi and the others still unearthed.

Dr. Martin Thomas Antony,
9 Neston Close, Helsby,
Frodsham, Cheshire,
WA6 0FH, UK
E-mail: martin.t.antony@googlemail.com



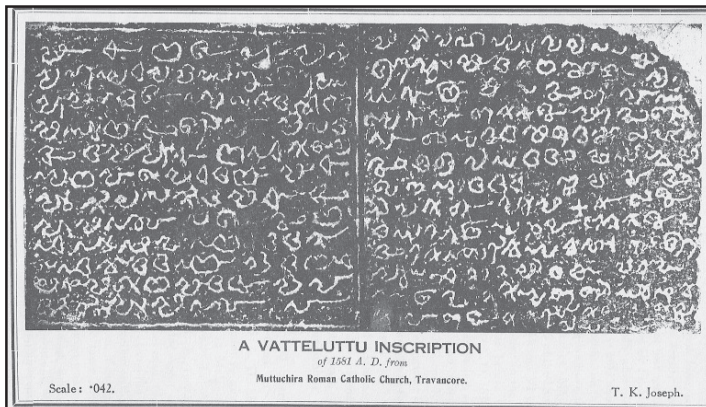
**The Picture of Muttuchira Sliva published in
Travancore Archaeological Series vol 7 Part I,
plate facing page 78 Block no. 5 published in 1930**



Muttuchira Sliva



Picture of Muttuchira inscriptions published in Kerala Society Papers, series 5, p 253, 1928-1933, reprinted in 1993, The State Editor, Kerala gazatteers, Thiruvananthapuram, Government of Kerala



Muttuchira Inscriptions



Muttuchira church and open air rock cross

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- 1 ADRIAN FORTESCUE, *The Lesser Eastern Churches*, p 84. Even though Fortescue does not accept that the accusation of nestorianism on Nestorius and his party was not correct but admits that there was significant controversy related to the Greek language terms and phrases that were translated into Syriac where they used more or less the equivalents in Syriac. (All Nestorians say there are two knume in our Lord. That is their formula: two kyane, two knume, one parsufa. The question, then (just as in the case of hypostasis), is what they mean by their knuma. If it means merely a real, individual nature (as opposed to a universal concept), they agree with us; if it means what we mean by person, their phrase two knume is pure Nestorianism).
 - 2 JOHN THOPPIL, *Christology in the East Syrian Tradition*, in *East Syrian Theology, an Introduction*, Ed Pauly Maniattu, pp 61-162
 - 3 W.A. WIGRAM, *An introduction to the History of Assyrian Church*, 1910, LONDON, p 97. Patriarch Iso Yahb II (628-643 AD) in Antioch made the following appellation of the faith of the Church of the

East that 'our belief in a Christ who, as Perfect Man, was consubstantial with us; - and who, as Perfect God, was consubstantial with the Father, in one "Personalitas"

- 4 T. K. JOSEPH, letter dated 03/10/1926 cited in H Hosten, *Antiquities of Sam Thome and Mailappore*, p 348. Antonio Gouvea uses both terms 'Nagapilli and Ignapilli/Ignaperi' in his *Jornada*. Rev Dr Pius Malekandathil explains that field study confirms a small bridge nearby is still called Nagpili bridge. Rev Dr Pius identifies Ignapilli as Elanji using the method of phonetic corroboration. Ignapilli is Ijna pilli, Ijni or Ejni could be an abbreviation of Elanji. But Gouvea states it was Ignapilli where Cathanar Jacob, the Vicar General of Mar Simon, the schismatic Bishop lived which was actually Muttuchira. Also, the Church in Ignapilli was dedicated to Holy Spirit which is Muttuchira, not Elanji unless the Church in Elanji changed its name later. Therefore, the name Ignapilli used by Gouvea could be Muttuchira itself. *Jornada* also give approximate distances. On the first visit to Muttuchira from Kaduthuruthy, Gouvea says almost half a league. On the second visit, Archbishop Menezes visited Ignapilli from Kuravilangadu and from Ignapilli, he went to Kaduthuruthy which Gouvea states almost a league away. These are approximate distances, but Elanji seems more far away. Muttuchira to Kaduthuruthy is only 2 kms while Elanji is about 14 Kms away from Muttuchira.
- 5 Rev. Dr. XAVIER KOODAPUZHA, *Mar Thoma Nasrani Sabha Vijnana Kosham* (Malayalam book), Oriental Institute of religious studies, Vadavathoor, Kottayam, 1999, p 752
- 6 PIUS MALEKKANDATHIL, *Jornada of Dom Alexis De Menezes: A Portuguese Account of the Sixteenth Century Malabar*, LRC Publication Cochin, 2003, p 198, 438.
- 7 H HOSTEN, *Antiquities of Sam Thome and Mailappore*, 1936, p 347 British Museum Sloane MS 9907 fol. 17v 18r-18 v1
- 8 H. HOSTEN, *Opus cit* p 348. These places have been identified by Mr T K Joseph with the help of Mr. Karottu C. George. Codd heli could be Kulaveli - a small track of land comprising the Christian street in Muttuchira. Kulaveli has become a family name also. Pram poram could be Parampram - a village east of Muttuchira Street.
Perium paddy could be Tiruvampady, a village a mile north of Muttuchira.

Tanara chera could be Thamarachira, a village south of Muttuchira. Cheri Omellur could be Cheriomelloor usually called Omellur, a village 2 miles south east of Muttuchira.

ay mure could be Memury, is 3 miles south of Muttuchira, near Manvettom.

Nin dure could be Neendoor, 2 miles south east of Memury.

Herle nelha cara could be Erennalakara- Eravi mangalakara

- 9 JOANNES FUCUNDUS RAULIN, Raulin Historis Ecclesiae Malabaricae cum Diamperitana Synodo, Rome, 1745,p 428 cited by PIUS MELEKKANDATHIL, Jornada of Dom Alexis De Menesis: A Portuguese Account of the Sixteenth Century Malabar, LRC Publications Cochin, 2003 p 199
- 10 ANQUETIL DU PERRON, Zend Avesta, t1, pt1, Paris 1771, p clxxxxvi cited by H Hosten, Antiquities of Sam Thome and Mailappore, p 348.
- 11 PAULINUS DE BARTHOLOMEW, India Orientalis Christiana, Roma, 1794,p 267.cited by PIUS MALEKKANDATHIL, Jornada of Dom Alexis De Menesis: A Portuguese Account of the Sixteenth Century Malabar, LRC Publications Cochin, 2003 p 199
- 12 H HOSTEN Opus cit p351 citing Rev Fr JOSEPH PEEDIYEKKAL, letter dated 02/11/1925
- 13 XAVIER KOODAPUZHA, Opus cit p 752
- 14 JOSEPH THEKKEDATHU, History of Christianity in India Vol II p 50 citing a letter of Fr Dionysio S J dated 23 January 1577, Josephus Wicki, Documenta Indica, X p 834.,
- 15 JOSEPH THEKKEDATHU, opus cit p51 citing Gueseppe Beltrami, La Chiesa caldea p 91
- 16 BERNARD THOMAS, Keralathile Mar Thoma Christianikal, Vol. II, Mannanam, 1921, Malayalam, p 117. It was on the third day of his Episcopal consecration which was on 01 February 1663.
- 17 JAMES PULIURUMPIL, The Early Christian Settlements in Kerala, p158
- 18 JOSEPH THEKKEDATHU, opus cit p 50 citing a letter of Fr Dionysio dted 23 January 1577 in JOSEPH WICKY, Documenta Indica, x P 834.
- 19 Mar Abraham received pallium from Pope Pius IV as Archbishop of Angamali. In 1555 AD, the then Chaldean catholic Patriarch mar Abdisho , the legitimate Canonical head of the saint Thomas Christians of Malabar sent two Bishiops to Malabar- Mar Joseph Sulaka and Mar Elias, the Apostolic visitor of the Chaldean Catholic Patriarch in Malabar along with two Maltese Dominicns Bishop

Ambrose Buttigeg, the Papal Nuncio for the East and Fr Anthony Sahara. Even with the presence of the Papal Nuncio, the group was arrested by the Portuguese in Goa in November 1555 and the two Chaldean Bishops kept in detention in a Franciscan Monastery in Bassein, near Bombay. With the intervention of the Papal Nuncio, the Bishops were set free in 1558 AD. By this time, Mar Abdisho, the Chaldean catholic patriarch sent Mar Abraham to Kerala who arrived in 1557 AD. Later, Mar Abraham was arrested in 1558, deported to Lisbon but on the way, when the ship anchored in Mozambique, he escaped and arrived in Mosul .Later, Mar Joseph was also arrested by 1562 AD and sent to Portugal. He was cleared all the accusations on him by Cardinal Herry in Lisbon and returned to Kerala. Again in 1567, mar Joseph was arrested and sent to Rome in 1568 to test his orthodoxy. In Rome, he was cleared again but died in Rome in 1569. Mar Abdisho, the Chaldean catholic Patriarch sent Mar Abraham again to Kerala, but through Rome from where, he received his pallium and three recommendation letters from Pope Pius IV to 1 Chaldean Catholic Patriarch, 2 Archbishop of Goa and 3 Bishop of Cochin. In these three letters, Pope Pius IV explicitly and unambiguously confirms the jurisdiction of the Chaldean catholic Patriarch over the saint Thomas Christians of Malabar. The Pope advised the Chaldean Patriarch to divide the Saint Thomas Christians of Malabar into two dioceses and appoint Mar Abraham as the Archbishop of Angamali. The Pope also advised Archbishop of Goa and Bishop of Cochin that Chaldean Catholic Patriarch is in full communion with the Pope and warned the Archbishop of Goa it will be detrimental to the Pope himself and the Apostolic See, if he would hinder the jurisdiction of the Patriarch of Chaldeans in Malabar.(Rev Dr Paul Pallathu, Were the Saint Thomas Christians Nestorians at the time of the Synod of Diamper in 1599?, Ephrem's theological Journal, Vol. 5 March 2001 pp35-70.

20 JAMES HOUGH, *The History of Christianity in India* Vol. I p 286

21 JOSEPH THEKKEDATHU, opus cit p 51 citing Fr Achilles Meersman, *The Ancient Franciscan Provinces in India 1500-1835*, 1971 p 302

22 JOSEPH THEKKEDATHU opus cit p 51

23 H. HOSTEN, opus cit p 352 citing letters from Mr T K Joseph and letter dated 02/11/1926 of Rev Fr. Peediyeikal, a former vicar of Muttuchira Church.

JAMES HOUGH, *History of Christianity in India*, Vol. I p 420

- 24 JAMES HOUGH Opus cit p 287. These letters were found by Archbishop Alexis De Menezis and sent to the General Inquisition of Portugal.
- 25 JACOB KOLLAMPARAMBIL, Archdeacon of All India, 1972, p 96. It has to be noted that Chaldean Pontifical allows Archdeacon to consecrate altars without using Holy oils.
- 26 JAMES HOUGH, Opus cit p 294-295
- 27 JACOB KOLLAMPARAMBIL, Opus cit p 96 citing Antonio Gouvea, *Jornada do Arcebishopo de Goa....Coimbra, 1606, ff 9v-11v*
- 28 H. HOSTEN, Opus cit p 352. Paul Madathil wrote an article in the vernacular News Paper Malayala Manorama 'Muttuchira and its Persian Cross'.
- 29 Mr. T. K. Joseph was an eminent historian and a versatile scholar and teacher. He was the secretary of the Kerala Society that was founded in 1927 by the scholars in Trivandrum modelled on the Royal Asiatic Society. He has published several articles and books and was the Editor of the prestigious journal 'Kerala Society Papers' which is a valuable resource for students, researchers and scholars.
- 30 Letter of Rev Fr Joseph Peediyekkal dated 02/11/1926 addressed to Rev Henry Hosten SJ, cited in *Antiquities of Sam Thome and Mailappore, H. Hosten, 1936 p 350 foot note 2*
- 31 T. K. Joseph, Notes by TK Joseph to the article by Rev H. Hosten, *The Saint Thomas Christians of Malabar (AD 1490- 1504) Kerla Society Papers series 5 p253.*
- 32 Mar Jacob who arrived in Kerala in AD 1504 with Mar Denha, Mar Jahballaha and Mar Thomas. Mar Jacob has been mentioned as Aboona in the letters of Saint Francis Xavier. Mar Jacob died in AD 1549.
- 33 A. S. RAMANATHAAYYAR, *Travancore Archaeological Series Vol VII, Part II 1930 p 75*
- 34 A. S. RAMANATHA AYYAR, *Muttusira Inscriptions, Travancore Archaeological Series, Vol. VII p 75*
- 35 A. S. RAMANATHA AYYAR, Opus cit p 75-76
- 36 F C BURKITT, *A Further note on the Pahlavi Crosses, Oxford Journal of Theological studies, 1929, os XXXI (1):pp47-48*
- 37 PAUL J. MADATHIL, Letter dated 28/10. 1925 to MR T K JOSEPH cited by H HOSTEN, opus cit pp351-352 foot note 5
- 38 H. HOSTEN, opus cit pp351-352 end note 5
- 39 H. HOSTEN, *Antiquities of Sam Thome and Mailappore, 1936, p 341. Letter from Mr A. S. Ramanatha Iyyer dated 16 September 1925*

- 40 H. HOSTEN, *Antiquities of Sam Thome and Mailappore*, 1936 p 342. Letter by Mr T K Joseph to Rev H Hosten dated 11 October 1925
- 41 H. HOSTEN, *Antiquities of Sam Thome and Mailappore*, 1936, p 351- Letter by Mr Paul Madathil dated 28 October 1925 to Mr T K Joseph.
- 42 H. HOSTEN, *Antiquities of Sam Thome and Mailappore*, 1936 p 345 letter from Fr Pediyekkal dated 02 November 1926
- 43 H. HOSTEN, *Antiquities of Sam Thome and Mailappore* 1936 p 344 letter from Mr. V .C. George to Mr. T K Joseph, dated 19 October 1925
- 44 H. HOSTEN, *Antiquities of Sam Thome and Mailappore* 1936 p 344 Article of Mr George P Murickel dated 21 October 1925 sent to the Catholic Herald of India, Calcutta forwarded to Rev H. Hosten by the Editor of Catholic Herald of India on 29 October 1925 which was due to be published in the Catholic Herald of India but the paper ceased publication on 28 October 1925
- 45 Rev. Fr. JOSEPH PEEDIYEKKAL, Letter dated 02/11/1926 cited by H HOSTEN, *Opus cit* p345 foot note 2
- 46 A. S. RAMANATHA AYYAR, No 52, *Muttusira Inscriptions*, Travancore Archaeological series Vol. VII part II 1930 p75
- 47 A. S. RAMANATHA AYYAR, No 52, *Muttusira Inscriptions*, Travancore Archaeological series Vol. VII, part II p 75,
- 48 H. HOSTEN, *Antiquities of Sam Thome and Mailappore* 1936 p 345 - Article of Mr George P Murickel dated 21 October 1925 sent to the Catholic Herald of India, Calcutta forwarded to Rev H. Hosten by the Editor of Catholic Herald of India on 29 October 1925 which was due to be published in the Catholic Herald of India but the paper ceased publication on 28 October 1925
- 49 H. HOSTEN, *Opus cit* p 351
- 50 H. HOSTEN, *Antiquities of Sam Thome and Mailappore*, 1936 p 346 Article of Mr George P Murickel to The catholic Herald of India, Calcutta dated 21 October 1925 forwarded to H Hosten by the Editor of Catholic Herald dated 29 October 1925.
- 51 PIUS MALEKKANDATHIL, *Jornada of Dom Alexis De Menezes: A Portuguese Account of the Sixteenth Century Malabar*, LRC Publications, Kochi, 2003, pp 244-245
- 52 PIUS MALEKKANDATHIL, *Jornada of Dom Alexis De Menezes: A Portuguese account of the Sixteenth Century Malabar*, LRC Cochin, 2003, p 245 foot note 190.
- 53 PIUS MALEKANDATHIL *opus cit* p 216

- 54 ANTONY VALLAVANTHARA, India in 1500 AD, pp 166-167, 231
- 55 PAUL MADATHIL, Letters dated 28/10/1925 and 07/11/1925 cited by H. Hosten, Antiquities of Sam Thome and Mailappore, p 345 foot note 2
- 56 JOSEPH PEEDIYEKKAL, Letter of Rev Fr. Peediyekkal dated 24/11/1925 cited by H. Hosten, Antiquities of sam Thome and Mailappore, p 345 foot note 2
- 57 H. HOSTEN Opus cit p 345 foot note 3
- 58 A. S. Ramanatha Ayyar, Opus cit p 78
- 59 A. S. Ramanatha Ayyar, Opus cit p78
- 60 H. HOSTEN, Opus cit p348
- 61 H. HOSTEN Opus cit p 346 citing T K Joseph, letters of Rev Fr Joseph Peediyekkal and Mr Paul Madathil.
- 62 XAVIER KOODAPUZHA Opus cit p 752. Rev. Dr. Koodapuzha has recorded that the first church was at Kurisummoodu in 6th century. In the 7th century, a new Church was built at the eastern side of the present Church complex, at the site of the Church of Saint Francis of Assisi. In the 9th century, the Church was attacked by Mugalans. In 13th century, it was rebuilt.