



CHRISTIAN
MUSICOLOGICAL
SOCIETY OF INDIA

പഴയ, മ-ഓരോരം

മലങ്കര നസ്രാണികളുടെ നാലു ഓരോരുകൾ.

റി. കെ. ജോസഫ്,
ബി. എ., എൽ. റി.

The Malabar Christian
Copper Plates,

CHRISTIAN
MUSICOLOGICAL
SOCIETY OF INDIA

T. K. Joseph, B. A., L. T

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INTRODUCTION.

(SOME OPINIONS)

Prof. Dr. STEN KONOW:

"I have not the slightest doubt that you are right in saying that Malayalam was, in certain features, different from Tamil even before A. D. 900. There can be no doubt that Malayalam and Tamil are derived from a common base. They can be considered as sisters of the same age, and to my mind it is not possible to say that one of the two is older or younger. I am not even convinced that the difference is always one of time and development. Today I should only like to congratulate you on having finished a long and laborious study with results which will accrue to the credit of Indian scholarship in general and of yourself in special." (Letter from Kristiania dated 22-6-1923).

Dr. E. HULTZSCH:

You are "doing a real service to linguistics. The method which you follow is the only true and correct one and will commend itself to European scholars." (Letter from Halle dated 13-6-1923).

Dr. L. D. BARNETT:

"Undoubtedly the contemporary documents must be the first and chief source for our knowledge



of any language, and one which must take precedence of the grammars. Naturally the language..... was never quite homogeneous throughout the Malayali speech-area; but that fact does not detract from the importance of the inscriptions as first-hand evidence." (Letter from London dated 2nd Jan., 1924).

Dr. F. W. THOMAS:

"What you wrote ... concerning the history of the Malayalam language is interesting, and I shall look forward to seeing it expounded in English." (Letter from London dated April 17, 1924).

SIR RICHARD CARNAC TEMPLE:

"It is a pleasure to me to publish your Malabar Miscellany articles (in the *Indian Antiquary*).

"The Christians have been so long in S. India and their history so interesting and I may say still so little studied that I am always glad to publish anything that can seriously throw light on the subject" (Letter from London dated 14-2-1925).

STANLEY P. RICE, ESQUIRE, F.C.S.

".....read with great appreciation your article in the last (April) issue of the 'Asiatic Review' on the *Magna Charta* of the Malabar Christians. - Letter from London dated 23rd April, 1925. See Ch. II, VI and IX which deal with this *Magna Carta*."



EX. ORIENTE LUX.

PREFACE.

The Malabar Christians of St. Thomas have very valuable, historic copper plate⁽¹⁾ documents and have been long enjoying exceptional social, commercial,⁽²⁾ political,⁽³⁾ and religious privileges. But very few of them have any clear idea of the importance of their *Magna Carta* or of the glory that was theirs. The first ten chapters of the book are meant to remedy this defect to some extent.

I have tried my best to make this book clear, correct and concise in its statements. Exhaustiveness and finality are, of course, impossible. I very much regret that the reading and interpretation of the Cufic and Pahlavi portions of the third document, which

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- (1) They have also three lithic inscriptions in Pahlavi of the Sassanian period (226-651 A. D. according to M. N. Dhalla's *Zoroastrian Civilization*, 1922), one of which was discovered by me in 1921 (*Indian Antiquary*, 1923, p. 355 and June, 1924). There are, besides, a lithic fragment in Greek (*Ibid*, 1923, p. 356), and another also in the same language.
- (2) Thomas Cana, Sabr Iso and Iravi Korttan of the copper plates, were three foreign merchant princes among the Malabar Christians.
- (3) They had, in pre-Portuguese times, a dynasty of Christian kings called the VILLIYARVATTAM SWARUPAM, *Ind. Ant.*, for June, 1929).



Prof. Ernst Herzfeld of Germany and Dr. J. J. Modi, B. A., Ph. D., C. I. E., of Bombay are preparing at my instance are not yet ready for insertion in this book.

A short summary of the book is given below.

CHAP. I. The four sets of copper plates: (1) The two plates of Thomas Canal of 345 or 745 A. D. according to traditions; (both missing); (2) the three plates of the Quilon Tarisa Church, of the 9th cent. (last plate missing); (3) the four plates of the same church; later in the same cent. (first plate missing); (4) the plate of Iravi Korttan, of 1320. (Pp. 1—3).

CHAP. II. Translation of a necessarily imperfect and inaccurate Portuguese rendering of the first set, made probably in 1544, when the two plates were pawned to the Portuguese for 200 reals. A lithic public copy said to exist, but not yet discovered. These plates may now be in the Torre do Tombo of Lisbon or in some old Franciscan Convent of Portugal. (Pp. 4—9).

CHAP. III—V. Improved readings and translations of the other three sets. New materials, facts and interpretations included. Linguistic evidence points to Kielhorn's 1320 A. D. for the plate of Iravi Korttan, and not to Daniel's 230 A. D. (Pp. 9—27).

CHAP. VI. Analysis of the four sets, showing the donees and the rights and privileges granted. (Pp. 27-30).

CHAP. VII. Description of the plates and an account of their strange vicissitudes. (Pp. 30-33).

CHAP. VIII. Recession and translation of the Cochin Jews' plates. (Pp. 33-35).

CHAP. IX. The traditional 72 privileges granted by the Emperor of Malabar. About 25 only mentioned by name in the plates. The rest merely indicated by *et cetera* (Pp. 36-48).

CHAP. X. The two old Malabar Christian denominations: Manigramakkar (perhaps Manichæans), and Tarutaykkal (literally orthodox, perhaps Nestorians). Manigramakkar of Quilon and neighbourhood now mostly Hindus. (Pp. 49-64).

CHAP. XI. Comparative study of the language of the copper plates. The successive stages in the evolution of Malayalam and their distinctive features, phonetic and grammatic. Nine additional specimens of old Malayalam (950-1725 A. D.), including some unpublished ones. (Pp. 64-80).

GLOSSARY. Explanation of some obsolete or obsolescent words and expressions. (Pp. 81-101).

CORRIGENDA and addenda. (P. 102).



I hope I am right in my conclusions in Ch. XI (4) regarding the origin and development of Malayalam. On the method I have adopted, Dr. Sten Konow (Oslo) wrote to me on 22-6-1923: "The way in which you approach the question about the development of Malayalam is scholarlike and sound, and your results will enrich our knowledge of the linguistic history of Southern India" This chapter is short, but the study of inscriptions, on which it is based was long and laborious, involving the very tedious and difficult process of making fresh, accurate readings of the epigraphs dealt with. Such a systematic study on scientific lines was never before attempted.

In 1906, my eldest brother, the late Mr. Kochchitty Vadhyar taught me the Vatteluttu alphabet, entirely defunct and practically useless in those days. But the useless has borne fruit in the improved

(4) In foot-note 18 (p. 71) I surmised, on the strength of linguistic evidence that Bhaskara Ravi of the Jewish plate (pl. 8) may be assigned to *circa* 1000 A. D. It has since been confirmed by Mr. A. S. Ramanatha Ayyar, Superintendent of Archaeology, Travancore, who in his recent tour assured himself of the synchronism of Bhaskara Ravi and Vallva Kotai by re-examining a lithic inscription in a temple in Changanasseri. There is an inscription of the latter king dated in 149 M. E. (973 A. D.) See *Ep. Ind.*, IX, 234 ff.



readings of the inscriptions and other documents in
incorporated in this book. I, therefore, most gratefully
dedicate this memoir to his revered memory.

In conclusion, I have to thank most sincerely
all the numerous foreign scholars and local friends,
who have very kindly made the book what it is.



स्वनिर्मित्व प्रलयावगुण्ठितः
स्वकान्यदोषं न बुधोपि बुध्यते ।
CHRISTIAN
MUSICOLOGICAL
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Trivandrum,
12th May, 1925,

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T. K. Joseph.



നസ്രാണികളുടെ നാലു ചെപ്പേടുകൾ.

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അഭ്യന്തരം മ.

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പ്രാരംഭം.

പദദേശത്തുനിന്നു മലങ്കരവെന്നു കഴിയേറിപ്പാർത്തു കച്ചവടം ചെയ്ത് ഈ നാട്ടിന് ഐശ്വര്യം വർദ്ധിപ്പിച്ച നസ്രാണികൾക്കു മലയാളത്തെ രാജാക്കന്മാരിൽനിന്നു നാലു ചെപ്പേടുകൾ കിട്ടിട്ടുണ്ട്. ഇവ താഴെപ്പറയുന്നവയാണ്.

1. ചേരമാൻ പെരുമാൾ കുന്നതിരൊമ്മനു കൊടുത്ത ചെപ്പേട്. ക്രി. 345-ൽ എന്ന് ഐതിഹ്യം (രണ്ടു തകിടുകൾ. രണ്ടും കാണാനില്ല).
2. ഭവനാട്ടു വാണരളിയ അയ്യനടികൾ തിരുധടി കൊല്ലം നഗരം കണ്ടു നീരേറ മരുവൻ സബിരിശോ പണിയിച്ച തരിസംപ്പള്ളിക്ക് 9-ാം ശതകത്തിന്റെ അന്ത്യപാദത്തിൽ കൊടുത്ത ഒന്നാം ചെപ്പേട്. (മൂന്നു തകിടുകൾ. ഒടുവിലത്തേതു കാണാനില്ല.)
3. മേല്പടി ഒന്നാം ചെപ്പേട്. ആ ശതകത്തിൽ രണ്ടു, പിന്നീടു കൊടുത്തത്. (നാലു തകിടുകൾ. അല്പത്തേതു കാണാനില്ല.)



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