Cosmopolitanism at work on the Malabar Coast of South India – a study with Muslim students in Kozhikode

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1 Introduction

It is February 2004, a few weeks after I had started my fieldwork with Muslim students on the Malabar Christian College (MCC) in Kozhikode (also known as Calicut).[1] When I introduced myself and my project to the students, I suggested that they show me around their homes, localities of their childhood, localities that were important to them now and in their memories. Rafeeq[2] then invited me to visit him and his family in a small coastal town some 20 km north of Kozhikode. Rafeeq was at that time a student of Functional English in his third year just before completing his degree.[3]

During the bus ride - two of his college friends (male and female, Christian and Hindu) are accompanying us today - Rafeeq tells me that his family lives in a house newly built a few years ago. He grew up in a small hut, and remembers that very well. Apart from two sisters he is the only son of a now wealthy and well-respected Muslim business man. His father has been working extremely hard all over India and in Abu Dhabi. In the meantime, he owns and runs several shops, a gas station, a fitness studio in town and one or two supermarkets in Abu Dhabi. Last year, Rafeeq's father and mother were in Mecca for their Hajj. Both of them have quite a poor education. Rafeeq and his sisters are the first in their family to complete high school and Rafeeq himself is the first to complete a bachelor's degree in his family.

The visit of his home town takes us nearly the whole day. After introducing us to his family Rafeeq will show us altogether 13 places of importance to him besides his home. The tour begins with a small walk. Right behind his house there are the huts and small houses of the fishermen (Mukkuvars) of the town. Rafeeq guides us through this settlement, greets many of the people and introduces them to me. A little bit further, just on the beach, he shows us the football patch where he played throughout his childhood. From the beach we can recognize the Sacrifice Rock or Velliam Kalli, a small barren island to which all kinds of legends and stories about cruelties of the Portuguese and resistance against them are linked. The next sight, a few hundred meters away, is a hatchery of Olive Ridley turtles, which his former high school teacher initiated and takes care of together with people of the neighbourhood. Then we drive to the museum of the Kunjali Marakkars. They were the Muslim heroes of the native resistance against the Portuguese in the 16th century. We proceed to a stone quarry nearby, which often serves as background for the popular cinematic dance scenes in Indian movies. On our way we pass a temple dedicated

[1] Kozhikode is the local name of the city. In Arabic the city is called Calicut, which was taken over by the Europeans. In Chinese the city was called Gulifo. In the following I use the two names 'Kozhikode' and 'Calicut' alternately.

[2] All names of the students have been altered to ensure confidentiality.

[3] This paper is a revised version of a paper originally presented at a workshop "Cosmopolitanism and Beyond" at the University of Freiburg in February 2008. My fieldwork for a PhD thesis in social anthropology was conducted at the Malabar Christian College in Kozhikode between 2004 and 2007. I want to express my thanks to the principle, the staff and the students and their families for their friendly support.

to Sri Narayanan Guru, the Kerala reformer of the early 20th century. Then Rafeeq shows us another beach where young men are just diving for *Kaddaka* or mussels. From there we drive to the local lighthouse which was built 150 years ago by the British. We climb the tower and enjoy the wonderful panorama of the Indian Ocean and of the lush green landscape. We pass his former high school, also have a glimpse at the mosque of his community and in the end he takes us to the shops of his father, where he often helps out. But what he actually loves to do most is to take charge of the fitness studio in the third floor of the shop building. He comes here as often as possible together with his college friends for training. After visiting the studio, and after a last cup of tea, we leave for Kozhikode. During all the rides in his father's car we are accompanied by music from CDs, a mix of Hindi, Malayali[4] and Mappila songs and western rock and pop. The clear hit, though, is the leading Malayali movie song of those days: "Lejaavadiyye".

2 Contextualizing Cosmopolitanism

This is not the place to attempt yet another general definition of 'cosmopolitanism'.[5] But at the end of this paper I do want to outline what cosmopolitanism may mean for a region like Malabar and for the young people of the Mappila Muslim community. For this purpose, I refer to publications of Appiah (2006), Beck (2004, 2007), Tsing (2000), Randeria (2006), and Conrad and Randeria (2002), which I find most useful in the attempt to characterize and understand cosmopolitanism at the Malabar Coast.

According to Appiah (2006) the challenge that lies in cosmopolitanism today is to live as if we were "living in a world of strangers" i.e. as if we were permanently living with the unfamiliar. A cosmopolitan person knows that his perspective of life is not the only true one in this world. Therefore, the ability and willingness to cross borders and barriers of all kinds through dialogues is a crucial condition of cosmopolitanism, but there is no promise of any ultimate consensus in ethics or in mind or soul. (2006: 20,113,127,174). Appiah dedicates a whole chapter of his book to "cosmopolitan contamination". (2006: chapter 7) It is this kind of "contamination", caused by the many entanglements described below, which people in Kozhikode are exposed to, in our case especially the Muslim students of MCC. Appiah's perspective is that of individuals as actors, understanding and shaping their current situation and their environment. His approach is a philosophic-pragmatic one, he provides us with general criteria for cosmopolitan concepts.

Beck (2007) has introduced the useful distinctions between 'philosophical cosmopolitanism' and 'cosmopolitan realism' and between cosmopolitanism and cosmopolitanisation. He argues that 'philosophical cosmopolitanism' based on Kant's "Weltbuergertum" with its European centred connotations like "Bildungsbuergertum" and "Humanismus"[6] is no longer globally applicable. In his eyes it is too idealistic and normative for social and cultural studies. He suggests instead the use of what he calls 'cosmopolitan realism'. "Es gibt keinen reinen Kosmopolitismus, es gibt nur eine deformierte Kosmopolitisierung." ("There is no pure cosmopolitanism, there is only distorted cosmopolitanisation." Beck 2006: 252. Translation by the author.) His theory of cosmopolitanisation refers to concepts and structures of cosmopolitanism as well as to methods and concepts of social theory in general. According to Beck, cosmopolitanisation is to be seen as the unplanned side effect of globalisation. It generates a new dialectic between cosmopolitans and anti-cosmopolitans at the same time, i.e. the renewed search for roots, identities and essentials is an immanent part of the process of cosmopolitanisation. In the course of cosmopolitanisation,

[4] Malayalam is the language spoken in Kerala. The people of Kerala are called Malayalis.

[5] For useful papers and summaries on cosmopolitanism see: Vertovec and Cohen (2002); Breckenridge et al. (2002); Beck (2004)

[6] These are both strong ideals in the German discourse of education, both difficult to translate. "Well educatedness" and "humanism". They originate in the 18th and 19th century.

new forms of mindsets will have to evolve with regard to the handling of diversities, of national, territorial or social entities. Cosmopolitanisation means deconstruction of traditional concepts, premises and demarcations. Social and cultural theories will have to include themselves into this process.

According to both, Appiah and Beck, a cosmopolitan person is no longer just a citizen of the whole universe but at the same time a locally rooted person. This may often lead to conflicts. But even though both stress the local side of cosmopolitanism, they hardly provide methods or tools to contextualize their theories. These tools to contextualize the concept of cosmopolitanism can be found in the following papers of Tsing and Randeria.

For Tsing (2000) the term "circulation" is a most important one (among others, i.e. "conflations"). „Most commonly, globalist thinkers imagine the local as the stopping point of global circulations. It is the place where global flows are consumed, incorporated, and resisted. It is the place where global flows fragment and are transformed into something place bound and particular. But if flow itself always involves making terrain, there can be no territorial distinction between the "global" transcending of place and the "local" making of places. Instead there is place making - and travel – all around, from New York to New Guinea." (p.338) She argues that there is no contradiction between "global forces" and "local places". "We might stop making a distinction between 'global' forces and 'local' places. This is a very seductive set of distinctions... The cultural processes of all 'place' making and all 'force' making are both local and global, that is, both socially and culturally particular and productive of widely spreading actions." (p. 352)

Randeria has been working on theories of entangled histories and entangled modernities. She advocates "a perspective of entangled histories of modernities within and outside the West in order to overcome both methodological nationalism as well as Eurocentrism by seeing colonialism as constitutive of, and not external to, European modernity. ... The notion of entanglement that I propose replaces a comparison of societies in the rest of the world with those of the West by using instead a relational perspective, which foregrounds processes of historical and contemporary unequal exchanges that shaped modernities in both parts of the world. Such perspective does not privilege Western historical experience or trajectories. Moreover, it is sensitive to the specificities of various configurations of modernity in the West and outside it." (Randeria 2006: 102-103)[7]

According to Randeria there are no "pure" developments of cultural structures and patterns of their own whatsoever. Her aim is to trace and delineate the entanglements of history, to illustrate the developments of cultural phenomena, to write a history of influences, connections and relations, of paths and flows of ideas and to describe their changes. While tracing these entanglements it turns out that they produce not only new common grounds but also new boundaries, particularities, frictions and breaches. Entangled histories and modernities are messy and uneven.

For both Tsing and Randeria the term cosmopolitanism is not a key term, but they use it very consciously (Tsing 2000: 355; Randeria, Fuchs and Linkenbach (eds.) 2004: 10-17; Randeria 2006: 104). With their thoughts in mind cosmopolitanism and cosmopolitanisation become a fabric in many directions with strong local emphasis.

[7]For Randeria's concepts of 'entangled histories and modernities' see Randeria (2006); Conrad and Randeria (eds.) (2002). While Eisenstad's concept of multiple modernities emphasizes the independent developments of modernities in terms of nation-states, cultures or civilizations, regions or religions, Randeria regards it more fruitful to go beyond these boundaries and to explore the many interconnections in the reconfigurations of modernity (Eisenstad 2000; Conrad and Randeria 2002: 16-17).

3 Past and Present Entanglements in Malabar

Kozhikode as a trading hub of the Indian Ocean from the 12th century until the present

Kozhikode is the district capital of Kozhikode District and the most important city of Malabar i.e. Northern Kerala. The population of the district is approximately 2.8 million, that of the city roughly half a million people. Along with the Hindu majority of 53% there are 37% Muslims and 10% Christians living together in and around Kozhikode city.[8] Until today Kozhikode is considered as a place of religious tolerance and communal harmony.[9]

Coming to Kozhikode as a visitor you will first find nothing special about it. Compared with other up-coming and internationally connected cities of present India like Bangalore or Hyderabad, Kozhikode seems sedated and self-content. But if you stay a little longer you will soon notice that the city has something of an 'old fashioned' cosmopolitan atmosphere: very busy with all kinds of small and large scale trade and commerce, many schools and colleges, bookstalls, libraries and book fares, newspapers in English and Malayalam. Life continues quite leisurely here, but at the same time the city has not shut itself away from the influences of modern world. With Randeria, we could call Kozhikode as it is today a classical result of entangled histories. In the following I want to show some of these past and present entanglements in Kozhikode.

Kozhikode or Calicut as it was called by the Arabs and in colonial times, was formerly one of the most important seaports on the Malabar Coast of South India[10] Since the 12th century and due to the favourable policies of the Zamorins (the Rajas of Kozhikode) people, ideas, goods and cultures from all over the world met, contested and mingled here: people, ideas, goods and cultures from local and regional Indian states, from the Vijayanagar[11] and Mughal Empires[12], from East and South-East Asia, Arabia, Persia and Europe. Kozhikode was, similar to other Indian Ocean port cities, a commercial and trading hub between these regions. Trade, mainly with pepper and other spices, the openness towards the ocean and the cultivation of scholarly traditions at the Tali temple of the Zamorins[13] in terms of language and literature were the moulding factors of the city.

Calicut and the Malabar Coast are mentioned and described in numerous Arabian, European and Chinese travelogues throughout the centuries.[14] Probably the most famous among them is the detailed account of Ibn Battuta, the great traveller and scholar from Morocco, who visited Malabar between 1342 and 1347. He describes Calicut, where he stayed for three months waiting

[8] Census of India 2001

[9] See chapters 5 and 6 in the comparative study of Varshney (2002). – There is a legend that the Hindu king of Kerala Bana Perumal travelled to Mecca in 620 AD to visit the Prophet Muhammed in Arabia. When he reached Mecca, the Prophet himself came to receive the king. When the Prophet asked him about his land, the king is said to have replied, "I come from a land that is beautiful beyond words and yet I have fear of strife between the haves and the have-nots." The prophet then turned his head towards the coast of Kerala and prayed for peace and harmony of that land which had supplied teak for the Ka'aba. Legend has it that Malabar enjoys communal harmony because of that prayer. – In 2001 and 2003 though there were two outbreaks of communal violence near Kozhikode, in Marad, a fisherman village. Since then great efforts have been made to endorse peace between the parties. The trial is going on, quite contrary to far more serious episodes of communal violence in other parts of India.

[10] See for instance Chaudhuri (1990); Narayanan (2006); Ptak (2007); Rothermund and Weigelin-Schwiedrzik (eds.) (2004)

[11] Vijayanagar (1336-1565) is the name of a most powerful Hinduistic empire based on the Deccan Plateau. It covered most parts of South India for a long time. The Malabar Coast never belonged to Vijayanagar.

[12] The Mughal Empire (1526-1858) was the Islamic imperial power that covered most parts of the Indian subcontinent at the height of its power around 1700. Only the utter parts of South India including Malabar never belonged to the Mughal Empire.

[13] For the ancient scholarly traditions in Calicut see Narayanan (2006): 178-189; Ayyar (1999): 287-302.

[14] See Narayanan (2006): 128-150 for a good summary

for a vessel to leave for China, as one of the greatest ports in the world, to which people from China, Java, Ceylon, the Maldives, from Yemen and Persia came and where merchants from all over the world met. He meets the Zamorin, he also mentions the chief merchant and harbour master of Calicut, who is a native from Bahrain, and the Qazi (the Muslim Judge of the city), whose name also indicates Arab origin.[15]

M.G.S. Narayanan, a celebrated historian of South India, sums the description of Kozhikode in those days up with the following words:

> "The establishment of an international trade centre in Calicut exposed the West Coast society to the latest trends in world economy and society. An intelligent religious policy, with an open secular attitude towards all races, creeds and languages made Calicut the abode of a cosmopolitan culture." (Narayanan 2006: 188)

In 1498 Vasco da Gama landed with three ships near Calicut. With him "began a long and bloody struggle to wrench away the control of the pepper trade from the 'Moors', merchants from Egypt and the Arabian peninsula."[16] His appearance marks the beginning of a long and turbulent history of the city with the Europeans (the Portuguese, the Dutch, the British) which lasted until 1947, the year of Indian independence. Kozhikode ceased to be "one of the greatest ports of the world", as Ibn Battuta had put it.

Nevertheless, Kozhikode maintained its character as a centre of trade and commerce throughout the centuries until today. The communities of merchants changed, the traded goods changed, the trading routes and networks changed. For instance, Kozhikode became a major export centre for timber and for tiles from the middle of the 19th century until late in the 1980s.

Nowadays, Kozhikode is a major regional market for rice, fish products, spices, lentils, copra and rubber. Although the importance of the seaport has greatly declined, Kozhikode is connected to the inland and to the world through railway, National Highways and the Karipur Airport of Kozhikode. Since the beginning of the Gulf oil boom in the 1970s international trade with goods has partly been replaced by labour migration to the Gulf countries. As in the rest of Kerala Kozhikode's economy depends greatly upon the revenues and remittances from the migrants. And the airport has become Kozhikode's window to the world.

Kozhikode has also maintained its character as a scholarly city. There are several prominent colleges in the city, some of them older than one hundred years. In addition to them, the city accommodates the University of Calicut, the Medical College, an Indian Institute of Technology and an Indian Institute of Management. Newspapers and publishing houses have good and long lasting traditions here.

To sum it up, we can describe Kozhikode as a city where cultures, religions, social and political practices from all over the world have met, influenced each other and mingled: Hinduism in its local varieties; Christianity in its different, partly very old denomination[17]; Islam, brought by Arab merchants, experiencing a revival through the connections to the Gulf countries; the modern Indian constitution with its British traditions, with communist influences and panchayat traditions; the British-based education system along with ancient ideas and practices of education. Kozhikode may well be described as a cosmopolitan city.

[15] Ibn Battuta (1974): 111-112

[16] Osella and Osella (2007): 326

[17] Roman Catholic, Protestant and Orthodox Christians, in addition to Syrian Christians, who claim a history which dates back to the arrival of Saint Thomas in Malabar in the 1st century

The manifold past and present entanglements of the Mappila Muslims of Kozhikode

As mentioned above, roughly 40% of the population in Kozhikode District is Muslim. They are part of the Muslim community in Malabar called Mappila Muslims. In contrast to Muslims of the rest of India, their history with Malabar starts very early and peacefully, probably with the first Muslim traders that came to Malabar from Arabia in the 8th century.[18] Again in contrast to the Muslims of North India they speak Malayalam, the language everybody speaks in Kerala.

Apart from the language, Mappila Muslims have absorbed elements of the surrounding Hindu culture in many areas of social life such as dress and food habits, marriage practices like the tying of the *tali* and paying dowry to the bridegroom, but also the stratification of Muslim society.[19] A striking example for the assimilation of the Mappila Muslims is the architectural style of the ancient mosques, which resembles very much the style of the typical Malabar Hindu temples.[20] Parts of the Muslim community also have adapted the matrilineal family system typical of some Kerala Hindu communities.[21] At the same time Mappila Muslims have stayed a distinct community of their own, with specific cultural features of their own. Let me just mention some of them: their beliefs, the Arabic and Urdu fragments in their language, their food, parts of their dress code, their songs, epics, and dances, their music and their own characteristic varieties of matriliny.[22]

The history of the Muslims of Calicut is strongly intertwined with the general history of Malabar and Calicut. Before the Portuguese came, the Muslims were a well-recognized, wealthy and accepted minority, which supported the politics of the Zamorins, and which made its living mainly by trade across the Indian Ocean, contributing strongly to the cosmopolitan atmosphere in the city.[23]

After the advent of the Portuguese, and in the periods which followed, their significance and their status in society declined steadily. Already the beginning of the relationship between the Portuguese and the Mappila Muslims was set by mutual misunderstandings and distrust due to the ongoing hostilities between Christians and Muslims since the crusades. This was the starting point of a fierce struggle for trade dominance in this region which lasted nearly 100 years. In the end, the Mappila Muslims lost their leading role in trade and society.

An intermezzo of 30 years of Mysorean conquest and rule in the second half of the 18th century led to the next stage of decline. Hyder Ali and his son, Tipu Sultan, both Islamic rulers of the Kingdom of Mysore, conquered Calicut and most parts of the Malabar Coast in 1766. The Islamic rule was welcomed by the Muslims of Malabar, whereas the Hindus of Malabar suffered under expropriations of land, disempowerment and forced conversions to Islam. The Zamorin, helpless in his reaction towards the Muslim intruders, asked the British for support against the Mysorean rule, which resulted in several British-Mysorean wars. In 1792, the British finally defeated Tipu Sultan. This marked the beginning of British rule in Malabar. The Muslims of Malabar who had been privileged during the Mysorean rule now became the objects of revenge through the majority of Malabar's society. They were now themselves landless and poor, without power and

[18] See Miller (1992), the most comprehensive work on Mappila Muslims

[19] S.M. Mohamed Koya (1983): 62,63; Miller (1992): 252

[20] Narayanan (2006): 115-123; Shokoohy (2003)

[21] Among Muslims this matrilineal family system called Marumakkathayam is mostly followed in the port towns of Malabar. In Kozhikode there also is an old Muslim part of the town, Thekkepuram, where they follow this tradition. Rafeeq and his family do not belong to this group. See Gough (1961); S.M. Mohamed Koya (1983); P.M. Shiyali Koya (1985, 2006)

[22] For the different varieties of matriliny among Muslims of Malabar see S.M. Mohamed Koya (1983), chapter VI "Matriliny and the Mappilas", pp. 62- 75.

[23] For a good description of the Muslim networks across the Indian Ocean see Freitag (2004): 61-81; for the special connections between the Hadramawt of Yemen and Malabar see also Dale (1997); Khalidi (2007): 27-30

influence and full of resentment against the British, the Hindus and Christians in Kerala. Trade with Arabian countries continued on a small scale only. The decline reached its deepest level in the 1920s with the Mappila Rebellion against the British administration which ended in a disaster for the Muslims (Miller 1992: 124-154; Pannikar 1989).[24]

In the 19th century and up to the middle of the 20th century the British administration and the non-Muslim majority of society regarded them mostly as a poor, uneducated, closed and radical community[25]. Richard Francis Burton (1821-1890), the famous adventurer, diplomat, anthropologist, author and translator, writes in his first book "Goa and the Blue Mountains or Six Months of Sick Leave" (1851) about the Mappila Muslims or *Moplahs* as follows:

> "The countenance of the Moplah, especially when it assumes the expression with which he usually regards infidels and heretics, is strongly indicative of his ferocious and fanatic disposition. His deep undying hatred for the Kafir is nurtured and strengthened by the priests and religious instructors. Like the hierarchy of the Moslem world in general, they have only to hold out a promise of Paradise to their disciples as a reward, and the most flagrant crimes will be committed. In Malabar they lie under the suspicion of having often suggested and countenanced many a frightful deed of violence. The Moplah is an obstinate ruffian... Near the coast, the Moplahs are a thriving race of traders, crafty, industrious, and somewhat refined by the influence of wealth. Those of the interior cultivate rice and garden lands. Some few of the latter traffic, but as they do not possess the opportunities of commerce enjoyed by their maritime brethren, their habitations and warehouses are not so comfortable, substantial, and spacious. Both of them have a widely diffused bad name. Among the people of Southern India generally, the word Moplah is synonymous with thief and rascal." (Burton 2003: 150 and 153)

And indeed until the 1960s a very high percentage of the Mappilas, especially in the interior parts, was extremely poor, illiterate, without land, isolated and cut off from the developments in the rest of Kerala. The attribute 'cosmopolitan' could no longer be applied to them, or actually only to a small minority of Muslims.

To illustrate this, it may be useful to cast a brief look at the education sector. For a very long time there was a high aversion amongst the Mappila Muslims against English as a medium of education and against the secular education system of India as a whole, which had been introduced by the British and taken over by post-colonial India. Mappila Muslims preferred to send their children (their boys) to the madrasas attached to the mosques. Here education consisted mainly in rote learning of the Qur'an.[26] This resulted in extremely low literacy rates. The literacy rate of the Mappila Muslims in 1931 for instance was 5% (Miller 1992: 204-205), compared to about 20% in All-Kerala and 9.5% in the rest of India (Ramachadran 1997: 256-257).

Since the independence of India in 1947 and especially since the Gulf oil boom, which began in the 1970s, things have changed thoroughly. The Mappila Muslims themselves struggled to get rid of this negative image and were supported politically in this endeavour by the state government. I want to mention just some of the reasons for this positive development: the warranted secularity and freedom of religion in the constitution of India, enormous efforts of the government and of

[24] For detailed descriptions of these periods see Gabriel (1996); Miller (1992): 60-148

[25] For a discussion of this repeated description of the Mappila Muslims as radical and fanatic see Ansari (2005)

[26] Nowadays English has become the lingua franca and the Anglo-American education systems have been adapted in most parts of the world, a fact that has to be accepted due to historical processes. At the same time we must keep in mind that this process is linked to a long history of ousting and disadvantaging countless other languages and education systems. Seen in this light the aversion of the Mappila Muslims against the British-Indian education system can by all means be regarded as adequate. For the politics of English as language see Mair (ed.) (2003) und Ngugi Wa Thiong'o (1986).

their own in terms of education and social empowerment, their representation in public space, and, last but not least, the contacts to the Gulf countries.

Nowadays, you will hardly find a Muslim family in Kerala without several members working in the Persian Gulf and sending money and other goods back home. Some of the richest families of Kerala are Mappila Muslims. Mappila Muslim communities with their own shops, schools, mosques, movie theatres and restaurants are established in all Gulf countries. Family, labour and commercial connections to and fro are vivid. We can speak of 'transnational social spaces' (Pries 2001:16, 17).[27] Mappila Muslims perceive life there in a way as the extension of their life in Malabar and as a revival of ancient ties and connections to the Persian Gulf.[28]

4 Rafeeq's entanglements

Let us return to the sites of Rafeeq's home town and have a closer look at some of them. First, we will return to the museum of the Kunjali Marakkars. The Kunjali Marakkars were a whole dynasty of seafarers and admirals that fought against the Portuguese in the name of the Zamorin, the Hindu raja of Calicut. Their fight against the Portuguese in and around Calicut lasted just about one whole century and ended only in the year 1600, when the last Marakkar surrendered after the Zamorin had signed a peace treaty with the Portuguese, and was later executed in Goa. The effect of this resistance was that the Portuguese never could really gain a foothold in Calicut. By the time the Marakkars were defeated, a new European power arrived on the scene, the Dutch companies, to which Portugal soon had to give way.[29]

The resistance of the Kunjali Marakkars belongs to the common memory of all Malayalis, the people of Kerala. Stories and legends around the Kunjalis are innumerable and are the theme of many ballads and folksongs. All children learn about them in school. The Kunjali Marrakars have become a common symbol of resistance against colonial power. This is of great importance to the Mappila Muslims and students like Rafeeq, because the Marakkars were part of them. There were other incidents and periods of resistance against colonial power in the history of Malabar and the Mappila Muslims like the Mysorean conquest and rule in the end of the 18th century and the Mappila uprisings in the 19th and early 20th century, but these never could become a symbol of common history because their interpretations cause too much discord and division until today.[30]

If we move on in our tour with Rafeeq we come to the small Hindu temple dedicated to Sri Narayanan Guru. Here again we have a popular figure of common memory in Kerala. Sri Narayanan was a religious and social reformer of Kerala of the early 20th century. A state-wide process of transformation, especially for the untouchable community of Izhavas, started at that time under the Guru's spiritual leadership, accompanied by mass campaigns for the abolition of untouchability. Everybody is familiar with his message: "One caste, one religion, one God for mankind."[31]

The next station of our tour is the quarry, a picturesque background for the popular dancing scenes in Bollywood and Malayalam movies. This kind of music and dancing, called "cinematics" is very popular amongst Indian youngsters. Dancing competitions are held at every school and college. At the same time, cinematics are regarded as unislamic by most Muslims who hardly participate in these competitions. Rafeeq, though, and his friends told me that they had just

[27]There are also many Malayali Hindu and Christian migrants in the Gulf countries, also well organized, but they cannot refer so easily to an ancient tradition.

[28]A good example for this is Osella and Osella's (2007) description of one special Mappila Muslim community, the Koyas of Kozhikode.

[29]For detailed accounts see Kurup and Mathew (2000); Narayanan (2006): 193-228.

[30]See Miller (1992): 85-148; Gabriel (1996); Pannikar (1989); Ansari (2005); Osella and Osella (2007):332-335

[31]See Osella and Osella (2000)

recently participated in such a competition at the college and danced a cinematic to the music of the latest hit "Lejaavadiyye". This had been celebrated as a small revolution and for that reason they were joining in on the song every now and then during our sightseeing trip.

At this point and in our context of cosmopolitanism it is worthwhile to have a closer look at Malabar Christian College (MCC) where Rafeeq and his friends are studying. The college, originally founded by the German and Swiss Basel Mission in 1909, is managed today by the North Kerala Diocese of the Church of South India. Since 1968, it has been affiliated with the University of Calicut. From the very beginning of the college, the motto "Education without Discrimination" has been taken seriously. Already in the first batch of 15 students there were two young women, and from the beginning young people of all creeds and castes became students of the college. According to the management of the college there have been approximately 1000 students at the college in the last years, 20% of them are Muslim, male and female, besides students of Christian and Hindu denominations. More than 50% of the faculty members are women. Between 1991 and 2008 three of four principles were female. It is in an environment like the one of Malabar Christian College where connectedness and relationships across all kinds of borders can develop freely. Of course MCC is not the only institution in Kozhikode that fosters this interconnectedness, but it was one of the earliest institutions to do so and is therefore a well known model in this region.[32]

Moving on in our tour we arrive at the "palli" (mosque) of Rafeeq's community. Rafeeq's family follows the Malabar *Sunni* fraction, which is characterised by orthodox theology.[33] This means that women aren't allowed to visit mosques. Rafeeq had the hope that he would be able to show me his "palli" all the same, and was quite disappointed when his request was turned down and we had to leave. Within the Mappila Muslim community many similar issues are debated: gender, education, the role of the clergy in their community and the interpretation of the Koran, Sunna and Hadith. They are influenced by discourses going on in the Muslim world, the *ummah*, itself, but also by current discourses going on in the Indian or Malayali society as well as by discourses from the 'western world'.

Rafeeq has completed his B.A. in Functional English in the meantime. He tried for further studies in England, but didn't succeed in this endeavour. Since then, he has been working in his father's shops, travelling to and fro between Abu Dhabi and Kozhikode. Sooner or later he will take over the business of his father.

In the course of the fieldwork I had the opportunity to visit some other former Muslim students (male and female) of the college in Doha, Qatar. The attraction of the Gulf countries is enormous and there is a lot of concern in public about the strong influence from there on the Muslims of Kerala and on life in Kerala in general. For instance, one general reproach is that Muslims of India are not really loyal Indians. There has always been the suspicion that due to their belief they feel more 'Arabian' or 'Pakistani'. This suspicion has become stronger. Another concern is that Muslims of India become more radical or fundamentalist due to the influence of the Gulf Countries. Also, there is the fear that the money coming from there influences the habits of consumption in Kerala. These concerns have been uttered by people from Hindu and Christian communities as well as by the Muslims themselves.

My impression, though, is that the young people cope with the attractions of the Gulf countries

[32]For further information on the college see for instance Sujanapal (2003). Visit also the webpage: `www.mcccalicut.org`

[33]All Mappila Muslims follow the *Sunni* denomination. All the same they are not a homogeneous community as it can be observed likewise in the whole Muslim world. Roughly spoken the Mappila Muslims are divided into three fractions which should not be confused with the commonly used global terms: the orthodox Sunnis, the more liberal *Mujahids* and the fundamental and pious reformers of the *Jama'at-i-Islami* movement. Whereas the *Mujahids* encourage women to visit their mosques, *Sunnis* and *Jama'atis* don't allow this. See Miller (1992): 230-288.

in a very mature way. They enjoy all the advantages of life there: more personal freedom due to the spatial distance to their families, more money for personal needs, and the prestige at home. They admire and are fascinated by the great architecture, the cars and the roads, the futuristic shopping malls, and other achievements of these countries. At the same time they miss life at home: the green countryside, the rain, their families, especially the children of their families. They are aware of the differences between the constitutions of each of the countries there and between them and the Indian constitution which warrantees secularity. They appreciate being Indian and being Malayali very consciously. They see the way international labour is treated there very critically. And moreover they criticize the present way of life of the Arabs themselves as artificial, superficial, immoral and hypocritical. This power of judgement certainly is a result of the cosmopolitan influences in Kozhikode.

Let me close this chapter by quoting a statement of one of the students in Doha, which I found in one of their internet forums[34] on the Republic Day of India, the 26th of January: "Justice, Liberty, Equality, Fraternity – Let's share the pride of being Indian, on Republic Day and always. May our dream of tomorrow come true."

5 Conclusion: Cosmopolitanism at work on the Malabar Coast

As described above, the Mappila Muslims of Kerala played a crucial role in the cosmopolitan past of Kozhikode for many centuries. With the advent of the Portuguese in 1498, their influence in society declined steadily until the middle of the last century. The Mappila Muslims could no longer be described in general as cosmopolitan. Since the independence of India in 1947, and especially since the Gulf Oil boom in the 1970s, there is a new kind of cosmopolitanism emerging among the Mappila Muslims. With Randeria's concepts of entangled histories and modernities, with Tsing's essay on "The Global Situation", with Beck's and Appiah's ideas in mind I want to outline some aspects regarding cosmopolitanism which may apply also to the Malabar coast and to the special situation of the young Muslim students there. I would like to make use of Beck's term of 'cosmopolitanisation' and to translate it with the term 'cosmopolitanism at work'. I am borrowing this expression from the introduction of Simpson and Kresse (2007). "In another sense, cosmopolitanism can also be seen as a 'factual challenge': how to create or envisage wider unity when faced with social diversity." (p. 3), and they write about "...cosmopolitanism at work (and as a contested idea) in struggles over social identity and conceptions of legitimacy" (p. 35). This term describes two aspects of cosmopolitanism at the same time. Firstly, it is the idea of cosmopolitanism itself which is 'at work'. It has its historical origin and it challenges the society in Kerala until today: to cross borders and barriers between religious communities, between nations, classes, caste and gender. Secondly, the term 'cosmopolitanism at work' describes the uneven, messy and incomplete side of cosmopolitanism.

'Cosmopolitanism at work' is and has been an ongoing process of circulation and of entanglements of people, goods, knowledge and ideas. It extends far into history as described above for Kozhikode and the Mappila Muslims. It is neither exclusively modern, nor does it develop along a single timeline. It is neither teleological nor irreversible. The Mappila Muslims and their decline are a very good example for this reversibility. Nowadays, they are becoming conscious of their history again and are able to connect to their old tradition. The decline itself is also not irreversible.

[34]"Orkut" is the Internet forum most of them participate in. I was invited to take part also. Since then I stay in contact with them mainly through "Orkut".

'Cosmopolitanism at work' is not confined to global cities and global dimensions. It takes place also in 'peripheral' areas of this world like Malabar or Kozhikode and in small scale everyday situations such as in Rafeeq's and his friends' lives. It is locally rooted. Rafeeq's participation in the cinematics contest is such a small scale situation where he and his friends crossed barriers for the first time. In their perception, they are in the centre of the process. In showing me the small fisher huts in his neighbourhood, the football patch, the turtle hatchery, the lighthouse, the *kaddaka* divers, the landscape of his hometown, his father's shops and the fitness studio he utters his local connectedness very well and with pride.

'Cosmopolitanism at work' is always unfinished, imperfect and in bad order (Beck 2006: 255), messy and contradictory (Tsing 2000: 330,352) and sometimes painful. Not all barriers can be crossed easily. The conflicts that accompany this uneven process are to be found within individuals, groups, communities and whole societies. That Rafeeq couldn't go to England for further studies was a painful experience. Cosmopolitanism at work can be accompanied by substantial conflicts and struggles. That he couldn't show me his Mosque was a big disappointment for him and indicates a substantial struggle going on in the Mappila community itself.

'Cosmopolitanism at work' describes globalization as a process in which all participants take action equally. The young people of the Mappila Muslim community in Kozhikode like Rafeeq and his friends are such active participants in this process. Formerly, it was the seafarers from Arabia that came to Kozhikode. Nowadays, the Mappila Muslims cross the ocean themselves. They compare and are very conscious about different concepts of life and society, they reflect on their further way in life, negotiate and shape it, they keep in contact with friends of other communities and, above all, they are willing to take responsibility for themselves and for their society.

Although the field study worked primarily with Muslim students the term 'cosmopolitanism at work' does not refer to them alone. At the same time there are students and teachers of other communities in the college who can also be described as 'qualified in terms of cosmopolitanism'. They all contribute to the project of 'cosmopolitanism at work' in their way, with their own historical, cultural, political and social backgrounds. 'Cosmopolitanism at work' amongst the Mappila Muslim community can therefore only be thought of in the context of the whole society in Kerala.

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