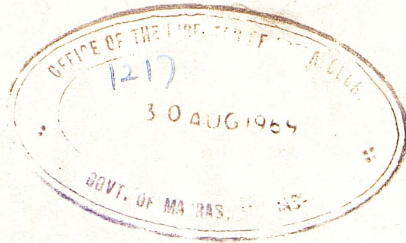


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THE NAVAYATS OF KANARA

A STUDY IN CULTURE CONTACT



Kannada Research Institute, Dharwar.

1955

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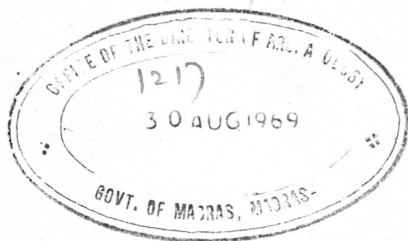
THE NAVAYATS OF KANARA

A Study in Culture Contact

by

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Kannada Research Institute, Dharwar

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INTRODUCTORY NOTE

The Kannada Research Institute which started functioning in the year 1939 appointed three Readers in 1949 to conduct researches in Kannada Language and Literature, Dravidian Philology and Sociology. The Readers have been carrying on their studies in their respective branches.

It is a matter of pleasure to bring out on behalf of the Institute the first work which embodies the results of the researches conducted by one of its Readers. Dr. V. S. D'Souza the author of this monograph has carried out extensive field work and put in patient and intensive study to work out the problem.

True to its traditional generosity Karnatak has welcomed and accommodated in her midst quite a few communities of people from elsewhere. These communities in their turn have also contributed towards her rich and varied culture. One of such communities is the subject matter of this work. In old Kannada works such as Chenna Basava Purāṇa and Gururāja Chāritra there are references to a Vīras'aiva saint by name Maleya Mallēs'a who visited Arabia and won by his miraculous powers the admiration of the Muslims there. H. H. Shri Nilakaṇṭha S'ivachāra Swāmiji of Hooli Muth in his scholarly history of the Hooli Muth places Maleya Mallēs'a about the year 1448 A. D., and he refers to Navayats as those Muslims from Arabia who accompanied Maleya Mallēs'a to Gokarn. Of course, Dr. D'Souza's conclusions would take the advent of Navayats in this region to a much earlier period. Nevertheless a reference to a ship in respect of the miraculous power of Maleya Mallēs'a as narrated in Gururāja Chāritra would be an interesting piece of information in view of what Dr. D'Souza has accepted as the correct derivation of the term Navayat.

We have here a well documented and many sided study of the Navayats of this region. The material has been collected from a variety of sources and critically examined and presented to the readers as an authentic record. The history, culture and the life of these people are brought out in sufficient detail by the author. Principal V. K. Gokak, M. A. (Oxon) in his interesting foreword has aptly introduced the subject matter as well as the author. He has also very rightly pointed out the need for a detailed linguistic investigation of the Kannada element in the language of the Navayats.

It is hoped that this ethnological study of the Navayats of Kanara would be enthusiastically welcomed both by scholars in the field and the public and that the author would be amply rewarded for his labour in his field of study.

Principal V. K. Gokak has added to the usefulness of this publication by his valuable foreword. On behalf of the Kannada Research Institute, we express our sense of gratitude to him. We also thank Shri V. R. Koppal, M. A., B. T., for the love and interest with which the printing work was executed at the Tontadarya Press.

S. S. Malwad

Director

Kannada Research Institute

FOREWORD

I had been to Bhatkal in 1938 when I had an occasion to visit certain places of interest in South and North Kanara. Bhatkal was a straggling village, at the most a small town. But near Bhatkal I saw a row of mansions built in the most recent style,—a bit of Malabar Hill, Bombay, in this forest area. I wondered what this upgraded colony might be, when the original village or town itself was dwindling. On being told that these houses had been built by rich Muslim merchants from Bombay, I was puzzled. I could not quite understand why rich Muslim merchants from Bombay should invest part of their fortunes in this obscure corner of the State. Was it because they anticipated what many were dreaming about,—that Bhatkal would, in the near future, be developed into a harbour like Bombay? I was puzzled and could not find an answer. I plunged into other pursuits of my own after my return from the tour and this question, which was then uppermost in my mind, lay buried under a hundred others clamouring for solution.

Shri. D'Souza's book on the Navayats of Kanara raised this ghost again in my mind, but only to lay it for ever. It is a fascinating study in culture contact and it traces, with remarkable fidelity and insight, the genesis and growth of this community of Kanara Navayats. The community was generated by Arab seafarers marrying the local Indian women. There are also other Muslim communities on the coast of India such as the Moplahs of Malabar and the Konkani Muslims of the Konkan coast with Indo-Arab origins. As Shri. D'Souza has analysed it, the Navayat culture manifests three main cultural elements integrated into one pattern,—the Arab element, the local Indian element and the Moplah element. Of these, the local Indian element naturally predominates over the others. Of the

numerous derivations suggested for the word *Navayat* Shri. D'Souza seems to be quite justified in accepting that from the Arabic word *Nawwātī* meaning 'sailors'. The Navayats of Kanara are identified by Shri. D'Souza as the very Muslim community found by Ibn Battūta at Honavar in 1342. The community subsequently shifted to Hospattan which place also it vacated eventually, owing probably to political vicissitudes. It is now spread in several places in North and South Kanara, its main stronghold being Bhatkal. The bit of Malabar Hill seen today in Bhatkal is not, therefore, an enterprise on the part of merchants from Bombay. It is a local and historical growth rooted in the region, which has come into prominence now because of the wealth and status that several members of the community have won in recent times through their own talents and industrious habits.

Shri. D'Souza gives a lucid and interesting account of the habitat and occupations of the Navayats, their mother-right traits, family organisation, kinship terminology, mode of life and dress, food and marriage and mourning customs. He also points out that the architecture of their mosques greatly resembles that of the local Hindu temples. To a layman like myself, this sociological account is as absorbing as a novel. The value of the book is further enhanced by an appendix on the dialect of the Navayats, with excellent linguistic specimens added to it. It is quite likely that the dialect of the Navayats was, in the course of their colourful history, influenced by Kannada, the language of the region in which they settled down, just as their practice of taking food before sunset reveals local Jain influence. A detailed investigation of the dialect and its vocabulary, whose base is Konkani with Arabic vocables interspersed in it, will, no doubt, help us to decide the issue.

Shri. D'Souza, Reader in Sociology in the Kannada Research Institute, is a sound sociologist and a scholar intensely interested in his own pursuits. He has an eager and inquiring mind, a

capacity for close and dispassionate reasoning and a broad and humane outlook. Sociologically speaking Bombay Karnatak is yet an unexplored field. I feel sure that Shri. D'Souza will make even more valuable contributions to sociology in the coming years, producing work of great significance in his field of studies. I shall look forward with great interest to his forthcoming contributions in this line and I recommend his book on the Navayats of Kanara to all those who are interested in sociology and also in Karnatak culture.

Karnatak College

DHARWAR

V. K. Gokak

24th July 1955

AUTHOR'S PREFACE

This work is an attempt at understanding the culture of the Muslim community of Navayats of Kanara who, on account of their isolation as a small community, are regarded by others as a peculiar people. The community was generated by Arab seafarers consorting with the local Indian women. There are also other Muslim communities on the coast of India such as the Moplahs of Malabar and the Konkani Muslims of the Konkani coast with similar Indo-Arab origins. All these communities had occupational contacts with one another in the past.

Many of the peculiarities of the Navayat culture become significant only if they are understood in the light of culture contact and diffusion. In the first place there is the contact and fusion of Indian and Arab peoples and cultures, and in the second the culture contact brought about by the other Indo-Arab Muslim communities. Thus it will be seen that the Navayat culture discloses three main different cultural elements—the Indian, the Arab and the Moplah—integrated into one pattern.

In these culture contacts the indigenous element was provided by the females and the foreign elements entirely by males. Moreover, the Arab ancestors of the Navayats were mostly sailors and traders who visited their families only occasionally or periodically with the result that the community was nurtured almost entirely by the native women. These peculiar types of culture contact and the dominating influence of the Islamic religion have been mainly responsible for the way in which the different traits are selected, modified, combined and integrated into the Navayat culture.

This is, therefore, an ethnological study in general and a study in culture contact in particular.

The study was commenced in 1950 and completed in 1953. Much of the material was collected through field investigation. The chief place of the Navayats, namely, Bhatkal and their other settlements in the North and South Kanara districts, were visited several times. A large number of persons were interviewed; but they include only males as, owing to their purdah restrictions, the womenfolk are not amenable to be interviewed by men. For the sake of comparative study I have also made a first-hand investigation of the cultures of the Moplahs and Konkani Muslims.

I must acknowledge my gratitude to all those who have contributed towards this study by their generous aid and assistance. Their names, however, are too numerous to be listed here. All the same, a few of the persons may be mentioned. Janabs J. H. Shamsuddin, B. A., LL. B., S. M. Syed Mohidin, and Kola Abdul Rahman of Bhatkal, Janab Puttur Hasan Saheb of Mangalore and Janab Pangal Hasan of Murdeshvar, all of whom are Navayats, have not only supplied much information but also helped in establishing many useful contacts in connection with this study. Janabs A. K. Maniar and N. M. Mugad of Dharwar were kind enough to place at my disposal their private collections of books on Islamic culture. Mr. L. F. Saldanha, who was once a Collector of the North Kanara district, has rendered me valuable help. My friend Dr. I. P. Desai, Reader in Sociology, M. S. University of Baroda, has gone through the manuscript and made valuable suggestions. The illustrations were photographed by the Photographer-Artist of the Kannada Research Institute. The ex-Director of the Institute, Shri. R. S. Panchamukhi, M. A., had provided me with the necessary facilities for my field work. This work, however, could not have seen the light of day as early as it has done, had it not been for the keen interest evinced and the encouragement given by my Director, Prof. S. S. Malwad, M. A. To all these and to Principal V. K. Gokak for the interest he has taken in the book and especially for his kindness in finding time in the

midst of his multifarious activities to write a foreword to it, I am deeply indebted. I also owe an indirect debt of gratitude to Dr. G. S. Ghurye, Professor and Head of the Department of Sociology, School of Economics and Sociology, Bombay University, whose inspiring lectures have been a great source of stimulation to me.

Victor S. D'Souza

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The Navayats of Kanara

CHAPTER I

The Arab Contact with the Coasts of India

Commercial Relations between Arabia and the bordering Countries and India

The Arabs had at all times held commerce in high esteem. Long before the birth of Prophet Muhammad the famous tribe of Koraish was regularly sending every year caravans laden with all products of Yemen into Syria. In the neighbourhood of Arabia, in Chaldaeae, maritime commerce was already flourishing in the fifth century A. D. The city of Hira was frequented by ships coming from the Red Sea, from India, and even from China. The merchandise from India was being sold at Obolla. Soon after the inception of Islam, when the Arabs conquered Chaldaeae, they became heirs to the maritime commerce which was in full swing there. The enterprising Arabs availed themselves of this opportunity to expand their sea trade.¹ The Arabs have been carrying on trade with India since time immemorial. According to Pliny, in the first century A. D., a large number of Arabs had settled on the Malabar coast and in Ceylon. In Ceylon they were so numerous that they could be regarded as the masters of the coast.²

Muhammadan Influence in Southern India

Owing to this link between Arabia, and India and Ceylon from very early times, the Muhammadan

¹ *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 9th Ed., Vol. XVI, p. 597.

² *Islamic Culture*, Vol. XIX, p. 225.

influence in southern India and Ceylon dates back almost to the very inception of Islam in the beginning of the 7th century A. D. As early as 91 A. H. or 709 A. D., there was an instance of the Ceylon king's sending to Al-Hajjāj (Hajjāj bin Yūsuf), the governor of Iraq, some women who were born in his country as Muslims, their fathers, who were Muslims, having died. He wanted to court favour with Al-Hajjāj by sending them back.¹

The Arabs who thus came to India were not motivated either by political ambitions or missionary zeal and their main business was trade handed down to them by their forefathers from pre-Islamic times. Later on, the establishment of Muslim settlements, particularly on the west coast of India, was due mainly to the encouragement to trade given by the Hindu rulers. Of these the rulers of Balharā dynasty² in the north and the Zamorins of the Malabar coast were known to be most partial to Muslims. Many of the Muḥammadan traders, encouraged by this kindly attitude of the Hindu chieftains took up their abodes in places like Anhilwāra, Cambay, Calicut and Quilon. They were treated with great consideration, allowed to build mosques and permitted to practise their religion without hindrance, with the result that these early Arab Muslim settlers established themselves all along the coast, intermarried with the Hindu population, and thus gave rise to the various Muslim communities on the coast that are found today.³

1 R. C. Majumdar : *The Arab Invasion of South India*, p. 32.

2 The relationship between the Balharā and the Arabs and the Muslims has been spoken of very highly by various Muslim merchants and travellers such as Sulaymān (851 A. D. ?), Mas'ūdī (943 and 955 A. D.), Iṣṭakhri (950 A. D.) and Ibn Hawqal (975 A. D.). Cf. S. Muhammad Husayn Nainar : *Arab Geographer's Knowledge of Southern India*, (University of Madras, 1942), pp. 162—164.

3 M.T. Titus: *Indian Islam*, (Oxford University Press, 1930), p.37.

Foreign commerce in Arabia received a great fillip during the time of the Abbāsid Caliphate. Under the Abbāsids the Arab sailors were noted for their great activity and courage in confronting danger. The centre of trade shifted from Hira and Obolla to Basra, which became the principal port. Muslim colonies were established all along the coasts of Persia and India, and Muslim voyagers began to venture as far as the coast of China.¹ It was also during the reign of the Abbāsid Caliphs that the four orthodox sects, viz., the Malikite, the Hanafite, the shāfi'ite and the Hanbalite were established among the Sunni Muslims and that the missionary activity of the Arabs was in full swing. During this period, therefore, the Arab Muslim colonies which were already there on the coasts of India must have swelled both by the increase in the number of Arab immigrants and by local converts. At this time the Arab and Persian sailors must have, no doubt, carried on their foreign commerce together, this also resulting in Persian influence in the coastal Indo-Muslim colonies.

The Mode of Formation of Muslim Communities on the Coasts of India

Commerce between distant places naturally leads traders to have settlements of their own in the places where they have their trade. History has recorded that from ancient times settlements have been formed in various parts of the world by shipwrecked crew. On the other hand, there have been cases also where traders have settled in various parts of the world either for purposes of trade and contracted marriages or have settled in the land of their adoption and married local women.

¹ *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 9th Ed., Vol. XVI, p. 597; G. F. Hourani: *Arab Seafaring in the Indian Ocean*, (Princeton, 1951), p. 53.

The nature of the voyages in early times could not but have encouraged the Arab mariners to have marital connections with Indian women. The boats of the Arabs used to come to Malabar and other coastal areas of India sometime in July or August and after about four months of business returned in December or January. In those days the voyage used to take about thirty to forty days.¹ So, even if the Arab sailors and merchants had any settled home life in Arabia, they were away from their homes for the greater part of the year. Thus while they were in India for about four months in a year they must have contracted some sort of marital unions, temporary or permanent, with the Indian women, for there is no evidence to show that they brought along with them their own womenfolk. At least in Malabar it was extremely easy for the Arabs to have such unions with the local women, due to the peculiar nature of the social organization of both the early Arabs and the people of Malabar.

The late W. Robertson Smith has pointed out that the society in early Arabia was organized on the basis of mother-right. By tribal rule the woman was not allowed to leave her own kin but could entertain a stranger as her husband at her own place. The man either settled down permanently with his wife's tribe or visited his wife occasionally. There was also present a sort of Nair polyandry, the woman receiving more than one suitor even though they belonged to different tribes. The children born of such unions belonged to the mother's stock and remained with the mother's tribe.² The type of marriage in which the husband goes to settle in his wife's tribe is called *beena* marriage the term having

1 Hakim Sayyad Shamsulla Qādri: *Malabar*, p. 15.

2 W. Robertson Smith: *Kinship and Marriage in Early Arabia*, (1907), pp. 77—79.

derived by J. F. McLennan from the name of similar unions in Ceylon.¹

Another special institution of the early Arabs which has survived even today and which needs to be mentioned in this connection is what is known as *muta'* marriage. It is a marriage of a temporary nature in which the contracting parties agree to live together in the house of the woman (wife) for a stipulated period of time, and for which the man has to pay an amount mutually agreed upon. The contract may be either terminated before the stipulated period or extended by mutual consent and on terms agreeable to both parties. But the main object of *muta'* marriage is to provide a man with a wife when he is away from home. According to G. A. Barton this type of temporary marriage is still in existence in Sunan, a town near Mocha in South Arabia.² He quotes the following passage from Hamilton's *New Account of the East Indies* (I, 52, 53) describing such marriages : " In all the streets there are brokers for wives, so that a stranger who has not the conveniency of a house in the city to lodge in, may marry and be made a free burgher for a small sum. When the man sees his spouse and likes her they agree on the price and term of weeks, months or years, and then appear before the Kadi, or judge of the place, and enter their names and terms in his book, which costs a shilling or thereabout. And joining hands before him the marriage is valid, for better or for worse, till the expiration of the term agreed upon. And if they have a mind to part or renew the contract, they are at liberty to choose for themselves what they judge most proper; but if either wants to separate during the term limited, there must be a commutation of money paid by the separating party to

1 *Ibid.*, p. 87.

2 G. A. Barton : *Semitic and Hamitic Origins*, (Philadelphia 1934), p. 102.

the other according as they can agree; and so they become free to make a new marriage accordingly."¹ It is also stated that similar marriages of short duration are entered into in Mecca which is visited every year by a large number of pilgrims who remain there for longer or shorter durations of time, and where women from Egypt go with the avowed purpose of entering into such alliances.²

These practices must have been common in early Arabia especially in the coastal towns and the Arab merchants and mariners who had to stay for longer or shorter periods in foreign places where the nature of their trade and occupation took them would therefore undoubtedly avail themselves of *beena* and *muta'* marriages wherever possible.

As a matter of coincidence as it were, the social conditions of Malabar at the time facilitated the ancient Arabs coming to this region to have marital unions like *beena* and *muta'* marriages described above. In Malabar many of the communities such as the Nayars, the Tiyas and the Mukkuvans with whom the early Arabs had connections, have maintained the mother-right character of their social organizations down to the present day. In olden times they adhered to the mother-right principles in a strict manner. The property was inherited in the female line. Marriage was matrilocal. The nature of the marital union itself was loose; a woman could entertain more than one husband or dismiss her husbands at her will and pleasure. Inter-marriage was not restricted to the members of the caste or sub-caste alone. Even foreigners were entertained as husbands so long as they were regarded as belonging to communities which were equal or superior in social status to the communities of the

1 *Ibid.*, p. 102.

2 *Ibid.*, p. 102.

women. As recorded in the Report of the Malabar Marriage Commission, 1894, even so late as the early days of British rule, the Tiyān woman incurred no social disgrace by consorting with Europeans.¹ The lax sexual conduct among the Mukkuvans displayed even today in some places would suggest that in olden times the Arabs did not find any difficulty in consorting with Mukkuvan women. Moreover it would appear that the Mukkuvans were also not troubled by religious scruples as evidenced by the fact that the Zamorins of Calicut (Kozhikode) had no difficulty in inducing one or more members of every Mukkuvan family in their kingdom to become Muslims with the idea of strengthening their navy which was manned by Muslims.² Therefore the fact that the Arabs were of a different religion might not have been a matter for consideration for the Mukkuvans when an Arab wanted to consort with a Mukkuvan woman. Many of the other castes of Malabar also could not have been very different from the Mukkuvans in these respects. The facilities for Arabs were all the more greater when the children born of such unions were looked after by the mothers and their families.

The Muhammadan Moplahs of North Malabar and the coastal towns of South Malabar have mother-right social organizations.³ From this it is evident that the early Arabs did take advantage of the peculiar social conditions prevailing in Malabar.

The Arab mariners must have also practised a sort of *muta* marriage while they were in the ports of India. It was not possible for them to settle down for a long time

1 E. Thurston : *Castes and Tribes of Southern India*, Vol. VII, p. 36, and W. Logan : *Malabar*, (1887), Vol. I, p. 143.

2 Madras District Gazetteers : *Malabar*, (1951), Vol. I, p. 186.

3 For a brief sketch of the mother-right social organizations of the Moplahs see chapter on Social Organization, *infra*.

in one particular place attaching themselves to the same wife or wives. Much of their time was spent in the sea and the remaining period was distributed over their stay in different ports. In the different ports of anchor they were required to stay for periods of varying durations and during such periods it was customary for them to marry the local Muslim women wherever possible, for they did not voyage with their wives. When it was time for them to leave the port they would also leave their wives behind and establish fresh marital connections in a new port.

An idea about their sex life could be had if the practice of Ibn Baṭṭūṭa in this connection is examined. Although he was not an Arab himself and his mission was different from that of the Arab sailors, his mode of life when he was on the coasts of India, the Maldivé Islands and Ceylon was the same as that of other Muslim itinerants coming to these parts. Travelling in the first half of the fourteenth century Ibn Baṭṭūṭa did not take his wife or wives along with him when he moved from place to place although he was always accompanied by one or more slave girls. When he was in Delhi for about nine years previously he had married a wife. But he left her behind when he had to leave Delhi on an embassy to China. Subsequently when he had an occasion of staying in the Maldivé Islands for some length of time he married there four wives in one of the Islands known as Mahal. A year later as he left Mahal he divorced one of the wives forthwith and the remaining three a little later, and in any case he had no intention of taking his wives with him on his onward voyage. He next halted in another of the Maldivé Islands called Mulūk for seventy days and married two wives in this place. He left these wives also behind when he finally proceeded further from the Maldivé Islands.¹

¹ See Mahdi Husain : *The Rehla of Ibn Baṭṭūṭa*, (Baroda, 1953), especially pp. 198, 214-216.

Temporary marriages take place in the Maldive Islands even now. Since all the inhabitants of these Islands are Muslims only Muslim men can enter into such unions and prostitution is strictly prohibited. When a ship is anchored at any one of these Islands the Muslim sailors can marry the women of the place for whatever period they like. The usual condition is that the man must present to the woman two pieces of cloth and at the time of leaving pay her a sum of Rs. 2—8—0.¹

The vestiges of temporary marriages could also be found on the west coast of India. At Calicut (Kozhikode) where the Arab seamen come every year and stay in the port for some time until their wares are sold and return cargo is procured, such marriages take place even at present. The Arab usually marries a local Moplah woman and stays with her for a few weeks or months. Thus the advantage is twofold: he secures not only a wife but also a place for board and lodging. When the time comes he departs leaving his wife free to act as she thinks proper.² So long as the monopoly of the maritime commerce in this area was in the hands of Arabs, marriages like these must have been very common in the Muslim communities all along the coasts of India, particularly in those where residence was matrilocal.

It must however be pointed out that the institution of *muta* marriage has been long since rejected by the Sunni Muslims. The only Muslim community which adheres to it even today, is the section of Shi'a Muslims

1 This information was furnished to me by Muslim sailors who have visited these islands several times.

2 This information was kindly supplied to me by Professors T. Abdullah and K. V. Abdur-Rahman of Farook College, Feroke, during my visit to Malabar.

known as *Isnā 'Ashariya*. *Muta'* marriage was prevalent in Arabia from very early times and even at the time of the Prophet. The Prophet himself, although he did not like the practice, condoned it in the case of some of his followers who for spreading their religion had to be away from their wives for long periods of time. However, subsequently being aware of its evil consequences, he forbade it altogether. But the *Isnā 'Ashariya Shi'ites* do not believe in the later abrogation of this practice by the Prophet.¹ The Arab sailors connected with the Indian coasts, on the other hand, being Sunni Muslims, strictly speaking, could not resort to *muta'* marriage. However, their contact with India dates back even before the inception of Islam, and the practice of *muta'* marriage once established by them in the Indian ports continued for a long time after the coming of Islam, especially because it proved to be a necessary evil in their case. Moreover, by not stipulating the duration of marriage at the time of entering into the contract, they have also tried to remove from such temporary marriages the stigma of *muta'* marriage.² In the case of the Arab-Moplah marriages at Calicut no conditions are laid down regarding the duration of the marriage. When the Arab husband goes away the Moplah woman can either wait for him during the succeeding year or marry another husband.

Where the conditions were not so favourable as in Malabar the Arab sailors might have even had recourse to marriage by capture. This practice was very common in early Arabia and at the time of the Prophet it was

1 *Journal of the Bombay Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society* (New Series), Vol. VIII, pp. 79-85.

2 One of the important conditions of *muta'* marriage is that the duration of marriage should be stipulated at the time of entering into the contract.

universally prevalent there.¹ With this practice prevailing at home, the Arabs could not have hesitated in capturing Indian women wherever possible. In some places of Malabar it is said that in the past if a Nair woman crossed certain geographical limits she would become a Muslim, implying thereby that even in Malabar there was a chance of the Nair and other local women's being seized by the Arabs.² There was also in those days a brisk trade in slave girls going on all over the coastal area as testified among other authorities by Ibn Battūṭa and of which the Arab sailors must have no doubt taken advantage.

It is now easy to visualise the possible process of formation of the Muslim communities on the coasts of India. The children of Arab Sailors whether brought forth by lawful wives or concubines were all admitted to the Islamic fold. On the other hand there was no way of reclaiming them to the Hindu society. However, by the very nature of their trade and occupation the Arabs could not have taken more than a casual interest in their children many of whom must have been born during the absence of their fathers. The result was that a new type of society began to evolve. The members of the new society retained the social customs of their mothers, but had a new religion, that of their fathers, superimposed on them. Further, at different places such as Konkan, Malabar and the Coromandel coasts the Arabs consorted with women belonging to different cultures and speaking different languages. Consequently the Indo-Arab communities formed in these different places adopted the different local languages of their mothers and evolved into different cultural types.

1 W. Robertson Smith : *Op. Cit.*, p. 89.

2 Also cf. E. Thurston : *Op. Cit.*, Vol. V, p. 305. Among many peoples on the coastal area the common abusive expression for a woman is "let the Arab kidnap you."

CHAPTER II

The Navayats

Origin of the Word Navayat

There is no unanimity among English writers on the spelling of the term *Navayat*. Wilks spells the word as *Nevayet*.¹ The other spellings of English writers are *Newayetah*, *Navāit*, *Nāata*, *Nārtia*, *Novoyt*, *Naitea*, *Naiteani* and *Nevoyat*.²

In the Arabic, Persian and Urdu languages also the word is spelt differently. In all these three languages the term is used either as *Nāyat* (نایت) or *Nawāyat* (نوایت). In the Arabic and the Urdu languages each of the terms *Nāyat* and *Nawāyat* is again spelt in two different ways. The Arabic alphabet contains two letters, *t* (ت, *te fauqānī*) and *ṭ* (ط, *tāe mahmilā*) which when pronounced in English both more or less sound like *t* (soft). These two letters have also been adopted into the Urdu alphabet. In the Persian alphabet the letter *ṭ* is absent. So in the Arabic and the Urdu languages *Nāyat* is sometimes also written as *Nāyat* (نایط) and *Nawāyat* as *Nawāyat* (نوایط). Although the different spellings of the terms *Nāyat* and *Nawāyat* depending upon the use of the letters *t* and *ṭ* make little difference when pronounced in English, their distinction is significant for the purpose of tracing the origin and meaning of the term *Navayat*.

There are various opinions regarding the origin and meaning of the term *Navayat* and these could be broadly divided into two categories: those which hold

1 Wilks: *History of Mysore*, (1930), Vol. I, p. 265.

2 *Ibid.*, pp. 265-266 and Yule and Burnell: *Hobson-Jobson*, p. 620.

that the term is of Arabic origin and the others which ascribe to it an Indian origin.

The opinions regarding the Arabic origin of the term may be recounted first. Many writers, especially Arab and Persian, have traced the origin of the community and its name to Arabia. In his work *Tauzak-i-wālā Jāhī* Burhān Khān Hāndī says that the community of Nawāyaṭs is of Arab stock.¹

In the Arabic language *Nāyaṭ* means backbone which signifies unity. So according to one opinion the community originally derived its name from the remarkable unity among its members under the leadership of one man. Consequently the community is called *Nāyaṭ*.²

'Alāmā Jalāluddīn Sayūtī the author of *Kashful-ansāb* says that the Navayats are the progeny of an Arab called Abdullah Wāyaṭ. First they were called *Banū-Wāyaṭ* i. e., the children of Wāyaṭ, and this expression gradually changed into *Nawāyaṭ*. He adds that after leaving Medīna the community settled down in a place called *Wāyaṭ* which is situated at a distance of three days' journey from Baghdad. However, he is not sure whether the place derived its name from its new inhabitants or the inhabitants themselves derived their name from the place.³

The author of *Naftha-ul-Ambaria*, Maulana Muhammad Bāqar Āga states that the ancestor of this community was called *Nāyaṭ*, who was the son of Nazār-bin-Kannāna, the ancestor of the prophet.⁴

1 Quoted in, Nawāb 'Azīz Jung Bahādūr : *Tārīkh-un-Nawāyaṭ* (Hyderabad, 1904), p. 26.

2 *Ibid.*, p. 25.

3 *Ibid.*, p. 26.

4 *Ibid.*, p. 26.

Jaffur Sharreef calls the community *Nuwā-ay-tay*, and states that it originated in Arabia from the expression *Nuwā-A-ay-t'hay* (or new comers).¹

According to Qāmūs, the Arabic dictionary, the Navayats, are a tribe of sailors, the term being derived from Nawwātī (نَوَّاتِي) the plural of Nutī (نُوتِي) which means sailor.² This view is further supported by the Muslim historian Syed Sulaiman Nadvi who states that the Arab Sailors of the Mediterranean sea were known as Nuti and Nawwāt.³ He is of the opinion that the Navayats living in Southern India are descendants of Arab Sailors called Nawwāt.⁴

1 *Qanoon-e-Islam or The Customs of the Mussulmans of India*—Translated by G. A. Herklots, (1863), p. 8. A rather unbelievable story has been related by him in this connection. After the death of the Prophet a section of the inhabitants of Medina planned to remove his body stealthily by a subterranean passage to a distant place so that they might collect there a crowd of worshippers. When the underground passage was nearly completed the Prophet in a dream warned the guards of the sacred mausoleum, of the projected scheme and charged them to apprehend and banish the culprits out of the city, whereupon the next day the villains were caught and expelled from the place. In whichever village they went the villagers on learning their whereabouts likewise beat them and drove them out. The ignorant among the villagers used to enquire of the others who the strangers were and were told that they were *Nuwā-A-ay-t'hay* (or newcomers). Thus wherever they went they were called *Nuwā-A-ay-t'hay*, and this term gradually corrupted into *Nuwā-ay-tay*.

2 While taking the word in this sense the letter t (ت) has to be used and not ṭ (ط).

3 To substantiate this he writes that Ibne 'Abbās, explaining a Quranic verse mentions نَوَّاتِينَ (نَوَّاتِي) (they were Nawwāt i. e., sailors). F. Steingass: *The students' Arab-English Dictionary* also gives the meaning of *nūtiyy* (pl. *nawwātiyy*) as sailor seafaring man and *nūtiyyāt* as navigation, navy (p. 1155).

4 *Islamic Culture*, Vol XV, (1941), p. 437.

Next, the opinions ascribing to the term Navayat an Indian origin, may be examined.

Wilks says that *Nevayet* is generally supposed to be a corruption of the Hindustani and Marathi terms for *newcomer*.¹ In the Sanskrit language the word *Navāyata* can be split up into *nava* (new) and *āyata* (come) meaning newcomer. On the face of it this meaning of the term is quite apposite, for it is generally believed that the forefathers of the Navayats were newcomers to their present localities. Viewed this way the community derived its name from the people of India.

Another opinion gives the term the meaning of *those who came by boat*, *nāve* or *nāo* meaning boat in Sanskrit and some other Indian languages.

According to yet another opinion the term is apparently a Konkani word connected with Sanskrit *nava*, (new) and implying new convert.²

To add to the bewildering number of explanations of the term, the author of *Tārīkh-un-Nawāyat* has one more to suggest. On the authority of a passage from *Tārīkh-e-Feristā*³ he states that in the Malabari language (apparently Malayalam) *Nawāyat* means lord or master⁴

1 *Wilks: Op. Cit.*, Vol. I, p. 264.

2 *Hobson-Jobson*, p. 620.

3 The relevant passage quoted in *Tārīkh-un-Nawāyat* (p.28) may be translated as follows: "Gradually the Muslims grew in number and many of the rulers of Malabar came within the fold of Islam, and the rajas of the ports of Goa, Dabul, Jēwal and so on, like the rulers of Malabar invited the Muslims from Arabia to settle down in the coastal area and called them Navayats or lords."

4 This statement does not seem to be correct. Jaffur Sharreef also mentions that there is a report current among the Navayats that their title is *Nāet* which is an Arabic word signifying *chosen*, and that the other Muslims say that the word means *driven away*! (*Qanoon-e-Islam* p. 9).

and the people of Malabar out of respect called these people Nawāyats.¹

Tippu Sultan is reported to have given a most obnoxious interpretation of the term Navayat. On one occasion when several of his noblemen belonging to this tribe were present he reprimanded them saying that they were an abominable lot because they were the descendants of a woman who had connections with nine men. When a child was born to that woman each of the nine men would have it named after himself, as being the father. But the court decreed that since all the nine men had connections with her, the child should receive the name of Now-Ā-ay-thay (or *nine came*). The progeny of this child were consequently called Nuwa-ay-tay or Navayats.²

All these are the opinions of various writers about the origin of the word Navayat. But before we assimilate these opinions it is necessary to have a fair criticism of some of them.

The opinions of some of the Muslim writers are conflicting. To take one instance, if according to Maulana Muhammad Bāqar Āga the community is regarded to have derived its name from Nāyaṭ, the son of Naṣar-bin-Kannāna, the origin of the term goes back much earlier than the time of the Prophet. If on the other hand the opinion of 'Alāmā Jalāluddīn Sayūtī that the community obtained its name from Abdulla Wāyaṭ is taken to be correct, the term should have originated after the time of the Prophet, for Abdulla Wāyaṭ is reported to have lived much after the Prophet's time.³ Even if Abdulla Wāyaṭ were a descendant of Nāyaṭ, his tribal name ought to have

1 Nawāb 'Aziz Jung Bahādur : *Op. Cit.*, p.28.

2 G. H. Herklots : *Op. Cit.*, p. 8.

3 Nawāb 'Aziz Jung Bahādur : *Op. Cit.*, p. 35.

been Nāyaṭ and not Wāyaṭ. Hence the statements of Bāqar Āga and Sayūti do not seem to agree with each other.

The author of *Tārīkh-un-Nawāyat*¹ has tried to reconcile the conflicting opinions of some of the Muslim writers by tracing the origin of Navayats to three different groups of Arabs merged together by force of circumstances. The three groups converge ultimately in one common ancestor, Naẓar-bin-Kannāna, the forefather of Prophet Muhammad, for which noble connection the Navayats deem themselves worthy of veneration. The members of the first group are the progeny of Nāyaṭ, the son of Naẓar-bin-Kannāna and they are called Ban-un-Naẓar or the children of Naẓar; the second group comprises the descendants of Mālik, another son of Naẓar and it is known as Shaikh Qureishi and the third group is the progeny of Fatima-zzuhra, the daughter of the Prophet.² It would thus appear that the Navayats derived their name from the group called Ban-un-Naẓar which in its turn received the name of Nāyaṭ from their progenitor Nāyaṭ the son of Naẓar-bin-Kannāna. The members of the other groups joined the first one making themselves one with Nāyaṭ s³.

The impression gained from the above is that at least some of the Muslim writers have laboured mainly to establish and emphasize the connection of the Navayats with the venerated tribe of the Prophet. Their

1 He is a Navayat himself.

2 Nawāb 'Aziz Jung Bahādur : *Op. Cit.*, pp. 28 - 29.

3 It may be pointed out that only the descendants of Fatima are entitled to call themselves Syeds and the supposition of the above three groups may easily explain away the facts that among the Navayats there are hardly a few Syed families and that for various reasons all the Navayats cannot be regarded as belonging to only one group.

explanations of the term Navayat are hardly convincing.

The explanations of the term that it means newcomers or those who came by boat or new converts are also not satisfying. There are different Muslim communities who go by the common name of Navayat¹. It is however not known whether all these communities lived together once upon a time and then separated or they were separately formed. It is quite likely that they originated in India quite separately. They are scattered in different regions and are in contact with people speaking different languages. It is therefore not possible that the word Navayat is the common corruption of the terms for "newcomer" in different languages. Nor is it probable that the people speaking different languages selected the sanskrit words, by common consent as it were, to name these newcomers.² If it were shown in which particular place and by whom the name was first given to these communities, it would perhaps be possible to say with some claim to accuracy whether or not the term originated with the meaning of newcomers. For the above reasons the suggested meanings of the term, *those who came by boat or new converts*, also cannot be regarded as being correct.

So far as the Navayats of Kanara are concerned it would appear that the term is intimately associated with their

1 See below under the sub-heading *The Different Navayat Communities*.

2 To make matters worse it is even claimed that the term is a corruption of Arabic (see p. 14, *infra*) and Persian expressions also meaning newcomer. Muhammad Nauruddin Madrasī in his book *Kashfun-nasab* says that the word Navayat was originally *naw-āmada* in Persian meaning newcomer (*naw*=new and *āmada*=come). Gradually *naw-āmada* became Navayat by constant use. (Taken from *Tārīkh-un-Nawāyat*, p. 28).

culture,¹ thereby indicating that the name originated within the community itself and the non-Navayats learnt it from them.² Furthermore, the presence of common Arab element in the different communities calling themselves by the common name Navayat would warrant the assumption that the term is of Arab origin. It is a matter of common knowledge that the earliest Arab contact with India was by Arab seamen and traders and so the male progenitors of Navayats must have been men of such occupations. With these premises the explanation about the origin of the term Navayat as given in Qāmūs and supported by Syed Sulaiman Nadvi, that it was derived from the Arabic word Nawwātī meaning sailors, being the most reasonable one will have to be accepted.³ The other explanations although ingenious seem to have been contrived to serve certain motives, ideas or prejudices.⁴

1 In their own language *Nāito* is singular and *Nāite* is plural of the term Navayat. A Navayat woman would generally refer to her husband as *mozo nāito* (my husband). Their earliest religious writings are contained in a manuscript popularly known as *Nāito Kitāb* (the Navayat book). *Nāito* is also used in the meaning of lord. In one of their songs there is the following passage: *Tōge nāito, amāge kīvro*, (referring to God, "He is the lord and we are the servants"). Examples like this could be multiplied.

2 In one of the inscriptions dated 1447 A. D. the Navayat community of Honnavar has been referred to as *Hanjamānaru* by the Jains (R. S. Panchamukhi: *Karnatak Inscriptions*, Vol. I, pp. 110-111).

3 *The Imperial Gazetteer of India* (Vol. VII, p. 371) also gives the meaning of Navayats as sailors.

4 The traditions of the Navayats do not bear out any of these explanations. None of the Navayats approached by me could give their history prior to their coming to India or state the time of the arrival of their community to India, and they could only point out to certain authorities. This could be accounted for if it were assumed that they are the progeny of Arab mariners brought up by Indian

For instance, the author of an article entitled *Qowm-i-Nawāit* (Persian)¹ resents the opinion of Qāmūs that the Navayats are a community of mariners, which opinion according to him belittles the pedigree of the community and states that in fact the Navayats have a superior ancestry, they having descended from no less a person than J'afar Tayār, the uncle and one of the companions of the Prophet.²

The Advent of Navayats in India

The question next arises: When did they come to India?

In his account of the Navayats, Wilks states that the Navayats belong to the house of Hāshem and they left the shores of Arabia owing to the persecutions of Hajjāj bin Yūsuf, the governor of Iraq under the Caliph Abd-al-Malik bin Merwan.³ This was about the end of the seventh or beginning of the eighth century A. D. His statement however is based on the *Saadut Nama* and implies that all Navayats belong to one tribe. On a closer study of the different Navayat family stocks it can be shown that among them there are people belonging to different stocks. While there may be a few among the Navayats whose ancestry can be traced to those who fled

women. Such people would naturally possess no clear traditions about their past. On the other hand, if a whole community of Arabs were to come and settle down in India they would certainly preserve some traces of their history.

1 Edited by Janab Syed Hamza Hussain in the *Bulletin of the Government Oriental Manuscripts Library Madras* (1951), Vol. IV, No. 1, pp. 121—130.

2 It is needless to state that the author referred to is himself a Navayat.

3 *History of Mysore*, (1930), Vol. I, p. 264.

from Arabia at the time of Hajjāj bin Yūsuf, not all their ancestors are of that type.

The accounts and dates given by some of the Muhammadan writers cannot be taken at their face value. In this connection the account of the emigration of Navayats given by Sayūtī and as quoted in *Tārīkh-un-Nawāyat* may be worth recounting, if not for its veracity, for the idea it gives about the other similar accounts of Muslim writers. He states that the leader of the community by name Abdullah, had the better of the Caliph of the time in some discussion. The Caliph could not bear this defeat with equanimity. His pride wounded, he ordered Abdullah to leave Medina, whereupon the latter together with his tribe went to Baghdad and settled down in a village called Wāyat, near Baghdad.

At this time the ruler of Baghdad was an adherent of the Shi'a sect, Isnā 'Ashariya and he compelled the newcomers to follow his sect. Some of them yielded and those who did not were illtreated by the ruler. As a last measure he set before his disobedient subjects two alternatives. In a message he told them that they belonged to the Sādāt family and that they should therefore respect the Caliphate of their ancestor 'Ali-ibn-Abītalib and become followers of the Isnā 'Ashariya sect, or pay the poll-tax. But they ignored either of these commands, and cursed the ruler for his unjust demands. As a result of this curse a great calamity overtook the ruler and his followers. The ruler was mortally afraid and finally condescended to ask pardon of them and told them that their prayers had changed his mind. If they were prepared to withdraw their curse he would levy on them a very light tax of one egg per member. The Navayats were glad and readily agreed to this modest demand and accordingly every one of them approached the ruler to pay his tribute of one egg. When all the eggs were collected the ruler bade them to be piled up in a separate

house. Thereupon he disclosed his intention not to accept even that token of poll-tax from them as they were the descendants of Fatima the daughter of the Prophet, and asked them to take back their respective property. Not suspecting the evil intentions of the ruler the men took back their eggs from the huge pile, each one taking one egg at random and informing the ruler that he received his property. However the ruler had adopted this strategy only to render ineffective any further curses of the Navayats, and after about three days of this incident when all of them had consumed their eggs, he opened again the old dispute. He now charged them of having committed two sins: One was that of telling a lie that each one of them had taken back his own egg while in fact it was not possible for him to select his particular egg from the pile, and the other was that of eating unlawful food because the egg that each of them ate did not strictly belong to him. And he once again ordered that either they accept his creed or pay the poll-tax. Enraged at this deceit the Navayats repeated their curse. But this time no signs appeared of their curse being answered, for God does not pay heed to the curses of sinners. Hence, helpless, the community left Baghdad and settled down at Basra. After the death of their leader Syed Abdur-Rahman Nāyati at Basra in 752 Hijri (or 1351 A. D.) they left that place and settled down at different places on the coast of India.¹

In this brief account the author gives the history of the community covering about 700 years. Some of the events related sound too trifling to be true. The death of their leader as being the cause of their emigration to India is unconvincing and the date of their emigration mentioned as 752 Hijri cannot certainly be taken as true because the Navayats had settled down in India much before that time.

¹ Nawāb 'Aziz Jung Bahādur: *Op. Cit.*, pp. 35--37.

The accounts of different writers, if true, might deal at the most with some sections or families of Navayats, for the male ancestors of Navayats seem to have been drawn from different Arab tribes and to have come to India at different times. As for their first arrival in India, if history has proved that the Arabs have been in contact with the shores of India from the earliest centuries of the Christian era, the Navayats also must have come to India about the same time.

The Different Navayat Communities

The Arab Sailors and traders who came to India have generated Muslim communities in different tracts of India and these communities go under different names. Among these at least three different communities are known by the generic name of Navayat.

In the Madras Census Report 1901, it is stated that the Navayats are "a Musalman tribe, which appears to have originally settled at Bhatkal in North Kanara, and is known on the West Coast as Bhatkali."¹ The Navayat community represented by the Muslims of Bhatkal and known as Bhatkali is restricted only to the North and South Kanara districts. These people may therefore be designated *the Navayats of Kanara*.

The second community which goes by the name of Navayat is the community of Muslims represented by the old Navayat Nawabs of Carnatic and other historical personages of the Deccan such as Chanda Saheb.² This

1 Quoted from E. Thurston: *Castes and Tribes of Southern India*, (Madras, 1909), Vol. V, p. 272.

2 Grant Duff in his *History of the Mahrattas* (1921) Vol. I, p. 435, states that Sadut-Oollah Khan, Dost Ally and Sufdur Ali, the Nawabs of Carnatic were known in the Deccan as the *Newayetah Nabobs*. The editor of that work, S. M. Edwards adds that the name Navayat is now hardly used in Madras, but the descendants and adherents of the former Carnatic dynasty which ended with Nawab Sufdur Ali in 1744 were commonly known as Navayats.

community is quite different from the so called Deccani Muslims of South India and it is scattered in places like Mysore, Hassan, Bijapur and Hyderabad. For the sake of convenience they may be termed *the Navayats of the Deccan*.

The third community under reference is the so called Konkani Muslim community found all over the coast of Konkan. The Konkani Muslims represented by two sections, the Jamātis and the Dāldis are now no longer called Navayats. But according to their traditions, in the past they were also known as Navayats, and various writers have referred to them as Navayats.¹

The different authorities dealing with Navayats, however, have failed to make any distinctions among these three communities viz., the Navayats of Kanara, the Navayats of the Deccan and the Konkani Muslims, and whenever they have had occasions of dealing with two or all the three of these communities they have treated them as if they are the integral parts of one and the same community of Navayats.² But there are

1 According to the *Gazetteer of the Bombay City and Island* (Vol. II, p. 24) the Muslims of the coast of Bombay State now styled *Konkanis* were formerly known as Naitias or Navayats. In *Hobson-Jobson* (p. 620) the Muslims of the Konkan also are referred to as Navayats. Wilks (*History of Mysore*, 1930, Vol. I, p. 264) speaks of Badruzamān Khan Koknī, the father of Hyder Ali's mother, who was a Konkani Muslim, as a respectable Navayat.

2 In *Hobson-Jobson* (p. 620) it is stated that Navayat is a name given to Muhammadans of a mixed race in the Konkan and South Kanara. It is clear that here the Konkani Muslims and the Navayats of Kanara are taken to be one community. Wilks treats the Navayats of the Deccan and the Konkani Muslims as belonging to one community. Nawāb 'Aziz Jung Bahādur in dealing with the origin, history and culture of the Navayats has made no distinctions among the three communities. The *Madras Census Report*, 1901 (as quoted in Thurston: *Op. Cit.*,

convincing indications to show that these three communities are distinct from one another in many important respects.

In *Tārīkh-un-Navāyat* (or the History of Navayats) which claims to deal with all the Navayats, the author has detailed the language, customs, manners, dress, food etc., peculiar to the community of Navayats to which he belongs, namely the Navayats of the Deccan and not the common traits of the three communities. These traits are entirely different from those of the Navayats of Kanara. So also the cultural traits of the Konkani Muslims are different from those of either of the above communities. Every one of these communities is strictly endogamous.¹

However, while each of these communities may be regarded as having more or less a distinctive culture, they are not entirely without some common traits. As a matter of fact if the basic assumption that in all the three cases they are the progenies of Arab men through Indian women is to be accepted it would be necessary to show the presence of some common traits on account of their similar origin.

Vol V, p. 272) while stating that the Navayats seem to have originally settled at Bhatkal, points out five subdivisions of the tribe called Kurēshi, Mehkeri, Chīda, Gheas and Mohāgīr. But among the Navayats of Kanara who are the representatives of the Navayats settled at Bhatkal these sub-divisions are not to be found. However, family stocks called Mehkri and Chīda are to be found among the Navayats of the Deccan who are different from the Bhatkali Navayats. Thus it would appear that in the above Census Report more than one community of Navayats are referred to.

1 I have made a detailed field study of the cultural traits of the Navayats of the Deccan and the Konkani Muslims too.

*Relationships among the Navayats,
the Moplahs and the Labbais*

Besides the three above communities there are certain other Muslim communities with Arab influence in Southern India who though not calling themselves Navayats, yet have similar origin. These are mainly the Moplahs of Malabar ¹ and the Labbais ² of the Coromandel coast. And so if the above assumption were to be correct it would be essential to establish the presence of common traits not only among the communities of Navayats but also among the Navayats, the Moplahs and the Labbais.

Although no historical evidence is forthcoming to show the connections among these communities, the resemblance between one another has drawn the attention of several writers. S. M. Edwards is of the opinion that the Konkani Muhammadans who represent one of the Navayat communities correspond closely to the Moplahs of Malabar and the Labbais of the Coromandel coast.³ Wilks has pointed out that the ancestors of the Navayats and the Labbais belong to one and the same group of Arabs. Mahmūd Khan Mahmūd Banglūrī, a Urdu writer ascribes to the Labbais and to the Moplahs one type of

1 Among the Muhammadan Moplahs there are two types: those who are the progeny of the Arab sailors who navigated between Malabar, Egypt, Arabia, the Islands of the East Indies and so on, (*Islamic Culture*, Vol. XVI, 1942, p. 412) and those that were converted locally, including the converts made by Tippu Sultan, and it is the first type that is referred to here.

2 Among the Labbais also, apart from the progeny of Arab sailors through local women, there are those who were locally converted and some Hanafi Muslims of the Deccan, and only the members of the first type are here referred to.

3 Grant Duff: *Op. Cit.*, Vol. I, p. 435.

origin.¹ If the opinions of the different writers are put together it would appear that all these communities are in a way connected with one another.

The connections among these communities could be better understood if distinctions are made between them and the main body of the Muhammadans of South India who go by the general name of Deccani or Dakhani² Muslims. The Deccani Muslims are the descendants of the armies led by the Muslim kings and Nawabs of the Deccan and those converted by them and assimilated into their fold. Their advent south of the Vindhya mountains was in 1294, in the invasion of Allā-ud-din Khilji who captured Devagiri.³ They came to this part by land and

1 Mahmūd Khan Mahmūd Banglūrī : *Tārīkh Jinūbī Hind*, p. 353. He, however, regards the Navayats as having a different type of origin. This is quite understandable. Banglūrī in this connection is referring to the Navayats of the Deccan. These Navayats are so much influenced by the customs and manners of the Hanafi Muslims of the Deccan who are of a different origin that their (Navayats') resemblance with the other Muslim communities of Arab origin cannot easily be detected. In fact others are prone to identify the Navayats of the Deccan with the Deccani Muslims. But himself being a Deccani Muslim of the Hanafi sect, Banglūrī could not but recognise the difference between the Navayats and his own community. Hence the apparent reason why he has classified the Navayats as having a different type of origin.

2 The term Dakhani has sometimes been misused to signify "rude rustic." *Dakhan* is a Hindi word meaning south or the Deccan, the latter having derived its name from its being situated in the south of India. So the Muslims of the Deccan are called the Deccani or Dakhani Muslims. But there is a Persian word *dahqān* which is used in Urdu and often wrongly pronounced as *dakhan*. The meaning of *dahqān* is a villager. The misuse of the term Dakhani has resulted in the failure to recognise the two words *dakhan* and *dahqān*.

In the Urdu language the Muslims of the Deccan are usually called Daknī. In this treatise it is proposed to refer to them as Deccani Muslims.

3 *Mysore Gazetteer*, Vol. I, p. 331.

are mainly to be found in the interior. On the other hand the communities under consideration are the descendants of Arab and to some extent Persian mariners and those converted through their influence. As against the land route in the case of the Deccani Muslims, Islam was introduced to these communities through the sea route and except in the case of the Navayats of the Deccan, their main settlements are invariably to be found near the ports or in places which served as ports in the past. In one case Islam came in the wake of conquest and in the other it followed commercial intercourse.

The most significant difference between the Deccani Muslims and the other communities referred to is in their religious persuasions. No doubt, all of them are Sunni Muslims, but whereas the Deccani Muslims are the followers of the Hanafi sect the other communities belong to the Shāfi'i sect.¹ The three communities of Navayats, and the communities of the Moplahs and the Labbais are all alike in that they belong to the Shāfi'i sect.² In fact, apart from these communities there are no other Shāfi'i Muslims in South India. Therefore while referring to these communities collectively, henceforward for brevity's sake it is proposed to call them *the Shāfi'i Muslims of South India*.

1 The Labbais seem to have been influenced and infiltrated by the Deccani Muslims and so there are some among them who are the adherents of the Hanafi sect.

2 The Muslims of South Arabia are mostly Shāfi'ites and the fact that the Indian communities referred to above also belong to this sect is a good piece of evidence of the common Arab influence in all of them.

3 The religious appellation here has no other significance than a convenient name and so in contradistinction to the Shāfi'i Muslims it is not necessary to call the Deccani Muslims *Hanafi Muslims*, as their designation is sufficiently inclusive.

The Shāfi'i Muslims have had a greater past in South India than the Deccani Muslims whose advent to this region dates back only to 1294 A. D. After the first Muslim expedition of Allā-ud-din into South India his great general Malik Kafur led a series of expeditions south of the Vindhya. In one of such expeditions in 1310-11 A. D. he went as far south as Rameswaram. This represents the first contact of the Deccani Muslims with the Coromandel coast. According to Amir Khusru, the ports near Rameswaram at that time already contained comparatively large Muhammadan population.¹ Malik Kafur, while pursuing Vira Pāṇḍya the chief of the Pāṇḍya kingdom, came to a place called Kandur (or Kaṇṇanūr) where he found some Muslims who were subjects of the Hindu ruler. In spite of their being "half-Hindus" he spared their lives as they could repeat the Kalimah.² He also found some Muslims among the troops of one of the chiefs of the Pāṇḍya country known as Pāṇḍya Guru. When the Muhammadan army arrived the chief fled from his station at Fatan, whereupon the Muslims in the service of the Hindu raja sought the protection of the Muhammadan conqueror.³ These Muslims found in the Coromandel coast by Malik Kafur were no doubt the ancestors of the modern Labbais⁴ and they represent the early Muslim colonies on the coasts of India effected through the influence of the Arab mariners.

Among the Deccani Muslims there are four principal social divisions called Syed, Shaikh, Moghal and Pathan. Syeds are those who trace their ancestral connections to

1 S. Krishnaswami Aiyangar: *South India And Her Muhammadan Invaders*, p. 101.

2 Elliot: *History of India*, Vol. III, p. 90.

3 *Ibid.*, pp. 550—51.

4 The early contact of the Labbais with the Deccani Muslims accounts for the considerable influence of the latter on the former.

the Prophet through his daughter Fatima. The Moghals claim Persian ancestry being the descendants of the Moghals who came with the Moghal conquerors of the Deccan (1686-1723).¹ The Pathans are of Afghan origin. The great majority of those who do not fall in the categories of Syed, Moghal and Pathan call themselves Shaikhs. *Shaikh* literally means an elder or chief and the title belongs strictly to three branches of the Koraish family of Arabs.² As a term of courtesy however it may be applied to any Muhammadan, especially to new converts. It would appear that this term which was once applied by way of courtesy to the newly converted Muslims of the Deccan was subsequently adopted by them as a title, and the so called Shaikhs among the Deccani Muslims are the descendants of the Indian converts to Islam. Broadly speaking the four different social divisions indicate the four different stocks or nationalities from which the population of the Deccani Muslims is derived. Among the Shāfi'ī Muslims, on the other hand, the social divisions are not based upon the above distinctions showing thereby that their ancestral stocks are not the same as those of the Deccani Muslims.³ As the nature of the social divisions itself suggests the Arab influence upon the Deccani Muslims is relatively slight, while it is predominant in the case of the Shāfi'ī Muslims.

The mother tongue of the Deccani Muslims is Urdu even though these Muslims are surrounded by people speaking quite different languages. This is because those who were responsible for their conversion and

1 Bombay Gazetteer : *Dharwar*, p. 232.

2 *Ibid.*, 231.

3 However, in keeping with the Muslim practice all over the world the distinction between Syeds and non-Syeds is maintained also among the Shāfi'ī Muslims.

some of their ancestors were Urdu speaking people who came south from North India and being conquerors they succeeded in perpetuating their language through their followers. On the other hand, the circumstances which led to the formation of the communities of Shāfi'ī Muslims of South India were different. As these communities were originally formed by the marital alliances of the Arab mariners with Indian women, the fathers did not permanently live with their children, their visits being periodical or casual. Consequently the children learnt the language of their mothers. The Arab fathers had neither the time nor incentive to teach their language to their wives or children. However it is natural that their own language should have some influence on the Indian languages of their wives and children. As the result of all these circumstances, as distinguished from the case of the Deccani Muslims who have adopted a uniform language foreign to the place of their habitation, the different communities of the Shāfi'ī Muslims have adopted or retained the local Indian languages which are of course influenced by Arabic and to some extent Persian.¹

Thus it can be shown that each one of the communities of the Shāfi'ī Muslims differs from the Deccani Muslims in some important respects more or less in the same manner. In addition to this indication of similarities among them other significant common traits may also be pointed out in order to drive the conviction still deeper.

1 Exception has to be made in the case of the Navayats of the Deccan who speak the Urdu language. But they have adopted this language because they are in intimate contact with the Deccani Muslims, Nawāb 'Aziz Jung Bahādur has commented that the Urdu that they speak is "strange" (*Tārīkh-un-Nawāyat*, p. 49.)

The most striking resemblance among these communities is the dress of their male members. In all these communities excepting the Navayats of the Deccan¹ the integral items of the male dress are a waist cloth called *Mundu* and a shirt. In the Coromandel Coast and in Malabar where the Labbais and the Moplahs are mainly to be found, *mundu* and shirt form part of the dress of most of the non-Muslim communities also. Therefore the dress of the Labbais and the Moplahs needs no explanation. But it looks odd that the same dress is also worn by the Navayats of Kanara and the Konkani Muslims who live among a people whose mode of dress is altogether different. Among the Konkani Muslims there are also some who dress like the people of the local non-Muslim communities. This only shows that *mundu* and shirt were adopted by the Konkani Muslims on account of their intimate contact with the other Shāfi'ī Muslims, notably the Moplahs and the Labbais. This is quite probable because originally the main occupation of all these communities was navigation, an occupation which brings in contact the seamen of one community with the seamen of another leading to intermarriages. However these intimate connections among these communities would be possible only if there were some strong common influence and this was supplied by the Arab element which was the same throughout. As is to be expected, the dress of the women is different in different communities.

Another important common trait which is not so striking as the dress but none the less significant is the practice of paying customarily fixed amount of *mahr* observed in all these communities.¹ Among other

1 The Navayats of the Deccan as in many other respects resemble the Deccani Muslims in their dress also.

2 I have not been able to secure confirmation on this point in the case of Labbais. But the Navayats of Deccan who differ from the other Shāfi'ī Muslims in some of their common traits, have this particular trait in common with them.

Muslims including the Deccani Muslims the amount of *mahr* or dower which a husband has to bestow upon his wife is not fixed by custom and the parties concerned are at liberty to decide its value according to their ability and expectations.¹ The practice of paying a customarily fixed amount of *mahr* by all the members of a community or a section of a community is almost unique in the Muslim world, and its observance by the different communities of the Shāfi'ī Muslims in South India would undoubtedly point to some past common influence in all of them.

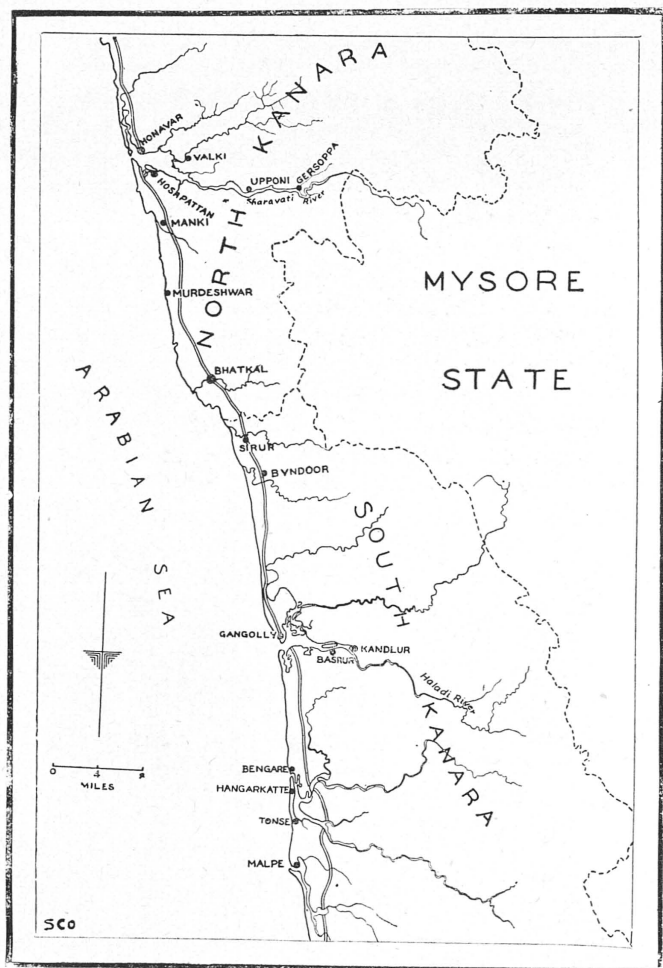
In estimating the significance of the common traits it must be recalled to mind that the differences among these communities are mainly of a regional character based upon the different types of women the early Arabs consorted with in each case. The common traits when seriously examined clearly show that they are due to the influence of males in each community. Further, the common traits are such that they cannot be attributed to independent origins in the different communities, thus strengthening the assumption that the male progenitors of the different communities must have been of one type while their female ancestors were different in the several cases. In all the communities the male progenitors must have been the Arab mariners to whom the origin of the term Navayat may also be attributed.

From the above point of view even the Moplahs and the Labbais may be called Navayats. At present only two communities, the Navayats of Kanara and the Navayats of the Deccan have retained the name Navayat. Incidentally, it would seem that these are the only two communities which have preserved the purity of their blood for a long time by jealously guarding their

¹ For a detailed consideration of this matter see the chapter on *The Navayat Life Cycle*, *infra*.

exclusive character. It would therefore be possible to suggest that only those communities which represent comparatively a large percentage of Arab element derived from a large group of Arab Sailors have retained their Arab name of Navayat and the other communities who have intermixed freely with the local people have lost the significance of their Arab ancestry, also losing the name of Navayat.

However, the subject matter of this treatise are the Navayats of Kanara and henceforward unless suitably qualified the term Navayat wherever used will refer to the Navayats of Kanara alone.



Map showing the past and present settlements of the Navayats of Kanara.

CHAPTER III

The Navayats of Kanara—Their History

The Dispersion of Navayat Settlements

The Navayats of Kanara are a community of Muslims who are found at present in small colonies ranging in population from a few hundreds to about 8,000, along the coastal areas of the North and South Kanara districts. Their colonies are restricted to the coastal strip between the Sharavati river in North Kanara and the Suvarna river in South Kanara, and are invariably situated either by the seashore mainly at the mouth of rivers, or a little interior on the banks of rivers so that in any case they have an easy access to the sea. For a number of years these people have been regarding the small coastal town of Bhatkal in North Kanara, as their centre or their headquarters.¹ Bhatkal has a population of about 8,000 Navayats who constitute the majority of the inhabitants of the place.

In North Kanara, their settlements are located at Valki, Herangadi, Upponi, Gersoppa, Manki, Murdeshvar and Bhatkal. In South Kanara they are found in Sirur, Byndoor, Gangolly, Basrur, Kandlur, Hangarkatte, Bengare, Tonse and Malpe.

These settlements have been in existence for quite a long time, and although the male members of this

¹ Members of this community, whether from Bhatkal or from any other place, while setting up hotels or other business outside their native place, sometimes designate their concerns as *Bhatkal Hotel* or *Bhatkal Cloth Shop* etc. In some places, such as Mangalore, the Navayats of Kanara are known as Bhatkalis, no matter from which place they come from.

community are scattered far and wide, especially along the west and east coasts of India and in Ceylon, where they have gone either for the purpose of trade or in search of employment, no new settlements have sprung up outside the little tract in which they are now found inhabiting. This is because the wives and children do not accompany the men when they go out of their native place.

*The Navayats of Kanara are the Descendants of the
Muslim Community of Honnavar Referred
to by Ibn Baṭṭūṭa*

The earliest description of the Navayats of Kanara is to be found in the account of Ibn Baṭṭūṭa who, in the course of his travels, also visited Kanara in 1342 A. D. and has left a brief account of the Muslim community which he came in contact with at Honnavar.¹ At present Honnavar is a small port and town and also the headquarters of a taluk of the same name in the North Kanara district, but when Ibn Baṭṭūṭa visited the place it was the headquarters of a muslim chieftain named Jamāl-ud-dīn Muḥammad son of Ḥasan and whose forces consisted of six thousand cavalry as well as infantry. The inhabitants of the place were Muslims who earned their living by maritime trade. They belonged to the Shāfiʿī sect. A pious and devout people, they were also powerful at sea and able to fight naval battles. Their women were beautiful and chaste. They did not wear sewn clothes but only unsewn garments i. e., saris and they covered their heads with one of the extremities or *pallav* of their saris. Each one put a gold ring in her nose. All of them knew the Qurʾān by heart. There were in the city thirteen schools for girls and twentythree for

¹ Ibn Baṭṭūṭa visited Honnavar four times during 1342-1343 and stayed there for brief periods.

the boys and such educational facilities that Ibn Baṭṭūṭa had not seen anywhere else.¹

At present, however, there is no Muslim community living at Honnavar and moreover Ibn Baṭṭūṭa has not mentioned the name of the community which he met at that place. Therefore it is difficult to state at the outset that the Muslims whom Ibn Baṭṭūṭa met at Honnavar were the forefathers of the present Navayats of Kanara. But the few details that he has given about them, that they belonged to the Shāfi'ī sect and earned their living by trade, and that their women wore saris with which they also covered their heads and so on, are quite applicable to the Navayats of Kanara and there is no other community in the vicinity of Honnavar which answers this description. Hence the Muslims of Honnavar referred to by Ibn Baṭṭūṭa may be provisionally taken to be the forefathers of the Navayats of Kanara until the historical connection between these two communities is fully established.²

The Navayats are not acquainted with their past history. However, there is a tradition that their male ancestors came from Arabia, and so they claim to be Arabs.³ There is also some other tradition current in a story. It is that after coming from Arabia the ancestors of these people settled down at Hospattan, a place on the bank of the river Sharavati just opposite Honnavar. There they lived in peace and contentment, carrying on their

1 Mahdi Husain : *The Rehla of Ibn Baṭṭūṭa* (India, Maldiv Islands and Ceylon), pp. 179-180. Also cf. Samuel Lee : *The Travels of Ibn Batuta*, pp. 165-166.

2 See below

3 Since in Islam kinship is traced in the male line, a person belongs to the tribe or race of his father whatever may be the race of the mother.

main occupation of trade. Eventually they became quite friendly with the ruler of the place who was a queen. As a mark of high honour and esteem which the queen had for them, she invited the leaders of the community to her palace to a feast. They were received with great honour and treated to a grand banquet befitting the royal court. The dinner over, as is the usual Hindu practice, the dining hall was smeared with cowdung. This last act on the occasion was regarded by the Navayats as a great blow to their prestige. Being ignorant of the custom, they thought that the queen had invited them for the purpose of insulting them publicly. But it was beyond their power to protest against the queen, possessed as she was with all the armed might of a kingdom. All the same they bided their time to seek their revenge. Finally they hit upon a novel idea. It was now their turn to invite the queen and her nobles to a dinner. Out of consideration for the feelings of her loyal subjects the queen accepted their invitation to their residence at Hospattan. In keeping with the dignity of the queen and the grandeur of the occasion a magnificent pendal was erected and profusely decorated. The royal party was received with due honour and entertained at a dinner far surpassing the one given by the queen. Then the long awaited moment came. When everything was over and as the royal guests were about to retire, much to the regret of the visitors, they saw the colourful pendal catching fire. With all haste the queen's men began to extinguish the burning flames. They would have saved the situation but were promptly asked by the Navayats not to exert themselves unnecessarily. It was unbelievable; and the Navayats explained to them that it was not an accident but they were just cleaning the place that was used by the guests while dining. It was true that it was an expensive method of cleaning, but they had to adopt it all the same, as it was far more clean

than using cowdung as was done in the queen's palace.¹ The Navayats felt a great relief in having paid back to the queen in her own coin. The queen on the other hand, realized the full implications of the situation. A people who tried to wreak vengeance on a trifle, she thought, would be most undependable in times of crises. Besides, they had the audacity to outrage her royal honour. She therefore decided to punish the culprits in the strictest manner possible. Accordingly, on a Friday when most of the male Navayats were assembled in their mosque to say their *jum'ah* prayers, orders were given to the soldiers to shoot at them. A great massacre followed. The whole community was drowned in consternation and the helpless survivors, mainly women and children, left the place bag and baggage and settled down in different places where they are found to-day.

The events related in the story were not beyond possibility a few centuries ago. But the facts may be realised according to the time. The story is so widely known among the Navayats that it may not be without an element of truth also. It at least gives a clue to the fact that their ancestors had emigrated from Hospattan.

While it is possible to identify the Navayats with the Muslim community of Honnavar referred to by Ibn Baṭṭūṭa, there is no historical evidence to show that they came to their present settlements directly from Honnavar. A few among them suggest that Bhatkal was the earliest settlement and that Ibn Baṭṭūṭa meant Bhatkal and not Honnavar when he was referring to the Muslim community, and that he was led to this mistake owing to the fact that in one of the accidents that he encountered,

1 Muslims do not regard cowdung in the same manner as the Hindus do but on the other hand keep away from it as they would do from human refuse.

the boat in which he was voyaging capsized destroying all his original notes and therefore later on he had to write mainly from memory¹ But there is an important inscriptional evidence which confirms beyond doubt the statement of Ibn Baṭṭūṭa and which is also a valuable link in showing how the Navayats originally found at Honnavar subsequently became scattered in different settlements.

The inscription in question is from Kaikini, Bhatkal Petha, North Kanara district and found on a hero-stone standing near a Jain Basti. "This *viragal* inscription belongs to the reign of Mahārājādhirāja Rāja-Paramēsvara Vira-Pratāpa Dēvarāya-Mahārāya, described as 'the choice lord of the city of Vijayanagara the great capital of Karnāṭa.' His feudatory Mahāpradhāna Timmaṇa Oḍeya, ruling from his capital Honnāvura, over Haiva. Tulu and Koṅkaṇa *rājyas* is said to have marched against Ummaramarakāla, the chief of the Hañjamāna merchants. Ummaramarakāla of Honnāvura is stated to have had some differences with Timmaṇa Oḍeya and consequently to have left Honnāvura and settled at Kāsarakōḍu with his followers. He then sought the assistance of Mahāmaṇḍalēsvara Saṅgirāya - Oḍeya of Nagire requesting him to arbitrate between himself (Ummaramarakāla) and Timmaṇa-Oḍeya. Saṅgirāya deputed, in this affair, his minister Saṅgava Koṭisvaranāyaka born at Kūruseyapura of Davutara-bali, together with a thousand soldiers to Kāsarakōḍu. Timmaṇa-Oḍeya, on the other hand, accompanied by the *Mūruchāvaḍi* (three stations) warriors of [Kem]guti Honnāvura, is stated to have treacherously attacked Kāsarakōḍu, and

¹ Mahdi Husain has tried to show that the alleged loss of notes is a fallacy (Mahdi Husain : Op. Cit., p. lxxv).

behaved roughly with the females of the Hañjamāna Community. Koṭis'varanāyaka, rising to the occasion, opposed bravely the king's forces (i.e., of Timmaṇa-Oḍeya) and rescued the males and females of Hañjamāna, including Ummaramarakāla, transporting them (to a safe place) by means of ferries. In the fight that ensued between himself and Timmaṇa-Oḍeya, Rājaguru Dēvaṇṇanāyaka was killed and Koṭis'varanāyaka fell bravely while driving away the warriors of the *Mūrchāvaḍi*. His younger brother Anṇunāyaka after performing his brother's funeral rites set up this hero-stone to commemorate the brave act. The vīragal was made by Māṇiyāchāri, son of Rāmāchāri." ¹ The inscription is dated May 1, 1427, A. D.

An examination of the names *Hañjamāna* and *Ummaramarakāla* would show that the Hañjamāna merchants referred to in the inscription are none other than the Navayats of Honnavar.

Interpretation of the Terms Hañjamāna and Marakāla

The term Hañjamānaru² refers to a Muslim community, for, in another inscription of about the same period the Muslims of Mangalore are called Hañjumānaru.³ But why they were so called admits of different explanations. It is possible that Muslim or Arab merchants used to organise themselves into associations or communities called *Anjuman*,⁴ and they might have been familiarly known to the local Hindus as Anjuman people. If this is conceded, it is easy to imagine that the word Anjuman

1 R. S. Panchamukhi; *Karnatak Inscriptions*, Vol. I, pp. 110-111.

2 In the Kannada language Hañjamānaru is the plural of Hañjamāna.

3 *South Indian Inscriptions* (Texts), Vol. VII, pp. 77-78, Inscription No. 182.

4 *Anjuman* is a Persian word meaning association.

became Hanjamāna or Hanjumāna in the tongue of the Kannada people. But this explanation, plausible though it is, is not without its limitations. The Navayats trace their descent to the Arabs, and the Persian influence, if at all there has been any, must have been comparatively very little. It is therefore not likely that in an important matter like designating their association or community they employed the Persian word *Anjuman*. The corresponding Arabic term is *Jam'āt*, and this in fact is the term used not only by Navayats but all Muslim communities on the west coast of India which have a strong Arab influence. The Navayat communal organization in Bhatkal is called *Muslim Jam'āt, Bhatkalla*. They no doubt use the term *Anjuman* also, but that is to designate smaller associations, such as school committees and poor relief associations, and the use of this term seems to be of later origin, after the influence of Persian and Urdu languages with which many of them are conversant at present.

The following explanation seems to be more plausible:

In olden days when the Muslim Arabs and the Hindus of Malabar were not conversant with each other's religion, the Hindus thought that the Arab Moplahs also practised a type of Hinduism, although different from theirs.¹ Consequently the Moplahs were supposed to have belonged to the fifth caste or *Anjuvarnam*² there being already four Hindu castes or varnas. Not only the Moplah-Arabs but even the foreign Jews and Christians must have been termed *Anjuvarnam*. In fact the ancient colony of the Jews at Cranganore was known as *Anjuwannam* and the Jews as a corporate body were also

1 The indigenous Moplahs themselves regarded their religion as the *Fourth Vedam*, the other three *Vedams* (Vedas) being the Heathen or Hindu, the Jewish and the Christian. (Logan : *Malabar* (1887), Vol. I, footnote on p. 191.)

2 P. Shungoony Menon : *A History of Travancore*, (1878), p. 47.

referred to as *Anjuwannam*. It is therefore quite probable that the Muslim communities connected with the Moplahs all along the coastal area must have been known at least to the Hindu ruling classes as *Anjuwannam*. In Kanara the term *Anjuwarnam* or *Anjuwannam* might have been gradually changed into *Hañjumāna* or *Hañjamāna*.

The term *Ummaramarakāla*, the name of the leader of the community is again a peculiar name. It can be separated into two parts: *Ummara* and *Marakāla*. The former is a personal name *Umar* and is of Arab origin, and the latter is a surname found among some of the Muslims of Malabar and the Coromandel coasts.

Some of the Muhammadans on the Malabar and the Coromandel coasts and in Ceylon bear the surname which is variously pronounced as *Marakkan*, *Marakkar*, *Marekar*, or *Marakkayar*. In the Coromandel coast the whole class of Muslims called by this surname is known as *Marakkayar*. As most of the Muslims of this area are called *Labbais*, sometimes the *Marakkayars* are also regarded as a sub-section of the *Labbais* although they seem to be distinct from the *Labbais* in many respects.¹

The various explanations given for the term *Marakkayar* or *Marakkar* are not convincing and it would be necessary to discuss the point in some detail here. The term *Marakkayar* is said to have originated from the Arabic word *markab*, meaning boat. According to one version it is stated that when the first Arab immigrants, the ancestors of this class, landed on the Indian shore, they were naturally asked of their whereabouts and being ignorant of the local language all that they could do was to point to their boats and pronounce the word *markab*, and as the result they became known to the Hindus as *Marakkayars*.² According to the *Madras Glossary* (iii, 474)

1 E. Thurston : *Castes and Tribes of Southern India*, Vol. V, p. 1.

2 *Ibid.*, Vol. V, p. 1.

the term is derived from the Malayalam *marakkalam*, meaning boat, and *kar*, a termination showing possession, and the same source defines it as a titular appellation of the Moplah Muhammadans on the south-west coast of India.¹ So the term as applied to the section of the Muhammadan community of the Coromandel coast and also to a class of Moplahs in the south-west coast, in both cases, is supposed to have been derived from *markab*.

In Malabar, the Moplahs of the surname Marakkar were prominent traders and owners of crafts in the past, and many of them were officers in the navy of the Zamorins of Calicut.² When after the advent of the Portuguese into Malabar the influence and the trading facilities of the Moplahs in general and the Marakkars in particular declined, most of the latter who were big and enterprising merchants are known to have migrated to other places in search of new opportunities. It is therefore probable that the Marakkayars of the Coromandel coast and Ceylon are the emigrants from Malabar. It may also be pointed out that the other Muslims living side by side with the Marakkayars of the Coromandel coast and who are called Jōnagan can be distinguished from the Marakkayars in that whereas the former are sea-fishermen and boatmen, the latter are prosperous traders having business with other countries such as Ceylon and the Straits Settlements and own most of the native coasting craft.³ Like the Moplahs the Marakkayars also belong to the Shāfi'ī sect.

According to Logan, Marakkar is derived from the Malayalam word *Mārggam*, "law" and means the doer or

1 *Hobson-Jobson*, p. 561.

2 Sheikh Zainuddeen in his work *Tuhfat-al-Mujāhidīn* has described the prominent part played by the Marakkar Moplahs in the fight put up by the Moplahs against the Portuguese.

3 E. Thurston : *Op. Cit.*, Vol. V, pp. 1-2.

follower of the law, and applied, as a title, to persons of a foreign religion like the Christians and Muhammadans.¹ The Roman Catholics of Malabar were called *Maryacar* which word has been broken into two parts, *Marya* and *Karar* by R. Drummond to mean "Mary's People".² As opined in Hobson-Jobson, *Maryacar* is the same as *Marakkar*. The use of the title among both the Moplahs and the Roman Catholics of Malabar would further point to the conclusion that in either case it must have originated from one and the same source.

It is now possible to attempt a new explanation of the term *Marakkar*. In the Malayalam language *Marakkar* is the plural form of the word *Marakkan* which is a surname found among the *Mukkuvans*, a Hindu fishermen caste of Malabar.³ It is a historical fact that many people from among the *Mukkuvans* of Malabar have been converted to Islam.⁴ Obviously, the people with whom the Arab sailors came in most intimate contact, must have been the fishermen, both on account of their occupation in the sea and their settlements by the shore. Even when the Arabs married *Mukkuvan* women, their children, in conformity with the customs of *Mukkuvans* and the other mother-right peoples of Kerala, must have adopted the surnames on their mothers' side. The fact that most of the officers of the Zamorin's navy were *Marakkars* is also significant. The Zamorin's navy consisted mainly of the Moplahs. These Moplahs were mostly converts from the *Mukkuvan* caste.⁵ When the *Mukkuvan* converts were raised to a higher social status

1 Logan : *Op. Cit.*, Vol. I, *footnote on* p. 332.

2 Hobson-Jobson, p. 561.

3 Thurston : *Op. Cit.*, Vol V, p. 112.

4 *Ibid.*, pp. 106—108.

5 See p. 7, *supra*.

of Moplabs, they must have changed the singular form of their title or caste name of Marakkan into the plural, Marakkar.¹

In places called Manjeshvar and Kumbbla in South Kanara, there is a community of Muslim fishermen. Because of their recent conversion they are known as *Pusalars* or *new Muslims*. They were converted from among the Mukkuvan caste of Hindu fishermen. These Muslims have still retained their original surname of Marakkan in the singular form itself.²

Many of the Roman Catholics of Malabar were also converted from the Mukkuvan caste and some of these people carry on their old occupation of fishing even today. Therefore the title of Marakkar which was prevalent among the Roman Catholics of Malabar could easily be attributed to their conversion from the Mukkuvan community.

Coming northwards to South Kanara there is a community of Tulu fishermen called Moger who resemble the Mukkuvans of Malabar.³ The surname of these fishermen is Marakkāla. This shows that the term Marakkāla is the Tulu or Kannada equivalent of the Malayalam term Marakkan.

From the above discussion it may be assumed that the surname Marakkāla of Umar, the leader of the

1 In Malabar, as in many other parts of India, a superior or influential person is referred to or addressed in the plural. E. g., the head of a Malabar joint family who is called Karanavan is referred to by a member of the family as Karanavar which is the plural of Karanavan. The Mukkuvans of Malabar rank low in the caste status and they are addressed in the singular.

2 Nowadays there is a tendency among them not to mention their surname since the same surname is also found among the Hindu Mukkuvans who are their immediate neighbours.

3 E. Thurston : *Op. Cit* , Vol. V, pp. 67 and 107.

Hañjamāna merchants mentioned in the Kaikini inscription, is similar to the Moplah surnames of Marakkan and Marakkar prevalent in Malabar and that Ummaramarakāla may be taken to be a Muslim name.

*The Emigration of Navayats from Honnavar
and Hospattan*

Now it is clear that the Muslim community which was seen by Ibn Baṭṭūṭa at Honnavar, subsequently left the place on account of some differences between its leader Ummaramarakāla and the local chieftain Timmaṇa-Oḍeya, and settled down at Kasarakod. In which year exactly they left Honnavar is difficult to determine, but it must have been just a few years before 1427 A. D., when the fight between Timmaṇa-Oḍeya and them took place at Kasarakod, since the same leaders were connected with both the incidents. Again, in the inscription found at Kodyalbail, Mangalore in the South Kanara district,¹ it is stated that the same Timmaṇa-Oḍeya who was ruling this area also, for some unknown reason attacked the Muslims of the place and destroyed their mosques. This was in the year 1419 A. D. It is therefore possible to suggest that he also harassed the Muslim community of Honnavar at the same time, probably destroying all their buildings, for at present there is no trace left of a Muslim community ever having settled there.

Kasarakod, where the Muslims from Honnavar are stated to have settled down after leaving that town, is a place on the other bank of the Sharavati creek, opposite Honnavar. It is said that the area round about Kasarakod has undergone much change on account of its situation on the seashore at the mouth of the river and consequent shifting of sand. However this may be, there is no evidence to show that a Muslim community ever lived in the place now known as Kasarakod.

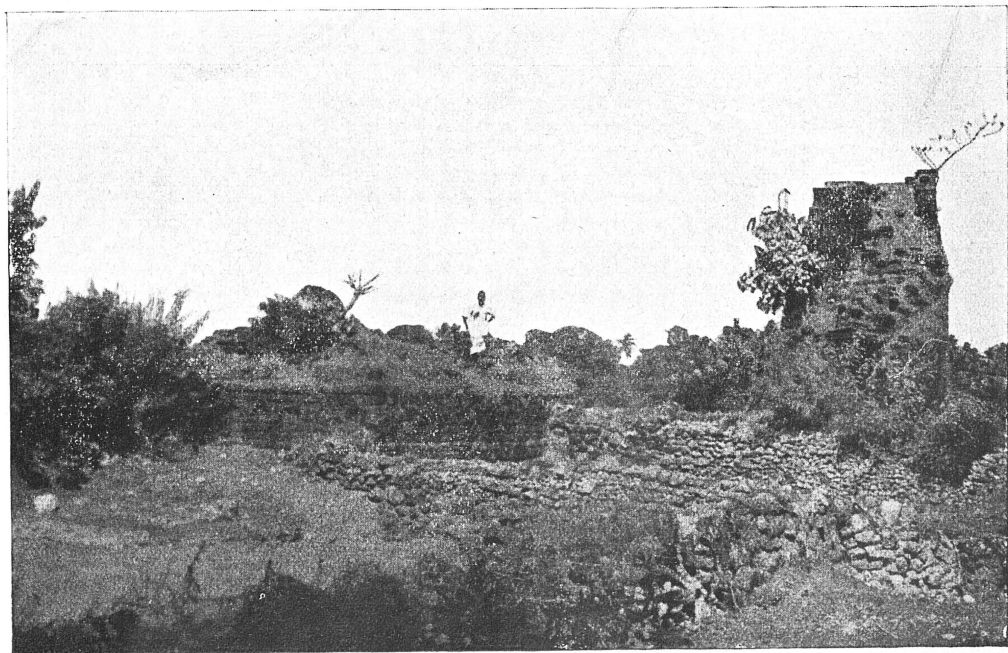
¹ See footnote 3 on p. 41, *supra*.

There is, however, a village adjoining Kasarakod and called Hospattan where there is ample material to show that once upon a time it was a settlement of a Muslim community. The place is full of debris consisting of broken stones piled up at several places. At the centre there is a foundation of a ruined mosque by the side of which there is a minaret about 20 feet high and with a rounded stone staircase from its inside. Leading to the area of the mosque there are wide passages¹ which must have served as streets in the past. The fields on either side of these passages are on a higher level. This would indicate that houses were built on either side of the streets. The several heaps of rubble collected at various places would testify to the existence of a large number of houses. The whole area round about the ruined mosque is interspersed with the shrubs of *Vitex Negundo* (five-leaved Chaste Tree) which are reminiscent of a Navayat burying ground. The nearby hill is known to the Navayats as *Yellaryā Gudo* or the mound of virgins, which is a typical Navayat expression.² According to the information of both the inhabitants of the village and the Navayats themselves, Navayats from various places used to visit this village in the past, and the place is still considered sacred by them. The village is now inhabited almost entirely by a caste of people called Sherugars who are known to have migrated from Goa and were in the military service of the local kings.

Although at present not a single Navayat or Muslim is residing at Hospattan, it is beyond doubt that

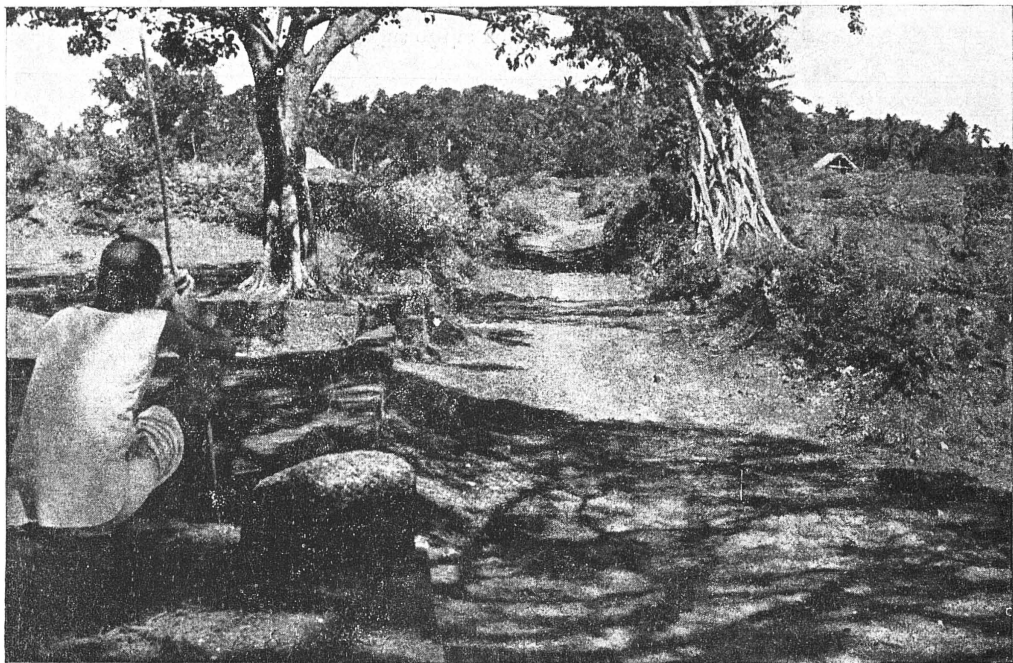
1 Such passages are not to be met with in any of the other nearby villages.

2 According to a tradition of the Navayats two virgins died by falling from the cliff of the hill. (This information was supplied by Puttur Hasan Saheb, a Navayat from Valki now residing at Mangalore.)



Ruins of the mosque at Hospattan.

(The foundation of the mosque is at the left and the minaret at the right.)



A section of the ruins at Hospattan.
(A passage can be seen at the centre.)

at one time the place had a Navayat settlement. It is likely that formerly Kasarakod represented a much wider area than it does today, and that the place Hospattan was included in its range. The very name Hospattan suggests that it is a new name. It is a compound of two words, *hosa* and *pattana*, meaning (in Kannada) a new port or town. This new port or town apparently came into being after the Muslim merchants settled in that place. Therefore the place Kasarakod mentioned in the inscription may be treated as actually referring to Hospattan which name came into being only subsequently.

Thus it is clear that the Navayat community which had first settled down at Honnavar migrated subsequently to Hospattan. It is however not clear when it finally migrated from Hospattan. Although there is inscriptional evidence of the violent attack on them by Timmana-Oḍeya in 1427 A. D., it is hardly likely that all of them abandoned Hospattan on that occasion. From the remains and traditions grown about Hospattan it would appear that such a township could not have been formed in those days within so short a time as between the departure of the Navayats from Honnavar possibly in 1419 A. D., and the attack on them in 1427 A. D. Moreover, the reference to the queen and other events related in the traditional story regarding their final emigration do not agree with the details of the attack in 1427 A. D.

It is evident that only a very grave crisis could have compelled the entire community of people to move from their place, surrendering their houses and property which they must have built up at great cost and sacrifice. The calamity may have been a great epidemic such as cholera or smallpox or it may have been an attack by the enemy. The mere prospect of better trade would hardly

have induced the Navayats to take such a step, and this, in spite of the fact that trade was their main occupation. Trade is still their main occupation and although most of their business is carried on in places far removed from their localities, they are not in the habit of shifting their families to the places of their business. On the other hand there is already a clear instance of the Navayats' having vacated their locality at Honnavar owing to differences with the local chieftain. Such situations may have been common at that time. Barros, in his *Decadas* mentions that in 1469 the Moors of Baticala (the Navayats of Bhatkal) incurred the displeasure of the Vijayanagar Emperor who, in consequence, ordered their massacre in which 10,000 Muhammadans are said to have perished.¹ The massacre of 10,000 people from their small community would undoubtedly unnerve the Navayats and a calamity of this magnitude would be sufficient to impel the remainder of the community to leave the place. However, there is no corroboration of this incident from other sources. It may well be that it occurred at Hospattan itself and is the same calamity as the one referred to in the Navayat story. Only the circumstances leading to the massacre are different in the story from those found in the account of Barros. Although the massacre was ordered by the Vijayanagar king, it must have been executed by the chieftain of Gersoppa who was ruling the area under the Vijayanagar king. And it is well known that the rulers of Gersoppa for many generations about that time were very often women.² These historical details, even though they have yet to be fully established, agree with some of the items mentioned in the traditional story of the Navayats.

1 *Journal of the Bombay Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society* (New Series) Vol. XV, p. 37.

2 Bombay District Gazetteer: *Kanara*, Pt. II, p. 283.

Their Other Early Settlements

It is quite likely that while the main body of the Navayats of Kanara was at Honnavar and later at Hospattan, a few of them were staying in other places also, chief among them being Bhatkal,¹ where they had settled down for the purpose of trade. But according to their traditions most of the Navayats now settled in different parts of Kanara, came from Hospattan. At present the Navayats of different places form themselves into separate endogamous communities with very little contact with one another. Yet their language, customs and manners are practically one and the same. This points to the conclusion that originally most of these people i. e., their ancestors, lived in one place from where they inherited their common culture. There are, no doubt, some local variations, but these are owing to the separate evolution of the same culture in different places.

Since Bhatkal is at the moment the biggest settlement of the Navayats and the term is often associated with the community, it would be relevant to dwell upon some details of the place. A section of the Navayat community must have lived here from very early times. There are now altogether eight mosques in this town. By local tradition the oldest mosque is the one called Gausia Masjid. As the number of people increased, the mosque now known as Jāmi' Masjid Qadeem was built to accommodate all the male members of the community during the *Jum'ah* prayers on Fridays.

1 In 1321 A. D., Friar Jordanus found a Saracen king at *Batigala* i. e. Bhatkal (Bombay District Gazetteer: *Kanara*, Pt. II, p. 271). However, scholars are not sure whether Friar Jordanus visited Bhatkal at all and whether the *Batigala* mentioned by him refers to Bhatkal or some other place.

This is the second oldest mosque. While the date of building of the Gausia Masjid is not known, that of the Jāmi' Masjid Qadeem is found on an inscription in the mosque. It is reported that this mosque has been renovated thrice, the last time about 1940 A. D. At present the inscription is on a marble slab which is fixed to one of the front pillars of the mosque.¹ The inscription is written in Persian and is dated 851 Hijri (or 1447 A. D.)²

The origin of the name Bhatkal is not clear. The old name for Bhatkal was Manipura.³ As early as 6th century A. D., Kosmos Indikopleustes mentions that horses were brought from Persia to Ceylon through Manipura. At present Bhatkal is also locally known as Susagadi. The origin of the word Bhatkal has been attributed by some to Marathi influence. Deshabandhu M. Shanker Linge Gowda has stated that when the military commanders belonging to the Patwardhan family under Peshwas used to invade and plunder the Manipura kingdom off and on, they named Manipura *Vatkul*, meaning hills round the town, because of the fact that the Manipura fort was lying in a valley encircled by hills. *Vatkul* has now become Bhatkal in colloquial language.⁴

1 According to the information of the person who supervised the renovation of the building last time, the words of the inscription were formerly found on a paper which was framed, and because the paper was in a very bad condition, for fear of the writing being destroyed, he had those words inscribed in a marble slab.

2 Its English translation is as follows : "This building has been constructed only for the purpose of reciting prayers and learning the teachings of Prophet Muhammad."

3 R. S. Panchamukhi : *Annual Report on Kannada Research in Bombay Province (1939-'40)*, p. 81.

4 *Report on Bhatkal Harbour Project (1944, unpublished.)*

A more plausible explanation for the origin of the term may be suggested. In one of the oldest manuscripts called *Hazā Kitāb Ahkām-ul-Islām*¹ written in the language of the Navayats by Ākhūn Seedy Muhammad in 1100 A. H. (or 1688 A. D.),² the author mentions the name of his native place as Ābādaqilla (أبادقل). The literal meaning of Ābādaqilla is a populated or inhabited summit of a hill. It is possible that originally the place was called Ābādaqilla on account of a settlement established there on the top of a hill. However, at present the town is situated in a valley and there are no clear indications that there was once a colony of people settled on the top of any hill while the remnants of a fort on the top of a hill are there. But the word itself is susceptible of alteration and it is quite likely that initially it was Ābādaqill'a (أبادقلع) meaning inhabited fort and subsequently changed into Ābādaqilla and finally Bhatkal.³ If it meant an inhabited fort there is no reason to doubt that the town derived its name because of a fort there which was inhabited by people. Obviously such a name could have been applied only by Arabs or the male progenitors of the Navayats who have been associated with that place from a very long time.

1 The manuscript is popularly known as *Nāto Kitāb* (see footnote on p. 19, *supra*).

2 The date is given in another published work entitled *Zukhairatu-ṣṣibyān* (p. 3).

3 The Navayats call the place Bhatkala. The real Arabic form of the word قلع (qill'a) seems to be قلع which according to F. Steingass: *The students' Arabic-English Dictionary* (p. 984) is pronounced qal'a. It means a castle or fort (especially on the top of a mountain). Originally, therefore, the term for Bhatkal might have been Ābādaqal'a.

Prof. G. M. Moraes has pointed out two more early settlements of the Navayats, one at Goa in the 11th century and the other at Barkur in South Kanara, the capital of the Ālupas.¹ But the subsequent whereabouts of these colonies are not known. It may however be stated that on the whole the Navayats of Kanara are the descendants of the Muslim community of Honnavar described by Ibn Baṭṭūṭa.

Their Unrecorded Past

The history of the Navayats of Kanara has so far been traced only from the fourteenth century. Doubtless they had been in existence in this area prior to this period. But there is no historical material available to delineate their earlier past and the formation of community.

However, the foundation of this community also, as in the case of all other communities of Shāfi'ī muslims on the coasts of India, was laid by Arab and, to some extent, Persian mariners consorting with local Indian women. In addition to this assumption a study of the culture of the community throws further light on its origin. There are a number of peculiar cultural traits among these people which they could not have borrowed from any other people but the Moplahs of Malabar. The name Ummara-Marakāla, the leader of the Navayats of Honnavar, mentioned in the Kaikini inscription of 1447, associates the man with the Marakkar Moplahs of Malabar who were noted for their commercial enterprise and naval exploits.

It is likely that owing to the special facilities that were obtainable at Malabar, the Arab traders first established their colonies there and from there carried on their trade with other convenient places. Enterprising merchants would settle down for longer periods at places

¹ *Journal of the Bombay Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society* (New Series), Vol. XV, p. 35.

advantageous to their trade. Conditions being what they were in the past, these temporary settlements would eventually develop into small colonies. These colonies would also be patronised by Muslim merchants coming directly from Arabia and Persia. Therefore from the available data, both historical and sociological, and from the characteristic physical features¹ of the Navayats of Kanara, it may be stated that their male Arab and Persian ancestors came by the way of Malabar as well as directly from Arabia and Persia. These men married or consorted with the local Indian women whose progeny the Navayats are.

It is now relevant to ask: Who were these local Indian women whom the male progenitors of the Navayats married?

The Untenability of The View That Their Female Ancestors were Jain Women of Kanara.

Several persons entertain the notion that this community resulted in the unions of Arab men with Jain Women of Kanara.² Especially in the 15th and the 16th centuries there were a number of Jain families including ruling dynasties in Kanara, and the Jain community is now practically non-existent in this area. Therefore, people who have not examined the past history of Kanara easily deduce that the Arabs who came to this area for the purpose of trade and who did not bring their women along with them, destroyed the Jain males on some pretext or other and took the Jain females to be their consorts. They are further strengthened in their belief

¹ As compared with the other communities of the locality the Navayats look to be a distinct group in point of physical appearance. Some of their noteworthy physical features are: red-brown eyes and prominent eyebrows, small ears, dark brown hair and short thin lips.

² Also cf. R. S. Panchamukhi: *Op. Cit.*, p. 30

by the facts that the Navayats in spite of their being Muslims of Arab descent have retained in their culture many local Indian traits and that at Bhatkal they do not take their food after sunset, which latter is a typical Jain practice.

At the time of Ibn Baṭṭūṭa or the beginning of the 14th century, the Navayats had organised themselves into a stable community at Honnavar. Ibn Baṭṭūṭa testifies to the character of their men and the chastity of their women, to their piety and education, which shows that if at all the Arabs, the male progenitors of Navayats, had promiscuous unions with the local women, they must have had them some generations earlier, and that is before the fourteenth century. But the Jains were prospering in this region even in the 15th and 16th centuries. Therefore it cannot be said that the community of Navayats sprung up from the ruins of the Jain families. On the other hand, the Navayats have enjoyed the patronage of the Jain chiefs even under the most trying circumstances, so much so that when in 1427 A. D., they were in the danger of being completely destroyed, it was the Jain chief of Nagire who came to their rescue.

Still it is possible to argue that the Navayats destroyed the Jain community at a later stage and married the Jain women who, in course of time, influenced their culture. This argument also is not sound. It is true that the main colony of the Navayats today is to be found in the very midst of the ruins of the Jain Bastis in Bhatkal and quite possibly the Navayats have utilized some stones and other materials from the ruins for their own buildings. But this is not sufficient evidence to prove that the Navayats have been the cause of the ruin of the Jain community of Bhatkal or, for that matter, of Kanara. So far as Bhatkal is concerned, even before the final death blow was delivered to the Jain community of Kanara as a whole, the territory of the

queen of Bhatkal was laid waste with fire and sword by the Portuguese Viceroy DeSouza in 1542 A. D., because the queen had withheld her tribute.¹ This damage must have been subsequently made good by the queen. In spite of the presence of the Portuguese, not to speak of the Navayats, the Jain chiefs both in North and South Kanara were able to hold their own for a time. It was however given to Venkatappa Naik, the chief of Bednur to sound their death knell. In the early years of the 17th century, this chief, helped by a revolt of the Halepaiks, attacked and defeated the queen Baira Devi of Bhatkal and Gersoppa. As a result of this fight all the Jains of North Kanara are said to have perished.² Other natural causes also might have contributed towards the extinction of the Jain community from its strongholds in North Kanara. But there is no instance in history to show that the Navayats have done the least harm to the community which had promoted their interests for a long time.

However, the possibility of the Navayats' marrying some Jain women such as those who were rendered helpless by being war widows or some other circumstances cannot altogether be ruled out. But the number of such women must have been negligible, and the particular custom of eating before sunset observed by the Navayats of Bhatkal cannot be attributed to their influence. If the female ancestors of the community were responsible for this custom, the same persons should have cast their influence over the other cultural elements also, notably the language of the community. Most of the Indian traits of the Navayat culture are common among many of the local Indian communities and so they cannot definitely be ascribed to Jain influence.

1 Bombay District Gazetteer: *Kanara*, Pt. II, p. 114.

2 *Ibid.*, pp. 121-122.

The language of the Navayats is Konkani with a strong blend of Arabic and Persian words and idioms.¹ To the extent that it is a mixture of Indian and foreign languages, the influence of the former predominating, it resembles the languages of the other Shāfi'i Muslim communities of the west and east coasts of India, such as the Konkani Muslims, the Moplahs and the Labbais. In every case the Indian influence is due to the language of the female Progenitors. On the same analogy, the Konkani part of the language of Navayats must be regarded as being due to the influence of their female ancestors. Were it not the language of their progenitors, there was no incentive whether economic, political or religious, for them to adopt the Konkani language. This leads to the conclusion that the Arab ancestors of the Navayats consorted mostly with Konkani speaking women.

Now, the Jains of Kanara were formerly the inhabitants of the interior of Karnatak and who after having met with a crushing blow at the rise of the Viras'aiva and Vaishnava reformers in the 12th and the 13th centuries A. D., were relegated to this coastal tract.² Their language was Kannada which they did not ever give up. If the Arabs had married Jain women, the language of their descendants could not but have been markedly influenced by Kannada. But the influence of Kannada on the language of the Navayats is negligible. This fact alone is sufficient to negative the assumption that the female ancestors of Navayats belonged to the Jain community.

1 Some specimens of the language of the Navayats are given in *Appendix A*.

2 R. S. Panchamukhi: *Op. Cit.*, p. 84.

The Jain custom of eating before sunset is no doubt found among Navayats even today, but it is prevalent only in Bhatkal. It is unheard of in the several other settlements — except perhaps in Byndoor where it is reported to have prevailed some years ago — although the main cultural elements of Navayats of all these places are practically the same. Therefore it may be presumed that the custom originated only in Bhatkal where the Navayats were in long and intimate contact with the Jains from whom they must have adopted the practice for local convenience. The Navayats of Byndoor are closely connected with and related to those of Bhatkal and intermarriages between them are common. So, if at all the custom was practised at Byndoor it may have been borrowed from Bhatkal.

Therefore the one thing clear about the female ancestors of the Navayats of Kanara is that they belonged to a community speaking a Konkani dialect. A careful and detailed study of the social customs of the Navayats may enable one to identify even this community. But the final conclusion will have to be deferred until all the Konkani speaking communities of Kanara and of Konkan coast are studied in detail.

CHAPTER IV

Habitat, Settlements and Occupation

Geographical Environment

Kanara, the region of the Navayats, is situated on the west coast of South India. It is divided into two administrative districts — North Kanara which comes under the Bombay State and South Kanara which forms part of the Madras State. However, geographically both the districts have more or less the same type of environment and the whole of Kanara may be treated as one unit. It is bounded on the north by Belgaum District and the territory of Goa, on the east by Dharwar District, Mysore State and Coorg, on the south by malabar and on the west by the Arabian Sea. The Western Ghats run from north to south occupying most of the eastern area and leaving a narrow strip of coastal plain on the western part. The whole breadth of the coastal plain from west to east is not more than twentyfive miles and in some places not more than five miles. Its height varies from 200 to 400 feet near the coast to 600 feet towards the Ghats. The Ghats themselves rise from 2500 to 6000 feet high. They are crossed by several passes which connect the plateau of the Deccan with the lowlands of Kanara. Between the plain and the Ghats there is a table-land which is full of mountain ranges running down from the Ghats.

There are a number of parallel streams draining the land. They take their source in the Western Ghats and flow into the Arabian Sea. As they intersect the coastal plain which is the most thickly populated area in the territory, the free movement of population has been greatly impeded. However, most of the bigger rivers are navigable and small boats can ply about 15 to 25

miles upstream. In the past these rivers were highways for small sailing ships. But they are silted time after time limiting their navigable capacity.

The coastline of Kanara like the other parts of the west coast of India has promoted oceanic and coasting trade through its ports. Most of the creeks and estuaries capable of providing safe anchorage to sailing ships had ports in the past. Some of the deeper rivers provided ports even many miles into the interior. These ports had a vast and rich hinterland including not only the area of Kanara round about them but also places in the Deccan Plateau beyond the Western Ghats. The fortunes of these ports, however, have undergone a great change due to alterations in the physical conditions, improvement in navigation and many historical factors. The silting up of the rivers and their estuaries and the development of sand bars across their mouths and in the interior, have rendered unsuitable a number of ports both estuarine and of the interior of the rivers. Few of the remaining ports can provide deep anchorage facilities for the larger sailing ships of the present day. Since the oceanic trade is carried almost entirely by the larger ships the undeveloped ports of Kanara afford little facility for such enterprise. The political changes have deprived the hinterland of these ports and the development of motor and railroad traffic has considerably reduced the waterborne trade itself. Thus, the once busy ports of Kanara today lie neglected and some even abandoned. A few of them are still functioning, but carrying on only coasting trade.¹

In considering the habitat of the Navayats who are a commercial people, the natural facilities for trade

1 Cf. Hunter : *Imperial Gazetteer of India*, Vol. VII pp. 368-370 & 375-377, and C. D. Deshpande : *Western India* (Dharwar, 1948), p. 32.

provided by the geographical environment of Kanara have to be kept in view. Their settlements are invariably situated either by the seashore or on the banks of rivers, that is, in places which either serve as ports or served as ports in the past and which were commercial centres. The settlements came into being when the ports were in operation and hummed with commercial activity. However, the importance of most of these places has diminished, in some cases even gone away completely. But the Navayats are not accustomed to shift their families unless under calamitous circumstances. Therefore their settlements have continued although the conditions which brought them into existence have disappeared.

The maritime activity of the Navayats has long since come to a standstill. As in the case of all other Muslim communities on the west coast, their sea trade received a great setback after the advent of the Portuguese in India. Ever since, they have been unable to regain their lost occupation. Trade is still their main occupation, but it is divorced from all maritime activity. Thus their geographical setting which was originally intimately connected with their occupation has now lost its significance. Their settlements today serve the only purpose of providing residential accommodation.

The Navayat Settlements

In the various places where the Navayats have settled down, they occupy compact areas called *Navayat-keris*. The *Navayat-keris* are segregated from the residences of other communities even including the non-Navayat Muslims. Generally the Navayat settlements are situated closer to the seashore or the river banks than the houses of other communities excepting those of fishermen. They have a number of streets usually parallel or perpendicular to the seashore or river banks.

Houses and Household Equipment

The houses of Navayats are peculiarly constructed. They are built wall to wall on either side of narrow streets or lanes and are very narrow and disproportionately long. The broadest houses are about 22 feet wide and are from 150 to 200 feet in length. An average house is about 18 feet wide and 70 feet long. Some houses are as narrow as six feet. From behind the house there is a passage to all the houses in the street and it is intended for the use of the womenfolk. The entrance to the house is directly from the street or the lane in front.

Almost all the houses are built in the same fashion, each house having four principal rooms and each room having its own specific uses. The first room as one enters the house is called *vasro* and is meant mainly for the use of male members of the house and male guests and visitors. The second room is called *ghar*.¹ Ceremonial functions are held in this room which is of equal importance to males and females, both family members and guests.² The third room is called *mazghar*. On either side of the *mazghar* there are two rooms which are used as bedrooms for married couples, and usually allotted to such of the married daughters who have not yet been taken to the houses of their husbands. The fourth and last room is called *kood*. Ordinarily a part of this room is utilized for cooking and the other portion is occupied by the women during daytime. A swinging cot is hung in this room for the recreation of women and children.

The doors of these rooms are in the middle in a straight line so that any sound made in the first room or

1 The name for the whole house also is *ghar*.

2 During functions the males and females do not mix together and each party has to take its own turn.

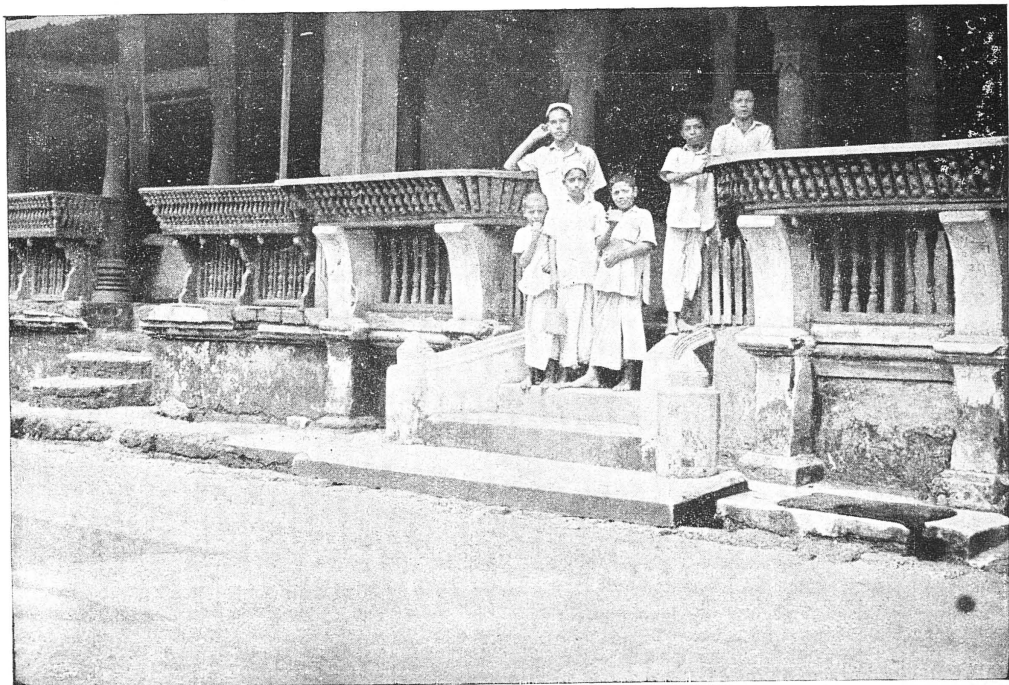
from the outside is audible to the womenfolk in the innermost room. Since the women have to observe purdah they should be enabled to know from inside what takes place in the outermost room where, if they come out, they are liable to be exposed to the public gaze. In the wider houses the entrance of the house from the lane is towards one of the sides so that when the entrance door is open the doors of the inner rooms are not visible to the public view thus enabling the womenfolk inside to move about freely. Generally the entrance door and the door leading from the *vasro* to the *ghar* are provided with bamboo curtains.¹ In front of the house and at its back are two narrow verandahs called *downi*. The front verandah is inclosed with a corbelled railing which has a seating arrangement and which is called *cascat*.

There are altogether four windows in the entire house, two on the front wall on either side of the entrance and the other two on the back wall. Since the houses are built wall to wall no windows can be built in the side walls.² The house, therefore, by its very construction is ill-ventilated. Moreover, as the front windows face the dusty lanes or streets they cannot supply pure air and hence they are generally kept closed. The inner rooms are dark even during the brightest part of the day.

In a typical house a part of the first room (*vasro*) projects into the verandah (*downi*) and a big rectangular wooden box of the dimensions of a cot is placed so as to fit exactly into the projection. The box is used for

1 The curtains are provided mainly for the sake of women. Since the male visitors are not allowed to go inside beyond the *vasro* the other doors do not require to be covered.

2 Even when the side walls are not common to other houses, still windows are not kept for privacy of women.



Entrances to Navayat houses (old type). Two of them can be seen in the picture.



A recently constructed Navayat house.

storing up provisions as well as for sleeping. This portion of the house with the wooden box is called *hirnolo*.

In the walls are wall cup-boards and niches, the latter being used for keeping incense-burners, lamps and small articles.

At the entrance of the house a rope is hung from the roof for the support of persons going up or down the floor of the house which is elevated from the street in front. This support is called *dhumso*.

The houses of rich people have two or even three storeys. The second and third storeys are called *mally*. The third storey is not used for living purposes, but utilized for storing up provisions and other articles not required for daily use. Two staircases lead up to the second storey, one from the first room and the other from the last one. This storey also is generally divided into four rooms corresponding to the rooms in the first storey and these rooms are called *vasro-mally*, *ghar-mally*, *mazghar-mally* and *kood-mally*, respectively from the front to the back rooms. The richer class houses have also outhouses called *ghōtō*,¹ meant exclusively for the use of women. In such cases the kitchen and the bathroom are attached to the outhouse.

The open space beyond the *kood* or between the *kood* and the *ghōtō* is called *angan*. The well is situated in this place and every house has its own well. The space beyond the *angan* or behind the outhouse is called *porsu*. This area is used for a kitchen garden or rearing poultry according to the convenience available. The lavatory is situated in this place.

1 In the Konkani language *ghoto* means cattle shed. But the Navayats do not keep cattle. It is likely that for want of a suitable name they have adopted the name of *ghōtō* for their outhouse.

Most of the houses are very old. Although a few new houses are built from time to time, especially at Bhatkal, the number of such houses falls far short of the requirements of the population. Various difficulties come in the way of building an adequate number of new houses. Within the settlements themselves all available space is already utilized for building purposes and there is no place left for new houses. Since the occupants are mostly women and children there is a reluctance to live in houses outside the *Navayat-keris*.¹ The man of the family, being usually away, is unable to supervise the work of construction and the woman with her strict observance of *pardah* is equally unable to do this. Most people cannot afford to build new houses and as a rule houses are not built by the richer people for the purpose of letting out. So for one reason or another the housing problem has become very acute in almost all of the Navayat settlements. Consequently each house accommodates about two to six families and instances are not wanting where a house is being occupied by as many as ten or twelve families. In Bhatkal about 8000 Navayats occupy an incredibly small area.

In recent years some of the rich Navayats of Bhatkal have built palatial houses in modern style. Although suitable arrangements have been made for the privacy of their womenfolk, these houses differ entirely from the old type of houses. At present the tendency is to have houses in separate compounds.

As are the houses which are built according to a common pattern, so is the household equipment, every

¹ At Bhatkal the Navayats have secured a plot outside the town for building up a new colony. But the people are not coming forward to put up new houses as their womenfolk are not willing to leave their present settlement.

household having more or less the same set of essential furniture and utensils. Notable among these are the rectangular wooden box in the *hirnolo*,¹ one or two double cots kept in the second room (*ghar*) or the siderooms of *mazghar*, one or two swinging cots (*hullo*), one hung in the fourth room and the other in the second room², two types of brass oil lamps, one type with a stand (*divo*) and the other to be hung (*chirāgh*),³ wash basins (*thusth*), kettles for pouring water, spittoons (*peekdāni*), incense-burners (*komjan-matṭay*) and rose-water bottles (*gulāb-dān*). Most of the cooking utensils and eating plates are made of copper. Ordinary rice and fish dishes are cooked in earthen pots. The eating copper plates called *tāla*⁴ are being gradually replaced by crockery. All the same, copper vessels and utensils are very prominent in the Navayat household.

Occupation and Economy

The main occupation of the Navayats is trade and hotel business. Dealing in handloom cloth all over the west coast of India was practically the monopoly of these people until recent times and even now they have a big share in this trade. Although there are some very rich merchants like Khan Bahadur Syed Abubakar Maulana of Bhatkal who owns some Millions, none of them have made a mark in manufacturing industries. A

1 Wherever there is no projection of *vasro* into the *dawni* the box is kept on one of the sides of *vasro*.

2 If there is only one swinging cot it is generally hung in the fourth room.

3 Only cocoanut and pinnay (*Calophyllum inophyllum*) oils are used for burning lamps.

4 Ibn Battūta also has made a reference to *tālam* which he noticed at Honnavar—Mahdi Husaīn : *The Rehla of Ibn Battūta*, p. 180.

few of them used to run some handloom factories in places like Mangalore, but they have given up their management now. A large number own hotels at various places. They have not taken to agriculture in spite of the fact that many of them own lands round about their settlements.¹

The trade of the Navayats, however, is not centred round their settlements and even in Bhatkal where they constitute a large proportion of the total population, the bulk of the local business is in the hands of non-Navayats. Their own business is spread far and wide in places like Karachi, Bombay, Madras, Colombo, Bangalore, Mysore, Calicut, Tellichery, Mercara, and other towns, especially in the west coast of India.

While many of them have their own shops and hotels the majority work as employees. But almost all of these employees are engaged in the concerns of Navayats themselves. The Navayat merchants in order to help their own people and also because of their trustworthiness usually employ men of their own community. Since their business is mostly located outside their native places the merchants have very often to leave their concerns solely in charge of their employees when going to their native places. It is therefore essential that a merchant should have one or two employees in whom he can repose his confidence. Usually brothers manage their business jointly so that at least one brother may be present at the business place when the others are away. As employees relatives are preferred to non-relatives and Navayats to non-Navayats. It is admitted by all people who have had anything to do with the Navayats that their integrity in business relations is

1 I have come across a few Navayats at Herangadi in the North Kanara district, who supervise the cultivation of their own lands. But they do not themselves do the work in the fields and engage for the purpose labourers from other communities.

irreproachable. An employee will not let down his master and one merchant will not try to cheat another even though the other happens to belong to a different community.

Persons employed in Government service are very few. Knowledge of English is necessary for such service. The Navayats have not taken advantage of English education and they are not keen on Government service. The children of persons doing business are trained for business careers alone, and others find ready employment under merchants of their own community.

As the largest proportion of the income of the Navayats is derived from outside their localities, their families are always dependent upon remittances from their menfolk outside. Some of them have a fluctuating income. Their families do not sometimes receive remittances for months together and have to pass many anxious days. However, they get succour from one source or another and are not left to starve.¹ The Navayats being a compact group the condition of a family in distress becomes known and help is given without being asked for. Navayats are a religious minded people and the well-to-do among them take advantage of such opportunities to give assistance to the needy.² Their social organization is such that when families are in need the responsibility for their maintenance is shared by relatives like the maternal uncle or maternal grandfather. Such help is even regarded obligatory.³

1 I have neither come across any Navayat beggar nor heard of any such case.

2 Some rich merchants pay money regularly every month to their poor relations.

3 If under dire necessity a woman is compelled to approach another who is not related to her, she will accept any financial assistance only as a loan even though the person who gives is in a position to

All the same, the poor people are finding it increasingly difficult to make both ends meet and there is a general complaint that the rich persons are now not so charitably inclined as they used to be.

The economic distress of the poor is aggravated by the fact that their womenfolk are not engaged in any gainful occupations. The purdah system being strictly adhered to they are unable to take up employments which expose them to public gaze and make them come in contact with men. Even domestic service in the houses of their own community people is rendered difficult. Some rich families at Bhatkal who can afford to engage maid servants have to hire the services of Deccani Muslim women as the poorer women of their own community cannot be persuaded to come.

Only rich merchants and owners of big hotels are able to save. These savings are usually invested in land in their native place and not in the place of their business.¹ But this land is let to tenants of other communities. Latterly on account of the new Tenancy Acts of the Bombay State, which are unfavourable to the landlords they have stopped

make a free gift. So if a woman wants to make some gift of money to a needy woman who is not related to her she has to give it before the other woman approaches her for a loan. As a rule free gifts are accepted under great embarrassment.

1 In the Bombay Gazetteer—*Kanara* (Pt. II, p. 1) it is stated that as on religious grounds the Navayats scruple to lend money they invest their savings on land. Even now they do not lend money on interest. But that does not mean that there is no lending and borrowing and that the lender does not expect any return for his money. When money is borrowed for starting a business, the borrower enlists the lender as a sleeping partner in his business and pays him a share of the profits. But his share is generally fixed in relation to the money lent and irrespective of the profits made. By some such methods they scrupulously avoid paying or receiving money in the shape of interest.

buying properties and begun to invest their money in some other ways, mostly in the place of their business as their native place offers no facilities for alternative investment.

The persons who are employed are not able to put by any savings for a rainy day. They serve mostly as shop assistants, clerks, accountants, cooks and hotel boys. The salaries of men coming under the first three categories are usually between Rs. 50 and Rs. 75 and of those under the last two categories between Rs. 25 and Rs. 50. But in all cases they are in addition to the expenses of board and lodging. Other incidental expenses like laundry charges, charges for haircut etc., are also met by the employers. But clothes have to be made by the employees themselves. From the net salary that they receive the major portion has to be remitted home and the remaining is spent as pocket money.

If a person who is employed is able to save at all, he accumulates his savings for his visit to his native place if he happens to be out. Returning home for a month or two is like going on a holiday and on such an occasion he needs all the money he has. He has to spend on his journey, buy presents for the members of his family, make a new dress for himself and spend freely in his native place so as to give his community the impression that he is doing well. His savings alone are often not sufficient to meet the expenses of the occasion and in many cases he has to take a loan from his employers. If he is able to save more, he spends more so that he is rarely able to put by anything for a rainy day. The position of a small business man also is not any better in this regard.

However, the women are more prudent so far as money matters are concerned. Whatever the amounts of the remittances they receive, they spend just sufficient to meet their essential requirements. The amount left over is either invested in gold ornaments or set apart as

savings. The savings of a woman are regarded as her personal belongings and her husband cannot rightfully demand them. But during times of necessity the woman is forced to spend her savings or pawn or sell her gold ornaments if any, rather than ask non-relatives for help.

The income of Navayats varies from family to family and so is their standard of living. Some among them are very poor, leading a precarious existence, depending mostly upon help given by considerate people. However the majority of the families have steady incomes derived from properties, business or service. The remittances received from members serving outside vary from Rs. 15 to Rs. 75. Persons with prosperous business remit more. On the other hand the income from their properties is steadily decreasing.

The main item of regular expenditure is food, and a middle class family of five comprising mother and children requires about Rs. 50 to Rs. 60 for food alone. Their food consists chiefly of rice, fish and vegetables and only the richer people can afford to have meat regularly. Clothing, ornaments, toilet articles etc., are brought by the male members themselves occasionally when they come home. Most people own the houses in which they live. If more than one family live in one house, either each of them has a title to a part of the house or is permitted to stay by the owner or owners free of rent. Where rent is paid the amount is small, varying from Re. 1 to Rs. 10 at the outside. So house rent is not an important item of expenditure. Betel and tobacco consume an appreciable part of the income. As many of the people now send their children to High School their school fees and other incidental expenses are items to be reckoned with. Thus the income of a person who is employed is either just sufficient or hardly enough to meet expenses.

CHAPTER V

Social Organization

Composition of Population

Each Navayat settlement may be regarded as a community by itself. Almost all their womenfolk spend their entire lifetime, from birth to death, within the settlement, the boys are brought up there until they are in a position to earn, and the old men retire in it permanently. Only men who have to earn their livelihood go out of the community and the number of such men is very large. Even then, as all their family and social interests rest there, they keep the most intimate contact with it.

As could be expected from their conditions of life the population of every locality consists mostly of females. At any particular time the population will consist of all the females—girls and women both young and old, all the boys who have not yet started working, all the old men past the age of earning, just a few earning men who are doing business or engaged in service in the locality itself, and some earning men who have returned home for short periods of family reunion. The majority of the earning males will be away. According to the Municipal census of 1948, at Bhatkal for every 1000 Navayat females there were only 651 males. Assuming that under normal circumstances the numbers of males and females in a given population are more or less the same, the difference of 349 found in the proportion of thousand Navayat males must be attributed to the men's going outside their locality to earn their livelihood. Actually the proportion of men going outside the locality is still higher, for the census figures also include the males who periodically return from their business or work places to join their families. The population of any other

Navayat locality shows a similar disproportion between the numbers of males and females, the females far outnumbering the males.

Traces of Mother-right

Although fraternal feelings exist among the Navayats of different localities, there is not much social intercourse between one settlement and another. Social intercourse between different settlements becomes easier if intermarriages take place between members of these settlements. But among Navayats intermarriages between members of different localities are few and far between. This is not because of any endogamous restrictions, but because of the special nature of their social organization which renders such intermarriages inconvenient.

A Navayat woman does not leave her parents' house for a long time after marriage, at least until she gives birth to two or three children. What is still more remarkable is that so long as the wife and children remain in the house of her parents a man is not in duty bound to look to their maintenance. The main item, that of food, is provided for by the parents of the wife and items like clothing, cosmetics etc., are supplied by the husband.¹ Where the parents of the wife are poor and yet are obliged to keep their daughter in their house as custom demands, a considerate husband may contribute towards the expenses of food of his wife and children. But such parents, rather than depend upon the good will of their sons-in-law, usually try to send their daughters to their husbands' houses as early as

¹ There are no hard and fast rules regarding the articles to be supplied by the husband. All these articles are given as gifts whenever he comes home from the place of his work. But a man brings presents not only for his wife and children but also for his mother, sisters and their children.

possible. However, a man may consider it his duty to contribute towards the expenses of his sisters and their children so long as they remain in his house and his parents are unable to assume the full responsibility. When living in her parents' house a woman cannot by right demand of her husband to send her remittances.¹ But the husband's mother who may have to look after her married daughters and their children can always have a claim on her son's earnings, and until a man is directly responsible for the maintenance of his wife and children he does in fact send his earnings to his mother.

While the wife remains in the house of her parents the husband stays in the house of his parents, and visits her at her own place. The usual arrangement is that the husband should take his food in his own house² and sleep at night in the house of his wife. It is in order to facilitate this arrangement that a man takes his wife from his own locality, and mainly on account of this custom that intermarriages between members of different localities usually do not take place. This custom is so deeply imbedded in their culture that even when the long absent husband of a young wife who resides in her parents' house, returns home, he does not bring her to his house, brief though his stay in the locality may be. Neither does he stay with her all the time, but goes there only to sleep during nights. And taking one's wife out of the locality

1 Even when she receives some allowance from her husband, the husband does not send it directly to her. As a rule he remits money to his mother and it is the mother who sends a part of the amount to the daughter-in-law who is staying with her parents. In most cases the sons do not expressly ask their mothers to send any money to their wives and the mothers themselves do so of their own accord. Such allowances received by a wife become her own property as she is not required to contribute towards the expenses incurred by her parents or brothers.

2 He, however, takes in his wife's house a light tiffin at night and the breakfast in the morning.

is taboo. Only a very few rich and influential persons in recent times have succeeded in taking their wives out of their localities and that too for brief intervals.

When a married daughter gives birth to two or three children and there are other younger daughters to be maintained, rendering the situation too burdensome for the parents, the son-in-law will take his wife and children and live with them either in a separate house or set up a new home in the house of his own father. Thereafter the husband assumes full responsibility towards the maintenance of his wife and children.

Although generally a young wife remains in her parents' house until she bears two or three children i. e., roughly three to six years, the duration of such a period would depend upon circumstances. In rich families the period is very much longer. There are instances in which the women have continued to live in their parents' houses for the last twenty or twentyfive years of their married life along with seven or eight children to whom they have given birth during this period. Such prolonged stay of the married daughter in the house of her parents is regarded as a matter of pride and prestige to the family. At the same time in a few instances the husbands have taken their wives to settle down in their houses soon after marriage. These cases are really exceptions to the rule and are dictated mainly by the exigencies of circumstances. If a man has no sisters and his mother is not living or if living she is too old, it is natural for him to take his wife from her parents in order to keep house for him or look after his aged parents; or if the parents of the wife are too poor and also hard pressed for accommodation the husband may take her to his own house. But if a man takes his wife to his house immediately after marriage to settle down with him for no sufficient reason, his action will not be countenanced by the community and such a woman is likely to be lowered in its estimation. However, under

no circumstances can the newly married wife leave her parents' house before the expiry of at least a month after marriage.

So long as his wife remains in her parents' house a man lives in a sort of joint family, with his parents, brothers, sisters, and the children of such of the married sisters as have not yet been taken over by their husbands. He also contributes towards the general expenses of the family even though he himself may not live there permanently. But when he brings his wife and children, his own family does not form part of the joint family. It is for this reason that he has to live with his wife and children either in a separate house or set up a new establishment in the house of his parents. Under such circumstances, in the event of the death of the husband the wife returns to her parents' house. If the parents are dead she will rather live with her own brothers than live with the parents of her husband, let alone the husband's brothers.

The property, however, is inherited according to Islamic Law, the daughter receiving half the share of the son. But at the time of division of the property the expenses incurred on a married daughter and her children are not taken into consideration. The house is allotted to the sons who may either share it in common by having in it separate establishments or leave it to one brother in exchange for money or other property of the value of their shares. However, if several brothers carry on their business together the whole business is regarded as if it is the property of a joint family even though each brother may live with his family separately. The eldest brother or the oldest male member of the family is usually the manager and this arrangement may continue for some generations without any division taking place. The manager will give maintenance to all the members who have a claim to the family business and properties. On account of this practice they are regarded as having

adopted many incidents of the joint family law of the Hindus and consequently the Hindu law of inheritance has sometimes been made applicable to them.¹

The above special features of the Navayat social organization are quite foreign to their locality, for none of the other communities living in their vicinity show these traits. Since most of their males live outside their native place for the greater part of the year, it may be explained that under such circumstances a man may find it convenient to entrust his young wife to the care of her mother, and consequently this practice might have given rise to the special features of the community. But this would not be a convincing explanation. If the parental care of his wife is the only motive for a husband to leave her with her parents during his absence, he should at least take her to his house when he visits his native place. But this he does not do. Secondly, when his wife is in her parents' house, he is not required to maintain her although he may do so through sheer affection, whereas he may be expected by custom to contribute towards the maintenance of his newly married sisters and their children. These main considerations imply that the reason for these peculiar customs should be sought in causes other than the particular mode of their life. They cannot also be attributed to the influence of their female ancestors who may be regarded as belonging to the coast of Konkan to which these customs are foreign. It is therefore necessary to examine whether they have anything to do with the influence of their male progenitors who were quite foreign to the locality.

As already pointed out, the male progenitors of the Navayats were of Arab ancestry and were also strongly influenced by the customs of the Moplahs of Malabar. The

1 G. C. Sarkar: *Hindu Law*, p. 64. Cf. cases, *Khatija vs. smail* (*The India Law Reports—Madras Series*, Vol XII, pp. 380-386) and *Hussain vs. Hassan* (*Indian Cases*, Vol. XLI, pp. 184-189).

particular traits of the Navayats may therefore be attributed either to the Arab influence or to the influence of the Moplah culture. It seems clear that these traits are the survivals of an earlier mother-right social organization, and either the social conditions in early Arabia or the culture of the Moplahs could give rise to them.

In his book, *Kinship and Marriage in Early Arabia*, the late W. Robertson Smith has shown that in Arabia male kinship had been preceded by kinship through women, implying that the present father-right social organization in Arabia had been preceded by a mother-right social organization. Whatever may be the merits of this theory, the evidence he has adduced regarding the different types of marriages in early Arabia is quite convincing. In one type of marriage, the woman did not leave her tribe, and her husband had either to come and settle with her or visit her occasionally. The children of such a marriage belonged to the mother's tribe which was also responsible for their maintenance.¹ One may therefore infer that the Navayats might have acquired their particular traits from Arabia through their male progenitors. This inference is further strengthened by the fact that similar traits are also to be found among a certain section of the Konkani Muslims of the Ratnagiri district² (Bombay State), whose male progenitors also had considerable Arab ancestry. But a consideration of the social organization of the Moplahs of Malabar would lead to a somewhat different conclusion.

1 W. Robertson Smith: *Kinship and Marriage in Early Arabia*, New Edition (1907), pp. 77-79.

2 The section of the Konkani Muslims referred to is to be found in the villages of Kasba-Sangameshvar, Nairi, Fansona, Kadwai, Makhzan and Kondiwda in the Ratnagiri district and I have been able to observe in them more or less similar survivals of mother-right as are found among the Navayats of Kanara.

The Moplahs of Malabar can be roughly classified into three broad categories with regard to their social organization— (1) the Moplahs of North Malabar, who have a typical mother-right social organization, (2) the Moplahs of the coastal towns of South Malabar, notably Kozhikode (Calicut) and Ponnani, whose social organization has the features of both mother-right and father-right systems, and (3) the Moplahs of the interior of South Malabar, who have a typical father-right organization. The presence of both father-right and mother-right Moplahs in Malabar could be accounted for mainly by the fact that they include converts from both father-right and mother-right Hindu communities of Malabar and that Arabs who came there adopted the local customs. Suffice it here to consider briefly the social organizations of the first and the second categories of Moplahs only.

The Moplahs of North Malabar live in joint families called *tarawads*, all the members of a tarawad tracing their descent from a common female ancestor and in the female line. The eldest male member known as the *Karanavan* has the sole authority in the management of the tarawad property and the affairs concerning the members of the tarawad. Family property is enjoyed in common and is inherited in the female line according to the *Marumakkathayam* system. But the self-acquired property is divided according to the rules of Muslim Law, and this is a notable departure from the *Marumakkathayam* Law. Marriage is matrilocal and usually the husband makes his permanent abode in the house of his wife. If this is not possible, especially if a man has more than one wife, or if he has to be absent from his locality for a long time, he may visit her occasionally. If a man can afford it he may secure a separate house and live with his wife away from her tarawad, but under no circumstances can he compel her to settle down with him in his tarawad house. His wife

and children receive allowances from their own tarawad, which allowances are often sufficient for his maintenance also. But whatever private income he has apart from his tarawad property can be inherited by his wife and children. The Karanavan of the tarawad, usually the maternal uncle, has greater authority in respect of a person than the father. Even in such an important matter like the marriage of a girl, the responsibility of the father ceases when he brings to the notice of the Karanavan that his daughter has reached the marriageable age; the Karanavan is expected to do the rest.

The social organization of the Moplahs of the coastal towns of South Malabar differs from that of the Moplahs of North Malabar to a considerable extent. Here the family property is divided according to *Shariat* as against the Marumakkathayam Law in North Malabar, and a man is required to maintain his wife and children. But the stamp of mother-right is unmistakable. A person belongs by birth to the social group of his mother and the ancestry is traced in the female line. He also lives in his mother's tarawad. Although property is divided according to the Muslim Law, the house becomes the common property of all the members, the daughters having a permanent interest, since their progeny in the female line are heirs to it, while the interests of the sons cease with their death. The marriage is matrilocal, but the husband does not permanently lodge in the tarawad of his wife as is the case in North Malabar. He takes his food in his own i. e., his mother's tarawad, and goes to sleep in the tarawad of his wife every night. Although children are brought up in their mother's tarawad, the father has to contribute towards the expenses of their and their mother's maintenance. Still, on all social matters the Karanavan of the tarawad has greater authority than the father.

The special features of the social organization of the Navayats, particularly their marriage system, bear a

great resemblance to the corresponding traits of the Moplahs of the coast of South Malabar. With regard to the marriage system there is this difference that, whereas the matrilocal-cum-visiting marriage of the Navayats is limited to only the first few years of marriage, among the Moplahs it is permanent. The other details of the marriage institution are the same. In either case the husbands take their food in their own houses and go to sleep in the houses of their wives every night. For the sake of convenience marriages take place between members of the same locality.

The inheritance of property in both cases is on the same basis, as per Muslim Law. But whereas a husband among the Moplahs is expected to contribute towards the expenses of the maintenance of his wife and children from the very commencement of his married life, among the Navayats he is not bound to do so when the marriage remains matrilocal. However, the practice of the Moplahs to maintain the wife and children seems to be of recent origin, since under similar circumstances in North Malabar a husband is not expected to be responsible for the maintenance of his family. Even in South Malabar, if the woman has inherited sufficient property through her mother or father, which is generally given her at the time of marriage, the husband need not pay for her maintenance although his property, if any, will ultimately be inherited by her and her children. On the other hand, if the men among Navayats are not expected to maintain their wives and children in the initial stage, they assume full responsibility for them within a few years after the marriage. Moreover, nowadays it is becoming increasingly common for a husband to maintain his wife and children from the very beginning even though they do not stay with him, and it is likely that soon this practice will have to be adopted by all to suit the modern economic conditions.

The question now arises whether the mother-right survivals found among the Navayats are owing to the influence of the customs of early Arabia or Malabar. It must be borne in mind that the influence of the early Arabs on the Moplahs of Malabar was itself tremendous. As a matter of fact, if the early Arabs were successful in establishing their communities in Malabar, it must have been to a large extent due to the fact that some of their important customs such as the matrilocal marriage were common to Malabar also. So, it is difficult to determine how much of the mother-right system of the Moplahs of Malabar is owing to the Arab influence and how much to the local influence, the latter however being very much greater. However that may be, on account of the great maritime activities of the Muslim communities on the west coast of India their influence on one another in general and the influence of the Moplahs on the Navayats in particular must have been inevitable. The existence among the Navayats of a number of traits borrowed from Malabar also supports this view. Similarly viewed from the background of the social organizations of the Moplahs, the mother-right survivals among the Navayats could be to a large extent attributed to the influence of Malabar.¹

More than anything else it is these special traits of the social organization of the Navayats that warrant the conclusion that their male progenitors although of Arab ancestry came from Malabar where they must have acculturated themselves for some time previously. There are other instances also in which Arabs who had settled

1 These special features of the Navayat social organization and their interpretation have already been set out by me in a paper entitled "Mother-right in Transition" appearing in the *Sociological Bulletin* (Bombay), Vol. II, No. I., and much of the above matter has been reproduced therefrom.

down in Malabar for some time had gone to far away places and established colonies which have retained many of the important features of the mother-right social organization of Malabar. An instance in point is the community of the Menangkabau Muslims of Sumatra and the Malay Peninsula.

It must however be admitted that even in this case, as in the case of Navayats, there is neither historical nor traditional evidence to show that the mother-right traits were derived from Malabar and a conclusion has to be arrived at only from a study of some of their customs and practices in relation to those of their neighbouring communities. All the same, such a conclusion could be none the less convincing.

Referring to the spread of Islam into the Malay Archipelago, T. W. Arnold is of the opinion that while it is not possible to fix the precise date of the first introduction of Islam to this region, missionaries must have come here from the south of India. In support of his view he cites certain peculiarities of Muhammadan theology adopted by the islanders. Most of the Muslims of the Archipelago belong to the Shāfi'ī sect which is also predominant in the Coromandel and the Malabar coasts of South India. Since the Muslims of the other neighbouring countries follow the Hanafi school, he holds that the prevalence of Shāfi'ī teachings may be explained by assuming them to have been brought thither from the Malabar coast. This was highly probable because the ports of Malabar were frequented by merchants from Malaysia, China, Yaman and Persia and the merchants of Malabar in their turn visited all these countries.¹ Many other authorities also are of the same opinion.²

1 T. W. Arnold: *Preaching of Islam* (1935), pp. 363, 364 and 366.

2 F. C. Cole: *The Peoples of Malaysia* (1945), pp. 23-24.

But the most conclusive proof of the influence of Malabar could be found in the social organization of the Menangkabau. Apart from belonging to the Shāfi'i sect they have a mother-right social organization. They live in matrilineal joint families and the families are organised into exogamous matrilineal clans. Property is inherited in the female line. The seniormost male member of the family in the female line is the manager. Marriage is matrilocal. The husband either visits his wife in her mother's house at night or resides in her place permanently. He has no permanent right to any property from his wife's family, while he retains his rights and interests in his own mother's house even though he stays in his wife's house.¹ Their mother-right social organization is of special interest because no other people in the Malay Archipelago manifest such traits of culture. It is also noteworthy that the accounts that have been published about the Menangkabau society are somewhat divergent, that the people themselves have confused and conflicting notions of the titles and duties of certain of their officers or full functions of their social divisions, that the same office or individual may often be referred to by different names and that although the mother's family and clan are more intimately related to an individual than those of the father, the kinship terms for relations on the mother's as well as the father's side are more or less the same.² For, such anomalies often point to culture diffusion.

The Indian and Dutch influence as well as the effects of Islam can also be discerned in the Menangkabau culture and they could be accounted for historically. These influences are also common to the other Malaysian societies. The Menangkabau have also much in

1 For a brief first-hand study of the Menangkabau see F. C. Cole: *Op. Cit.*, pp. 250-270.

2 *Ibid.*, pp. 252 and 254.

common with the other coastal Malay people with respect to indigenous traits. But it is only the prevalence of mother-right traits among them that requires some culture-historical explanation which has led many a writer to offer his own suggestions. Cole is of the opinion that the special features of their social organization must be due to some such people as the Nair Caste of Malabar.¹ But the fact that these traits are to be found only among the Menangkabau who are a Muslim community of the Shāfi'i school would indicate that these must be due to some Muslim community possibly belonging to the same school rather than to the Hindu Nairs. And if the opinion of eminent authors like Arnold and Cole that Islam was introduced into the Malay Archipelago by way of India, carries any authority, there cannot be any doubt that the mother-right social organization of the Menangkabau including their religion was due to the influence of Shāfi'i Muslims like the Moplahs of Malabar whose contacts and connections with the islands of the Malay Archipelago are well known and whose mother-right social organization manifests all the unaccounted for traits of the Menangkabau.

The Changing Family

The survivals of mother-right in the Navayat social organization would thus point out that originally in the wake of the direct influence of the Arabs coming from Malabar, the mother-right traits must have been more pronounced. As among the mother-right Moplahs the residence must have been permanently matrilocal, a person permanently residing in the house of his or her mother. The family organization must have been unilateral with affinity to maternal relations. The maternal uncle must have had considerable responsibility and authority. Gradually under the influence of the

¹ *Ibid.*, p. 258.

father-right Islamic as well as local cultures the predominantly mother-right family organization must have absorbed many of the father-right traits. This process was easier in their case than in the case of Moplahs who are living in a region where mother-right is an indigenous culture complex. The family organization of the Navayats today may be regarded as bilateral with affinity to both maternal and paternal relations. However, the affinity with the paternal relations is progressively increasing, and the organization is again tending towards one-sidedness, but now towards father-right. Whereas previously the families of the sons were treated as separate groups, at present instances may be found in which several brothers with their wives and children are living with their parents in a common household with a common board.

The bilateral family organization of the Navayats has its own advantages, mostly economic. Under this system the responsibility for the maintenance of a woman and her children may be shared by the woman's father, her brothers and her husband. If the father is in affluent circumstances he bears the brunt of the burden at least for a few years after her marriage, if not her brothers are there to help. Failing either party the husband himself can support. In the case of unilateral family such responsibility usually rests upon one person and consequently the poverty of that person or his death would more often than not lead the family into destitution. But in the case of Navayats the poverty or the death of any of the parties responsible may not affect the family very adversely for in that case the remaining parties may just enhance their share of contribution. Even when the woman is staying with her husband her brothers would readily help her if her husband is in difficulties. That is how even the poorest of the poor among them are not entirely left without assistance and they adjust themselves somehow. However, where the

responsibility is shared there is also at the same time the danger of each person's escaping his responsibility expecting the others to look after the family, resulting in a peculiar situation in which no one may come forward to help. But the Navayats on the whole are a very considerate people who accommodate one another with sympathy and kindness.

They distinguish themselves as belonging to different stocks, each stock comprising several families and possessing its specific name.¹ A person inherits the name of his father's family stock and there is no evidence whatsoever to show that in earlier times the family names were inherited in the female line. It may therefore be necessary to explain why even in former days the mode of tracing descent in the female line which is a very important mother-right trait was not found associated with the mother-right traits of the Navayats, especially when they have borrowed these traits from Malabar where the particular trait is very prominent. This may be due to the fact that whereas in Malabar mother-right is proper to the soil, in the region where

1 The following is a list of names of the family stocks of the Navayats which is by no means complete : Abu-Husni, Africā, Akbara, Akrami, Alibappu, Ārcot, Ārmār, Asarmatta, Biḍichol, Bomboi, Bōtlejukka, Brahmāvar, Chaḍkhān, Chāmunḍi, Dāmdā, Dātā, Dhārwaḍ, Durgā, Fakardi, Faqi-Ahmada, Faqi-Bhāwu, Gaima, Gāwāi, Gulwaḍi, Hafiska, Hāji-Amīn, Hāji-Hassain, Hajika, Harḍa, Hasanbappu, Hegḍe, Hubballi, Ikkēri, Jikka, Jūbāpu, Jukāku, Kādīra, Kaṛli, Kāk-Mohiddina, Kāshimji, Katpāḍi, Kattingeri, Kāzia, Khatibī, Khattāl, Kōbatte, Kōlā, Kōtēshvar, Kozbhāw-Mānna, Lawna, Māni, Mānna, Mawlāna, Mawllim, Mawlwi, Mōhtisham, Muhammad-Siddiqa, Muhammadu-Jōepa, Mūlky, Munīri, Musbā, Naitay, Nhānna, Pāngal, Pēshmām, Ruknaddīn, Sādā, Sakarḍe, Sawḍa, Sawdāgar, Shāhbandri, Sharif, Siddiqa, Singēri, Sirūr, Syed, Syed-Ali, Syed-Hassaina, Syed-Kāku, Syed-Mohiddina, Syed-Saqqāf, Tāhiri, Takki, Tālūr, Tāmbūri, Uddyāvar and Wajīra.

the Navayats are found it is a borrowed system, and still more to the fact that it was borrowed through the males. Their female ancestors who were accustomed to a patrilineal mode of tracing descent must have reckoned the descent of their children through their husbands and not themselves. That is how the typical mother-right clan organization such as the exogamous matrilineal tarawads of the Moplahs is absent here. Incidentally the practice of tracing descent in the male line has made it easier for them to discard the mother-right traits progressively. In fact at present they do not understand why there should be among them the system of matrilineal marriage and the generations to come may do away with that custom without any difficulty. But among the Moplahs, although the important features of mother-right such as the inheritance of property, the extent of the authority and responsibility of the maternal uncle etc., are being modified especially in South Malabar, the matrilineal residence and the matrilineal character of their marriage show no signs of disappearing, probably because of the matrilineal descent and the matrilineal tarawad organization.

The Family Stocks

The names of the family stocks which are patronymic are derived from various sources such as (a) names of persons, as in Syed-Mohiddina¹ and Muhammadu-Joepa,

1 Although Syed-Mohiddina comprises two words, it is treated as one name. The name is derived from a famous ancestor of the family called Mohiddin. Since he descended from the family of the Prophet's daughter, Syed is prefixed to his name as is the general Muslim practice. While the very name Syed-Mohiddina suggests that the family is descended from the family of the Prophet, it is interesting to note that not satisfied with this, the individual members, after writing the family name repeat the word Syed just before their personal name, as in Syed-Mohiddina Syed Mohiddin Saheb where the second Mohiddin is the personal name of the member.

(b) occupational and professional titles, as in Gavai (singer), Maullim (teacher), Moulana (scholar), Kazia (Kazi) etc., (c) place of business of the ancestor, as in Arkot, Brahmavar, Koteswar etc., and (d) nicknames, as in Kola (jackal). However, owing to the chequered history of these people some of their family names do not convey any understandable meaning.

The Navayats take great pride in their family traditions and cherish the memory of their prominent ancestors. If a person is of outstanding merit and popularity his progeny may adopt his name for their family name.

The fact that some families are named after certain professions like those of Maullim, Kazi and Khatib would indicate that these professions were hereditary in the past. At present there are no hard and fast rules for the selection of a Kazi or a Khatib, greater importance being given to suitable qualifications, but as far as possible Kazis and Khatibs are still appointed from particular families who go by the name of Kazia and Khatibi.

The reason why place names figure in their family names is this that since most of their males go out to other places on business or work, in their own locality they are often referred to by the name of the place of their business, and when any of them become prominent their progeny might adopt the respective place names for their family names. Thus Koteswar is the name of a place where the ancestor of the family going by that name was having business.¹

1 The well-known millionaire businessman of Bhatkal, Khan Bahadur Syed Abubakar Moulana who has his chief business at Colombo is popularly known as Colom (Colombo) Saheb. Were he to live in the past his progeny would have by now taken Colom for their family name. Under the changing conditions what his progeny will actually do in the future in this respect is a matter for conjecture.

As an illustration of nicknames of well-known persons becoming family names it is said that the Kola families are so called after their common ancestor who was particularly cunning and as such was nicknamed Kola i. e., jackal.

It is clear from the above that within the same original family stock different groups of families may adopt different names, and a large number of the present family stocks converge in a comparatively few stocks. For example, at Bhatkal the Muhammad-Akrami and Jukaku families are the offshoots of the Siddiqa family which traces its name to Arabia.

A small proportion of the Navayat population traces its connection to the lineage of the Prophet through his daughter Fatima. Such people are called Syeds in conformity with the practice adopted all over the Muslim world and the individuals prefix the honorific title Syed to their personal name.¹ All the Syeds among them can be traced to a few family stocks from Bhatkal. They are (1) Syed-Mohiddina, (2) Syed-Kaku, (3) Brahmavar, (4) Syed-Kazimi, (5) Syed-Jamaluddina and (6) Syed-Hassaina. Of these at least four stocks (Nos. 1-4), are known to converge in one stock. Their common ancestor is said to be one Syed Ibrahim Baghdadi, who as his name indicates came directly to Bhatkal from Baghdad in Arabia.²

1 Also vide footnote on p. 89 *supra*.

2 The following is a genealogy preserved by one of the Syed families of Bhatkal which traces its connection to Syed Ibrahim Baghdadi. The genealogy was shown to me by Brahmavar Syed Umer *bin* (son of) B. (which stands for Brahmavar) Syed Hasan *bin* B. Syed Ali *bin* B. Syed Mohiddin *bin* B. Syed Hussain *bin* B. Syed Muhammad *bin* Syed-Kaku Syed Ahmad Brahmavar *bin* Syed-Kaku Syed Hussain *bin* Syed-Kaku Syed Usman *bin* Syed-Kaku Syed Ali *bin* Syed-Kaku Syed Usman *bin* Syed Kaku *bin* Syed Ibrahim Baghdadi. The genealogy also shows the complete ancestry of Syed Ibrahim Baghdadi leading up to the

Even after making allowance for the convergence of the many family stocks among the Navayats into a fewer parental stocks it is clear that their male progenitors came from different stocks. At any rate the distinction between the Syeds and non-Syeds is quite obvious and it cannot be said, as the opinions of some authors would imply, that they are all descended from one and the same stock.

Class Distinctions

Although there is a general fraternal feeling among all the Navayats and there does not exist much social difference between the rich and the poor, the master and the servant, still there is difference in status between persons. The status of a person is generally defined by his family connections and each family stock has its own social status. In ordinary dealings these status differences do not matter much and they are taken into account mainly at the time of marriage. Usually persons belonging to families of more or less equal status marry among themselves.

On the basis of their social status the families in each locality may be broadly divided into two or three

Prophet himself. The family referred to traces its descent from Syed Ibrahim Baghdadi through his son Syed Kaku. On that account it is also called Syed-Kaku. The family name Brahmavar was acquired through one of the ancestors by name Syed Ahmad who had business connections in a place called Brahmavar in South Kanara. The Brahmavar family, therefore, is just a branch of the Syed-Kaku family. It may be pointed out that among the people going by the family name of Brahmavar there are also some who are not Syeds. They are distinct from the Brahmavar families belonging to the family stock of Syed-Kaku. It was also reported to me that the family stocks of Syed-Mohiddina and Syed-Kazimi are derived from two other sons of Syed Ibrahim Baghdadi, named Mohiddin and Kazimi. Thus it would appear that the four family stocks *viz.*, Brahmavar, Syed-Kaku, Syed-Mohiddina and Syed-Kazimi converge into one.

classes. At Bhatkal there are three such more or less well defined classes. The family stocks such as Siddiqa, Ruknaddin, Damda, Syed-Mohiddina, Syed-Kaku, Brahmavar, Mohtashami, Kola, Tahiri, Shahbandri, Sada and Kazia are of the highest social status and may be regarded as forming the upper class. The families of the next higher rank and which may be considered to constitute the middle class are Akrami, Jūbāpu, Muhammadu-Joepa, Kak-Mohiddina, Jukaku, Faqqi-Bhāu, Durga, Kashimji, Tamburi, Gavai, Kozbhāu-Manna, Maullim, Armar etc. To the lower class belong the families like Hafiska, Uddyavar, Bottlejukka, Arkot, Peshmam and Akbara.

As matters stand at present wealth is not taken into consideration in assigning a particular family stock to a particular class. Even in the lower class there are many rich people although the proportion of rich people is higher in the middle class and the highest in the upper class. However, while the status of any family is more or less fixed, an individual can climb up or down to an upper or lower class and transmit his new status to his progeny. But then a separate name will be given to his progeny as distinguished from the main stock and the new family will have a different status. For example, although the Akrami and the Jukaku families are but branches of the Siddiqa family they occupy a lower status than the latter.

The mode of reckoning status among the Navayats on the basis of the family stocks and not according to individuals nor even according to individual families resembles a similar trait in the social organization of the Moplahs among whom also status is determined by the membership of the tarawad or family stock. Tarawads of equal social status come under separate categories like the classes among the Navayats and such groups are usually endogamons.

System of Names

A person has usually three names— first, the name of his family, second his own personal name and third the honorific title of 'Saheb' e. g., in Damda Hasan Saheb, Damda is the family name, Hasan the personal name and Saheb the honorific title. Although the family name generally comes first, in some cases it occurs last, as in Mohiuddin Saheb Siddiq where Siddiq is the family name. This latter practice is adopted by the members of certain families only. The honorific suffix of Saheb is not very important and is sometimes dropped.

In the neighbourhood of Navayats the custom of reckoning the family name first in their system of names is peculiar only to the Navayats. In the other communities the type and order of names are different. In North Kanara which is one of the districts where the Navayats are residing and which comes under the Bombay State, members of other communities write the personal name first, father's name second and the family or group name last. In South Kanara, the other district where the Navayats have settled and which forms part of the Madras State, among the others the name of the place of residence¹ is usually written first, the personal name second and the family or group name last. The peculiar custom of the Navayats could again be explained by assuming Moplah influence.

In Malabar, the system of names of mother-right Moplahs is slightly different from that of the father-right Moplahs, but in either case a person usually has four names. First comes the name of the house which, in the case of mother-right Moplahs, is that of the mother's house and in the other case that of the father's house, second the maternal uncle's name in the former case and the father's

¹ The name of the place of residence is quite different from the family name.

name in the latter, third the personal name and fourth the group name or an honorific title which is inherited through the mother in case of mother-right and through the father in case of father-right.¹ Of course, there is much difference between the systems of names of the Moplahs and the Navayats. The second name in the systems of names of the Moplahs i. e., the father's or maternal uncle's name is altogether absent in the system of names of the Navayats. The honorific title of the Navayats also does not have the same significance as possessed by the corresponding titles or group names of the Moplahs. But the house name of the Moplahs which is the tarawad name, and in effect the name of the family stock, is similar to that of the family stock of the Navayats. As the name of the tarawad is always written first in the systems of names of the Moplahs it may be concluded that the observance of a similar practice among the Navayats is due to the influence of Moplah custom.

In regard to the other practice of the Navayats whereby they sometimes also write their family name last,² it is interesting to note that even among the Moplahs there are some sections who write their family names last. But among the particular sections of the Moplahs such practice could invariably be attributed to the direct influence of the Arabs who usually write their family name or tribal name last, and the names of the family stocks of these sections are usually of Arab origin. Similarly, among the Navayats also the practice could be

1 The systems of names among the Moplahs have been discussed at length by me in a paper entitled *Sociological Significance of Systems of Names with Special Reference to Names in Kerala*, to be published elsewhere.

2 This practice however, is not consistently followed and a few individuals of such families, obviously influenced by the majority practice, write the family name first.

traced to Arab influence, and a closer examination of the family names like Siddiqi, Muniri, Saqqaf, Tahiri etc., which usually come last in the system of names, would show that these family stocks could be traced directly to Arabia. Properly speaking, since the Navayats claim descent from the Arabs they ought to be able to trace the names of all their original family stocks to Arabia. But if most of their male progenitors came through Malabar, this need not be so. Because in Malabar even though the male ancestors of many Moplah families were Arabs, still owing to the influence of the local custom whereby descent is traced in the female line, they have lost their Arab genealogy. Some families, however, notwithstanding the fact that their female ancestors also were Malayali women have retained their Arab genealogy owing to special circumstances. Among the Navayats, since descent is traced always in the male line, the male progenitors of the families whose original stocks cannot be traced to Arabia may have come through Malabar and the ancestors of those families the stocks of which could be traced to Arabia may have come directly from Arabia. In either case the female ancestors were local women.

However, in keeping with the almost universal practice of writing the family name last the trend among all the Navayats nowadays is also to write the family name last.

Apart from the three typical names, the family name, the personal name and the honorific title, a person may also add other prefixes like Syed, Haji, Moulvi, Moulana, Kazi etc. Of these only Syed is hereditary, being distinctive of the connection with the Prophet's lineage. The title Haji is assumed by any one who has performed the pilgrimage to Mecca. Moulvi and Moulana are titles given to qualified scholars and Kazi is the professional title of the person holding the office of Kazi. All these special titles are written immediately preceding the personal name.

A person has at least one Muslim name of Arabic origin. Some of the common Muslim names used for males are Muhammad, Husain, Hasan, Ali, Abdul-Qader, Abdul-Rahman, Mohiddin, Ahmed, Shamsuddin, Abubakr, Ismail, Umar etc., and the names given to females are Hajira, Fatima, Khatija, Khairunnisa, Zuhra, Rukiya Zuleka, Bulqis, Safura, Halima, Tājunnisa, Kamarunnisa, Badrunnisa, Zaibunnisa, Raziya, Hasina, Noorjahan, Mumtaz, Shaharbanu, Meherbanu, Zainab, Amina and Sara. However, most individuals have pet names which are more often and prominently used than the Muslim personal names. Pet names common among men are Saibu, Kocho-Saib, Bappu, Kozāpu, Cheḍu etc., and those frequently used among females are Saibīn, Kochi-Saibīn, Māsaibīn, Olli-Saibīn and Dhakti-Saibīn.

Kinship Terminology

Most of the kinship terms of the Navayats¹ are included among the kinship terms of the Marāthā country collected by Dr. Mrs. Iravati Karve. In her treatise on, *Kinship Terminology and Kinship Usages of the Marāthā Country*,² Mrs. Karve has dealt in detail with the origin, meaning and sociological significance of these kinship terms. Therefore an elucidation of only the special features of the kinship terminology of the Navayats is attempted here.

Although the kinship terminology of a people is a pointer to the type of their social organization and that it gives an insight into the nature of their social institutions, these correlations between kinship terms and social organization need not always necessarily

1 A table of kinship terms of Navayats is given in *Appendix B*.

2 *Bulletin of the Deccan College Research Institute*, Vol. I, pp. 327-389 and Vol. II, pp. 9-33.

exist. When the culture of a people evolves gradually corresponding changes in the kinship terms may also take place, thus the kinship terms truly reflecting the social change. But sometimes there may take place a sudden change in the social organization of a people without a corresponding change taking place in their kinship terminology, in which case the correspondence between kinship terms and social organization may no longer exist. The sociological significance of kinship terms may also be weakened when people of two different cultures mix and merge together evolving a new type of culture and selecting kinship terms from both the old cultures. In such an eventuality there is also a possibility of one of the old cultures dominating and submerging the other, at least in some respects, retaining most of its kinship terms and wiping away the corresponding kinship terms of the other. However, in any case, the kinship terminology has some significance. If among a certain people it does not reflect the social organization fully it at least provides a clue to the understanding of their past history and the process of evolution of their society. The kinship terminology of Navayats has to be viewed in this light.

While the culture of the Navayats has had a mixed origin, their male and female progenitors belonging to two distinct cultures, the women have had a greater opportunity of influencing their social life, with the result that the culture of their female ancestors, namely the local Indian women, left its impress on many important traits. This is also to be noticed in their kinship terminology which is for the most part the terminology used on the coast of Konkan mainly by people speaking the Konkani language.¹ This supports the assumption

1 Mrs. Karve does not make any distinction between the kinship terminologies of the people speaking Marathi and those speaking Konkani. She has however drawn pointed attention to the

that the female ancestors of the Navayats belonged to the coast of Konkan.

Owing to the widely prevalent practice of cross-cousin marriage in Maharashtra and Konkan the kinship terminology of the communities who follow this practice is typical of a case where two families continued exchanging daughters for generations.¹ As a result of new relationships established by marriage between cousins, their kinship terms are altered. In the communities referred to a person regards the children of his father's brother or mother's sister as his own brothers and sisters and applies to them the same kinship terms as for brother and sister (*bhāu* and *bahīṇā*).² Normally, therefore, he should apply the same terms to the children of his mother's brother and father's sister also. But since they are potential marriage mates and in many instances the old relationship of cousins is actually modified by marriage between them, their kinship terms

difference in some of the significant terms used in the west coast of the Maratha country which is, in fact, the coast of Konkan. As distinguished from the people of Maharashtra the people of the Konkan coast use the following words: *bāpu* or *bāpus* for father, *āis* or *āvsū* for mother, *māvala* or *māvalo* for mother's brother, *ātyā*, *āte*, *ūtō*, *āta* or *māvalaṇa* for father's sister, *pūtu* for son, *dhu* for daughter, *dhuvaḍi* for brother's or sister's daughter, *gho* or *goho* for husband and *hokala* for bride or wife [*Bulletin of the Deccan College Research Institute*, Vol. I, pp. 332-371]. With two exceptions in the case of mother and mother's brother and some variation in the case of father, these words are also to be found in the kinship terminology of the Navayats.

1 *Bulletin of the Deccan College Research Institute*, Vol. II, pp. 16 and 24.

2 But to distinguish the cousins from his own brothers and sisters he describes their relationship as brother or sister through father's brother or mother's sister.

by birth are changed into kinship terms by marriage. So a person calls his mother's brother's and father's sister's sons and daughters, by the same terms as he uses for his wife's brothers and sisters.¹ But in communities which do not practise cross-cousin marriage, such as the Chitpavan Brahmins, the Devrukhe Brahmins and the Shukla Yajurvedīya Brahmins, the same terms for cross cousins are used as for parallel cousins or brothers and sisters.² In this respect the kinship terminology of Navayats resembles that of the communities which do not practise cross-cousin marriage. The Navayats do not make any distinction between the children of father's brother and mother's sister on the one hand and of father's sister and mother's brother on the other with regard to their kinship terms, and this is in spite of the fact that they practise cross-cousin marriage. If the female ancestors of the Navayats belonged to a community of Konkan practising cross cousin marriage and consequently using special terms for cross cousins as distinguished from parallel cousins there is no reason why the Navayats should subsequently alter the kinship terms without a corresponding change in their marriage custom. It would therefore appear that their female progenitors belonged to a community or communities which did not practise cross-cousin marriage. The cross-cousin marriage now practised by them may be ascribed to Muslim influence, for they practise not only cross-cousin marriage but even parallel-cousin marriage, the latter being a preferential mode of marriage among all Muslim Communities.

The kinship terminology in Maharashtra and Konkan and therefore of the female progenitors of Navayats is characterised by the salient features of the Classificatory

1 *Bulletin of the Deccan College Research Institute*, Vol. I, pp. 350-351.

2 *Ibid.*, Vol. II, pp. 32-33.

system. In the main this holds good in the case of the kinship terminology of the Navayats also. But some of their kinship terms reminds one strongly of the Descriptive system. Terms referring to relatives such as the wives of father's brothers, of mother's brothers, of one's own brothers and of husband's brothers, and the husbands of father's sisters, of mother's sisters and of husband's sisters are descriptive. The children of brothers and sisters and those of husband's or wife's brothers and sisters are also called by descriptive terms, although in the case of the children of brothers and sisters primary terms too exist side by side. But in all other communities of Konkan each of these relatives has a special kinship term. Therefore the above deviation in the kinship terminology of the Navayats from the expected form implies some external influence. Now the Descriptive system is to be found in its most characteristic form among the Nilotic and Semitic peoples including the Arabs.¹ Among the Arabs, for example, the word '*amm*' stands for paternal uncle, and the son of the paternal uncle is called *ibn 'amm*, literally son of a paternal uncle.² Since the male progenitors of the Navayats are known to be Arabs the descriptive features of some of their kinship terms may be attributed to the Arab influence.

One of the most remarkable point to be noted in the kinship terminology of the Navayats is that the different brothers of the father are called by different kinship terms. At least five special terms for the father's brothers are to be found. They are (1) *wodeppā* ³ [the eldest brother of the father], (2) *goreppā* [the second eldest brother], (3) *awppā* [the third], (4) *hakkappā* or *hakkā* [the fourth] and (5)

1 W. H. R. Rivers : *Social Organization*, [1932], p. 61.

2 W. Robertson Smith : *Kinship and Marriage in Early Arabia*, [1907], p. 73.

3 *wodeppā* = *wolle* + *bāppā* i. e., big father.

*kochappā*¹ [the fifth or the youngest]. Including father this makes provision for addressing six brothers. If more terms for the brothers of the father are not to be found it may be owing to the fact that the possibilities of there being more than six brothers in a family are remote. In all the five terms for the uncles the suffix *-ppā* is to be found. The suffix *-ppā* is a diminutive form of *bāppā*, the term for father. So the uncles also are regarded as fathers, but they are differentiated from one another and also from the real father. However, there is also a general term for father's brothers called *bāpūlyo*, but it is rarely used.

Among the Indian peoples in general and the Marathi and Konkani speaking people in particular, distinctions in the kinship terms for father's brothers are not made. Among the Konkani speaking people on the coast of Konkan father's brother is called by the generic term of *bāpūlyo*. At the most distinctions may be made between the elder brothers on the one hand and the younger brothers on the other by using the adjectives *big* and *small* respectively. Hence the peculiar feature of the Navayats cannot be attributed to the influence of their female progenitors. Neither can this be traced to the kinship terminology of the Arabs. It is therefore to be presumed that the special terms for the different brothers of the father were evolved by the Navayats themselves. Explanation of the circumstances leading to their evolution is not easy to find.

Mrs. Karve has cited two other communities where the father's brothers are differently named. These are the Tibetans and the Khasiyas, the latter being one of the Himalayan tribes. Among both these tribes, polyandry is the established practice and the lack of a generic term for

¹ *kochappā* = *kochō* + *bāppā* i. e., small father. I have not been able to analyse the meanings of the other terms.

the father's brothers is ascribed to the influence of this practice. Among the Tibetans only the eldest brother marries and all the younger brothers have access to his wife. The regularly married husband of the mother (father) is called *A. Pa. Chen. Po.* or *A. Pha. Chen. Po.* meaning the great father. He is regarded as the father of all the children born of the woman. His brother next in seniority is called by the children *A. Pa. Chuñ. nu.* meaning the junior father. The next brother is called *Pha. Chuñ. ba* meaning the second junior father. Among the Khasiyas also all the brothers share the wife or wives in common. The husbands of the mother, who are brothers are addressed as father. If there are four brothers sharing their mother, the eldest is termed *bara bābā* [the big father], the next *choṭā bābā* [the little father], the third *bhedi bābā* [father who tends the sheep], and the fourth *gaiar bābā* [father who tends cows].¹

The kinship terms of the Navayats for the father's brothers bear a striking resemblance to the terms in the above tribes. But social processes are so intricate and there are so many ways of arriving at the same result, that one should not jump to the conclusion that at least once upon a time the Navayats also practised polyandry. It is however true that the social organization of Navayats presents the traces of mother-right, resembling the old societies of Malabar in which polyandry has been traced. But unlike the polyandry of the Tibetans and the Khasiyas which is fraternal the polyandry in Malabar was non-fraternal. In Malabar the wife was not taken to the house of the husband and if she had several husbands they were not necessarily brothers and they had to visit the woman in her own house. Under such circumstances there was no possibility of a child's

¹ *Annals of the Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute*, Vol. XX, pp. 225-226.

knowing its father's brothers at all. As a matter of fact, in Malabar among the peoples who practised polyandry in the past there are no separate terms for the different brothers of the father.

Apart from these special characteristics of the kinship terminology of Navayats there are a few terms which merit particular attention.

The terms used for father are *bāpūs* and *bāppā*, the latter being most commonly used. *Bāpūs* is clearly a term used in the Konkani and the Navayats have retained it from the kinship terminology of their female progenitors. Terms like *bāpu* and *bāpa* are also used in the Konkani and it would seem that the *bāppā* of Navayats is derived from *bāpa*. But it is interesting to note that the Moplahs of Malabar especially those of South Malabar also use the term *bāppā* for father.¹ The pronunciation of the word *bāppā* by Navayats is quite different from the pronunciation of the other communities in the Konkani, but it agrees remarkably well with the pronunciation of the Moplahs. Since there are many other traits among them which they have borrowed from among the Moplahs the use of this term also may be traced to the influence of the Moplahs.²

1 The Moplahs also use the term *uppa* side by side, but its use is not so extensive as that of *bāppā*. The Moplahs of South Kanara use the Arabic term *abba* for father.

2 The Malayalam term for father is *achchan* and the term *bāppā* in Malabar is peculiar to the Moplahs alone. As its possible origin may be ascribed to Konkani it may be argued that the Moplahs themselves borrowed it from the Navayats. But the Navayats are too small a community to have such an influence on the comparatively very large community of Moplahs. The majority of the Muslims of the Konkani viz., the Konkani Muslims use the term *bāpus* for father and the use of the term *bāppā* is unknown among them.

Mother's brother is called *marwlo* or *maleka*. However, *maleka* is more commonly used. The term *marwlo* is also used in the Konkan, but *maleka* seems to be peculiar to Navayats alone. Among Navayats a man has a responsible position in respect of his sister's children since for some time after marriage a woman remains in the house of her parents where her brothers also are obliged to contribute towards her and her children's maintenance. Among the mother-right Moplahs of Malabar where a woman remains in her mother's house throughout life her children show great respect towards her brothers. A maternal uncle is called *Karanavān* (head of the tarawad which is a position of the highest respect in the family) even though he may not be the head of the household. From the traces of mother-right still to be found among Navayats it would appear that in the past the maternal uncle among them occupied the same position as among the Moplahs, and the term *maleka* for maternal uncle may be related to such a position. If the term is derived from the Persian word *Malik* meaning lord, the above conclusion would seem to be well founded.

Husband's father and wife's father are called by the same term *māmūlo*. In the Konkan the corresponding term is *māmā* (*māmu*) or *māvalā* (*marwlo*). *Māmūlo* might have been derived from the Konkani forms of the term.¹

The terms for mother are *awus* and *māmā*, the latter being more common. *Awus* is found among the terms used for mother in the Konkan, but the term *māmā* for mother sounds very odd because this term is used for mother's brother in the Konkan. It is therefore strange that among Navayats the term for mother's brother among other peoples whose kinship terminology the Navayats have adopted, is applied to mother, particularly because these two persons belong to the opposite sexes. It is

¹ *Māmūlo* may be regarded as the diminutive form of *Māmu*.

difficult to explain how the Navayats derived this term, but it is interesting to note that the Jews of Bombay who also have some Semitic influence, call their mother *māmā*.¹

Wife's mother and husband's mother are called by the common term *māũ*. The corresponding term in the Konkani is *māmī*, *sāsu* or *māvalñi*. Among the Konkani speaking Christians of Kanara the term for wife's or husband's mother is *māĩ* and the term for wife's or husband's father is *māũ*. It may therefore be pointed out that the same kinship term used among the Christians for a person of the male sex is applied among Navayats to a person of the female sex, but in either case the relationship of the person is the same.

The term for husband is *ghaw* or *nāito*. Here the word *nāito* is peculiar to Navayats alone. It is the singular form of the word *nāite* which stands for the term Navayats in their language.² In some communities the women use the name of their community for the term for husband. The Brahmin women in Kanara and even the women among Christians of Kanara many of whom are converts from among Brahmins use the term *bammunu* i.e., Brahmin, for husband. A similar practice is to be noticed among the Moplahs and Tiyas of Malabar. In the same manner the Navayat women have adopted their community name in referring to husband.

The wife is termed *mheli*. This may be the corrupt form of the Sanskrit word *mahila* meaning woman.³

Relations on the side of daughter-in-law or son-in-law are termed *samdi* or *sōste*. *Samdi* is just another form of the Sanskrit word *sambandhi* meaning relation.

1 *Gazetteer of Bombay City and Island*, Vol. I, p. 252.

2 Also see footnote on p. 19, *supra*.

3 There are several such corrupt forms of Sanskrit words to be found in the dialect of the Navayats, e. g., *parñē* (marriage) from *pariṇaya*, *gōsā* (God) from *gōswāmi* etc.

The terms *ambulo* or *amulo* used for man and *ambuli* or *abuli*¹ used for woman are noteworthy as these words are not used by any other community.² Mrs. Iravati Karve has pointed out that in old Marathi literature husband was also referred to as *āmulā*, *ābulā* or *āmbulā* and wife as *āmbuli* or *āmbulī*.³ These terms for husband and wife are similar to the terms of Navayats for man and woman, and in many languages the terms for man and husband and for woman and wife are interchangeable. Whatever may be the origin of these terms, and Mrs. Karve is of the opinion that they may have come from the Tamil word *ambar* or *aṇaṇan*,⁴ it is fairly clear that the Navayats have retained them from old Marathi and Konkani languages while the other dialects of these languages have somehow lost them. A closer examination of the dialect of the Navayats would disclose many such words which were found in old Konkani but are non-existent in the other modern dialects of this language.

In most cases where the Navayats have terms of their own for relations, the general kinship terms used in Konkani are also to be found side by side, but the latter are rarely used.

1 They also use the Konkani words *mānus* or *mānush* and *bāil-mānus* or *bāil-mānush* respectively for man and woman. But the use of these terms is less frequent.

2 However, I have been informed by Shri. S. Silva, B. A., LL. B. of Karwar that among the Desh Bhandaris who are a Konkani speaking people of North Kanara one of the terms for woman is *aboli*.

3 *Bulletin of the Deccan College Research Institute* (Poona), Vol. I, p. 368.

4 *Ibid.*, p. 369.

CHAPTER VI

Life in Navayat Settlement and Family

The Morning Activities

The day begins quite early for the Navayats. They rise usually between 5 and 6 a. m., the women getting up even earlier. After performing the usual ablutions they recite their morning prayers which have to be completed before sunrise. The males go for prayers to the nearby mosque and the women say them in their own houses. The women finish their prayers much earlier than men and after prayers they set to their work of preparing breakfast. Those who have leisure read the Qur'ān or other religious literature.

Breakfast is taken after the men have finished their prayers. It is called *nashta* and usually consists of eatables called *puttu* and *appo*. The richer classes have a variety of other preparations. Tea is the common beverage.

For the young husbands who have spent the previous night at the houses of their wives' parents it is now time to return to their own houses.¹ The men then go about their usual work. Those who have shops or other business in the vicinity attend to their work. Some

¹ It is said that in olden days the husband used to return to his own house for his breakfast but now it has become a custom to have it at the wife's house so much so that it is insisted that he should take his breakfast there. During one of my visits to Bhatkal a young husband whose wife was accustomed to stay in her parents' house had taken her to his house for a few days as a special case. But because under normal circumstances he was expected to take his breakfast at his mother-in-law's place his breakfast as well as the milk which is taken at the wife's place just before retiring to bed was sent to his house while he stayed there with his wife.

go to their gardens and fields either for the supervision of property or for the collection of rent. But those who have come home on a holiday spend their time in various pursuits like putting their houses in order, settling terms with their tenants, collecting provisions for their families to last during their absence, going to the market to fetch fish and vegetables or just relaxing at home. Most of the women occupy themselves with cooking, cleansing and looking after their children. Some engage themselves in stitching and embroidering. The school-going children, of course, attend their schools or religious classes.

All these activities continue till about 10 or 11 a. m., when those who are accustomed to take their daily baths do so. Even for those who bathe once or twice in a week this is the time for such baths. If a fresh set of clothes is to be worn it is also done about this time after bath. The richer people generally change clothes every day and those who cannot afford several sets change thrice, twice or at least once a week. The women change their clothing less often than men.

Dress

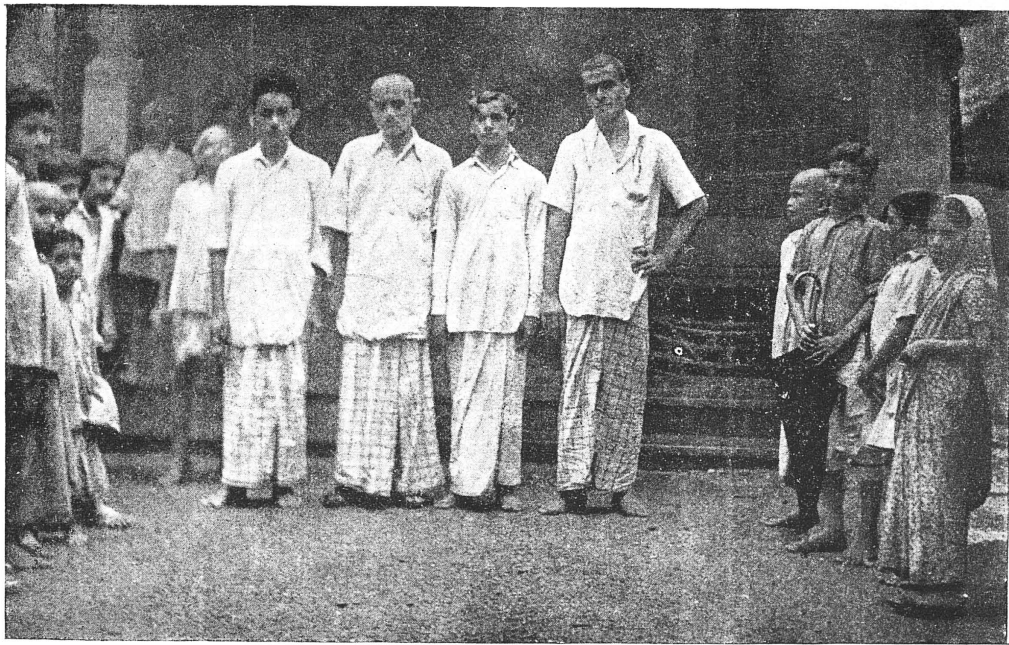
The dress of the Navayats bespeaks of their mixed origin. Significantly enough the dress of women resembles that of the local Indian women while the dress of men is foreign to the locality.

The dress common among men comprises a *lungi* (also called *mundu*) which is a piece of cloth tied round the loins and reaching down to the ankles, a banian, a shirt, a cap and a pair of sandals. Coats are also worn over the shirt, but the use of coat is not very common. *Mundu* and shirt are worn by all the Shāfi'ī Muslims of the west coast of India, especially the Moplahs of Malabar and the Konkani Muslims of the coast of Konkan. The Labbais of the coast of Coromandel also have this

mode of dress. In the Coromandel coast and in Kerala including Malabar *mundu* and shirt are worn by all communities and so the dress of the Moplahs and the Labbais of the Coromandel coast is proper to their soil. But in places where the Navayats and the Konkani Muslims live this mode of dress is adopted by no other peoples. It is therefore evident that they have borrowed it from outside. The Navayats have many traits in common with the Moplahs of Malabar indicating thereby that this form of their dress also must have been borrowed from the Moplahs. Their mode of wearing the *mundu* also supports this conclusion. In tying the *mundu* round the waist by tucking the two ends at either side, one flap will overlap the other. In Malabar, in the case of non-Moplahs, the upper flap will end at the right-hand side and the lower one at the left-hand side. But in the case of Moplahs the upper flap will end at the left-hand side.¹ Further, the non-Moplahs in Malabar, wear under the *mundu* and next to the skin at the waist covering the privities a piece of cloth known as *Kōmanam*, whereas the moplahs wear no such under garment. The dress of the Navayats resembles that of the Moplahs in both these respects. In some cases the two breadthwise sides of the *mundu* are stitched together making it look like a loose skirt, but it is tied round the waist in the usual *mundu*-fashion.

Side by side with this common mode of dress there is also another form of dress which is worn by some of the old men even today. This consists of a pair of white pyjamas, a banian, a long shirt called *yakhthayo*, a jacket called *sudriya*, a towel for the shoulder, a white cap with a turban for the head and a pair of sandals. This costume

1 The reason given for this different method of tying the *mundu* by the Moplahs is that as Muslims they cannot touch the privities by the right hand at the time of passing urine or ablution and the method of tying the *mundu* as they do, renders the use of the left hand on those occasions more convenient.



A group of Navayats.
(The mode of dress of the girl at the right is typical of the female attire.)

is reminiscent of the Arab dress and may be attributed to Arab influence. Such mode of dress is also to be found among the Moplahs and the Konkani Muslims. Among the Moplahs those who wear it more commonly are the Thangals or the Syeds who, as their very title suggests, are the descendants of Arabs, and who, since their higher social prestige is derived from their connection with the Prophet's progeny, have found it necessary to retain as many Arab traits as possible.

Although this dress is worn by a few individuals and the very fact of its being used by older men signalizes its fast disappearance, it still forms part of the typical attire of a Navayat bridegroom. The dress of the bridegroom consists of gold embroidered pyjamas, a long shirt extending below the knees (*yakhthayo*), a broad silk belt called *kamarband* and a folded silk shawl called *dupṭā* which is passed round the left shoulder and below the right arm-pit. The head-dress consists of a cap with a turban called *mudoso* (also called *muṛso*) which has a plume called *turāyi*. In the middle of the turban some flowers are kept. He also adorns himself with a long gold chain called *sarpulīa tāwiz* which has an amulet containing words from the Qur'ān. The sandals worn are embroidered and are such as will make noise while walking. The noise of the bridegroom's sandals is proverbial as a signal for the women to move away from the bride. The present day bridegrooms prefer to wear simpler dress consisting of a white *lungi* white mulmul shirt and a white cap called *zali topi*. Latterly some of the bridegrooms have taken to wearing European dress during the marriage ceremonies.

It may be recalled that the earliest bridegrooms of this community, as in the case of all Muslim communities on the coast formed through Arab influence, were Arabs. As customs usually die hard especially if they are

connected with important institutions like marriage, the dress of the early bridegrooms must have set a model for the mode of dress of the bridegrooms of subsequent generations, whatever dress the people adopted for their daily wear. Even in Malabar the traditional dress of the bridegroom shows Arab influence. The traditional dress of a bridegroom in Malabar consists of a pair of long trousers called *kalsa*, a long shirt reaching below the knees called *neela kuppayam*, a silk or woollen shawl tied round the waist and another silk shawl placed on the shoulder. The head is covered with a cap over which a turban is tied.

Caps in common use are those made of a special type of velvet cloth and called *makhmali topi*, those made of stiff white cloth woven in meshes and called *zali topi*, and Turkish fur caps. Embroidered caps are called *zari topi*. Small white skull-caps like the ones extensively used in Malabar are worn by some old men underneath their turbans especially if they are accustomed to dress in the Arab fashion. A type of fur cap like the one worn by the late Quaide Azam Jinnah and popularly known as *Jinnah cap* is all the rage among members of the younger generation.

In olden days practically all the male Navayats used to shave their heads completely and grow a beard. But now this practice is observed by a few old men here and there. Majority among the younger generations have their hair cropped and do not wear a beard. Some do not even wear caps for fear of their hair being disturbed. Formerly, leaving one's head bare was considered unbecoming but now it is regarded as fashionable.

The wardrobe of a well-to-do man may comprise about a dozen *lungis*, an equal number of shirts, two coats, half a dozen banians, two caps and two pairs of shoes or sandals. Men belonging to poorer classes have to manage with about half the number of above items.

The women's garments consist of a striped piece of red cloth called *val* which is tied round the waist underneath the sari as a skirt, a blouse and a sari the loose end or pallav of which is passed across the bosom, the left shoulder, and from there over the head, allowing it to hang freely over the right shoulder. The saris and blouses are generally of gay colours and made of silk. Cotton clothes are worn by the poorer classes.

Although these three main items of dress are common to the women of other neighbouring communities also, the Navayats have made some modifications to meet with their religious requirements. Women of no other communities in the neighbourhood of Navayats put the pallav of their sari over the head. The Navayat women however do so because Muslim women are not allowed to leave their heads exposed. Again, the blouses or bodice of other women are tight-fitting and sleeveless or with short sleeves. They are often short leaving exposed portions of the stomach and the back. But the blouses of the Navayat women are somewhat loose and long, reaching even below the waist. The sleeves are almost full coming upto the wrists or a little above. All this is in conformity with the requirements of Islam. In olden days the sleeves were about three fourths of the arm's length. But at present their length varies. Women with a strong religious bias have full sleeves and those having an eye upon modern fashions shorten them to half and in rare instances even wear sleeveless blouses.

The most remarkable feature about their blouse is that although it is long, reaching below the point where the sari is tied round the waist, its lower end is not tucked inside the sari but is left to hang loose outside the sari. In this respect their blouse resembles that of the Moplah women. In both these communities the blouses are not buttoned and they are not open in front. Such blouses seem to be peculiar only to the Moplah and the

Navayat women on the west coast of India. It is quite likely that the pattern was first designed or adopted by the Moplahs and subsequently borrowed from them by the Navayats. The fact that although the female progenitors of Navayats are culture-historically closer to the female progenitors of the Konkani Muslims than to the ancestresses of Moplahs, they have adopted certain important traits from the Moplahs rather than from the Konkani Muslims would suggest that the Navayats had more intimate connections with the Moplahs.¹

Apart from their dress which is as modest as could be expected by their religion the Navayat women observe strict purdah while going outdoors. For this purpose they use a large sheet of cloth called *valye* or *vodni* which envelops the head and the whole person and is also pulled over the face. The *valye* is being gradually replaced with the modern *burka*. However, at the time of marriage, especially when she is taken to the bridegroom's house on special occasions, the bride has to use only the *valye* and not *burka*. The bride's dress consists of a white silk sari with red border, specially decorated with gold brocade and which is called *yelasule*, a full-sleeved satin blouse with silver embroidery and slippers worked with gold or silver threads and which are called *Pāpush*. The present day brides, however, wear any type of silk saris, embroidered velvet blouses and modern slippers. But the use of *valye* for purdah is still retained although they may use *burka* on other occasions. Although the women can go out of the house during daytime by

1 The women of Konkani Muslims wear a tight-fitting and short sleeved bodice which is in front just sufficient to cover the breasts. The neck of the bodice is V-shaped and the two lower extremities are tied together in a knot, there being no buttons or hooks.

observing purdah, they prefer to go to one another's house after sunset.¹

Purdah is introduced into a woman's life while she is yet a girl of seven to ten years of age depending upon her stature. Ever afterwards she cannot mix with grown-up boys or men nor attend social functions.

The women of poorer classes go barefooted. But the well-to-do classes wear slippers. Leather slippers curled upwards at the toe and called *kavshyo* are commonly worn. Ordinary slippers are called *khadave* and slippers with gold embroidery are known as *pāpush*.

A middle class woman possesses about two to four saries and as many blouses and *vals*² or skirts. Generally the same sari is worn both at home and while going outdoors. On festive occasions new saries are bought which are subsequently used for daily wear with the result that the saries worn by them at home are usually of silk.

Ornaments

The women are very fond of adorning themselves with gold and silver ornaments. Ornaments used on the upper parts of the body such as ear, nose, neck, arms and fingers are usually made of gold and the ornaments worn round the ankles are of silver.

Ear Ornaments :— Odd number of holes, five, seven or nine are bored in each ear and of these one is in the lobe and the others are in the incurved margin or helix

1 A similar practice is also followed by the Moplah women of Malabar residing in towns. But the Moplah women on such occasions make use of umbrellas instead of a *burka* or a sheet to cover them, and in the Malabar towns like Calicut and Ponnani one may very commonly notice after sunset several women, huddled together under one umbrella, passing through the lanes of Moplah localities. The umbrella is intended for holding against the gaze of male passersby.

2 Instead of *vals* skirts are used nowadays.

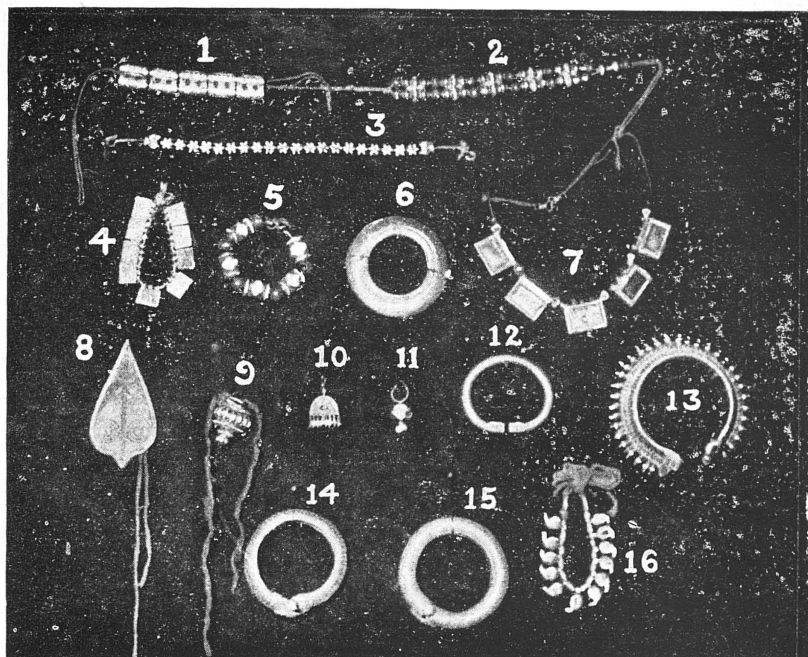
of the ear. As many ornaments are worn as there are holes.¹ Ornaments commonly worn in the ear rims are called *halke* and *thatti*. In the ear lobes are worn ornaments called *shevnthe* which is in the form of the flower *jasminum auriculatum*, *pathi-mudi* which is in the form of a ring with a leaf-like design hanging from it and *mudi* which looks more or less like a ring.

Nose Ornaments :— Rings called *mudi* and star shaped or crescent shaped ornaments called *puḍo* are worn in the nose. Ornaments like *nath* and *bulāq* which are popular in other Muslim communities such as the Deccani Muslims are not used by the Navayat women. Nose ornaments are now being eliminated and the present day girls do not have their noses bored.

Hand Ornaments :—Different types of gold, glass or celluloid bangles are worn on the forearms and wrists. The present day bangles are thinner and of a delicate make. The general term for these is *kaḍavlyo* and a popular variety is known as *kaḍavlya pāti*. Thick solid bangles which are now confined mainly to older women are known as *bilyo*. A special type of bracelet is known as *kangan*. A string of beads tied on the wrist is called *hastar* and a string of amulets tied on the forearm is termed *tawzo*. The women of younger generation generally wear three gold bangles on each wrist together with or without other glass and celluloid bangles. Fingers are adorned with gold rings.

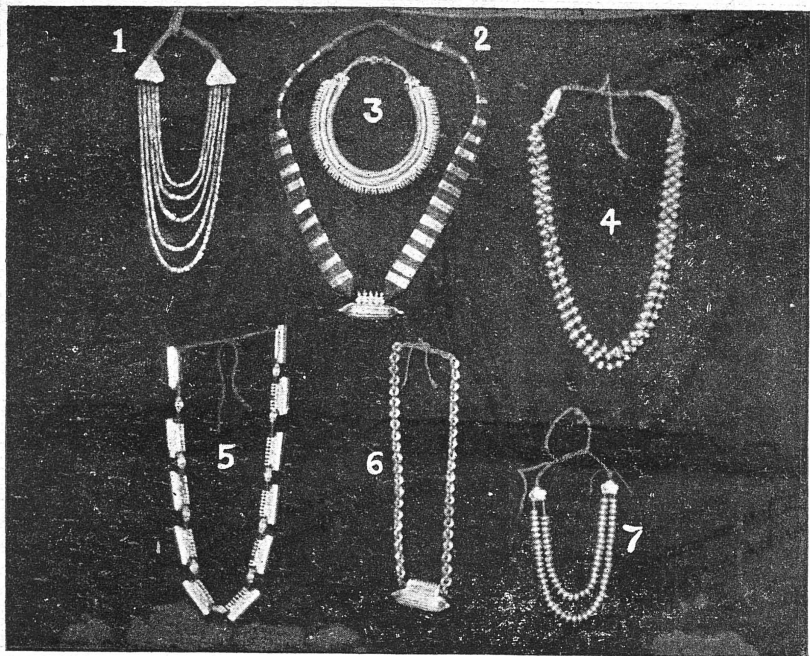
At present no ornaments are worn on the upper arm. But in olden days armlets known as *bazuband* (which is a string of amulets) and *tasbīh* (a string of beads) were commonly worn.

1 Of late the tendency has been to have only one ornament in each ear and therefore the present day girls have only one hole in each ear and that only in the ear-lobe. The more enlightened and religious minded women even discard the ear ornaments altogether.



Ornaments of the Navayats—I

1. Bazuband 2. Tasbīh 3. Karamania lasso 4. Tawzo (for the forearm)
5. Hastar 6. Kangan 7. Tawzo (for the neck) 8. Kedag 9. Kubo
10. Halke 11. Pathi-mudi 12. Sari 13. Jhinyo 14. Toḍe
15. Attekōl 16. Ghaguryo.



Ornaments of the Navayats—II

1. *Pānch sarachi duḍalli* 2. *Vollo lasso* 3. *Patiā-sar* 4. *Homal malo*
5. *Tawzā-sar* 6. *Sarpulliā tāwīz* 7. *Duḍalli*.

Neck Ornaments :—Necklaces with various designs and sizes are worn round the neck. The general term for a necklace is *lasso*. The indispensable neck ornament for a married woman is the lucky thread known as *karmania lasso*. There are two types of lucky thread: the one is a gold chain strung entirely with black beads and the other is strung with both black and gold beads alternately. A long gold chain is called *vollo lasso*; a special variety of *vollo lasso* consists of a golden amulet strung to a thick velvet tape having bands of golden plates at regular intervals. A gold chain with several small circular gold plates hanging from it is called *dali lasso*. One of the longer necklaces commonly worn is called *putliā-sar*. A tight-fitting gold necklace (choker) is called *paṭiā sar*. Necklaces with several rows of gold chains are known as *duḍalli* and *duḍallis* of different number of rows are qualified with their respective number of rows, e. g., a *duḍalli* with five rows is termed *pānch sarachi duḍalli*. A necklace called *sarṇpulliā tāwiz* consists of a gold amulet hanging from a chain also of gold, and another called *tawzā sar* is made up of an odd number of gold amulets, usually eleven, strung round a string. Necklaces with rows of gold beads which are strung round strings are called *homal malo*.

Head Ornaments :—Studs and bosses of various designs are pinned to the hair. The different types of studs are named after the designs they bear at the top end. Common among them are *kedag* (the flower of the screw pine plant), *rakhti* and *shizfool*. Combs called *fanyo* inset in gold ornamental designs are worn at the crown of the head. A special type of ornamented gold knob is called *kubo*.

Anklets :—Different types of silver anklets are worn, common among them being known as *saryo*, *jhinyo*, *toḍe aṭṭekōl* and *ghaguryo*. Toe rings are not in use.

There are no special types of ornaments for girls who wear the ornaments of women themselves. The bride is

decked with different kinds of ornaments chief among them being *putliā-sar* round the neck, and *kedag* and *rakhti* on the head. Ornaments with elaborate designs and which look prominent are preferred at weddings. However, boys are decked with special kinds of ornaments. They consist of a gold chain with an amulet, for the neck, solid golden bangles called *kaḍe* and *toḍe* for the hands, a gold or silver chain called *dāb* for the waist and silver anklets (*saryo*) for the ankles.

Men do not wear any ornaments except for a gold or silver ring on the finger. However, the bridegroom alone is privileged to wear a gold chain called *sarpuliā-tāwiz* during the marriage ceremonies.

Girls and young women gather their hair into one large plait which hangs straight down the back and which is decorated at the crown with golden bosses and flowers. Women in general and elderly women in particular gather and tie the hair into a knot behind and run through it a large pin with an ornamental silver or gold head to it.

Flowers are a passion with the womenfolk. Flowers called *shēvthe* (chrysanthemum), *sāpi* (champaca), *mogri* (double jasmine), *kast-mogri* (common jasmine) and *zaifūl* (Spanish jasmine) are used for daily wear. On special occasions such as marriages, and functions connected with pregnancy flowers of the arecanut palm called *honfūl* and of the plant *pandanus fascicularis* or screw pine called *kedag* are chosen. The bride during marriage functions and young women during functions connected with pregnancy are decked with bulk quantities of flowers.

Lunch and After

Particularly at Bhatkal the first meal of the day is taken between 10 a. m., and 12 noon, that is, before the noon prayers which are recited just after the sun has begun to decline. In other places it is taken a little later.

After the noon prayers most people relax or take a nap until tea time which is between 2 p. m., and 3 p. m. The afternoon prayers are said about 3-30 p. m. Next the women get ready the evening meal and the men go about their business.

Again, especially at Bhatkal the evening meal is customarily taken before sunset.¹ The meal is followed by the evening prayers which are required to be said soon after sunset. In the other localities the meal is taken after the prayers any time between 7-30 p. m., and 8-30 p. m. When the evening meal and prayers are over the women are entirely free from the household activities for the day, and then commences a spate of visits by women from one house to another. From now until about 8-30 p. m., the time is devoted exclusively to recreation which consists chiefly of small talk and gossip. Men also indulge in similar types of recreation. The children meet together at various places either in the lanes or mosque premises and have their own games. In short the time between 7 p. m. and 8. 30 p. m.² is the busiest period for recreational activity during the whole day for the entire community. It is also during this period that individual and family problems are discussed. Men and women meet separately and while conversing indulge in the smoking of the hubble-bubble i.e., the tobacco pipe called *hukka*, the women being the greater *hukka* addicts. The women are also voracious pan eaters.

The final prayers at nightfall are said about 8-30 p. m. As usual during the time of prayers the men go to the mosques and the women recite their prayers at home. Some men linger in the mosques for some time after prayers. Mosque is the place where all the men of the

1 This peculiar custom is discussed in Chepter'III, p. 59, *supra*.

2 This period holds good for Bhatkal, and in other localities the corresponding period is between 8-30 p. m., and 10 p. m.

lane meet and therefore the proper venue for the discussion of general topics. When they return home generally tea is served. Finally all retire to bed.

In the case of young husbands the time to go to the place of the wife is just after the last prayers, that is after 9 p. m. From now onwards the wife will keep waiting for her husband and if he does not arrive within a reasonable time a person will be sent to his house to enquire into the cause for his delay. When the husband arrives the wife sits by his side for some time carrying on conversation. In the meantime he is offered some sweets if prepared during the day and milk or tea. At the time of the arrival of the husband the wife will try to look her best. If a new sari is worn during the day it is not changed until after the husband has seen her in that dress. She will also adorn herself with ornaments and fragrant flowers and apply scent. Betel will be chewed more often than usual. At the time of going to bed she wears a white sari.¹ It is customary to sprinkle the bed with rose water.

The women in general go to bed at night in the same dress as that worn during day time unless the sari is a new one when it is removed and an old one is substituted. The men remove their shirts before going to bed and sleep with waistcloth and banian on. The children also do not usually have a separate set of clothes for the night.

Thus the life in a Navayat village is one of quiet and peaceful routine. On festive occasions and holy days like Fridays there is much gaiety characterised by the wearing of a new or clean set of clothes, application of perfumes, preparation of better meals and various

¹ Whenever the husband comes home at night a woman usually changes into a white sari. The blouse, however, is coloured.

types of sweets and the exchange of visits¹ and eatables.

A remarkable feature of their social relations is that whenever in a certain family some special type of eatable is prepared it has to be shared with some of the relatives and neighbours. If this is not done mild complaints are voiced by the neglected parties at the daily conversations. In the richer families presents of eatables are received almost every day from one family or another. Such presents are sent usually in the mornings. Also, if a dinner is arranged in honour of a guest, son-in-law, daughter-in-law or any other relative, friends and relatives are invited on the occasion.²

Food and Dishes

Rice and fish constitute the staple food of the Navayats. Except on festive occasions the dishes prepared are in Indian style. On feast days and for public dinners *Moglai* dishes are served. The richer people are gradually introducing *Moglai* dishes in their daily diet also. The poorer people eat meat such as fowls, mutton and beef usually once a week on Fridays; the richer classes eat it oftener. There are a few people especially among the older generations who do not eat beef.

1 On Fridays as soon as the noon prayers are over it is customary for the men to visit their near and dear ones and have the afternoon tea with them. The ladies always anticipate such visits and make adequate preparations.

2 Once when I was invited to a dinner by one of the Navayats at Bhatkal I was surprised to find there about two dozen other male guests who had come to dine with me. I thought that the dinner had been arranged as part of some social function to which I myself was an invitee. But after the dinner it was explained to me by the host that the dinner was arranged specially in my honour and that the others had been invited according to custom. In addition to the men there were women invitees also who had participated in the dinner in the women's quarters.

Apart from the everyday preparation of boiled rice a number of eatables are prepared out of rice. Soaked rice, either plain or mixed with cocoanut scrapings, different kinds of fruits or jaggery, is ground into dough and bread is prepared either by frying in a pan or steaming. Each preparation has its characteristic name. Bread prepared out of plain rice dough is called *chāmbat-poli*, of rice and jaggery is called *godā-poli*,¹ of rice and cocoanut is *nalla-poli*,² of rice and jack-fruit is *founsā-poli*,³ of rice and cashew is *kazwā-poli*,⁴ of rice and cucumber is *thowshyā-poli*,⁵ of rice and fenugreek seeds (*trigonella foenum-graecum*) is *methā-poli*⁶ and of rice, milk, eggs and cocoanut is *chorpoli*. A little jaggery is added to all preparations of which fruits form an ingredient.

Cakes of rice which are steamed are called *bhāḷlyo*. If eggs are added, they are called *thathā-bhāḷlyo* and if jack-fruit is mixed they are called *founsā-bhāḷlyo*. Thus rice cakes are prepared by adding different kinds of fruits and other ingredients and each variety of cakes is named after the particular ingredient added. Small balls of rice dough are steamed and they are called *mudkule*. These are sometimes put into curry together with shell-fish. When a big lump of rice dough is steamed, it is called *und*.

In some preparations of rice the dough is leavened⁷ and either fried in pans or steamed. Common among such preparations are called *pole* and *appo*.

One of the most common preparations especially popular among the poorer classes is called *puttu*. Rice

1 God = jaggery.

2 Nal = cocoanut

3 Founas = jack fruit.

4 Kazu = cashew.

5 Thowshe = cucumber.

6 Methi = fenugreek seeds.

7 The leaven generally used is black-gram (*phaseolus mungo*).

dough¹ is mixed with cocoanut scrapings and the mixture is leavened. It is next filled in bamboo tubes and cooked in steam. This preparation is made use of only for breakfast. Almost all other preparations of rice among the Navayats could also be found among the other neighbouring communities, but this preparation called *puttu* is unheard of among them. The only other place on the west coast of India where such a preparation is made is the coast of Kerala including Malabar where it is very common among all communities not excluding the Moplahs. In Malabar too the preparation is used mainly for breakfast and its name is also *puttu*. It is therefore clear that the Navayats have learnt this preparation from the Moplahs of Malabar and the fact of its use being made so very widely and that too only for breakfast, as in many other cases points to the very intimate past connections of the Navayats with the Moplahs.

One of the most common sweets prepared out of rice is called *sacar-brinji*. To prepare this rice is boiled with sugar, ghee and dry fruits like plums and almonds, and coloured with saffron. It is distributed among friends and relatives on important social occasions like marriage, betrothal and the birth of a child. In another type of sweet preparation of rice which is called *bhiddi* pure white rice flour is kneaded with eggs, sugar and ghee and fried as cakes. The cakes are finally dipped into sugar syrup. In yet another type called *nevri* rice dough is stuffed with a mixed preparation of beaten rice, cocoanut scrapings and jaggery, made into cakes covered with leaves and cooked in steam.

A slightly hot preparation of rice is called *kichdi*. It consists of rice boiled with gram, meat, either chicken

¹ In this case rice is not so finely ground as in the case of other preparations. Sometimes condiments also are added at the time of grinding.

or mutton, cocoanut juice and condiments, and prepared in a semi-liquid form.

Small balls are prepared out of rice flour kneaded with eggs, sugar and cocoanut juice and fried in oil. They are called *piṭagule*.

Vermicelli called *sheyyo* are prepared out of rice and eaten with a sweet liquid preparation of cocoanut juice and jaggery.

Wheat is also used extensively in various types of preparations. Two types of wheat chapathis are prepared, one type is thick and called *gōvāpoli* and the other variety very thin and called *humalli-poli*. Thin chapathis made of a mixture of wheat and rice flour and fried without the use of any oil are called *chavavaili-poli*. They are eaten with mutton curry and sometimes with sugar.

Vermicelli prepared out of wheat are dried and preserved. On occasions these are soaked in sugar syrup and fried in ghee. Such a preparation is called *seyyā-sacar-brinji*.

Pudding is prepared out of granulous wheaten flour, the other ingredients being eggs, cocoanut juice, ghee and dry fruits like almonds and pistachio. It is called *tari-e-poli*. Another sweet preparation of granulous wheaten flour of which the other main ingredients are milk and sugar, is called *tari-e-sacar-brinji*.

A sweet preparation called *malida* is prepared out of wheat flour. Wheat flour, sugar, ghee etc., are mixed together in a liquid form and boiled until the mixture solidifies to viscousness when it is poured into trays or plates and allowed to become solid. It is then cut into square pieces and it can be preserved for several days. The speciality of *malida* is that it is given as a gift by the mother-in-law to the son-in-law when he starts on his way to his business place for the first time after

marriage so that he may distribute it among his friends abroad. Another preparation of wheat flour added with eggs and cocoanut juice is called *ghavan*.

Wheat flour, eggs, sugar and cocoanut juice are kneaded together and the dough so prepared is made into thin wafer-shaped cakes. The cakes are first fried without oil and next several such cakes are superposed one over another and fried in ghee. These delicious sweets are called *satpatri nevri*. Like *puttu* this preparation also is entirely foreign to the locality of Navayats, and its origin also can be traced to Malabar. Among the Moplahs such a preparation is called *chattipattiri*.¹ There is no doubt that the term *satpatri* of the Navayats is a corrupt form of the term *chattipattiri* of the Moplahs and that this preparation of the Navayats is copied from the Moplahs.

Eggs form an important ingredient in the preparation of many sweets. One preparation of which eggs are the main constituent is called *tairlose*. It consists of eggs and sugar fried in ghee.

Various types of sweet liquid preparations are made. Their common name is *godān* and the different varieties are qualified by the name of the special ingredient put, the common ingredients being jaggery, cocoanut juice and ghee. The popular preparations are *gōva-godān* (of wheat), *muga-godān* (of green gram), *tandla-godān* (of rice), *kela-godān* (of plantains), *ambya-godān* (of mangoes), *amatya-godān* (of hog-plum or *spondias mangifera*) and *dakhya-godān* (of plums).

Curries prepared out of vegetables like pumpkin (white gourd melon) and to which cocoanut juice is added are called *pande* and those which are prepared out of mixed vegetables and to which cocoanut juice is not added

1 Thin cakes are called *pattiri* in Malayalam.

are called *sakhuche*. Dry preparations of vegetables are called *saura*. Fish is ordinarily cooked in two different ways, the dishes being called *sāmbhār* and *ukaḍ*.

The main *Moglai* dishes are *pulāo*, *hushka* (superior type of *pulāo*), *akhani*, *biryāni*, *kurma*, *kābāb* (mutton roast) etc. For *biryāni* either mutton or chicken is used. Other non-vegetarian dishes are chops of mutton or chicken, cutlets, fried chicken, mutton or beef samosas, mutton, beef or chicken curries, fried or boiled eggs and egg omelettes.

Drinks

The main beverage now popular among them is tea. Coffee is seldom used under normal circumstances. But as the older people among them recall even tea was not common in the days gone by. The drink most commonly used on those days was sherbet. This is evidenced by the fact that even now sherbet has to be served at all public occasions whether they be marriage functions or funerary ceremonies. Another common drink is what is known as *faluḍa*. Milk of buffalo, cow or goat is used for drinks and in the preparation of eatables. If plain milk is to be drunk, cow's milk is usually preferred.

Mode of Eating

The meal is generally served on a round mat called *sufra*. Rice is served in a big plate called *tāla* or *wāṭe* and fish or vegetable curry in a large dish. The persons who are to dine sit in a circle round the food. If there are any savouries, each of them is served in as many cups or saucers as there are diners such that while all eat rice and curry from the common plate and dish, they may eat the savouries severally. Sometimes two or three persons partake of the savoury from a common saucer. Different dishes are accompanied with different types of sauce to give relish to the food. Pickle is served with rice and curry, chutney with *pulāo*, onion salad with *biryāni*,

vegetable with meat and so on. Salt is always passed round at the commencement of the meal and every person has to put a pinch of it into his mouth before beginning to eat.

At present the tendency is for every person to have separate plates. Even then the food is placed at the centre in large plates and each person helps himself usually with his own hand or sometimes with the help of a small plate or ladle or a spoon. At least two persons share the curry from the same dish.

During family meals males and females eat together. They usually sit on low wooden stools called *monoi*. When there are guests males and females eat separately, the males occupying the first room and females the last. If the guests present are too many they are divided into convenient groups. Before and after the meal water in a jug and a wash basin are taken round for washing hands and mouths of the guests. Water is first taken to the guest of honour. Prayers are also said before and after meals. The dinner is usually the last item of any social function and the guests retire immediately the dinner is over.

Education and Social Uplift

Great importance is given to the religious instruction of children. As soon as a child is about four or five years of age it is sent to a school of religious instruction. Practically every lane has such a school called *maktab*.¹ The children are taught to read the Qur'ān in Arabic and to read and write Urdu and Persian. Both boys and girls attend these schools, reading there for three to four years. As the men are engaged in more remunerative occupations these schools are conducted mostly by women teachers.

1 The thirty-six schools observed by Ibn Butūtā at Honnavar (see p. 36 *supra*) must have been of similar type.

Most Navayats deem the *maktab* stage as sufficient education for their children. It is only in recent decades that they have begun to appreciate the necessity of higher education and now they are sending their children to higher Urdu schools wherever possible. At Bhatkal they are running their own High School called Islamia Anglo-Urdu High School which is well patronised by the members of their community.

There is also a movement afoot for reorganising their community life and at Bhatkal a trust called *Majlis Islāh wa Tanzeem* established in 1919 is functioning for the social, political and economic uplift of the people.¹ The following are some of the aims of the trust which would give one an idea about the nature of the improvement sought to be brought about: (a) to organize lectures and public meetings, (b) to organize and direct volunteers and social workers, (c) to conduct night schools, (d) to bring about unity between the two Jamats at Bhatkal,² (e) to collect *zakat* with a view to spending it on a rational basis, (f) to make arrangements for funerals,³ (g) to arrange marriages of orphans, (h) to render financial assistance to the poor and the needy, (i) to run a reading room and a library, (j) to publish a journal and (k) to support the candidates of the community in elections. However, it cannot be said that all these aims are being successfully achieved but serious attempts are being made towards their fulfillment.

1 They also have an organization in the city of Bombay working for the uplift of the men employed or carrying on business there.

2 Regarding the two Jamats at Bhatkal *vide* the chapter on Religion *infra*.

3 Even in the case of well-to-do people sometimes there may not be any responsible male member present at home at the time of a funeral and hence the need for a public body to meet the emergency.

CHAPTER VII

The Navayat Life Cycle

Pregnancy and Birth

When a woman becomes pregnant for the first time, the blouse pieces presented by the husband at the time of marriage are cut for stitching and embroidering in the fifth month and this is continued for the next two months. The occasion is celebrated in the mother's house¹ to which friends and relatives also on the side of the husband are invited. Mainly sweets are distributed among those present.

In the seventh month a day is chosen on which she is made to wear one of the embroidered blouses and a new sari which is presented by the husband for the occasion. Her hands and feet are decorated with henna juice and she is decked with flowers and adorned with gold ornaments. A feast is given to friends and relatives at which the main course is a sweet liquid preparation of wheat or rice, cocoanut juice, jaggery etc., called *goḍān*.² The occasion is called *gurbini-dīs* (the pregnant woman's day). The same day she is taken to the husband's house for a similar feast. The dinner should again contain the main course of *goḍān* which is followed with *tatapolo* (a preparation of eggs), beaten rice and other sweet preparations. While dining she is seated with married women more or less of her own age.

1 As the woman remains in her parents' house for the first few years of marriage most of the ceremonies in connection with pregnancy and birth for the first time are performed in the house of her parents.

2 See p. 125 *supra*.

No such practices are observed for the subsequent pregnancies.

The first delivery of a woman always takes place in her parents' house. As soon as the child is born it is washed and an elderly man holding it in his hands announces the *adhān* i. e., call to prayer. He then says the prayer called *takbir* near the ear of the child. The child is next placed by the side of its mother. A little honey is put into its mouth to clear its stomach. Those who come to see the child are given sweets especially sugar.

For three days the new mother is kept on strict diet. Drinking water is carefully avoided and rice and jaggery are the only items of food. From the fourth day onwards a decoction prepared out of nutmeg, bonduc seed (*caesalpinia bonducella*), pepper, thick-leaved lavender (*anisochilus carnosus*), neem leaves, shoots of the sacred peepal tree (*ficus religiosa*) and ghee is given until about the thirtieth day. A tonic of which the main component is ginger is also given in the meantime. Starting from the twelfth day she is regularly given massage of oil and bathed in warm water. She is also fed with different kinds of food known for their nutritive value, especially chicken soup.

On the sixth day of delivery a feast is given to some female relatives and friends who are specially invited. No other practice is observed. But the Navayats of some places like Upponi call the function *chchatti*. This is obviously a survival of the Hindu custom of that name. Among some well-to-do Navayats the ceremony of *akika* is performed on the seventh day. This seems to have been introduced among them in recent times and is in accordance with the traditions of the Prophet. The performance of *akika* is obligatory upon all believers in Islam having sufficient means for such celebration. In Arabic, *akika* means cropping of one's hair. On the

occasion the hair of the child is cut off, and gold or silver is weighed against the hair thus cut and the precious metal is distributed among the poor. A number of guests are treated to a feast, the meal served consisting of the flesh of two sheep in case of male babes and of one in the case of female ones. The parents of the child cannot partake of this meal.

On the twelfth day again a feast is given in the same manner as on the sixth day. *Goḍān* is the main course on both these occasions. The feast is called *tāri-jevān*. Although the Navayats attach no significance to the celebration on the twelfth day it is clear that the observance is a survival of the Hindu ceremony of purification after birth. Among the Hindu communities the family of the parturient woman has to observe pollution for a few days after delivery. The numbers of days so observed vary in different communities. Among some the purification ceremony takes place on the 11th day, some others on the 12th day and so on. The fact that the Navayats give a feast on the twelfth day after delivery would suggest that their Hindu female ancestors belonged to a community which performs the purificatory rites on the 12th day of delivery.

The mother has to lie in for full forty days. The fortieth day is called *chāleeswe* which is observed in a special manner. Friends and relatives especially women, are invited. The young mother is bathed, dressed in a white sari, decorated and ornamented, and led to the well by women. She drops into the well odd numbers of betel leaves and nuts and draws from it odd number of pitchers of water. The water so drawn is poured to a cocoanut tree. The ceremony is called 'touching the well' and is performed in the forenoon as the sun is rising in the horizon.¹ The guests are treated to a feast.

1 This ceremony is now rarely performed.

The ceremonial bath on the fortieth day is important even according to Islamic practice and the parturient woman cannot say her daily prayers until this bath.

The child is named either soon after birth when the *adhān* is announced or later, but in any case before the fortieth day. It is put into the cradle generally in the twelfth night by its maternal grandmother or some other elderly woman.

Removing the hair of the child for the first time or piercing the ears of a girl does not call for any special observance. The ears of a girl are generally pierced between the ages of three and five years.

*Circumcision*¹

Boys are circumscribed generally between the ages of four and seven years and always before ten years. In olden days this ceremony was viewed with much religious significance and used to be performed with great pomp. The boy was treated like a bridegroom. He was dressed in a bridegroom's attire and taken in procession with the music of the local bands. Friends and relations were treated to a grand feast. Nowadays circumcision is a quiet affair and the operation is sometimes performed even by a doctor without making it a public show. During the time of healing the circumcised boy is given a special preparation of granulous wheat flour, milk and ghee. An alternative preparation is made of ragi flour, sugar and ghee.

Coming of Age

When a girl comes of age and has her first menses, she is given a ceremonial bath after the cessation of the menstrual flow. She is nicely dressed and decorated with

¹ Called *twār*.

flowers. Female friends and relatives are invited to a feast at which *godān* is served. If married she is taken to her husband's place for a dinner at which *tatapolo* is served.¹

After coming of age, or even before that, when a girl is considered fit to marry the Navayats practise a curious custom of not allowing their girls to mix even with women. Such girls are not allowed to attend social functions. A close correspondence with this custom may be found among the Moplahs of Malabar where a girl after puberty has to observe purdah even against women if they happen to be outside her family circle.

No special notice is taken of a woman in her monthly courses. But according to the religious precepts the menstruating woman cannot say her daily prayers until after the menstrual discharge is stopped and she has had her ceremonial bath.

Marriage

The importance of the marriage ceremonies varies according to the ideas upon which marriage is based. Where marriage is recognised as a religious sacrament and an irrevocable contract the ceremonies are preformed with the utmost care and seriousness and with an eye to the minutest details, while the marriages which can be conditionally dissolved are not celebrated with the same fervour and precision. For Muslims in general marriage is a civil contract with almost absolute powers for the husband to divorce his partner at will and a privilege for the wife to obtain divorce under certain circumstances. So Muslim marriages as a rule are simple and unostentatious. But for the Navayats

1 This practice was mainly observed in respect of young married girls. As marriages nowadays take place after the maturity of girls, the practice is gradually dying out.

marriage is a serious affair and notwithstanding the rights of the parties to divorce each other, for all practical purposes it is treated as an irrevocable solemn contract. The attitude is changing now, becoming more and more in tune with the general Muslim outlook. Marriages in olden times were celebrated in the orthodox Hindu fashion, faithfully following numerous Indian customs. Some of these customs have survived even now in some localities

In their marriage ceremonies the Navayats observe all the essentials of a Muslim marriage. In addition they have retained or incorporated a number of local customs and have modified certain Muslim practices to suit their cultural pattern.

Child and early marriages are now prohibited in India by law. But prior to this, marriages among Navayats were celebrated while the parties were yet children and before the girl reached her puberty. As soon as the girl reached the age of about four or five years and the boy about five or six years i. e., soon after piercing the ears of the girl and circumcising the boy, matches were arranged. The arrangement was announced in the presence of the kazi, friends and relatives, and followed with the feasts of betrothal on either side. However, marriage would take place when the parties reached the age of about eight to ten years. During the interim most cordial relations were maintained between the two households and gifts and sweets were mutually exchanged on festival occasions and betrothal anniversaries.¹ Such exchange of gifts is called *bhade*.

At present most of the girls are married between the ages of thirteen and sixteen years and boys after

¹ Such practices are also observed among the Moplahs of Malabar.

the age of sixteen years. Matches are generally arranged formally or informally two or three years before marriage. The bride's age should always be less than that of the bridegroom.

The proposal of marriage is usually made by the boy's party and the preliminaries of match are settled by women.¹ The bridegroom or male members of his family cannot see the prospective bride until she is married and as such it is the boy's mother, sisters or any other close female relations who have to approve of the girl.

When both the boy and the girl are approved by the parties concerned a day is fixed first at the girl's house for the formal betrothal ceremony. The bridegroom's father accompanied by the kazi and a few friends and relatives, all elderly men, go to the girl's house. Sweets are distributed to all present by the bridegroom's party. Someone from the gathering formally asks why these sweets are distributed and the girl's father explaining the purpose replies that it has been proposed to give his daughter in marriage to X the son of Y. This formal announcement is called *parshid* (possibly from the Sanskrit word *prasidh*, meaning *to publicize*). Next sweets are distributed by the bride's party. After this it is customary to treat the guests to a dinner.

A similar function is celebrated at the boy's house. Here it is the girl's party that serves the sweets first and the boy's father who answers the query. The boy and the girl do not visit each other's houses during these functions. The betrothal ceremony is variously called. Since the distribution of sweets is an important

¹ The boy and the girl usually have no choice in the matter. Moreover since there is no opportunity for them to meet each other before marriage romantic love is unknown.

item of the function it is popularly known as *thod-god* or sweetening the mouth. In places like Upponi where the boy's party has to take blouse pieces and flowers to the girl's house, the function is called *cholifule* i. e., "blouse pieces and flowers." It is also named *nisbath*.

Giving his daughter in marriage is the bounden duty of a Navayat, and it is the bride's father who has to bear the brunt of the marriage expenditure which exceeds all reasonable limits. So a father having several daughters is doomed to be a pauper.¹ However, to make the most of a bad bargain the father of many daughters used to celebrate the marriages of two, three, four or even five daughters all at a time to save the recurring expenditure. In that case the ages of the girls to be married would range from four to twelve years. When marriages were thus arranged in the same locality a number of boys and girls, sometimes as many as even forty, had to be married at one time. And a Navayat marriage celebrated in the normal manner observing all the customs would last for about forty days. Consequently a whole season was set aside for the celebration of weddings, during which period the entire community would have a gala time draining the resources of the unfortunate fathers of the girls to be married.

The marriage functions commence about ten days in advance of the actual wedding ceremony called *nikāh*, and they last for about thirty days after *nikāh*, thus occupying a period of about forty days. The bride's house is the venue of most of these functions. Generally all the important functions take place at night. The only other Muslim community on the west coast of India in which also marriages used to be celebrated

¹ Regarding the other liabilities of such a father see p. 74 *supra*.

for forty days is the Moplah community of Malabar. But whereas among the Navayats the marriage functions commence about ten days before the *nikāh* ceremony among the Moplahs they start after *nikāh*. Among them also most of the marriage functions take place at the bride's house and they usually take place at night.

The first function is called *raththa* or *thaharath* i. e., fixing night. At this night the engagement is confirmed and the day and time of the *nikāh* are formally fixed.¹ The kazi, *muktesars*,² friends and relatives are invited. Sweets like *tatapolo* and *sacar-brinji* are distributed. An important function of the night is the grinding of black-gram (*phaseolus roxburghii*) and it is called *uḍḍāmuḍo*.³ In the bridegroom's house the same day prior to this ceremony beads are strung to prepare the lucky thread which would subsequently be tied to the bride. From now onwards all the relatives and friends and whoever invited to the wedding usually do not cook in their houses but go for their meals to the marriage pendal. Although the ceremony of *raththa* is performed in the houses of bridegroom as well as

1 If the engagement is broken after this the party responsible has to pay a fine stipulated previously.

2 See the chapter on *Religion*, *infra*.

3 The term *uḍḍāmuḍo* is actually a corruption of the word *uḍḍāmuḥūrth* or *uḍḍi murta* as it is also called among some neighbouring Konkani speaking communities. Many of these communities such as the Shenvi Brahmins worship Ganapati at the commencement of any auspicious occasion, the ceremony being called *devkārya*. For the occasion an image of Ganapati is prepared out of the flour of black gram. In some places of Karnatak the Ganapati images are made of granulous wheat flour called *sajjige* on similar occasions and the relevant part of the function is called *sajjige muhūrtha*. *Uḍḍāmuḥūrth* literally means the auspicious moment of black gram and *Uḍḍāmuḍo* among the Navayats is a survival of the Hindu ceremony of *devkārya* which is performed at the beginning of an auspicious occasion.

the bride, there is one important detail which is observed only in the house of the bride. Here the *palang* or the cot¹ which is subsequently decorated for the use of the bridal couple is ceremoniously kept in the proper place—that is, in the second room of the house.² Among the Moplahs of South Kanara also great importance is attached to the installation of the bridal cot in the house of the bride, and the bridegroom's sister's husband or the maternal uncle places on it a gold ornament which goes to the bride.

Soon after *raththa* arrangements are made to decorate the bridal chamber in which the bridal cot is placed. The cot and the room are profusely decorated and the work lasts until the eve of the *nikāh* and involves much labour and material.³ In some houses, especially of rich people, two cots are decorated on either side of the room. If there is just one bride, only one cot is used and the other is kept for the sake of symmetry.⁴ If, on the other hand, there are more than two brides in the same house the other cots are kept in different rooms either on the ground floor or the first floor. In all the four corners of the cot four lamps are hung and these are lighted day and night for four days following the *nikāh*. A peculiarity of the bridal cot is that it is covered with seven mattresses placed one above the other. The bride and the bridegroom will have to

1 It is usually a double cot.

2 In the house of the bridegroom there is no use for such a cot, for the bride and the bridegroom do not spend their nights together at the latter's house for the first few years of their marriage or at least until all the marriage functions are over.

3 This is also the case with many of the Muslim communities in the coastal area such as the Moplahs and the Konkani Muslims.

4 A similar practice is to be found among the Moplahs of Malabar, especially the Keyi Moplahs of Tellicherry.

get into the bed by the aid of stools. This custom of covering the bridal cot with several mattresses was also followed among some sections of the Moplahs of Malabar.

The bridal chamber is called *maṇḍap* or *hokkal horaitaso thāw*.

The night following *raththa* or a few days later is devoted to the preparation of fire torches called *divṭe* and the occasion is named after these, namely *divṭe*. Old rags in the house are washed and wound round thin sticks. Seven or eight of these sticks are pierced to the outer skin of the plaintain tree and four or five such coverings of the plaintain tree are placed in position round a pole and plastered together with mud. When this torch is smeared with oil and burnt, it gives a very bright light. Several such fire torches are prepared to the accompaniment of songs. *Sacarbrinji* or beaten rice is distributed to guests. The function takes place only in the bride's house and the torches are used for all functions at nights after the *nikāh* whenever the bridegroom is invited and taken to the bride's house. Men of the Hindu fishermen caste called Moger are specially hired to carry fire torches.

Subsequently another night a function called *rāth-zagowni* or keeping awake during the night, takes place. Men and women sing, separately, the eulogies of the bridal couple. Sometimes men and women sing on different nights.¹ Women sit on swings and make themselves merry. Tea, sugar-candy, pepper etc., are distributed as often as are needed by the singers to

1 *Rāth-zagowni* is also kept up in the houses of the friends and relatives of the bride and the bridegroom. The bride or the bridegroom is invited along with other guests and the festivity goes on the whole night.

clear their throats. Early in the morning, about 5 a. m., conjee and *sacarbrinji* are served and the function gets over about 9 a. m., after another meal.

One of the important functions performed in the houses of both the bride and the bridegroom is called *maulood*.¹ It is mainly a function for men. The life history of the Prophet is related in songs by men and the night's function gives over about 9 a. m., in the following morning. The guests are treated to a feast, at which either *biryāni* or *pulāo* is served. If the parties are rich an open invitation is extended to all the Navayats of the locality and the functions are largely attended. The celebration of *maulood* is common to all the Muslims. The Navayats, however, celebrate it with great pomp and grandeur. Local bands are hired for the occasion and fireworks are displayed. From that night onwards bands are regularly played in both the houses. If there are many weddings the bands are hired even from distant places as the local bands would not be sufficient to go round.

For about five days before *nikāh* the bride and the bridegroom are daily rubbed with cocoanut juice and given baths in their respective houses.

The eve of the wedding is called *feno* and is celebrated at the houses of the bride as well as the bridegroom. At the bride's place about noon the bride is seated with an odd number of married women about her own age and she is applied sandalwood and turmeric paste on her forehead, hands and feet by every

1 In places like Manki and Upponi *maulood* is also called *devā-jevān* or meal to the god. It would appear that the Muslim custom of *maulood* was here substituted for the Hindu practice of propitiation to the gods in connection with functions like marriage.

woman present commencing with the bridegroom's mother or sister.¹ Next she is rubbed with cocoanut juice and then carried to the bathroom where she is bathed by several women who are closely related to her.² The water in which the bride is bathed is filled in the vessel earlier by all the women forming a line from the well and passing every pitcher of water down this line.³ It is a prerogative of every woman to participate in this ceremony and if any woman is not duly invited, the omission will, in all likelihood, be treated as an offence. However only married women whose husbands are living take part in the above ceremonies. After bath the bride is seated in the *mandap* and her hands and feet are painted with the henna juice. On the feet generally the designs of shoes are painted. Throughout all these ceremonies singing by women is continued. Finally all the guests are treated to a grand feast.

The bridegroom in his own house is first given a clean shave on his head by the barber⁴ who is presented with cloth, cocoanut, rice, sugar, plantains, betel etc., and also money. He is also applied sandalwood and turmeric paste and rubbed with cocoanut juice in the same manner as is done to the bride. The paste is first applied by the bride's mother or, if she is a widow or not alive, by the bride's married sister who along

1 As she approaches the bride to apply the paste every woman puts into the bride's mouth a pinch of sugar and ghee.

2 Just before the bath every woman puts into her mouth a pinch of the mixture of sugar and broken rice.

3 For the interpretation of a similar custom see J. Abbot : *The Keys of power*, p. 11.

4 Among the Moplahs of Malabar also the bridegroom is ceremoniously shaved just before he leaves for the bride's house for the first time. While shaving, a group of men sit round him and sing and clap hands.

with other women goes to the bridegroom's place as soon as the function at her place is over. Next he is given a bath. A few of the women closely related to him sing in the bath-room and also assist him while bathing. Band is played during all these ceremonies.

Towards the evening the bridegroom dressing himself in a bright coloured silk *lungi* and a shirt, and adorned with a gold necklace sits on a white cloth in the outermost room called *vasro*. He gives alms to the fakirs and the poor and makes donations to charitable institutions. Friends and relations come to greet him with garlands and presents.¹ At this time the band is played and the hired dancing girls make their performances.² When the receiving of visitors is over the bridegroom dresses himself up for the *nikāh* ceremony which is to follow.³

The *nikāh* ceremony invariably takes place at night,⁴ and at an auspicious moment previously appointed by the kazi (*qādi*) with the aid of a calendar called *taqveem*. Although among the Indian Muslims in general the ceremony takes place usually in the bride's house and failing which the mosque, among Navayats it usually takes place in the bridegroom's place and if it is inconvenient,

1 Presents may consist of soaps, perfumes, towels, caps etc.

2 The visiting guests pay the dancing girls some money and ask them to greet the bridegroom in their behalf. They salute the bridegroom saying "Doola sākhi daulat zyāda." In olden days for one rupee a dancing girl had to salute eight times. The hiring of dancing girls is completely given up now.

3 For the details about the dress of the bridegroom see p. III, *supra*.

4 This is also the case with the Moplahs and the Konkani Muslims.

in the mosque, but never in the house of the bride.¹ Celebrating *nikāh* in the bridegroom's place is an Arab practice and its prevalence among the Navayats is evidently due to the Arab influence. Some sections of the Moplahs, especially in South Kanara and Ponnani in South Malabar, and the Konkani Muslims of Janjira and some other places, among whom Arab influence is discernible also celebrate the *nikāh* in the bridegroom's house.

Just before *nikāh* the *walī*² or guardian of the bride, usually her father is taken to the bridegroom's house by a special invitation and with great pomp. Before departure he has to obtain the consent of the girl to the marriage contract and this is verified by two witnesses who should be respectable persons, preferably not related to either party.

When the appointed moment arrives,³ the kazi in the presence of the two witnesses asks separately the bride-

1 Another peculiarity of the Navayats in connection with their *nikāh* ceremony is that it may take place even in the absence of the bride. It is sometimes performed outside the locality where the bridegroom and the guardian of the bride are present. However, for the consummation of the marriage and other functions related to marriage the bridegroom has necessarily to go to his native place where usually his bride also would be residing.

2 Next to the bride and the bridegroom the *walī* of the bride plays an important role in the marriage ceremonies. His main function is to give over the bride to the bridegroom and he takes an important part in arranging the terms of the marriage. As to who should perform the duty of the *walī* the Navayats follow the Shāfi'i rite. Accordingly the *walī* should be the bride's father, grandfather, or other relative in the ascending line. Failing them, her brother, nephew (brother's son), uncle or male cousin (in that order) may act. In the absence of any male relative the kazi undertakes the duty. If the girl is marrying for the first time the *walī* has the prerogative of settling the terms of the marriage even without her consent.

3 It is usually before midnight and between 9 and 10 p. m.

groom and the *wali* whether they give their full consent to the proposed marriage contract.¹ After obtaining their answer in the affirmative he recites the relevant passage from the Qur'ān² and joins the hands of the bridegroom and the *wali*. The whole ceremony lasts for about ten minutes. No sooner the ceremony is over the whole place resounds with the noise of fireworks and music played by the bands. *Sacarbrinji* and betel are distributed to all the guests.

Soon after the *nikāh* ceremony a woman from the bridegroom's house, either the bridegroom's mother or married sister, but in any case a woman whose husband is alive, goes to the bride's place accompanied by small boys and ties the *karamani* or the lucky thread round the bride's neck.³ The bride cannot stir from the cot until she is tied with the *karamani*. Throughout the night at the bride's house special songs called *jilvo* are sung by women. In these songs the bride is exhorted to emulate the example of the Prophet's daughter and prayers are expressed that she might bring forth worthy children and enjoy prosperity and a long and happy married life and so on.

Among the Muslims in general it is customary on the part of the bride's father to give his daughter a wedding trousseau called *jihāz* comprising clothes, utensils, furniture etc.; which remains her property thereafter. But among Navayats the wedding trousseau is presented to the bride by the bridegroom.⁴ The cause for this

1 The marriage register called *sijil* is written in advance by the kazi.

2 The passage is known as *Khutba-e-nikāh*.

3 Great importance is attached to the lucky thread and a married woman has to wear it always during the lifetime of her husband.

4 This peculiarity is also found among the Konkani Muslims and the Moplahs.

difference is easy to visualise. The present of the father to his married daughter has meaning and significance only when the daughter goes to a different house, that of her husband, after marriage. But among the Navayats since the woman does not leave her house for a few years after marriage her father need not make her presents at the time of marriage. On the other hand since the husband has no responsibility of maintaining his wife during the first few years of marriage it is but proper that he should fulfill his obligation towards her by way of making handsome presents to her especially at the time of marriage. The *jihāz* is sent on the morning following *nikāh*. Always an odd number of pairs of articles¹ are included and they are put in odd number of trays which are covered with silk towels and carried generally by small boys.² These presents are sent with as much ceremony as the status of the bridegroom allows, accompanied with local bands and sometimes even by dancing girls.

The day following the *nikāh* ceremony is most important and is called *Parnyā-dīs* or marriage day. About 9 a. m. in the morning the bridegroom together with a few of his companions is invited to an ordinary dinner called *neet-jevān*. About 4 p. m. a few men from the bride's side go to invite the bridegroom and his party to a feast. The bridegroom who wears the full wedding dress is first taken to the mosque and from

1 The articles usually sent are *choli* or blouse pieces, gold ornaments like bangles, chains etc., artificial tresses of hair, different types of footwear called *khaḍave*, *pāpush*, *kavshyo* etc., perfumes, toilet articles and so on. Saries are usually not included.

2 At Bhatkal the *jihāz* is taken to the bride's house in the very night of *nikāh* soon after the *nikāh* ceremony is over and is carried by seven women. At Murdeshvar it is taken soon after *nikāh* only in case the bride happens to be a widow.

there to the bride's house in a gay procession preceded by bands and dancing girls. Songs known as *zikro* are sung by men and fire crackers are burnt throughout the way. As the marriage procession passes the houses of friends and relatives, the bridegroom is made to halt, until he is garlanded and offered milk and a sweet omelet of eggs called *tairlose*. He takes a little of the *dūd-tairlose* (milk and omelet) which he just retains in his mouth without swallowing. The path leading to the bride's house, at least a few yards of it from the house, is covered with white cloth so that the bridegroom may walk in state. As soon as the party reaches the bride's house the members are duly received and the bridegroom is seated outside on a chair. Some water in a jug called *jām* and a spittoon called *pikdāni* are brought to him. He first throws out from his mouth into the spittoon whatever *dūd-tairlose* he has partaken on the way and has retained in his mouth, and washes his mouth. Then he takes fresh *dūd-tairlose* from the bride's house and he is supposed to take a good quantity of it. Next one or two hens and some coins are waved round his head and given to fakirs.¹ After this the oldest male member of the house takes him inside.

The bridegroom and his party are now served a preparation of egg called *tataṭolo* and then the regular dinner consisting of *biryāni* or *ṭulāo*, mutton, *tairlose* etc., follows. When the male guests have departed after dinner the bride and the bridegroom are seated together² for the first time on the decorated cot in full view of the female relatives. At this time the bridegroom washes his hands in milk and drops in the basin a ring from one of his fingers which is subsequently put on the bride's

1 This ceremony is called *wawalni*.

2 The bride is seated to the left of the bridegroom. She places her right hand on the lap of the groom and the latter keeps his hand over hers.

finger. The assembled women bless the bridal couple. The bridegroom returns home after this ceremony.

At night in the bridegroom's house a ceremony called *ghar borowni*¹ is performed for receiving the bride for the first time. The bridegroom sends two women in a palanquin to invite the bride. The bride, accompanied by a few of her friends or relatives, all married women more or less of her own age, is taken to the bridegroom's house.² She is welcomed by the groom's mother or elder sister. First she is made to wash her feet in milk and then taken in with her right foot crossing the threshold first. The party is treated to a feast. After dinner the bridal couple are seated together. The bridegroom washes his hands in milk as he did at the bride's place but this time he does not drop a ring. The bride and the groom are greeted by the assembled guests. Before returning to her house the same night the bride is given presents of money and gold sovereigns, the presents so given being called *banni*. The gifts given by the guests are noted as they have to be returned to the respective parties during weddings in their houses.

Later at night a party of men from the bride's house, including the brother of the bride goes to the bridegroom's house to invite him for the night. The bridegroom alone accompanies the party. Their way is lighted with fire-torches already kept ready and the groom is taken with much pomp, the local bands playing. He is treated to a grand feast, at the close of which he is given a special kind of preparation called *pisowli* to eat and milk to drink. After he has partaken of all the delicacies he is seated on the decorated cot in the bridal chamber.

1 Literally meaning "filling the house with."

2 If the bride is small in age she is carried by her maternal uncle, paternal uncle or brother.

An elderly woman then leads the bride to the cot.¹ The marriage is consummated that night. The couple has to rise very early in the morning and take bath.² The bridegroom has a hurried breakfast because he has to return to his house before any one can see him on his way, it being considered shameful for a bridegroom to be seen on the way the following morning after enjoying himself overnight at the bride's place.³

Even if the girl has not reached the age of puberty the ceremony of the bringing the bridal couple together is performed all the same. Moreover, ever after marriage whenever the husband is in the locality he has to go to sleep in his wife's house whatever the age of his wife.⁴

Dinners continue every day at the bride's place, until the marriage functions are formally closed. An ordinary meal called *sada khana* or *neet-jevān* is served in the morning about 9 a. m. consisting of rice and fish curry. In the afternoon about 1 p. m. a grand dinner is given at which *biryāni* or *pulāo* is the main course. Again in the evening after sunset another ordinary meal is served.⁵ To all

1 Bringing the bridal couple together for the purpose of consummation of marriage is known as *ṭhāw*.

2. All Muslims ought to take bath after sexual intercourse and the Navayats follow this rule strictly.

3 Among the Moplahs of Calicut and Ponnani also the same feeling is entertained under similar circumstances.

4 This practice is also observed by the Moplahs of Malabar. Some of the members of the communities who follow this practice informed me that there is nothing wrong in such a practice and in this connection they cited the example of the Prophet himself who lived with his wife 'Āishā even before she reached the age of puberty.

5 When the bridegroom is taken to this meal at night his way is lighted with fire torches (*divṭe*) and so this meal is called *divṭyā jevān* or dinner of fire torches.

these dinners the bridegroom and his companions¹ are invited. One peculiarity about these dinners is that the bridegroom returns home after every dinner and he has to be invited separately for each dinner.² A dinner is always followed with a sweet dish and each time a new type of sweet dish is served. Later at night only the bridegroom is invited and this time to stay the night. Before going to bed he is given a special tiffin called *pene*. Early morning the next day he takes his bath and a light breakfast and rushes home. This is, more or less, the programme for the subsequent days. But after three or four days of the *nikāh* many of the guests drop out except on certain occasions and the bridegroom treads the path between his house and that of the bride up and down alone.³

After the *nikāh* ceremony the only important function at the bridegroom's house involving much expenditure is a dinner called *valima*. This is in accordance with the example set by the Prophet himself. Relatives and

1 For about three days after the *nikāh* ceremony whenever the bridegroom goes to the bride's place excepting late at night, or the bride goes to the groom's place, they are accompanied by specially selected people. The bridegroom's companions are generally men closely related to him and they are called *honvolo*. The bride goes in the company of married women whose husbands are living and who are more or less of her own age. During dinners the bridegroom is seated with his companions and the bride with hers and the parties while thus seated are known as *horaite patne* and *hokkle patne*, respectively. While serving, these parties are taken special care of and some dishes are prepared exclusively for them.

2 The same procedure is followed among the Moplahs also.

3 Whenever the bridegroom goes to the bride's house during the period of marriage it is customary on the part of the bride's people to play practical jokes on him and sometimes on his companions also.

friends on either side are treated to a sumptuous feast.¹ It usually takes place after three days of the *nikāh* ceremony.

The concluding function of the marriage which takes place at the bride's house is called *paunār*². The special feature of this function is that at the morning meal, in addition to the *sāda khana*, cakes called *bhallyo* prepared out of the flour of black gram ground during the *uḍḍāmuḍo* ceremony are served. The marriage is now officially over.³

1 The bride is taken for the dinner only after sunset. During the period of marriage the bride may leave her house only after sunset.

2 The word signifies festivities connected with reaching the bridal couple to the bridegroom's house. But here the word has no real significance excepting that the function is a survival of an old custom, for, in fact, there is no formal ceremony of reaching the bridal couple to the bridegroom's house since the bride remains in her own parental house.

3 I participated in one of the *paunār* ceremonies at valki. Just after sunset all the invited male guests assembled in the bridegroom's house. They were treated to some sweets and tea and the *lukka* was handed round. After some time the bridegroom was garlanded and taken in procession to the bride's house to the accompaniment of songs sung in Arabic, Urdu and Navaiti languages. On reaching the bride's house the groom sat on a chair placed outside. The guests were received by the bride's party and the bride's father holding the bridegroom by the hand took him inside. All were seated in the *vasro* on a mat and in a circle, the bridegroom occupying a prominent place. After a while *jām-pikdāni* were taken round commencing from the bridegroom for washing the hands and mouths of the guests. A *sufra* was placed at the centre on which a big plate of seasoned rice and another plate of fowl cury were placed. Vegetables and salads were served in several plates so that two or three persons could help themselves from each. Empty plates were supplied for each and all helped themselves by taking rice from the big plate with their hands and the fowl cury with a ladle. Before eating

Subsequently one day the newly married daughter-in-law is invited to the house of the parents-in-law to spend the day. The occasion is called *sune-dis* or the daughter-in-law's day.

After the ceremony of *paunār* the bridegroom is not expected to take his meals in the bride's house except on all feast days when he is specially invited.¹ But so long as he is in his locality he has to go to sleep in his wife's house every night.² If he failed to do so for any adequate reason the feelings of the wife and her people would be hurt. Every night he is given a special tiffin (*pene*) in his wife's house. This practice continues for quite a long time, in normal cases at least until the wife bears two or three children.³

When the son-in-law leaves his locality for his place of work he is given a grand feast and the mother-in-law also gives him a large quantity of a special type of

each one put a pinch of salt in his mouth. After dinner and washing of the hands the *fātiha* was recited. Next betel was handed round. The bridegroom was first offered the betel by his father-in-law and he placed in the betel tray some rupee coins. Incidentally, the bridegroom can neither smoke nor eat pan in the bride's house until permission is granted to him by his father-in-law on the day of *paunār*. After this hukka was passed round and a little later the bridegroom and his party returned. At this function the black gram cakes were not served. It was also said that the function was not celebrated with the usual grandeur, the bridegroom in this case being a widower.

1 During the first few years after marriage if the son-in-law happens to be in place at the time of any festivals the parents-in-law have to celebrate those festivals in a special manner giving sumptuous feasts to him and along with him some other relatives also are invited. Even later on a man has to eat in his wife's house on all feast days so long as his wife remains there.

2 Usually he goes to his wife's house after the night prayers.

3 For details about this special custom see p. 74 ff. *supra*.

sweets called *malida* to be taken with him so that he may distribute the same among his friends.¹

If a widow or a divorced woman is being married most of the functions are cut down. However, the *nikāh* ceremony, being the central part of marriage, is fully performed. The consummation of the marriage which normally takes place on the night following *nikāh*, takes place at the night of *nikāh* itself.² On the other hand, if a widower is marrying an unmarried girl the marriage festivities take place as usual, but the bridegroom's house is not decorated.

The marriage customs of the Navayats have become much more simple now. The number of celebrations are reduced and the few that are remaining are shorn of much of their old grandeur. The marriage time is also cut down to a few days. Apart from *nikāh* without which marriage cannot take place, the other functions usually celebrated nowadays are *raththa* with its ceremony of keeping the bridal cot in the proper place, the dinner called *neet-jevān* in the morning of the day following *nikāh*, evening procession to the bride's house the same day and the dinner after the procession, and the *valima* dinner in the house of the bridegroom. In addition to these about two or three special dinners are given at the bride's place. The functions called *feno*, *moulod* and *paunār* are also celebrated to some extent, but celebrations like *divṭe* and *rāth-zagowni* are completely eschewed. The engaging of dancing girls, playing of bands and display of fireworks are also given up.

As has been mentioned already, the Navayats of Kanara marry among themselves preferring persons of

1 *Vide* p. 124 *supra*.

2 Among some of the Hindu castes in which widow-remarriage or *kuḍike* takes place, the bride and the groom have to consummate their marriage the same night they are married.

the same locality. Marriage with a non-Navayat is an exception to the rule and that with a Navayat belonging to a different locality is usually avoided as this leads to many inconveniences with regard to their visiting marriage in the initial stage.¹ The prohibited degrees of relationship for the purpose of marriage are the same as those prescribed by Islam.² The marriage of cousins which is considered desirable among Muslims in general and the Arabs in particular is also favoured among Navayats. However, marriages between the children of brother and sister are more popular³. While arranging a match the family connections of the parties concerned are a major consideration.⁴

Although Islam permits a man to have four wives at a time the Navayats are not in the habit of resorting to even a second marriage. There are a few instances where men have married for the second time. However, in all these cases it is not sexual gratification that has prompted these unions but factors such as sterility of the first wife, incurable disease and so on. Marrying for the second time merely for the sake of pleasure is not countenanced

1 In a few instances observed by me at Bhatkal where the males married women from outside the locality they brought their wives to their houses soon after marriage but the marriage in these instances was a second marriage.

2 Among Muslims a man may not marry the following persons : mother, daughter, sister, paternal aunt, maternal aunt, brother's or sister's daughter, grand-mother, grand-daughter, mother-in-law, step-mother, daughter-in-law and grand-daughter-in-law. He is also debarred from marrying any who stand in any of these relationships from fosterage. In addition he cannot marry two sisters simultaneously although marriage with a deceased wife's sister is allowed.

3 This is consistent with the local Hindu custom of cross-cousin marriage.

4 Vide p. 92 *supra*.

by society. Virgin girls are generally not given to a man who is marrying to have a second wife.

Practically all men and women are married. If one of the parties dies, the other partner, if he or she is not too old, marries again. Widows are generally married to widowers. However, if a widow is young and there are other considerations, a bachelor may marry her.

Even though the husband is at full liberty to divorce his wife this prerogative is seldom exercised.¹ Out of a few divorces recorded most were claimed by the wives on the grounds of inadequacy of the maintenance on the part of the husband.² Divorces among the richer classes are very rare.

The Custom of Mahr

The custom of *mahr* as observed by the Navayats requires some explanation.

Mahr or dower is the amount which a Muslim husband has to pay his wife as a condition of the marriage contract. It is one of the most important conditions of the Islamic marriage and even if it were not mentioned in the marriage contract the husband would still be liable to pay it when demanded by the wife. There is, however, no limit to the amount of *mahr* and it usually depends upon the rank, special beauty or accomplishments of the wife and on the conditions upon which the

1 In one instance at Murdeshvar a man has married a second wife on account of ill-feeling with the first one. But he is still maintaining the first wife since divorcing a wife reflects unfavourably upon one's prestige and reputation.

2 Such cases occur only among the poorer people as the women of richer classes need not depend solely upon their husbands for maintenance. Further, young wives do not claim divorce on this ground since by custom the husband is not solely responsible for the maintenance of his wife for a few years after marriage.

parties agree when the marriage contract is settled. Only the Hanafites and the Malikites have ordained that it should not be less than a gold *ḍinār* or ten silver *dirhāms*. The other Muslim schools including the Shāfi'ī sect to which the Navayats belong, do not insist even on this condition of a minimum limit. So also, while the payment of *mahr* is obligatory on the part of the husband there are no hard and fast rules regarding the mode of its payment and the wife can always absolve the husband from this obligation if she so chooses. Generally *mahr* is of two kinds, termed (1) *mahri mu'ajjal* i. e., the amount payable by instalments or in case of divorce and (2) *mahri mu'ajjal* i. e., the amount paid in full at the time of *nikāḥ* or on demand any time after the marriage.

Contrary to the general Muslim practice of allowing the parties concerned the freedom of determining the amount of *mahr*, the Navayats of Kanara have a fixed figure for *mahr*. With the exception of two family stocks of Bhatkal the fixed amount of *mahr* for the whole community is $19\frac{1}{2}$ *varāha* or its equivalent of Rs. 78. The two family stocks called Ruknaddin and Syed Hassaina each has a different amount fixed for all its members, the amounts being 40 *varāha* (Rs. 160) and 50 *varāha* (Rs. 200) respectively. In all these cases the contracting parties have to accept the amounts fixed by their respective groups. Further, the *mahr* is reckoned in terms of the coin *varāha* although the amount is paid in Indian rupees. *Varāha* was a Vijayanagar gold coin which has long since been out of circulation and for all practical purposes it is equivalent in value to four Indian rupees.

In order to understand this peculiar custom of paying a fixed amount of *mahr* by a whole group of people and the implication of the figure $19\frac{1}{2}$ it would be necessary to have an idea about the *mahr* prevalent among the other Shāfi'ī Muslims of India. Significantly enough, most of the other Shāfi'ī Muslims of India, such as the Konkani Muslims,

the Moplahs and the Navayats of the Deccan also follow the practice of paying customarily fixed *mahr*. What is still more significant is the fact that among the Indian Muslims this custom is observed only by the Shāfi'i Muslims.¹ However, the fixed amount varies from community to community and sometimes within the same community from section to section. Thus, among the large majority of Konkani Muslims the customary *mahr* is 19 *misqals* and among the Konkani Muslims of the Bombay City it is 40 tolas of gold. Among the Moplahs it generally ranges from 3 to 30 *misqals* from section to section and usually it is in odd numbers. The Navayats of the Deccan generally pay 39 tolas of gold.²

Among the other Muslims who pay *mahr* according to individual cases the fixing of the amount of *mahr* is an important item of the marriage functions and it involves considerable discussion and accommodation on either side. Steps would also be taken for the payment of *mahr* at an early date. But in these communities as the amount is fixed by custom it is taken for granted and not discussed, and since the amount is generally small its payment is usually not insisted upon and as a rule it is not made even in part. It is some times claimed by a woman in the event of her being divorced and that too if she happens to

1 Reuben Levy has cited one other instance where the amount of *mahr* is known and fixed by custom, and that is among some tribes of Morocco and Tunisia (*An Introduction to the Sociology of Islam*, Vol. I, foot-note on p. 155).

2 This figure regarding the Navayats of the Deccan was obtained by me from Janab H. M. Nurulla of Hassan (Mysore State), who is a member of that community. According to *Tārīkh-un-Nawāyat* (p. 81), the maximum limit is 49 tolas of gold. So it may be presumed that among the Navayats of the Deccan also different sections have different figures. However, at present, mainly under the influence of the Deccani Muslims, this community also has adopted the practice of paying *mahr* according to the ability and status of the parties.

belong to a poor family.¹ Further, probably because the *mahr* is usually not paid they still continue to reckon the amount in terms of coins like *misqal* and *varāha* which are now out of circulation.

Although *mahr* among these various peoples is counted in terms of *varāha*, *misqal*, tolas of gold and in a few cases also in terms of rupees, by far the largest majority of them reckon it in terms of *misqals*. *Misqal* is an Arabic measure of gold weighing $4\frac{1}{2}$ masas and the term was also used for a gold coin of that weight. Another and more popular term for a gold coin of that weight is *dīnār*.² The *dīnār* was used very commonly by the Arab traders on the coasts of India and elsewhere.³ However, since these communities make use of only the term *misqal* it seems that the gold *dīnār* was known to them as *misqal* from the very beginning. It would also appear that initially the fixed *mahr* was reckoned in terms of *misqal* alone and the other coins or measures were substituted in course of time. For instance, it seems that *varāha* was a later substitute for *misqal*, adopted for local convenience. Apart from the Navayats of Kanara a section of the Moplahs of Mangalore also count their *mahr* in terms of *varāha*. The reason is obvious. Of all the Shāfi'ī Muslims only the Navayats of Kanara and the Moplahs of Mangalore were the subjects of the Vijayanagar kings and their feudatories for a long time

1 As the *mahr* is not paid, the more orthodox among them perform at the time of the death of a man, a ceremony whereby the wife absolves the dying husband the debt of *mahr* which he owes her. The wife's *mahr* is sometimes taken into consideration at the time of dividing one's property.

2 T. P. Hughes : *Dictionary of Islam*.

3 Ibn Baṭṭūṭa has made several references to the use of *dīnār* on the coast of India and during his time both gold and silver *dīnārs* were in circulation.

during which period they must have used the prominent gold coin *varāha* of the ruling dynasties as it was easily available in their parts and as it was more or less equal in value to that of the *misqal*.¹ Some Moplahs of Mangalore also count the *mahr* in terms of *misqal*. But such Moplahs consider themselves distinct from the Moplahs counting the *mahr* in terms of *varāha* and their social organization and customs are such that it may easily be made out that they are the descendants of the early Arabs and as such they represent the oldest section among the Moplahs of Mangalore. It may therefore be presumed that these Moplahs were accustomed to pay their *mahr* in terms of *misqal* even before the coin *varāha* was introduced and their strong ties with the similar Moplahs of Malabar must have prevented them from switching over to *varāha*. The other Moplahs who pay their *mahr* in terms of *varāha* seem to have been converted subsequently and it may be assumed that they adopted this coin because it was in currency at the time of their conversion.

Thus it would seem that the Navayats of Kanara originally used to reckon their *mahr* in terms of *misqal* and that their customary *mahr* was $19\frac{1}{2}$ *misqals*. They must have been in the habit of regularly paying their *mahr* when *misqals* went out of circulation and so they must have substituted the local *varāha*. However, the *varāha* also is no longer in circulation. But since the Navayats are now not in the habit of paying the *mahr* the question of changing over to a new coin does not arise. All the same their religion demands that *mahr* has to be taken into consideration at the time of marriage and so the old custom of reckoning *mahr* in terms of *varāha* still continues.

1 The weight of a *misqal* which is $4\frac{1}{2}$ masas of gold is about $\frac{1}{3}$ of a tola, and if the weight of a *varāha* is taken to be 60 grains (C. J. Brown : *Coins of India*, P. 57), which is also $\frac{1}{3}$ of a tola, the *varāha* and the *misqal* could be regarded as more or less equal in value.

The figure 19½ adopted by the Navayats does sound a little odd and it would imply that some sort of significance is attached to it. This would become clearer if the customary *mahr* among the Moplahs is studied in brief. Among the Moplahs there are different sections or groups which are usually endogamous and each section has its own customary figure for *mahr*. It is not quite clear how the different sections came to adopt the different amounts of *mahr* or for that matter how the different communities of Shāfi'ī Muslims selected the different figures. However, having adopted a certain amount of fixed *mahr*, the figure has stuck on to the particular community or section and as a rule it is not altered. The different groups among the Moplahs have different social statuses, and within a given locality, with a few exceptions, the amount of customary *mahr* of a section is correlated with its social status. The bigger the figure the higher the social status. If the persons belonging to a group accustomed to pay a lower figure mention in their marriage contracts a higher amount proper to a different group, their action would be treated by the other group as an insult to its prestige and such a situation is fraught with the possibilities of a conflict.¹ As a matter of fact, the *mahr* among the Moplahs today has become just a symbol of group distinctions and it does not serve the purpose for which it was intended by Islam.

A very important section of the mother-right Moplahs of Calicut going by the group name of Koya have adopted the figure 19½. Also, all the Shāfi'ī Muslims of Travancore² pay 19½ *misqals*. So the Navayats of Kanara, the Koya

1 At Mangalore the Moplahs accustomed to reckon their *mahr* in terms of *varāha* are not even allowed to mention *misqal* in place of *varāha*.

2 The Shāfi'ī Muslims of Travancore are not called Moplahs even though they have a similar origin as the Moplahs of Malabar.

Moplahs of Calicut and the neighbouring places and the Shāfi'ī Muslims of Travancore have the figure $19\frac{1}{2}$. Of these the Navayats and the Koyas have many traits in common, and if the general influence of the Moplah customs on the Navayat culture is conceded the male progenitors of the Navayats coming from Malabar might be taken to have belonged to some such group as the Koyas.

The Konkani Muslims who pay 19 *misqals* and the Shāfi'ī Muslims of Travancore who pay $19\frac{1}{2}$ *misqals* explain their preference for the figure 19 or $19\frac{1}{2}$ by saying that this has been adopted in order to obviate the necessity of having to pay the *zakat* on the *mahr*. According to an Islamic injunction one has to pay annually $\frac{1}{40}$ of one's possessions as alms or *zakat*. But in respect of any article of wealth there is a minimum below which *zakat* need not be paid. In respect of gold the minimum is 20 *Misqals* and the *zakat* on 20 *misqals* of gold is $\frac{1}{2}$ *misqal*. Now *mahr* is the property of the wife and under ordinary circumstances she is not required to spend the amount. Thus supposing a wife is paid a *mahr* exceeding 20 *misqals* she will have to go on paying the *zakat* every year and unless the amount is very big eventually, after deducting the *zakat* every year, a stage will be reached when the original amount will dwindle down to less than 20 *misqals*. So all this can be prevented if *mahr* is fixed at less than 20 *misqals*,¹ and 19 or $19\frac{1}{2}$ *misqals* is the highest figure which a person can possess without having to pay the *zakat*.

1 This clever device would appear contradictory to the spirit of their religion. But the early Arabs, shrewd and businesslike that they were, cannot be considered incapable of such a trick. Another interesting example of circumventing the injunctions of the Qur'ān comes from the Arab settlers of Indonesia. These Arabs are great money lenders and notorious for the usurious rate of interest that they charge.

Now, so far as the Shāfi'ī Muslim communities of the west coast of India are concerned, the section having the figure 19 or $19\frac{1}{2}$ is represented in every community. On the basis of this it may be suggested that the particular sections are the descendants of the earlier Arabs and those who were assimilated into their groups. Further, the fact that the figure $19\frac{1}{2}$ of the Navayats of Kanara has counterparts in the southern communities of Moplahs of Malabar and the Shāfi'ī Muslims of Travancore and not among the Konkani Muslims to the north despite the fact that the female ancestors of the Navayats and the Konkani Muslims were Konkani speaking women, would indicate that in the past the Navayats had greater affinities with the Moplahs than with the Konkani Muslims.

Whenever intermarriages take place between the different sections of the Moplahs which are usually endogamous, the woman has to be paid the *mahr* according to the custom of the section or social group to which she

But taking interest is prohibited in the Qur'ān and usury is not permitted by the Indonesian government. They are circumventing both these restrictions in a very ingenious manner by devising two methods. One is the method of "renting" money. If a person wants say a rix-dollar (about \$ 1) the Arab just "leases" the rix-dollar for three or four cents a day as if the rix-dollar were an object and not a coin. Another method is a kind of pseudo-sale of goods. If a borrower wants 50 guilders the Arab will sell him a group of sarongs costing 50 guilders for 90 guilders and obtain a note signed by him. The Arab thereupon immediately buys back the sarongs for 50 guilders cash. This pseudo-sale is in effect a loan of 50 guilders, but 90 guilders have to be repaid by the borrower in monthly instalments. Thus the inconvenient question of interest is bypassed, giving peace to the conscience and abiding by the law of the country! [*The Middle East Journal*: Vol. VII, No. 3 (1953), pp. 315-316]. Regarding how Navayats themselves circumvent the Qur'ānic injunction concerning interest vide footnote on p. 70 *supra*.

belongs irrespective of the customary figure of her husband's group. Among the mother-right Moplahs, since a woman belongs to her mother's social group she should be paid the same amount of *mahr* as was given to her mother, while among the father-right Moplahs since she belongs to her father's social group her *mahr* will be the same as that of her father's sisters. Among the Navayats since practically the whole community has one figure for *mahr* there is no correspondence between the amount of *mahr* and the social status of the group as is the case among the Moplahs and intermarriages between sections accustomed to pay $19\frac{1}{2}$, 40 and 50 *varāha* take place freely. Yet the rule that the woman should be given the *mahr* proper to her family is followed here also. If a man belonging to a family whose customary *mahr* is $19\frac{1}{2}$ *varāha* marries a woman belonging to a family whose *mahr* is 40 *varāha* he has to pay 40 *varāha* as *mahr*. Differences on this matter do occur sometimes when each party insists upon the customary *mahr* of its own family. Such an instance occurred at Bhatkal a few years ago where the bridegroom's party insisted on paying only $19\frac{1}{2}$ *varāha* although the customary *mahr* of the bride's family was 40 *varāha*. Each party was so insistent on its own demand that the *nikāh* ceremony was delayed for hours together. Finally a clever device was hit upon. The bridegroom was to pay $19\frac{1}{2}$ *varāha* and the bride's party was to give a receipt for 40 *varāha* so that the *mahr* could be entered as 40 *varāha* in the marriage contract. Here the question was not of paying a higher amount of *mahr* but that of securing recognition for the customary amount of *mahr* of the bride's family.¹

1 Latterly some of the women of the Ruknaddin and Syed-Hassaina families have accepted $19\frac{1}{2}$ *varāha* as the amount of *mahr* and now there is a tendency on the part of these families to give up their distinctive figures and to accept $19\frac{1}{2}$ *varāha*.

The origin of the custom of fixed *mahr* is buried in the past and difficult to be explained at present. However, the fact that it is prevalent only among the Muhammadan communities which are known to have had considerable influence of Arab seafarers would perhaps give a clue. Also the facts that *mahr* in these communities was originally reckoned in terms of *misqal* and that this mode of reckoning has persisted in many sections till now strongly suggest that the custom is very old and that it could be traced to the times of the old Arab settlements on the coast of India. It has been shown that owing to their peculiar life conditions the early Arab mariners were accustomed to have temporary marriages in the different ports they visited. Under those circumstances a man would marry several times not only in the course of his lifetime but even during the period of one year, and that would be possible only when he could secure a wife for a small amount of *mahr*. In stating that it was easy to marry in the Maldiv Islands one of the chief reasons given by Ibn Battūta is that the dowries there were small.¹ Otherwise a Muslim sailor of the past could not afford to have a new wife at every port. Now, the only way of ensuring a low amount of dowry is by fixing the amount for a whole community or group, or else in a matter like that competition is bound to ensue resulting in the enhancement of the amount. Thus it would appear that the peculiar custom of fixed *mahr* is a relic of the temporary marriages entered into by the old Arab mariners on the coasts of India.²

1 Mahdi Husain: *The Rehla of Ibn Battūta*, p. 202.

2 Apart from the Shāfi'i Muslim communities of India which practise the custom of paying a fixed amount of *mahr* there are other Muslim communities in the East with similar Arab origin. They are chiefly the Shāfi'i Muslims of Ceylon and Indonesia. The Muslims of Maldiv Islands also come under this category even though they are

Death Ceremonies

As soon as a person dies his usual dress is removed and the body is covered with a white sheet of cloth and placed in the second room called *ghar*, facing towards *Ka'bah* or *Qibla*, the holy mosque in Mecca. The hands are placed on the chest,¹ right hand over the left. Relatives and friends come to visit the bereaved family and to pay their last respects to the dead person. Close relatives, especially the womenfolk sit round the corpse. The male visitors retire to the front room (*vasro*) and women sit with their faces veiled in the same room in which the corpse is placed.² Although Islam enjoins that the faithful should not wail over the departed, however dear the departed one may be, in the case of Navayats human nature has the better of the religious command, and it is not uncommon among the relatives to give audible expression to their grief. All the while passages from the Qur'ān are read by the *mullah*.

While the dead body is lying in state in the house, alms mainly in the shape of rice,³ and bread prepared out

Malikites. I have however not been able to investigate the customs of *mahr* in these communities and if done so it is likely to throw some new light on the peculiar custom of fixed *mahr* as well as help to understand the inter-relationships among all these communities.

1 The position is just between the chest and the stomach.

2 If the dead person is a man, all people, men and women can see the face. But if she is a woman all men who according to Islam were potentially eligible to marry her and towards whom she had to observe *purdah*, are debarred from seeing the face.

3 In the case of rich people sometimes as many as 25 to 30 *muras* of rice is distributed.

of rice and wheat is distributed among the fakirs and the poor.¹

Care is taken to inter the dead body as early as possible. It is kept in the house generally four to eight hours after death so as to enable the near and dear ones to have the last glimpse. A little before removing the body to the burial ground it is given a ceremonial bath.² After the bath little quantities of frankincense and camphor powder covered with cotton, are placed in the mouth, nostrils, eyes, ears and on every joint of the body. The body is next shrouded in five pieces of white cloth.³ Of these five pieces, if the dead person is a male, one piece is used as an underwear, a second as a *lungi* for covering the lower part of the body below the waist, a third is cut in the shape of a shirt and used for covering the upper part of the body, a fourth is used as a covering for the head and with the last one called *luffafa* the whole body is covered from head to feet.⁴ Over this covering

1 The fakirs and beggars who come for alms are generally non-Navayat Muslims as it is not customary among Navayats to go abegging, however poor one may be. But the well-to-do Navayats are aware of the poor people in their own community and on occasions like this grains and money are sent to their houses.

2 In places like Bhatkal and Murdeshvar the bath is given by special persons called 'gassal' for men and 'gassala' for women who are paid for the job. In the smaller localities the bath is given by close relatives themselves.

3 The Deccani Muslims make use of only three pieces of cloth.

4 In the case of females also the body is shrouded in five pieces of cloth. But the manner of shrouding is slightly different. One piece called *langa* is used for covering the lower part of the body below the waist, the second is covered round the body from the arm pits down to the ankle joints, the third, called *vodni*, encircles the head once and has its two ends hanging loosely on the sides, the fourth called *cafni* is used to cover the face and the fifth to cover the whole body.

bands, again of white cloth, are tied, one on the head, one on the stomach and one on the ankles. The bands are to be untied at the time of burial. Finally the body is put in the coffin which is covered with red cloth.¹

Next the coffin is taken to the *jāmi'* mosque on the way to the burial ground, only men taking part in the funeral procession. The kazi joins the cortege from the very start although he does not officiate in any religious ceremony in the house of the dead person. Generally four persons carry the coffin on their shoulders and every man who accompanies the dead body gives his shoulder to the coffin at least for sometime relieving the coffin bearers every few steps. If a member of the community chances to come across a funeral procession, even though he is unrelated to the dead person, he joins the procession for a while, gives his shoulder to the coffin for a few steps and then resumes his work.²

At the mosque the kazi performs the funeral obsequies, after which the coffin is removed to the burial ground for inhumation. The body is removed from the coffin, and untying the three bands which were tied earlier, it is laid in the grave³ with head to the north and feet to the south, turning the face towards *Qibla*, and placed on its right side, slightly slanting so that the right cheek and the tip of the nose touch the ground. Above the body and without touching it stones are placed, their ends resting in the cavities burrowed in the sides of the grave, so as to avoid mud falling on the body when the grave is refilled. Everyone present commencing from the kazi throws into the grave a handful of mud three times. Immediately the

1 The coffin is a public property and is available in the *jāmi'* mosque for the use of the members. It is used only for carrying the corpse to the graveyard and is brought back after the burial ceremony.

2 This is counted as one among the pious Muslim practices.

3 The grave is dug six feet deep.

grave is refilled.¹ A small pitcherful of water which is brought from home along with the coffin is poured over the grave. When the burial is over the *gassal* says some prayers. Alms and clothes² are also distributed among the mullahs, fakirs and the poor on the burial ground. From the burial ground the party returns to the house of the dead person to console the bereaved members and are served with sherbet or tea and offered the *hukka*.

At night a lamp is kept burning near the entrance of the house and looking at the funereal taper even strangers may enter the house for paying a visit in order to comfort the family members. A big vessel filled with sherbet is kept in the *vasro* so that whoever comes in may freely partake of it.³ The funereal taper is lighted for forty days and visitors continue coming during these days. Mullahs come to recite prayers for forty days and on Sundays, Wednesdays and Thursdays they are served special eatables in addition to presents and money.⁴

1 When the grave is refilled its top should be nine inches above the level of the ground. Two stones are erected on the top, one corresponding to the head and the other to the feet. Between the stones, if the buried person is a male, and outside them, if female, two twigs of the shrub *Vitex Negundo* are planted. It is said that the twigs represent the beard if the dead person is male, or hair if she is a female.

2 Close relatives and friends attending the funeral bring with them rose-water which is sprinkled over the body of the dead before burial and white sheets of cloth which are spread over the coffin. These white sheets and the clothes of the dead person are distributed on the burial ground.

3 Courtesy requires that any person coming for a visit should have at least a sip of the sherbet.

4 In olden days it was customary for friends and relatives to bring food to the house of the bereaved family while coming for visits.

On the third day of death called *zeārat* the *fatihah* is recited and relations and the poor are invited to a simple meal (*sādā-jevān*) at which *khir* is served. *Fatihah* is likewise recited on the eleventh¹ and the fortieth days followed by a dinner of *pulāo* to relatives and the poor. Death anniversaries also are celebrated keeping up the function by reading the *Mouloud* and entertaining guests and the poor to a dinner at which the main dish is *pulāo*. Such celebration of the death anniversaries is called *barsi manownche*.

Mourning is observed for one full year during which period the members of the bereaved family shun all merry-making and festivities and do not celebrate festivals like the Ramzan and Bakr Ids. On feast days funereal tapers are burnt and sherbet is kept in the house, and friends, relatives and the passersby come to visit the family. These mourning visits are called *santabhēt*.

¹ In some places instead of the 11th, the 10th or the 12th day are observed.

CHAPTER VIII

Religion

The Shāfi'ī school to which the Navayats belong is one of the four sects of the orthodox Muslims known as Sunnis, the other three being the Hanafite, the Mālikite and the Hanbalite schools. These schools differ only in details of religious and civil jurisprudence and in matters of dogma they agree with each other. They were formed in Arabia during the reign of the 'Abbāsīd caliphs and spread quickly throughout the Muslim world. At present the Hanafī school has the largest following and the Shāfi'ī school comes a close second in this respect. The other two schools have considerably less numbers of followers.

For a long time since its inception the Shāfi'ī school was in the ascendancy. But subsequently owing to the active support of the Turkish sultans the Hanafitic school stole a march over it and from the sixteenth century onwards the Hanafites have outnumbered the Shāfi'ītes. The Hanafi school was introduced wherever Turkish influence was felt. In India too where the large majority of the Muslims accepted their religion as a result of Muslim invasions of Turkish influence, the Hanafi school is predominant.

In the land of its origin the strongholds of the Shāfi'ī school are found in the western and southern Arabia (especially in Ḥadramaut) and on the Persian Gulf. Elsewhere it is spread in east Africa and lower Egypt in the west and on the west and east coasts of India, the Straits Settlements and the Indian Archipelago in the east. A few of its followers are also found in Daghestan and some parts of Central Asia.¹ It is worth noting that the

¹ *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*, Vol. VII, p. 859

Shāfi'i school has always been dominant in the region of the Arab mariners, i. e., all along the coast of Arabia, and wherever Islam has been introduced through the peaceful influence of Arab traders and sailors it is this school that has been adopted by the followers.

Religious Organization

For the Muslims in general and the Navayats in particular their religion is the greatest integrative force. In the final analysis the various community organizations of the Navayats are based upon their religion. They have a very cohesive religious organization which facilitates observance of their religious rules and as their social life is very intimately connected with their religious life this organization also acts as an effective agency of social control.

Each Navayat settlement with the exception of Bhatkal is regarded as one big unit or group for religious purposes. Such a group is called a *Jam'āt*. The *Jam'āt* is centred round a mosque called the *jāmi' masjid* to which all the men of the locality should go to say their mid-day prayers on Fridays. If the settlement is large and there are several lanes or quarters in it, each lane or quarter has a separate mosque intended for the daily use of the people of the vicinity and these people again organise themselves into a smaller group with this mosque as the centre. This mosque is usually very much smaller than the *jāmi'* mosque and just sufficient to accommodate the men of the lane. Thus there is first the big organization called *Jam'i'āt* embracing the entire community of the place and smaller organizations including the people of the several lanes or quarters. But in all matters the authority of the *Jam'āt* is final.

Each mosque has its own officials. Most important of all, every mosque requires a person called *imām* to lead

the daily prayers.¹ Among Navayats he is called *pēsh-imām*. Another important office is that of the *mueddhin* (called *bāngī* among the Navayats) who has to chant the *adhān* or the call to prayer five times a day.² A servant called *farrāsh* is employed to sweep and clean the mosque, to see to the arrangement of water for ablution, odd duties etc. All these employees of the mosque are paid and if the funds at the disposal of the mosque are too meagre only one person may do the work of both *pēsh-imām* and *mueddhin*. The *jāmi'* mosque has one more official called *khatīb* whose function is to preach the sermon or *khutbah* during the noon prayers on Fridays. Then the whole *Jam'āt* has a *qāḍī* or kazi (literally meaning judge but now devoid of all judicial powers) whose main work is to officiate at the marriage ceremonies. He is not regularly paid but derives his main income from fees received at marriages.³ In most places the *qāḍī* also acts as the *khatīb* for the performance of which duty he may be paid from the mosque funds. The advice of the *qāḍī* is sought on matters pertaining to religious regulations or *fiqh* and so he is expected to be well versed in the knowledge of the *fiqh*.

1 At the time of prayers all worshippers must perform the prescribed ceremonies together and at the same moment and this is possible if there is a leader to officiate over all. The office of the *imām* however has no priestly character—in fact, Islam has no institution of priesthood and any one qualified for the office can lead the prayers.

2 The *adhān* consists of the following formulae: "God is most great" (this is said four times); "I testify that there is no God but Allāh" (twice); "I testify that Muhammad is Allāh's apostle" (twice); "Come to prayer" (twice); "Come to security" (twice); "God is most great" (twice); "There is no God but Allāh."

3 Every *Jam'āt* has a minimum fee fixed to be paid to the *qāḍī* at marriages. At Bhatkal the minimum fee is Rs. 2—8—0. But those who can afford pay more even to the extent of Rs. 50/—.

The *Jam'at* has a managing committee the members of which are called *muktesars*.¹ These *muktesars* are drawn from the entire community. Their number, of course, varies according to the size of the community.² Once a person is appointed a *muktesar* he continues to hold the office until his death, when a new person is appointed in his place. At present such office bearers are elected at general meetings. The *qādi* is generally an *ex-officio* member of the committee. The chief member of the committee, the chairman as it were, is called *mutawalli*. He is the most important person in the committee, the funds of the *Jam'at* being in his charge. It would appear that his office in the past was hereditary much in the same way as it is to be found even today in some places of Malabar where it is the privilege of certain families to be in charge of the mosques. In some cases sub-committees of three or four persons are appointed trustees of the *Jam'at* property. The venue of the managing committee is the *jāmi'* mosque where all the records are kept and meetings are held.

On the same model as the managing committee of the *Jam'at* each lane or quarter where there is mosque has a smaller committee having jurisdiction over the people of that smaller area. Only men from that particular area are appointed its members.

The important functions of the managing committee include such works as the upkeep of the mosque, appointment of the mosque officials and providing for their

1 The term *muktesar* seems to have been derived from the Arabic word *mukhtasar* (مختصر) meaning leader. But the term is now also used for the managers of Hindu temples on the coastal area.

2 One of the *Jam'ats* at Bhatkal has as many as 30 *muktesars*. However, as most of them go out of their locality the full compliment of the members is never present and usually between five and ten members function at a time.

salaries, making arrangements for imparting religious instruction to the children and settling disputes arising between the faithful. The functions of the committees of the different sectors are also more or less the same as those of the *Jam'āt* committee, but with this difference that whereas the jurisdiction of the *Jam'āt* committee embraces the entire community, that of the sectional committee is restricted to a smaller group.

The committees of *muktesars* are very effective in settling social disputes. Disputes arising between parties residing in the same lane are settled by the committee of that particular lane. But the parties have a right of appeal to the *Jam'āt* committee, whose decision is final. The decisions of the committee are aimed at bringing about reconciliation between the contending parties and the restitution of property. Fines are levied very seldom, if at all, and the amounts credited to the *Jam'āt* fund. As a rule the decisions of the *Jam'āt* are not disobeyed. Those who disregard the verdict of the *Jam'āt* committee are ostracised by the entire community. Social ostracism may take such forms as the boycott of social functions in the house of the recalcitrant person and even nonparticipation in the funeral ceremonies of persons dying in his family. Nowadays, however, the *Jam'āt* does not mind the disputes being taken to a court of law as a final resort.

The Dual Religious Organization at Bhatkal

Only at Bhatkal the community is divided into two *Jam'āts* each with its own *jāmi'* mosque and a separate *qāḍi*. It may be pointed out that the existence of two *jāmi'* mosques in one place is contrary to the requirements of Muslim law, according to which people of a town should meet for their Friday prayers in one mosque except when one mosque is not sufficient to accommodate all the people. But even if there are two *jāmi'* mosques there is no justification for having two separate *Jam'āt* organizations,

There are no clearcut residential divisions corresponding to the membership of the *Jam'āts* such that people of one contiguous area belong to one *Jam'āt* and those of the other to the second one, and members of both the *Jam'āts* are to be found in every street and corner. The membership of a particular *Jam'āt* is determined at birth, a person belonging to his or her father's *Jam'āt*, and in the case of a female not even her marriage changing her membership of the *Jam'āt* if her husband belongs to the other *Jam'āt*. So, in any particular family all collateral relations in the male line belong to one *Jam'āt*, but women who are married into the family may belong to the other *Jam'āt*.

The only distinguishing features between the members of the two *Jam'āts* are : (1) although for their daily prayers the members of both the *Jam'āts* meet at the common mosque of the lane, for the Friday prayers they go to the *jāmi'* mosques of their respective *Jam'āts*;¹ (2) for officiating at their marriage ceremonies members of each *Jam'āt* call the *qāḍi* of their particular *Jam'āt*. As the *nikāh* ceremony takes place at the house of the bridegroom, the *qāḍi* of the bridegroom's *Jam'āt* is called, no matter to which *Jam'āt* the bride belongs; (3) when a person dies, before taking his corpse to the burying-ground, it is taken to the *jāmi'* mosque of his own *Jam'āt*. Even when the body happens to be of a married woman belonging to a *Jam'āt* different from that of her husband it is still taken to the *jāmi'* mosque of her own *Jam'āt* and not to that of her husband; (4) and finally, on the two great Muslim feasts known as the *Ramzan-Id* and the *Bakr-Id*, the members of the parent *Jam'āt* go for their prayers to the *Idgah*

1 A person residing in the vicinity of the *Jāmi'* mosque which is not his own would normally go to the other *jāmi'* mosque for his Friday prayers even though it may mean greater effort, while for his daily prayers he may go to the nearby *jāmi'* mosque.

(a place specially set apart for the performance of the *Id* ceremonies) which is situated outside the town and the members of the other *Jam'āt* say the *Id* prayers in one of the mosques known as the Sultani Mosque.¹ Apart from these distinctions on all other matters there are no differences on the basis of the membership of the different *Jam'āts*. Intermarriages take place very freely as if the two *Jam'āts* did not exist. According to their tradition the bifurcation of the community at Bhatkal into two rival *Jam'āts* took place more than a century and a quarter ago. The immediate cause of the division, it would appear, was a controversy in connection with the appointment of the *qāḍi* after the death of the previous one. Until then the post of *qāḍi* had been mainly hereditary, the son succeeding the father. But at that time a section of the community insisted upon selecting a *qāḍi* according to his qualifications irrespective of whether or not he was a relation of the previous officer. Since they could not arrive at a unanimous decision the revolting section seceded from the main body and organised itself into a separate *Jam'āt* now called the small *Jam'āt* and with a separate *jāmi'* mosque. The small *Jam'āt* has continued to make the appointments to the post of *qāḍi* on the basis of suitable qualifications whereas the parent *Jam'āt* called the big *Jam'āt* has stuck to the principle of hereditary appointments.

It is significant that although the membership of the *Jam'āt* is hereditary, in most of the family stocks at Bhatkal there are families belonging to either *Jam'āt*. The fact

1 Just as all the Muslims of a town should meet in one mosque for the Friday prayers, so also all the Muslims of a locality or a small region, belonging to different *Jam'āts* are enjoined by Islam to meet in one place for the *Id* prayers. It is therefore all the more surprising that the Navayats of Bhatkal do not meet together even for the *Id* prayers.

that the two *Jam'āts* cut across family stocks would indicate that the division took place much later than the evolution of most of the family stocks, and that the families or members within the same stock were ranged in opposite camps during the controversy which resulted in the formation of the two *Jam'āts*. In the case of a few family stocks such as Damda, Ruknaddin, Jukaku, Akrami and Siddiqā, all the members of the stock are in the same *Jam'āt*, either the *big* or the *small*.

This sort of division of a homogeneous Muslim community into two *Jam'āts* in the same place is a very rare phenomenon. The writer, however, has observed such a division in two other places viz., in Calicut and in Quilandy, a town round about Calicut, and in both cases it is found among the Moplahs. In each place there are two *jāmi'* mosques corresponding to the two *Jam'āts*. In keeping with the matrilineal descent of the Moplahs, here a person belongs to the *Jam'āt* of his or her mother. More or less the same distinctions as among the Navayats are observed. In addition to these there are also some other striking differences. At Calicut the members of one *Jam'āt* during *nikāh* ceremony and other marriage functions eschew clapping and making noise which is so characteristic a feature not only of the other *Jam'āt* but also of almost all Moplahs of Malabar.¹ At Quilandy it is customary for members of one *Jam'āt* to send printed or written invitations and for those of the other to invite orally, to their social functions.

It appears that the members of the communities divided themselves into two camps owing to the rise of some party fired with a zeal for reform. In Malabar as well as in Bhatkal the Muslim communities observe a number of customs which are not exactly in conformity

¹ Also cf. E. Thurston: *Castes and Tribes of Southern India* Vol. IV, p. 470.

with the spirit of Islam. Probably such customs were more in number in the past and some orthodox and enlightened members tried to reform the community. It is just possible that this movement for reform took place owing to the influence of Wahhābism¹ which spread in Arabia in the latter half of the eighteenth century and which must have doubtless cast its influence upon the Muslim communities on the west coast of India which were in regular contact with Arabia.²

However, at Bhatkal, for quite a long time now, the people have been striving to merge the two *Jam'āts* into one, as it should be.³

1 'Abd al-Wahhāb born in 1730 started the movement with the avowed object of restoring Islam to its pristine purity as taught by Muhammad and practised by his converts. The movement has subsequently given rise to a Muhammadan community called Wahhābis which has its headquarters in the part of Arabia called Nejd and which is also represented in Mesopotamia, India and Africa. (*Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*, Vol. XII, pp. 660-661.

2 Referring to the Labbais of the North Arcot district Mr. H. A. Stuart has stated that many among them belong to the Wahhābi section (E. Thurston : *Op. Cit.*, Vol. IV, p. 204).

3 When the manuscript was sent to the press I received the news that the two *Jam'āts* at Bhatkal had at long last merged into one in May 1954. The whole community now seems to have adopted the principle of appointing *qādis* on the basis of qualifications and not on the basis of heredity, since the *qādi* of the former small *Jam'āt* who is a better qualified person has now been made the chief *qādi* of the combined *Jam'āt* and the *qādi* of the former big *Jam'āt* given a secondary place. Also in May 1954, for the first time in many years the members of both the *Jam'āts* met together for the *Id* prayers in the *Idgah*.

Religious Observances

Six centuries ago, Ibn Battūta observed that the Muslims of Honnavar (who were the ancestors of the Navayats) were a very religious people. His statement remains substantially true even to this day. Their womenfolk go one better in the acquisition of religious knowledge and the observance of religious rules.

Great attention is paid to their daily prayers or *ṣalāts* which are said regularly five times a day,¹ the men saying them in the mosques in their vicinity and the women in their own houses. The noon prayers on Friday called *ṣalāt al-jum'ah*² (the *ṣalāt* of the Friday) are said in the *jāmi'* mosque. Friday is treated as a holy day and the *ṣalāt al-jum'ah* is not avoided under any circumstances unless the person is physically incapacitated. Although normally clean and tidy, on Fridays they are at their best in this respect. The men who have succumbed to the modern habit of shaving invariably have a shave on a Friday even though they may skip it on other days. Even those among the males who are not accustomed to bathe daily do not miss their baths on Friday morning. The women, many of whom are habituated to weekly baths, take their baths on Thursday night in preparation for the

1 The timings of the five daily *ṣalāts* are as follows: (1) the *ṣalāt al-ṣubḥ* is performed at daybreak; (2) the *ṣalat al-zuhr*, at noon or rather a little later when the sun has begun to decline; (3) the *ṣalāt al-'aṣr*, in the afternoon, about halfway between noon and night-fall; (4) the *ṣalāt al-maghrib*, at sunset, or rather about five minutes later and (5) the *ṣalat al-'ishā'*, at nightfall when it is quite dark. Each of these five prescribed periods ends when the next commences, except that of the *ṣalāt al-ṣubḥ*, which ends just before sunrise. It is however recommended that every *ṣalāt* be performed as near the beginning of the prescribed period as possible.

2 In addition to the daily *ṣalāt* the *ṣalāt al-jum'ah* has a *khuṭḡbah* or sermon preceding the *ṣalāt*.

following day. Clean clothes are worn. Those who do not possess many set of clothes change their clothes at least once a week and that is on a Friday. Scents and cosmetics are freely applied and the whole settlement is filled with their fragrant smell.

Persons residing outside the settlements cannot however observe these rules with the same rigidity. Their time is not their own and they may not have the convenience of a nearby mosque or quiet surroundings. Ordinarily therefore many such persons are unable to say their daily prayers regularly. Those who can afford to leave their business or work place at regular intervals, such as owners of business and managers who have reliable men working under them, do make it a point to say their prayers as regularly as possible. But no one misses the *ṣalā al-jum'ah*, all Muslim concerns being closed on Fridays.

The annual almsgiving or *zakat* is given by most people according to their means. One day in a year viz., the 27th of the month of Ramazan is set apart for its distribution. Even though much of their capital is located and income derived from outside their settlements, the *zakat*, as a rule, is paid within their settlements. Such of the earning males who are unable to come home during that time send their share of *zakat* to their womenfolk at home, so that they may distribute it among the poor. However, the distribution is not restricted to the poor of their community alone. Beggars and *fakirs* belonging to other Muslim communities such as the Deccani Muslims, come to the Navayat settlements on that day by flocks. But their first thought is naturally upon the poor in their own community, who, as a rule, do not go begging from house to house. Alms are sent through children to the houses of such persons. *Zakat* is distributed in the shape of money, clothes and rice. Although it is laid down that one-fortieth of one's possessions has to be given in alms this rule does not seem to be strictly followed. Since the

zakat is distributed on one day in a year the amount so distributed would usually depend upon the income of a person round about that time. If a rich man does not happen to have sufficient income that month he is not likely to give the alms in proportion to his wealth. All the same, all people regard the distribution of *zakat* as their sacred duty.

Fasting in the month of Ramazan which is another essential religious duty obligatory on all Muslims, is most rigorously observed, no man or woman, unless under extraordinary circumstances, ignoring this duty. No food or drink is taken between daybreak and sunset. A sumptuous meal is taken soon after sunset, followed with another meal early in the morning, which latter has to be completed before sunrise. A peculiarity of these meals is that any food that is left over from the night meal cannot be taken during the morning meal and each meal has to be cooked afresh. The preparation of food for the morning meal requires that the women should rise up very early, about 3 a. m. or so and to enable them to wake up in good time some persons are appointed to go about shouting in the lanes.

Finally, the other obligation of a Muslim that he should perform the pilgrimage to Mecca at least once in his lifetime if his means permit him, is also given due importance by the Navayats. In recent years the Hajj pilgrims among Navayats average about half a dozen a year. Only in very rare cases women accompany their menfolk and the number of women who have performed the Hajj is negligible.

As all other devout Muslims the Navayats too observe the various Muslim festivals in a special manner. The chief among these festivals are: (1) *Ramazan-Id* which is celebrated soon after the prescribed 30 days' fasting in the month of Ramazan. (2) *Bakr-Id* or *Iduzzoha* which is observed on the 10th day of the twelfth month called *Zilhij* of the Muhammadan year. This is the day on which

the pilgrimage to Mecca closes and the pilgrims start from Mecca to proceed to Medina. Every Muslim, however poor he may be, is expected on this feast day to wear a new dress, perfume his person and garments and give alms to the beggars. The Navayats do not lag behind in all these respects. (3) The 10th of *Moharram* or the anniversary of the martyrdom of Hassan and Hussain, the grandsons of the Prophet. The Navayats, however, do not observe such customs as the *Moharram* processions as is usually done by their neighbours, the Hanafi Muslims of the Deccan.¹ (4) *Milad* or *Mouloud-i-Sharif*, that is the celebration of the birth-day anniversary of the Prophet. One of the main items of the celebration is the reading or recitation of the passages from the Qur'ān and works dealing exclusively with the Prophet's life history-his birth and the events attending it and his personal virtues and qualities. This is observed daily for about two weeks preceding the festival. Of the minor festivals observed the following may be mentioned: (1) *Shub-i-Barat* which falls on the 15th of the Muhammadan month called Shaban, and (2) *Shub-i-Kadar* which is on the 27th of Rajab.

Saint Worship

Worshipping saints is a common feature of almost all Indian Muslims and the Navayats are not an exception to it. Shrines of saints called *dargahs* are found in every Navayat settlement.² The *dargahs* are the tombs of holy

1 No community of Shāfi'i Muslims of South India indulges in these rites which are contrary to the spirit of Islam.

2 Among the noteworthy *dargahs* at Bhatkal those belonging to the following saints may be mentioned: (1) Shah Nanga, (2) Shah Qadri, (3) Syed Ahmad Saqqaf, (4) Muhammad Saleh Taqia, (5) Makhdoom Taqqi Ismail, (6) Satu Shaheed, (7) Shamsuddin Saheb, (8) Syed Muhammad Saheb Jabul and (9) Kutṭi Musa. The shrine of Kutṭi Musa is patronised by the Hindus as well.

men, many of them being Arab missionaries. These men are regarded as saints and there is a widespread belief in their power of working miracles. Their shrines therefore are visited by people for gaining temporal and spiritual favours through their intercession. The devotees bring with them offerings such as money, cloth, food, fruits, flowers, oil or even flags. These offerings are first placed on the shrine and the *fatihah* is recited. Small pieces of eatables are distributed to those who are present. Offerings of money, cloth, grains etc., are taken by the keeper of the shrine. If they consist of flags they are planted on or round about the tomb. Oil is used for the lamp which is lighted every night. Frankincense is often burnt before the tomb.

The shrines are visited during any part of the year. But the death anniversary of the saint is specially celebrated and on that day his shrine is visited by a large concourse of devotees. The occasion is called '*urs*'¹ and it is a time of great rejoicing and feasting as well as the observance of religious ceremonies in memory of the saint. In cases of more popular saints fairs also take place at the celebration of the '*urs*'. The '*urs*' ceremonies consist chiefly of the taking of a procession with flags and the recitation and reading of the traditional history of the saint and the miracles wrought by him. The meal is prepared at the shrine itself and after reciting the *fatihah* over the food the whole gathering is feasted. The feeding of the huge crowd involves considerable expenditure and so the money is collected through public subscription. In some places, notably Murdeshvar, each family has to subscribe a fixed amount. If in certain families there are only the womenfolk who are unable to eat at the shrine, their food is sent to their houses.

† '*Urs* in Arabic means wedding. But the term is used to refer to the saint's death because of the idea that his death means the union or 'wedding' of his soul to Allāh.

Mosques

The mosques of the Navayats are rectangular buildings with pyramid-shaped roofs. Usually they have two floors. The ground floor consists of an outer hall and an inner room on the eastern side. The hall has porches on three sides, the north, the west and the south. The *mimbar* (or pulpit) and the *mihrāb* (or the recess which indicates the direction of the *Ka'bah* of Mecca) are situated in the inner room. The leader of the prayer or *pēsh-imām* occupies this room and the congregation prays from the outer hall and the porches. A small tank with an arrangement for the performance of *wuzu* or ablution is often to be found by the side of the mosque. The roofs of most of the mosques are decked with small pinnacles of the type of the Hindu *kalas'a* (auspicious jar).

The particular mode of construction of the mosque with an outer hall and an inner room is noteworthy. The inner room of the mosque resembles the sacred precinct or *garbha gūḍi* of the Hindu temple which is visited only by the officiating priest. Further, most of the mosques of the Shāfi'ī Muslims of the west coast of India are of the above type¹ as contrasted from the mosques of the Deccani Muslims which do not have a separate room for the *mimbar* and the *mihrāb* and for the use of the leader. This shows that, as in the case of many other traits, the Shāfi'ī Muslims including the Navayats have borrowed their mosque architecture more heavily from their Hindu neighbours.

1 However, the front portion of the mosques of the Moplahs of Malabar has a decorated gable as found in the Hindu temples of the region.

Postscript *

A note on the early history of the Navayats of Kanara

The community of the Navayats of Kanara has been traced back to the Muhammadan community observed by Ibn Battūta at Honnavar in 1342 A. D.¹ But the earliest known reference to Navayats is found in an inscription of the 11th century A. D. The inscription records the grant of the village Laghu Morāmbikā (the present Morambi in Ilhas, Goa) made by the Kadamba king Jayakes'i I of Goa to a person called Chhaḍama belonging to an Arab family. The name of Chhaḍama's father is given as Aliyama and that of his grandfather as Madhumada, the latter two names being the Sanskritised versions of the Arabic personal names Ali and Muhammad respectively. The name Chhaḍama itself has been shown to have been derived from an Arabic expression meaning one who remembers God or a Chamberlain or door-keeper. The name of the community to which Chhaḍama belonged is mentioned as *Nauvittaka* or the present name Navayat. The inscription is dated the 5th July 1059 A. D.² Chhaḍama (referred to by the Portuguese as Sadano) was also

* This has become necessary because an important reference to the early history of the Navayats was kindly brought to my notice by Shri G. B. Pai of Ankola, North Kanara district, after the manuscript was sent to the Press and the material relating to history had been printed.

1 *Vide* Chapter III.

2 Moreshwar G. Dixit : "Panjim Plates of Jayakes'i I; Saka 981" in *Indica—The Indian Historical Research Institute Silver Jubilee Commemoration Volume*, pp. 89-94.

appointed governor of the Konkan by King Jayakes'i I and under his wise administration the city of Goa achieved great prosperity.¹ His grandfather Madhumada (Madhumod) who was a rich merchant is reported to have made a magnificent present of wealth to the Goa Kadamba King Guhalladeva II (980-1005 A.D.).² Thus the Navayat settlement of Goa can be traced as far back as the 10th century A.D., and possibly it had existed there for generations earlier.

The subsequent whereabouts of the Navayats of Goa are not known. At present there is no Navayat settlement in Goa and it is not known when the Navayats left that place. Possibly, they migrated to Honnavar sometime after the fall of the Kadamba dynasty of Goa and so the Navayats of Goa may be regarded as the ancestors of the Navayats of Kanara. This hypothesis is based upon certain important facts. For a long time including the period of the Kadambas of Goa, both Goa and Honnavar were under the same rulers. Therefore, Honnavar being one of the chief ports and commercial centres of the time, the Navayats of Goa must have had some of their members stationed at Honnavar also. During the Vijayanagar period the importance of Honnavar reached unprecedented heights. It is therefore probable that the Navayats of Goa eventually made Honnavar their headquarters. The fact that the mother-tongue of the Navayats of Kanara is a dialect of Konkani also supports this hypothesis, for the various other Konkani speaking communities of Kanara are known to have immigrated to this area from Goa at different times and owing to diverse circumstances.

1 G. M. Moraes : *The Kadamba Kula*, p. 185.

2 *Ibid.*, p. 172.

APPENDIX A

The Dialect of the Navayats

The Navayats of Kanara speak a dialect of Konkani known as *Navaiti*. But their speech contains a large number of vocables borrowed from Arabic and has many peculiarities of its own so much so that people speaking the other dialects of Konkani are not easily able to follow it. This peculiar position of the *Navaiti* dialect may be attributed to the fact that their ancestors belonged to two different groups, one speaking Konkani and the other Arabic. However, in its development, the influence of Konkani has predominated over that of Arabic. This greater influence of Konkani can be accounted for by the fact that it was their Konkani speaking female ancestors who had played the major part in shaping their culture since the Arab fathers had very little touch with their children.¹ Thus the structure of their speech has remained substantially the same as that of Konkani and only some vocables are borrowed from Arabic. Further, the borrowing of the Arabic vocables is more marked when dealing with religious themes.² This is quite natural because Arabic is the very medium of the Islamic religion and this religion was introduced to them by the Arabs themselves. However, in their ordinary intercourse a lesser number of Arabic words are used. Where an Arabic word is borrowed for a common object its corresponding Konkani word is also commonly used and the Arabic word is preferred only by those who are familiar with the Arabic lore. When Arabic or Persian verbs are used

1 Even now the Navayat children have a limited contact with their fathers who come home only occasionally and they are brought up almost exclusively under the care of their mothers.

2 For instance compare specimen Nos. I and II with No. III *infra*.

they are generally compounded with Konkani verbs. For instance, instead of the Konkani verb *āpai* (call or invite) the compound verb *da'wat kar* in which *da'wat* is Arabic and *kar* is Konkani, is used. Similarly for *palau* (see) we have *nazar kar*. While conjugating such compound verbs only the Konkani part is inflected.

The dialect is now written in the Arabic and the Urdu characters. But their earlier writings are mainly in the Arabic characters. It appears that the dialect remained unwritten for a long time and that efforts were made to put it down to writing for the first time about three centuries ago.¹

When their recent writings are compared with the earlier ones what strikes one's attention is that in the former a good deal of the influence of Persian and Urdu could be discerned.² This is owing to the fact that of late they have taken to the study of Urdu and Persian. Originally their education consisted chiefly of the study of the Qur'ān in Arabic. But now religious instruction is imparted to them in the Urdu language and they send their children to schools where the medium of instruction is Urdu.³

It is not proposed to give here a scientific analysis of the Navaiti dialect. But as one whose mother tongue is Konkani it may not be out of place here, for me to make a few observations on certain points which I find

1 In their manuscript, *Hadhā Kitāb-ul-Ahkām-ul-Islam* also known as *Nāito Kitāb* written in 1100 Hijri it is stated that the work was an attempt to render the religious precepts from Arabic into Navaiti which was until then only a spoken dialect.

2 For instance Specimen No. III may be compared with No. VII *infra*.

3 In fact there is a great desire among the educated to replace their mother-tongue with Urdu. But the mother tongue is strongly backed up by their womenfolk who have very little Urdu education.

peculiar from the standpoint of my own dialect.¹ However, my remarks refer to their speech as spoken by the men and found in their writings, since, owing to their custom of purdah I had no opportunity of listening to the speech of their womenfolk.

(a) Many of the words which are found both in my dialect and the Navaiti dialect occur in different forms :

e. g.,	K ²		N
	<i>malai</i>	(storey)	<i>mally</i>
	<i>palai</i>	(see)	<i>palle</i> (or <i>palau</i>)
	<i>dolo</i>	(eye)	<i>dolo</i>
	<i>tōṇḍ</i>	(mouth)	<i>tōḍ</i>
	<i>galo</i>	(neck)	<i>galo</i>
	<i>hardz̃</i>	(chest)	<i>harḍe</i>
	<i>uzo</i>	(fire)	<i>ujo</i>
	<i>mos</i>	(she-buffalo)	<i>mais</i>
	<i>bōs</i>	(sit)	<i>bais</i>
	<i>wol</i>	(stream)	<i>wahāl</i>
	<i>talē</i>	(tank)	<i>talo</i>
	<i>dāwō</i>	(left)	<i>ḍāwō</i>
	<i>sakkaḍ</i>	(all)	<i>sakhaḍ</i>
	<i>māg</i>	(pray)	<i>māng</i>
	<i>wōṇṭ</i>	(lip)	<i>hōṭ</i>
	<i>jēwu</i>	(take meal)	<i>jēwu</i>
	<i>ḍēw</i>	(climb down)	<i>ḍēw</i>
	<i>lās</i>	(burn)	<i>lāsh</i>
	<i>rāw</i>	(stay)	<i>rahāw</i>
	<i>nēs</i>	(wear)	<i>nhēs</i>
	<i>āpai</i>	(call)	<i>āpai</i>

1 I speak the Konkani dialect of the Christians of Mangalore and South Kanara which has been referred to by Dr. S. M. Katre in *The Formation of Konkani*.

2 K stands for my dialect and N for Navaiti.

K		N
<i>pāyi</i>	(leg)	<i>pā̃yi</i>
<i>bombli</i>	(navel)	<i>bombi</i>
<i>nākshī</i>	(nail)	<i>nākh</i>
<i>ātā</i>	(now)	<i>ātā</i>
<i>kāi</i>	(where)	<i>kē</i>
<i>itlē</i>	(so much)	<i>yeṭle</i>
<i>anī</i>	(and)	<i>anī</i>
<i>mātē</i>	(head)	<i>mātē</i>
<i>lāgī</i>	(near)	<i>lāgī</i>

In the above examples, from the point of view of my speech, the Navayats in some cases interchange the sounds *d* and *ḍ*, *t* and *ṭ*, *j* and *z*, and *l* and *ḷ*, in some cases the nasal sound is omitted or added or misplaced, in some words the aspirate sound *h* is added, in some cases certain letters are omitted and so on.

(b) The following are some of the peculiar Navaiti words which are neither Arabic nor Persian, nor are they found in my dialect :

<i>amulo</i> or <i>ambulo</i> ¹	(man)
<i>abulyi</i> or <i>abolyi</i> ²	(woman)
<i>mhēli</i> ³	(wife)
<i>parne</i> ⁴	(marriage)
<i>gōsā</i> ⁵	(God)
<i>īzān</i>	(small one)
<i>sūzān</i>	(great one)
<i>mōgyō</i>	(friend)
<i>kīwar</i>	(slave)
<i>zāpnī</i>	(speech)
<i>tikūn</i>	(from)
<i>garwō</i>	(big or great)
<i>sughad</i>	(good)

1—5 For explanation of 1 and 2 vide p. 107 *supra* and for 3—5 vide p. 106 *supra* and footnote thereof.

<i>dugaḍ</i>	(bad)
<i>augē</i>	(all)
<i>sāmyō</i> ¹	(all)
<i>gōmār</i>	(great)
<i>kettāũ</i>	(never)
<i>dakkan</i>	(fast)
<i>bēnē</i>	(separately)
<i>Biji</i>	(and)

(c) While following the usual rules of Konkani for the formation of plural from singular Navaiti has adopted an additional rule whereby the plural number is formed by the addition of the suffix *ē* to the singular.

E. g.,		K		N	
Singular		Plural		Singular	
<i>manis</i>	(man)	<i>manis</i>		<i>mānush</i>	<i>mānushē</i> or <i>manshē</i>
<i>bhūt</i>	(devil)	<i>bhūt</i>		<i>bhūt</i>	<i>bhūtē</i>
<i>zaḍ</i>	(plant)	<i>zaḍā</i>		<i>zahāḍ</i>	<i>zahāḍē</i>
<i>waras</i>	(year)	<i>warsā</i>		<i>warash</i>	<i>warashē</i>
<i>nākshī</i>	(nail)	<i>nākshyō</i>		<i>nākh</i>	<i>nākhē</i>

Sometimes this rule is also applied to Arabic words although Arabic words have their own rules for the formation of plurals. E. g.,

Singular	Arabic plural	Navaiti plural
<i>kandil</i> (lamp)	<i>kanādil</i>	<i>kanādilē</i>

(d) The Navaiti personal pronouns of the first person singular and the third person plural for masculine have different forms as follows :

1 In my dialect there is a word *somēst* meaning *all*

First Person Singular

K
hāṽ (I)

N
mē̃

Third Person Plural (masculine)

	K	N
Remote Demonstrative	te (they)	teĩ̃
Proximate Demonstrative	he	heĩ̃

Further, the plural for the third person feminine is the same as the singular as follows:

K		N	
Singular	Plural	Singular	Plural
tĩ̃ (she)	tyō̃	tĩ̃	tĩ̃
E. g., tĩ̃ abulyĩ̃ (that woman)			
tĩ̃ abulyō̃ (those women)			

In my dialect the reflexive pronoun *apun* takes the form of *apnāk* in the Accusative Case. But the corresponding form in the Navaiti dialect is *aplāk* or *aplyāk*.

(e) In my dialect the verbs *assā* and *vortautā* mean "to be." In Navaiti the corresponding verbs are *ashē* and *wātē*. These verbs are used only in the present tenses as "is" and "has." The verb *ashē* cannot be declined but *wātē* has four declensions, they being (1) *wā tē̃* for first person singular, (2) *wātē* for second and third person singular (sometimes also used as *wātēs*), (3) *wātēt̃*, for second and third person plural and (4) *wāt̃yō̃* for first person plural, as in

<i>mē̃ hīgā wā tē̃</i>	(I am here)
<i>tū̃ hīgā wātē</i>	(Thou art here)
<i>to gharā wātē</i>	(He is at home)
<i>tumĩ̃ hīgā wātēt̃</i>	(You are here)
<i>teĩ̃ gharā wātēt̃</i>	(They are at home)
<i>amĩ̃ gharā wāt̃yō̃</i>	(We are at home)

To express the meaning of "to be" in the past tenses the verb *hotō* which is absent in my dialect, is used in Navaiti. It is declined so as to agree with number and gender. E. g.,

<i>kāl mē hīngā hotō</i>	(I was here yesterday)
<i>kāl Abdul hīngā hotō</i>	(Abdul was here yesterday)
<i>kāl tī hīngā hotī</i>	(She was here yesterday)
<i>kāl tē hīngā hotē</i>	(They were here yesterday)

(f) In my dialect as well as in Navaiti, in speaking to a boy or an inferior male person the particle *arē* is put before the name and *-rē* is suffixed to the verb, e. g., *arē Abdul hīngā yē-rē* (O Abdul come here). Similarly, in speaking to a girl or to a younger woman *agō* is put before the name and *-gō* is suffixed to the verb, as in *agō 'Aishah hīngā yē-gō* (O 'Aishah come here). So also while addressing a man who is not superior to, neither very familiar with the speaker *agā* is put before the name and *-gā* is added to the verb, as in *agā Saibū hīngā yē-gā*. The corresponding particle and suffix in the case of women are *agē* and *-gē*.¹ But the Navayats use a special suffix when a man talks with another man who is equal and familiar to him. The suffix used is *-wā* as in *tū kē wota-wā?* (Where are you going?) However, in this case there is no particle put in the beginning of the sentence. The above suffix is used only in the case of men and there is no corresponding suffix for women. Further, superior persons in my dialect are addressed in the plural and there are no special particles or suffixes used as in the above cases. But the Navaiti dialect has a special particle and a suffix to be used while addressing the superiors in addition to referring to them in the plural. They are *anē* and *-nē* as in *anē odepā hīngā yē-nē* (O uncle come here). Both superior males and females are addressed in the same manner.

1 The Navayats prefer to use *agē* and *-gē* in the case of girls also.

Thus it is clear from the foregoing observations that Navaiti is a distinct dialect of Konkani. The Navayats have isolated themselves from other communities including the other Konkani speaking people for centuries together and hence the evolution of their dialect is quite unrelated to the evolution of the other Konkani dialects, this coupled with the influence of Arabic accounting for most of the peculiarities of Navaiti.

The following specimens from Navaiti transliterated and translated by me into English may give those unacquainted with the dialect some idea about it. Linguists may find in them some material for a scientific analysis.

The scheme of transliteration of the Arabic and the Urdu characters used in this connection is as under :

ا = a	ر = r	ق = q
پ = p	ز = z	ک = k
ب = b	ژ = zh	گ = g
ت = t	ڑ = r	ل = l
ث = s	س = s	م = m
ٹ = t̤	ش = sh	ن = n
ج = j	ص = ṣ	ں = ~ over nasalised vowel
ح = h	ض = z	و = w, v
خ = kh	ط = t̤	ہ = h
د = d	ظ = z̤	ء = ' (schwa)
ذ = dh	ع = ' (open syllable)	ی = i, y, i or e
ڈ = ḍ	غ = gh	ی medial (i) = ai.
	ف = f	

The Arabic words in the transliterations are in Italics and the Persian words in bold print. However, Arabic and Persian words which are commonly used also in the other Konkani dialects are not treated this way.

Specimen I

CONVERSATION BETWEEN TWO NAVAYATS
IN THE PREMISES OF A COURT

- 1 Q. Tumĩ keka aile hingā ?
- 2 A. Post Imāmā upar bāḍe bāqi ashē balūn dāvo
kaila taĩ.
- 3 Q. Tumso vakeel kon-to ?
- 4 A. Jali Setgi.
- 5 Q. Jali Setgi ailanāĩ.
- 6 A. Yēnatlān Jukaku vakeel paltalo.
- 7 Q. Biji kā kabār ? Garē sāmyō nikke parīn wāṭēt ?
- 8 A. Allāchō fāzl. *Shukr al-Hamdulillah.*
- 9 Q. Biji baiso tumĩ.
- 10 A. Baislān nawazē wasūchō time zālō.
- 11 Q. Tumchē Abdul Hamidāchē kā zāle ?
- 12 A. Te faislā zālō.
- 13 Q. Kā dakkan Madras watalatgā ?
- 14 A. Dōn mās lāgēt.
- 15 Q. Watāt kā toptāt.
- 16 A. Yetta wottā.

Free Translation

- 1 Q. Why have you come here.
- 2 A. Because I have sued Post Imam for the
recovery of the arrears of rent.
- 3 Q. Who is your lawyer ?
- 4 A. Jali Setgi.
- 5 Q. But Jali Setgi hasn't come.

- 6 A. If he has not come lawyer Jukaku will attend to it.
 7 Q. What other news? Are all well at home?
 8 A. By God's grace. Let Him be praised.
 9 Q. Sit down for a while
 10 A. If I sit down it will be late for prayer.
 11 Q. What happened to (the matter) pertaining to Abdul Hamid.
 12 A. It has been settled.
 13 Q. Are you going to Madras in the near future?
 14 A. It may take two months.
 15 Q. Are you going or staying?
 16 A. Now I am going.

Specimen II

COPY OF A DOCUMENT OF THE YEAR 1213 HIJRI

Transliteration

1 *Sanh* 1213 warsāntlē māh safar tārīkh satrawī
 budwār disā 2 Hazrat Maulwī Ism'ail Ṣāhbā pūt Abū
 Muhammadāchī mhēlī Māyī Bibīyēn 3 aplō putnyō
 Sukrī Bāpūk baraun dīlale lād'awā kāghaz. 4 Amchē
khawind wafāt zālā mag 5 tumchēt anī tumchē bāpūlyō
 Abdulqādirāt mukhālifat paḍūn 6 tumchē anī tumchē
 bāpūlyō aushē bābat milak wa bāpshē bābat mirās dōn
 taqṣim karūn 7 hiṣṣo yēk amchē khawind Abu
 Muhammadāk 8 hiṣṣo yēk tāichē bhāwus Abdulqādirāk
 9 henchē dōn hiṣṣe mafrūq karūn gheṭlalo bayān—
 10 Sukūnat kailale ghar yēk 11 hēchī qimat 12 ṭhāwāk

kailale warahā pannās 13 wa bāndāwaḍēk panchāwan
 warahā . 14 *jumlā* yēkshē pānch warahā— 15 Ṣāleḥā
 sāyitalē gharā ṭhāw yēk; 16 hēchī *qīmat* pānchtīs warahā,
 17 wa Dōngrāwaile pōrsū yēk; 18 hēchē *qīmat* warahā
 dhā 19 *jumlā* warahā yēkshē pannās 20 y'anē dēdshē;
 21 wa Kōyḍā Kākā *milaketle* ailalē warahā pandrā wa
 dām naw— 22 *jumlā* warahā yēkshē sādē sāṣsat chār dām
 23 Abdulqādirāchē *hiṣṣyāk* ailale *milak*:— 24 Ṣāleḥā
 sāyitalo gharā ṭhāw, 25 *qīmat* warahā pānchtīs 26 wa
 Dōngrāwaile pōrsū yēk, 27 *qīmat* warahā dhā, 28 dīgar
 Kōyḍā Kākā *milaketale* pāwlale sādē-sāt warahā chār dām,
 29 ghar Sukrī Bāpūn mazbūr mōlak aplē *qabzāt* ghēwun
naqad dilale warahā tīs— 30 *jumlā* Abdulqādirāk pāwlale
 warahā sādē ba-ashshī chār dām. 31 Abū Muhammadāchē
hiṣṣyāk ailalo 'iwaz:— 32 mazkūr ghar Sukrī Bāpūn
 y'anē tumī mazbūr mōlak aplē *qabzāt* ghēwun
 Abdulqādirāk tīs warahā dīwun tumchē *zimmāt* rahālale
 warahā panchahattar ; 33 Kōyḍā Kākā *milaketale* warahā
 dām unē aṭ — 34 *jumlā* warahā sādē bā-ashshī chār dām.
 35 Tumchī wa 'Abdulahmanāchī wa Faqīr Ṣāhbāchī
 āwus ghawā fūḍē *wafāt* zālalyā dhanī taīchē āngār
 aslale *zēwar*— 36 halkyā tōḍ yēk, 37 *qīmat* warahā dōn;
 38 nākatuli mūdī yēk, 39 *qīmat* sowāi chār dām;
 40 bēḍo duḍallī yēk, 41 *qīmat* warahā dōn 42 pōtā
 halḍo yēk, 43 *qīmat* warahā pānch; 44 wālyā tōḍ yēk,
 45 *qīmat* warahā sowāi chār; 46 kaḍaulyā tōḍ
 yēk, 47 *qīmat* warahā chār— 48 *jumlā* warahā sādē satrā
 pāwnē dōn dām; 49 bēḍō hechēt ghawā hārī
rujū' zālālē *rubā'* yēk, bābat chār warahā chār dām—
 50 *jumlā* Abū Muhammadāk pāwlalē, 51 mhēlyē bābat

rubā' sait, 52 satte ashshī warahā tīn dām sādē tīn wīswē;
 53 hechēt 54 Khatīb Aḥmad Ṣaḥbān gharā bābat *y'ānē*
 tumī gheṭlale gharā bābat aplyāk *milak* pāwūkāz balūn
 dā'wō kailale teikā tumī dīlale warahā sādē bārā 55 wa
 Muṣbā Muḥammad Āmīnāk bāpūs Abū Muḥammadā
tarfīn pāwūche *garzāk* dīlale sōlā warahā dharūn 56 wa
 Bājīdāk pāwūchē warahā chcha 57 Kaḍlī Muḥammad
 Husaināk pāwūchē warahā dād 58 anī Bājīdā mhelyēk
 pāwūchō warahā sowāi 59 anī Bōṭyā Faqī Bāpū mhelyēk
 pāwūchō sowāi dharūn, 60 hē sā bād karūn; 61 baqī
 sādē yekunpannās warahā sādē tīn wīswē 62 anī
 tumchī aushīchō *mahr* warahā chālīs 66 tī ghawā
 fūdē *wafāt* zālalyā *sababēn* 64 chār *hiṣṣyātlō* yēk *hiṣṣo*
 ghawā hārī *ruḡū'* karūn 65 baqī tīs warahā tīkā pāwē.
 66 Āmkā pāwlalo *bayān*: 67 mazkūr *zēwar*, 68 hechā
qīmatēk sādē-satrā warahā pāwnē dōn dām 69 beḍō *bāqī*
 yek warahā tērā chakar 70 tumchē *tarfīn naqad* pāwlē
 71 balūn baraun dīlale lādā'wā *khat*.

72 Māyī Bībiche *razāwen* 73 bhāwus Kākān kailale dastaqīsam.

74 Hēnchē sāmāchē *razāwandēn* 75 baraulalē Muḥammad Husainā.

Free Translation of the Above

1 This day on Monday the seventeenth of the month
 Safar 1213 Hijri, 2 Māyī Bībī the wife of Abū muhammad
 the son of Hazrat Maulwī Ism'aīl Sāheb 3 hereby gives in
 writing the deed of surrender to her stepson Sukrī Bāpū.
 4 After the death of my husband, 5 differences having arisen
 between you and your uncle 'Abdulqādir, 6 the ancestral
 property coming from father and mother were divided
 into two shares, 7 one share belonging to my husband 8
 and the other to his brother 'Abdulqādir 9 and these two

shares were divided (between you and 'Abdulqādir) as follows: 10 House which we are occupying—one; 11 its value, 12 for the site fifty varāha 13 and for the building fiftyfive varāha, 14 total one hundred and five varāha. 15 The house site near ṣāleḥā (lane)—one; 16 its value thirtyfive varāha, 17 and the garden on the top of Dongar—one; 18 its value ten varāha; 19 total one hundred and fifty varāha, 20 that is one and a half hundred 21 and the fifteen varāha and nine *dām* received from the property of Kōyḍā Kakā; 22 total one hundred sixty seven and a half varāha and four *dām*. 23 The property that has come to the share of Abdulqādir (is as follows): 24 The house site by the side of ṣāleḥā 25 valued at thirty five varāha 26 and the garden on the top of Dongar 27 valued at ten varāha, 28 Next the seven and a half varāha and four *dām* from the share of Kōyḍā Kakā's property 29 and thirty varāha given by Abdulqādir after taking full possession of the house. 30 The total amount paid to Abdulqādir is eighty two and a half varāha and four *dām*. 31 The property that has come to the share of Abu Muhammad (is as follows): 32 The seventy five varāha remaining with Sukrī Bāpū i. e., yourself, on account of the above mentioned house after you took full possession of the same paying the above mentioned sum of thirty varāha to Abdulqādir; 33 eight varāha less one *dām* from the share on account of the property of Kōyḍā Kakā—34 total eighty two and a half varāha and four *dām*; 35 yours, 'Abdulrahman's and Faqir Ṣaheb's mother having died before her husband, the following ornaments left by her: 36 *halkyā tōḍ*—one, 37 valued at two varāha; 38 nose-ring—one, 39 valued at four and a half *dām*; 40 next *duḷli*—one, 41 valued at two varāha; 42 *pōṭā halḍo*—one, 43 valued at five varāha;

44 *Wālyā tōḍ* — one, 45 valued at four and a half varāha; 46 *kaḍaulyā tōḍ* — one, 47 valued at four varāha 48 total seventeen and a half varāha and one and three quarters of a *dām*; 49 from this the one fourth due to her husband is four varāha four *dām*. 50 Thus the total amount due to Abū Muhammad 51 including the one-fourth share from his wife 52 is eighty seven varāha, three *dām* and three and a half *wiswē*. 53 From this, 54 the twelve and a half varāha paid by you to Khatīb Aḥmad Ṣahab when he claimed a share of the house i. e., the house purchased by you; 55 the sum of sixteen varāha taken as a loan by your father Abū Muhammad from Musbā Muhammad Amīn; 56 six varāha due to Bājīda; 57 one and a half varāha due to Kādli Muhammad Husain; 58 one fourth varāha due to Bājīda's wife, 59 and one fourth varāha due to Bōṭyā Faqī Bāpū's wife; 60 after deducting all these amounts 61 the remainder is forty nine and a half varāha three and a half *wiswē*; 62 and your mother's *mahr* of forty varāha 63 since she died before her husband 64 deducting one share out of four as being due to her husband 65 the remaining thirty varāha due to her (have to be deducted from the above sum of forty nine and a half varāha). 66 Description of my receipts: 67 The above mentioned ornaments 68 valued at seventeen and a half varāha and one and three quarters of a *dām* 69 and the remaining one varāha and thirteen *chakar* 70 received from you in cash. 71 To this effect this deed of surrender has been given in writing.

72 With the approval of Māyī Bibī 73 this document has been prepared by her brother Kākā.

74 With the approval of all these 75 written by Muhammad Husaina.

Specimen III

THE OPENING PASSAGE FROM THE MANUSCRIPT

HADHĀ KITĀB-UL-AHKĀM-UL-ISLAM.

(The work is assigned to the year 1100 Hijri, the date being mentioned in a book called *Zukhairat-ul-Şibayān*. There are several copies of this manuscript and they are widely read especially by women.)

Transliteration

1 Ayy 'aziz walaktū— 2 Ākhūn Seedy Muhammadāk
anbāyī chand bhāūḍēn āplyāk 'Arbī 'ibāratēn 'ilm dīn
sorzochī mihannat mushkil yēwn ghaḍta anī aplē m'arshatī
hālāk anī 'Arbī 'ibāratēn 'ilm hāşil karūchāk ist'adād mumkin
zāwn yēnahi balūn iltimās kailale kaḍe, 3 māgīr tāichō
iltimās khātīrāt hāḍūn 4 balke dūsre nafah pāūchī wast
ghaḍūn dharaūchāt kamīl sawāb ashē balūn ragħbat dharūn
5 mu'tabar kitābē palūn 6 ba'inah tyāntūle masā'il muwāfiq
mazmūn ma'niyy manāt taşawwar karūn ghēwn 7 sāmyeū
izān sūzān abulyī ambulo walkhī nawāitī zubānī
'ibārat bayānwār tālīf karūn kāyī lābud bayān
imānēchī anī islāmēchī mukħtaşar taqrīrē tahrīr pā'wn
murattab zā'wn aile ashē..... 8 Ayy 'aziz, 9 agar
kōn Arbī 'ibāratēn 'ilm paḍuche mushkil ashē balūn
alshigī karūn jāhil zā'wn bēnaşīb raha'ūchyā pāsūn
10 lāzim ashē aplē bhashēn albattā imānēchī anī islāmēchi
ahkām sorzūkāz 11 jeshē hazrat paighambar farma'ule
wātēt (..... Quotation in Arabic) 12 ya'nē 'ilm dīn
paḍuchē farz ashē haryēk musulmān ambulō anī abulyēr
13 ya'nē haryēk musulmān ambulō anī abulyī bālīgh zālā
māgīr 14 imān anī islām aplī walkhūchī farz ashē.
15 Māgīr 'Arbī 'ibāratēn sorzō yā fārsī 'ibāratēn sorzō

16 jēshē *hazrat paighambar* farma'ulē wāṭet. (..... Quotation in Arabic) 17 Ya'nē arē mūjē *ummatitulyā* 8 zā tū apūn walkhatalo 19 yā walkhallyā pāsūn shīktalo 20 yā walkhallyā pāsūn aikatalo 21 *fāmmā* zā'wnākā tū chautō 22 ya'nē jettā tū aplē *imānēchī* anī *islāmēchī* *ahkām* walkatalo nohī zālān 23 shīktalo nohī zālān 24 māgīr *albattā* tū *kharāb* zāshī.

Free Translation

1 O thou friend, understand. 2 When some members of the community supplicated to *Ākhūn* Seedy Muhammad saying that they found it difficult to acquire the knowledge of religion in the Arabic language and that the type of their occupation did not make it possible for them to acquire knowledge in the Arabic language, 3 complying with their supplication 4 and moreover with the intention that the preparation of a thing that is profitable to others would be greatly rewarded, 5 going through authoritative books 6 and reflecting in the mind the purport of appropriate precepts from them, the commentaries on the infallible matters on belief and Islam 7 have been compiled in the service of God, rendering them in the unwritten Navaiti language which is understood by all, small or big, woman or man. 8 O friend, 9 lest any one should be unfortunate in being ignorant through laziness on the plea that it is difficult to acquire knowledge in the Arabic language, 10 it is incumbent on him that he should understand the injunctions of faith and Islam at any rate in his own language 11 as the Prophet has enjoined: (.....Quotation in Arabic) 12 that is, the acquisition of the knowledge of religion is incumbent upon every Muslim man and woman, 13 that is, when every Muslim man or woman has attained to puberty 14 it is obligatory that he or she should know his or her faith and Islam. 15 It is, however, immaterial whether

you study in the Arabic language or in the Persian language 16 as the Prophet has enjoined (.....Quotation in Arabic), 17 that is, O my follower, 18 be thou one who knows 19 or one who learns for the sake of knowing 20 or one who listens for the sake of knowing, 21 but do not be of the fourth category 22 that is, when you do not know the injunctions of your faith and Islam, 23 nor do you attempt to learn 24 then you will be ruined.

Specimen IV

THE FIRST TEN VERSES OF A SONG SUNG DURING MARRIAGE FUNCTIONS

(The song contains forty verses in all.)

Transliteration

1. Palwā *hikmat khās* garwē gōsāchī
Aikā *qissah* Bībī 'Ā'ishah parnyāchī.
2. Jettā gēlī *Khadijah w'adāk* pāwūn
Ūdās hōtē *hazrat* dilgīr zāwūn.
3. Jabrail āilē ghēwun parnyā *bashārat*
'Ā'ishah *ṣūrat* barown haḍle 'ibārat.
4. Balle ballo *rabb-ul-'izzat salām*
Dharūnākhāt *khātir* aplo mudām.
5. Parne kēlū wātēs tumkā hī *ṣūrat*
Yettā tumī parnawn ghēnā hī mūrāt.
6. *Hazrat sarwar rabbā anrāk mānūn*
Khushnūd zālē shukrbajā hāḍūn.
7. Māgīr *hazrat* dalālēk āpawle
Tī 'ain *ṣūrat* nirmal taikā dākhaḍle.
8. Pūsle taikā *wāqif* wātēs parnyāchī
Dēkhū rahāshī isli *ṣūrat* gartyānchī.

9. Balle *n'am wāqif wāṭēs shahrāchī*
Wāṭē tī dhu *hazrat Abubakrāchī*.
10. Garwō *jum'ah dīs waḍlo buzurg*
T'ajil kaile dakkan hē kām sudrūk.

Free Translation

1. Behold the special skill of great God
Listen to the romance of Bibi 'Ā'ishah's marriage;
2. When Khadijah died
The Prophet was dejected being sad.
3. Gabriel came bringing the tidings of marriage;
He brought a painted figure of 'Ā'ishah.
4. Said he : "Allah has given you salām-
"Do not grieve yourself perpetually.
5. "You have been married to this figure
"Now you take in marriage this picture."
6. Prophet, obeying the command of God
Was happy and was grateful.
7. Then Prophet called a broker
(And) showed him the same immaculate figure.
8. Asked him if he was aware of the marriage;
If he had seen such a beautiful housewife.
9. He said : "Yes, I am acquainted with the town;
"She is the daughter of Abubakr."
10. It was a Friday, holy and great;
They made haste to accomplish the work quickly.

Specimen V

THE FIRST TEN VERSES OF THE SONG CALLED
AIKĀGĒ SAYYĀNŌ.

(The Song contains 143 verses.)

Transliteration

1. Aikāgē sayyānō mēgē sāngtā
Allahche pāshī *taufiq* māngtā.
2. Tōgē nāito amīgē kiwro
Tekāgē waknūk nāpāwē iwro.
3. Tōgē postolo amchōgē dhanī
Teka nāi zōdō ūpāwanīt konī.
4. Manāt mokhāt aslale tō zānē
Techegē mazūk nā-hālē pānē.
5. Īzānāk sūzānāk techegē *nā'amato*
Īnwā gawrwā techēchgē *sifato*.
6. Īnāũche gauraũche tekāchgē sazāwar
Techegē aṭhwēn īnautā janāwar.
7. Muhammad *nabiyācho* karāgē wakān
Allahgē rākhīt tumchīgē *imān*.
8. Gōsāchō mōgyō amchegē warī
Yeko zān nāhī teichegē parī.
9. Taikāgē feṭaules amchēr *rabbān*
Aplegē *qudrato* karūk bayān.
10. Jibraīl yēwn teikāgē sangilē.
Qur'ān ghēwn teichērgē ḍivilē.

Free Translation

1. Listen friends (female) I am going to tell you;
I am going to pray Allah for graces.
 2. He is the master, we are the slaves;
Words are not sufficient to praise him.
 3. He looks after us, he is our lord;
None is born equal to him.
 4. Whatever is in the mind and the mouth he knows;
Without his knowledge the leaf does not move.
 5. His bounties are bestowed upon the small as well as
the great;
His attributes are to be found in both the rich and
the poor.
 6. He is the only one fit to be praised and respected;
His praises are sung by animals.
 7. Sing the praises of Prophet Muhammad;
Allah will safeguard your faith.
 8. The friend of God is unto us;
There is no one like him.
 9. God sent him unto us;
In order to reveal to us His power.
 10. Gabriel came and revealed to him;
He gave the Qur'an to him.
-

Specimen VI

THE FIRST 12 VERSES FROM THE SONG
GARWŌ WAKĀN

(The song comprises 253 verses.)

Transliteration

1. Garwō wakān karyā garwē gōsāchō
Khāliq rāziq dhaklē waḍlē sāmāchō.
2. Ni'amat dēlō amkā aplē karmān
Minnat kēlō amchēr aplē *rahmān*.
3. *Khāṣe sarwar* Muhammad nabi ūpaulo
Rahmat karūn amche ūpar fēṭaulo.
4. Zālō amchēr bhō waḍlo ūpkār
Isliye mōgyō amchēr kēlō **sardār**.
5. **Raushan** ūbzan *zāhir* zālē jē waqtār
Wamte paḍle bhūtē awgē tē waqtār.
6. *Awwal rabi'a* bār wō dīs sōmār
Pāida zālē *dunyēt* garwē gōmār.
7. **Nur** taicho zhalkūk lāglō 'arshāwar
Raḍlo *iblis* mātī ghālūn mātīyāwar.
8. Yegte hōtē fūḍē *shaitān* agsār
Man'a kēlē jettā dēkhlē hō dīdār.
9. Naushirwāchō *mahal* paḍlo ḍhalōn
Machosāchō ūzō gēlō īzōn.
10. Rākhlē hōtē yēk sās warshē *mudām*
Nābud zālō ētēch *khair-ul-anām*.
1. **Khurmyāchō** yēk zhāḍ hōtō sukōn
Tāzā zālō falāk ailō fulōn.
12. Sūkī hōtī wahāl pānī nāthūn
Dhāūk lāglī sal sal jhiryo fūṭūn.

Free Translation

1. Let us hail the great God,
The creator and sustainer of all, big and small.
 2. In his graciousness he bestowed upon us his
bounties;
In his mercy he did us benefit.
 3. He created the best leader Prophet Muhammad;
Mercifully he sent him unto us.
 4. It was a very great favour upon us
Because His friend was made our commander.
 5. When this became manifest
All the devils fell flat.
 6. On monday the twelfth of (the month)
rabi-ul-awwal
Was born the blessed and great (Prophet).
 7. His light began to shine in the eighth heaven;
Satan cried putting mud on his head.
 8. The devils were previously climbing up the sky;
They stopped when they saw this sight.
 9. Naushirwan's palace fell down shaking;
The fire of fire-worshippers became extinguished.
 10. They had been looking after it continuously for
a thousand years;
It disappeared at the advent of the best among
men.
 11. A date tree had been dry;
It became fresh and blossomed to give fruits.
 12. The stream had dried up without water;
It began to run with the opening of founts.
-

Specimen VII

A PASSAGE FROM THE BOOK *MUSLIM KHĀTŪN*

BY MOHIDDIN MUNIRI (1953)

*Transliteration*Abolyō **shauhara** sarīn chālūchō *tarīqa*

1 Aē abolyānō! 2 Walkhūn rahāyā 3 ke ghaw anī
 mhēlyēk saglī 'umr sarīn **zindagi basar** karuche ashē.
 4 Dōgācheū **dil** milūn rahālān tēiche *sabab* hi ēk waḍlī
 nī'amat ashē. 5 Dogātī konācheū **dilāt** farq yēwū dēwū
 nākhāt. 6 **Hamesha** aple **shauharāk** rāzī dēraūchi **koshish**
 karā 7 ke hejēt Allāhchī *rahmat* anī ākhr tēchī bhalāyī ashē.
 8 **Shauharā**chē *marzī* anī *tabī'ate khilāf* zāpūnākhāt. 9 B'az
 abolyō man-mānī zāpūn aple **shauharāk** nārāz kartāt
 10 anī mag pēshṭōtāt. 11 Aṭhow dhara ke yēkmartbah
 nārāz karūn mag manūlāt tarīn 12 *mumkin* ashē 13 ke
 fuḍlā parīn **dil** ṣāf zāūche nāhī. 14 Hyā *sabab* **shauharā**
 nārāz karūchī zāpnī jībet ṭikūn kāḍūnākhāt. 15 Aple
shauharāchī *haiṣiyat* pāsūn *ziyādah* **kharch** māngūnākhāt.
 16 Agar tumī aishī karīt tarīn 17 tumkā to aple *sabab* yēk
 bojh balūn walkhīt. 18 **Shauharā**chō hāth **tang** asu *waqtār*
 19 aplī *zarūrat*tēchī **farmaisho** karūnākhāt. 20 Aplī
khuahishāt pūrā karūchyā kanī 21 aple **shauharāk** *garz*
 ghēūchā ūpar **amadah** karūnākhāt. 22 Aple **shauharā**
 sarīn kon yēk zāpnār *zidd* karūnākhāt. 23 Agar tumchī
marziche khilāf **shauhar** *iṣrār* karta tarī 24 **khamosh** rahāyā
 25 anī mag *mau'ā* palūn 26 *ṣaḥīh* *taurār* samzwā. 27 Aple
shauharā ghare **tangi** aslān 28 konākāḍē **zīkr** karūnākhāt.
 29 Jekāyī khāū jāūk miltā tejēr **khushi** *zāhir* karte rahāyā.
 30 Tumī aishī karūchān 31 **shauharāk** tumchēr *ziyādah*

piyār zāyit. 32 **Shauhar** tumchē *sabab* tumchī
napasandīdah **chiz** haḍlān 33 **nakhushi** *zāhir* karūnakhāt.
 34 Agar tumī *nārāzgi* kartīt tarī 35 tējē **dil** dhakle zātle.
 36 Anī dūsri **chizo** haḍuchā *sabab* tayār zāuchē nāhī.
 37 **Shauhar** kōpār astanī 38 islī zāpnī zāpūnakhāt
 39 ke tejen techō kōp *ziyādah* zāyit. 40 Har *waqt* tējī
tabi'atēcho rang palūn **guftugu** karā. 41 Kāyilē **waqtār** hāsī
dil lagī karūn tējē **dilāk** **khush** kartē rahāyā. 42 Agar
ittifāqān to tumchen *nārāz* zālān 43 tumī kau tōḍ bhaūḍōn
 baisōnakhāt; 44 balke *m'āfi* māngūn aplo *quṣūr m'āf* karūn
 ghēuchāt *fakhar* walkhā. 45 Aple **shauharāk** aple pāsūn
hameshah bāizzat anī **baland** *martabah* walkhā 46 anī tējī
khidmat karuchāt *'ain s'ādat* anī **khush** *naṣībī* balūn *khayāl*
 karā. 47 **Shauhar** pargāwānt aslān 48 **haftah** yēk
martabah *kh att* barōn gharchē anī chedwāchē *ḥālāt m'atūm*
 kartē rahāyā. 49 To **kaghzat** kāyī *hidāyat* baraulān 50 tejer
'amal aplēr *lāzim* karūn ghēnā.....

Free Translation

The way in which women should behave with their husbands.

1 O women! 2 bear in mind 3 that a husband and a wife have to pass their whole lifetime together. 4 If they are both of one heart it is a great blessing in their case. 5 Do not allow any discord to enter into the heart of either of you. 6 Always try to keep your husband satisfied, 7 for in this there is God's mercy and finally his merit. 8 Do not talk against the wish and mood of the husband. 9 Some women by talking obstinately make their husband dissatisfied 10 and repent afterwards. 11 Remember that having caused dissatisfaction once, even if reconciled, 12 it is possible 13 that

the heart will not remain clear as before. 14 Therefore, do not utter from your tongue the talk that is displeasing to your husband. 15 Do not ask for more money than the capacity of your husband permits. 16 If you do like this 17 he will regard you as a burden upon himself. 18 When the husband is short of funds 19 do not bother him with your requirements. 20 In order to satisfy your desires 21 do not induce your husband to raise a loan. 22 Do not contradict your husband on any talk 23 If your husband tries to go against your wish 24 keep silent 25 and afterwards finding an opportunity 26 make him understand in a proper manner. 27 If there is hardship in your husband's house 28 do not reveal it to any one. 29 Manifest your satisfaction in whatever you get to eat. 30 If you do like this 31 your husband will love you more. 32 If the husband brings for you a thing that is not acceptable to you 33 do not show your displeasure. 34 If you show your displeasure 35 his heart will become small, 36 and he will not be prepared to bring other things. 37 When the husband is angry 38 do not speak such talk 39 as will increase his anger. 40 Every time converse with him according to the colour of his mood. 41 At the time of illness keep on gladdening his heart by trying to be cheerful. 42 If per chance he is displeased with you 43 do not sit with a sour face, 44 but take just pride in asking pardon and having your fault pardoned. 45 Always regard your husband as having a higher honour and higher rank than yourselves 46 and you should think that your proper duty and good fortune lies in serving him. 47 If the husband is outside the native place 48 write him a letter once a week and keep him informed of the domestic affairs and the condition of children. 49 If he gives any instructions in his letter 50 you should make it incumbent on you to execute them.....

APPENDIX B

Table of Kinship Terms of Navayats

P₃ Generation

- (a) Males
 Great-grandfather on the father's side }
 as well as the mother's side } *paḍāzō (wolle āzō)*
- (b) Females
 Great-grandmother on either side : *paḍajji*

P₂ Generation

- (a) Males
 Father's father and mother's father : *āzō*
- (b) Females
 Father's mother and mother's mother : *ajji*

P₁ Generation

- (a) Males
 Father : *bāppā (bāpūs)*
 Father's brother (in common) : *bāpūlyo (bappu)*
 " (eldest) : *wodeppā*
 " (second) : *goreppā*
 " (third) : *awppā*
 " (fourth) : *hakkappā (hakkā)*
 " (fifth) : *kochappā (koyappā)*
 Mother's brother : *mālēka (māwlo)*
 Wife's father : *māmūlo*
 Husband's father : *māmūlo*
 Father's sister's husband : *ātāghaw*
 Mother's sister's husband : *mawsheghaw*
- (b) Females
 Mother : *mama (awus)*
 Mother's sister : *mawshi*

Father's sister : *ātā* (*māwōln*)

Wife's mother : *māu*

Husband's mother : *māu*

Father's brother's wife (in common) : *bāpūlyā-mhēlī*

(*bāpūlyālī*)

Father's eldest brother's wife : *woḍēppā-mhēlī* (*woḍēppālī*)

Father's second brother's wife : *goreppā-mhēlī* (*goreppālī*)

Father's third brother's wife : *awppā-mhēlī* (*awppālī*)

Father's fourth brother's wife : *hakkappā-mhēlī*

(*hakkappālī*)

Father's fifth brother's wife : *kochappā-mhēlī* (*kochappālī*)

Mother's brother's wife : *mālekā-mhēlī* (*mālekālī*)

OR *māwlyā-mhēlī* (*māwlyālī*)

Ego's Generation

(a) Males

Brother : *bhāw* (*bhāwus*)

Father's brother's son (in common) : *bāpūlyā-bhāw*

Father's eldest brother's son : *woḍēppā-bhāw*

Father's second brother's son : *goreppā-bhāw*

Father's third brother's son : *awppā-bhāw*

Father's fourth brother's son : *hakkappā-bhāw*

Father's fifth brother's son : *kochappā-bhāw*

Mother's sister's son : *mawshyā-bhāw*

Father's sister's son : *ātā-bhāw*

Mother's brother's son : *mālekā-bhāw* (*māwlyā-bhāw*)

Husband : *ghaw* (*nāito*)

Husband's brother : *mehwono* (*mewno*)

Wife's brother : *mehwono*

Sister's husband (both man and woman speaking) :

bhāwa

Son's wife's father : *sōsto* (*samdi*)

Daughter's husband's father : *sōsto* (*samdi*)

Wife's sister's husband : *sadduk*

Husband's sister's husband : *mehwnē-ghaw*

Bridegroom : *horait*

(b) Females

Sister : *bhain*

Father's brother's daughter (in common): *bāpūlyā-bhain*

Father's eldest brother's daughter : *woḍēppā-bhain*

Father's second brother's daughter : *gorēppā-bhain*

Father's third brother's daughter : *awppā-bhain*

Father's fourth brother's daughter : *hakkappā-bhain*

Father's fifth brother's daughter : *kochappā-bhain*

Mother's sister's daughter : *mawshyā-bhain*

Father's sister's daughter : *ātā-bhain* (*māwōlnī-bhain*)

Mother's brother's daughter : *mālēkā-bhain*

(*māwlyā-bhain*)

Wife : *mhēlī*

Husband's sister : *mehwnī* (*mewnī*)

Wife's sister : *mehwnī* (*mewnī*)

Husband's brother's wife : *jāw* (*mehwnyā-mhēlī*)

Brother's wife : *mehwnī* (*bhāwshī-mhēlī*)

Son's wife's mother : *sōsti*

Daughter's husband's mother : *sōsti*

Wife's brother's wife : *mehwnyā-mhēlī*

Bride : *hokal*

Co-wife : *sawat*

F₁ Generation

(a) Males

Son : *pūt*

Brother's son (both man and woman speaking): *putnyo*
(*bhāwshī-pūt*)

Sister's son (man speaking) : *bhāco_s*

Sister's son (woman speaking) : *bhāco_s* (*bhainī-pūt*)

Husband's brother's son : *mehwnyā-pūt*

Husband's sister's son : *mehwnē-pūt*

Daughter's husband : *jāwāi*

Wife's brother's son : *mehwnyā-pūt*

Wife's sister's son : *mehwnē-pūt*

(b) Females

Daughter : *dhū*Brother's daughter (both man and woman speaking) :
*dhuwndī (bhāwshī-dhū)*Sister's daughter (man speaking) : *bhāchi*Sister's daughter (woman speaking) : *bhāchi*
(*bhainī-dhū*)Husband's brother's daughter : *mehwonyā-dhū*Husband's sister's daughter : *mehwnē-dhū*Son's wife : *sūn*Wife's brother's daughter : *mehwonyā-dhū*Wife's sister's daughter : *mehwnē-dhū**F₂ Generation*

(a) Males

Son's son : *nātūd*Daughter's son : *nātūd*

(b) Females

Son's daughter : *nātūdī*Daughter's daughter : *nātūdī**F₃ Generation*

(a) Males

Son's grandson : *shitūd*Daughter's grandson : *shitūd*

(b) Females

Son's grand-daughter : *shitūdī*Daughter's grand-daughter : *shitūdī**Other Special Terms*Child (male or female) : *chedu*Adult : *bālig*Relative : *mōgyō*Man : *amulo (ambulo)*Woman : *abolyi, (abuli, ambuli)*Maiden : *aṭhwar*Housewife : *garti*

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