

SESSION 8 (Papers, Film)

Mohamed Haseeb N

Mangalore University, Mangaluru, India

Where Music Meet Strength: Emotion and Esteem, Revisit into the Kolkkali Performance of Mappilas of Malabar

Mappilas, the minority Muslim community of Malabar, evolved as a result of pre- and post-Islamic Arab contacts. Kolkkali (Stick dance) is a group performing art with sticks practiced mainly by the Mappila fisherman community. Among the Mappila art forms, Kolkkali belongs to a special category, because kolkkali is a mixture of music, movement, physical strength, and emotional stability. The first part starts with a Mappila song (Mappilappattu) and a simple body movement known as ‘marinjadi minkkali’ and ends with an intricate step ‘ozichil mutt’. The pattern of body movements varied in accordance with the rhythm of Mappila songs and oral commands (vayitari). Kolkkali was a source of inspiration in the anti-colonial struggle and played a key role in the socialization process of Mappila community. Kolkkali reiterated self-confidence of the Mappilas and acted as a psychological weapon during Malabar rebellion. This is an attempt to understand the tradition and changes that happened in kolkkali by analyzing its different steps which are recorded by Dutch ethnomusicologist Arnold Adriaan Bake in 1938. A comparison of the kolkkali performances in 1938 and 2023 includes analysis of the socio-economic condition of the fisherman community past and present. Through this musical voyage, connecting different historical phases in the light of Bake recordings of 1938 and restudy conducted by Nazir Ali Jairazbhoy and Amy Catlin Jairazbhoy in 1991, I hope my paper provides wider dimensions into the study of music, dance and minorities.

Bio

Mohamed Haseeb N is currently working as an Assistant Professor in the Department of History at PSMO College, University of Calicut, Kerala, India. He completed graduate and postgraduate studies in history with special focus on Indian History and Culture from Calicut University. Indian Council for Historical Research (ICHR) awarded him a Junior Research Fellowship in 2019. He is pursuing his Ph.D. at Mangalore University. His special interest is the Mappila song, a unique musical genre compiled and composed by Mappilas of Malabar. Apart from Mappila song, he is an acknowledged expert in other Mappila performing arts namely Vatta pattu, Daff muttu, Arabana muttu, and Kolkkali. He presented papers at several conferences, including those of SEM, ICTMD, BFE, RMA, and the Association of Ethnomusicology-Turkey.