

Lutheran Mission Matters

Winner of
Concordia Historical Institute's
2017 Award of Commendation



Lutheran Presence at the First Protestant Christianity in South Travancore

Damodharan Christudas

Abstract: Protestant Christianity in Travancore has a unique history different from other missions in India. The Eastern (Syrian) Orthodox and the Roman Catholic Christians first came to India as immigrant communities and multiplied primarily through biological reproduction. Protestant Christianity however was a missional movement, proclaiming Jesus Christ as Savior among indigenous peoples. The Protestant mission movement in India began especially with the entrance of Bartholomew Ziegenbalg in Tranquebar in 1706, a Halle Lutheran Missionary. The existing histories about the origin of the Protestant Christianity in Kerala hardly mention this fact. Before the arrival of the London Mission Society in 1812, Protestant Christians were working already in Travancore as an extension of the Tranquebar mission. Historians of Travancore Protestant Christianity so far have only acknowledged the origin of Protestant Christianity in Kerala with the Rev. Vedamanickam of Mylady. That story however is very selective. This study is an attempt at re-reading the Travancore Christian mission history for the purpose of showing a clear connection of Lutheranism with the first Protestant missionary efforts in Travancore.

This year the world is celebrating the five hundredth anniversary of the Reformation. During this historic year, 1.6 million Indian Christians belonging to twelve different denominations within the Lutheran tradition will be joining this celebration. To God alone is due the praise and honor for the growth and expansion of the Lutheran Christians in India. It is important that the voices of Indian Lutherans be heard as part of the five hundredth anniversary celebration. They, too, have been called by the Lord to be His witnesses at this critical moment in world history. What



Rev. Dr. Damodharan Christudas is an ordained minister of India Evangelical Lutheran Church (IELC). He served as a pastor in several Lutheran congregations in Kerala. In 2004, he joined the faculty of Concordia Theological Seminary, Nagercoil, as director of the IELC Lay Training Program. Christudas holds his BD, MTh, and DTh degrees from the Senate of Serampore College, West Bengal, India. The author has published several scholarly articles and books in English and Malayalam, including The Legacy of Martin Luther. Presently he serves as the principal of Concordia Seminary, Nagercoil. dchristudas@yahoo.co.in

Copyright 2017 Lutheran Society for Missiology. Used by permission.
View Lutheran Mission Matters 25, no. 2 (2017) at <http://lsfm.global/>.

Membership in LSFM is available at <http://lsfm.global/joinlsfm.htm>.

E-mail lsfmissiology@gmail.com to purchase a print copy of a single issue.

through God’s grace transpired five centuries ago through the faith and life of one servant of the Word, named Martin Luther, historians have called the “protestant revolution.” That “revolution” continues today to profoundly influence the lives of Christians and no Christians alike. Indian Lutherans have many reasons to celebrate the Reformation as we experience the power of the Word living and active in the lives of ordinary people.

New perspectives in historiography are emerging, enabling investigators to find proper, relevant, and sufficient sources for the reconstruction of an inclusive history of any existing tradition or movement. Each minority Christian movement has a story which needs to be told, especially as these stories have hitherto been ignored or overlooked by historians. These stories are important because they represent the experiences of exploited minorities, oppressed peoples, and outcasts. The Christian minorities in India have been and still are vulnerable because of the socio-economic and cultural context in which they live. Historians must do justice to the concerns and perspectives of these suppressed minorities.

A rereading of the life stories of Indian Christians is vital at this point in the history of Christian missions in India. Roger C. Hedlund observes the importance of the inclusion of “little traditions” in the study of mission history.¹ Too often church historians concentrate mainly on the so-called “great tradition,” that is, the history of the institutional church, its administration, seminaries, charitable institutions, and official doctrines, while neglecting the efforts of the common people who by living the Gospel in their everyday activities and sharing their faith with family, neighbors, and acquaintances are carrying out the Great Commission, not only in their own vicinities, but often in other parts of the country. Our understanding of contemporary Christianity will be incomplete if we ignore the folk theology of the masses and the mission work carried out by the unsung lay evangelists of what anthropologists designate as the “little tradition,” the religion of the common people. The perceptions and assumptions found in most of the available histories are deficient and incomplete in this respect. In India, as in the Early Church, the faith was spread mainly through social and family networks and not by professional missionaries prepared by the institutional church. A historiography taking into account the perspective of those neglected in the past is needed to give church history a holistic

Students of history need to read anew the available histories to discover the hidden transcripts that relate how the Holy Spirit has been active in the lives of the poor, the oppressed, and the disinherited.

The common people have been and are not only the objects but also the subjects of mission.

Copyright 2017 Lutheran Society for Missiology. Used by permission.

View *Lutheran Mission Matters* 25, no. 2 (2017) at <http://lsfm.global/>.

Membership in LSFM is available at <http://lsfm.global/joinlsfm.htm>.

E-mail lsfmissiology@gmail.com to purchase a print copy of a single issue.

approach. Students of history need to read anew the available histories to discover the hidden transcripts that relate how the Holy Spirit has been active in the lives of the poor, the oppressed, and the disinherited. The common people have been and are not only the objects but also the subjects of mission. In this light we need to have a look into the history of first Protestant mission in South Travancore,² a part of present state of Kerala in India.

Christian Mission is a movement that cuts across all kinds of geographical boundaries. Jesus Christ sends His disciples into the world as an extension of His incarnation. Therefore mission work is not an auxiliary activity but the very life-blood of the Church. It is generally believed that in obedience to Christ's mission, St. Thomas, one of the twelve apostles, came from Palestine to Kerala, South India, in AD 52 to preach the Good News. From the first century AD onwards there has been a Christian presence in India. The present St. Thomas Christians in India, also known as the Syrian Christians, were the direct descendants of the Apostle Thomas' early converts.³ Certainly there was a well-established Church in Malabar by the third century.⁴ We have no evidence that any member of the early church in Kerala ever attempted to record the history of this church body during the first thousand years of its existence.

Jesus Christ sends His disciples into the world as an extension of His incarnation. Therefore mission work is not an auxiliary activity but the very life-blood of the Church.

The so-called St. Thomas Christians limited their outreach to other Syriac speaking peoples but did not reach out to others or translate the Scriptures into the many languages spoken in South India. Though a Christian community existed in South India long before a church was established in many sections of Europe, the rest of India had to wait many centuries before hearing the Good News in a language they could understand. It is clear that only after the coming of the Portuguese, and particularly after the arrival of St. Francis Xavier in 1542, that Roman Catholic Christianity progressed in the South. In the ensuing years, geographical discoveries and the evangelical zeal that was a by-product of the Reformation and Counter Reformation contributed much to the establishment of many missionary organizations dedicated to the evangelization of the non-Christian races of the world, including the many peoples inhabiting the Indian subcontinent. Accordingly, the first Protestant missionaries to be sent to the Indian subcontinent were German Lutherans who arrived in the small Danish colony of Tranquebar⁵ in South India in 1706.

Protestant Christianity in South Travancore

The Lutheran missionaries who helped establish Protestant Christianity in Tranquebar were German pietists who had studied at the University of Halle under the influence of August Hermann Francke, one of the great leaders of Lutheran Pietism. The German missionaries were sent to India by the Danish royal family, that is, by laypeople and not by a church body. Upon arriving in Tranquebar, the missionaries began translating the Scriptures, founding congregations, establishing schools, and undertaking charitable work. From Tranquebar, Christianity spread to other parts of India, including Travancore. Soon other missionary societies in England, Holland, Scotland, and Germany began sending workers to South India. For many years Protestant missionary work in Southern India was a cooperative enterprise that saw Anglicans, Reformed, Lutherans, and Methodists serving together in the same society. However, the first evangelists who carried the Gospel to Travancore were not foreign missionaries from one of the mission societies in Germany, Holland, Denmark, or Great Britain, but indigenous Indian Christians who identified themselves as Lutherans. One of these Indian evangelists was a young man named Maharasan.

Conversion of Maharasan

Maharasan came from an obscure village called Mylady near Nagercoil. He heard the Gospel while he was on a pilgrimage to a place called Chithambaram. It was on this pilgrimage that a Lutheran missionary named Kohlhoff, from Tanjore in Tamil Nadu, shared the Gospel with him. Maharasan converted to Christianity and was baptized by the Lutheran missionaries. He then took his new name, Vedamanickam (1763–1827),⁶ and returned to his village and began proclaiming the Word of God that he learned during his long stay in Tanjore. This happened in 1804. Certain catechists from Tanjore and Thirunelveli came and worked for some time in South Travancore. But Vedamanickam felt that presence of a European missionary in this place would further boost the cause of mission. So he returned to Tanjore with a request for a missionary. It so happened that a Lutheran missionary named Ringaltaube, associated with the London Mission Society, was residing and waiting for providential guidance to direct him to a new sphere of labor. He accepted Maharasan's invitation as a divine call to work in Travancore. So he promised to visit South Travancore. In Mylady, it was Vedamanickam's habit to gather those who would listen to the Gospel and read to them the Scriptures. He taught them the Catechism called *Gnana Upathesa Kuripadam* (which means small notes on wise doctrine). They were about thirty persons.⁷ Vedamanickam also gave Christian names to his wife and relatives who accepted Christianity. A catechist from Palayamcotta visited him occasionally to help him. But Ringaltaube's ministry in South Travancore opened a new era in the mission history of South Travancore.

Copyright 2017 Lutheran Society for Missiology. Used by permission.

View *Lutheran Mission Matters* 25, no. 2 (2017) at <http://lsfm.global/>.

Membership in LSFM is available at <http://lsfm.global/joinlsfm.htm>.

E-mail lsfmissiology@gmail.com to purchase a print copy of a single issue.

The Christian churches that were established in South Travancore came into being as an extension of the Tranquebar Mission,⁸ although South Travancore was considered as part of the Thirunelveli Mission. Certain officers of the East India Company, like Colonel Trotter, and certain Danish merchants, like Samuel Sawyer, took much interest in spreading the Gospel in South Travancore.⁹ According to John A. Jacob and also Anglican Bishop Robert Caldwell (1814–1891), Dutch factories were established in Cape Comorin and other places in South India. Mention is made in these reports of possible Protestant evangelistic work in South Travancore.¹⁰ Kohlhoff (1773–1819), the successor to Schwartz, states that “he sent an Indian evangelist by the name Yesuadian, to Travancore.”¹¹ Certain merchants and other travelers who used to go to the Thirunelveli district for tapping Palmyra juice became Christian converts and were baptized and returned to South Travancore.

The congregation at Kudangulam was established on November 11, 1802.¹² Early Protestant Christians at South Travancore had a close connection with the members of this Church. James Hough, the first Government Chaplain in Thirunelveli, in his report of 1815 states that “out of the 3100 Christians in the churches, 270 live in a village in Travancore.”¹³ T. K. Velupillai, who wrote about the Protestant Christianity in Travancore, reports that “even before 1806, stray attempts had been made by missionaries of Tanjore and Tinnevelley missions to gain converts.”¹⁴

Moreover, citing a leaf from Ringaltaube’s church register of the congregation at Pichaikudiyiruppu, Robinson says, “most of the people were baptized at Karungulam by Sathyanesan, a native priest. The register indicated these converts died during the famine of 1803.”¹⁵ Describing Ringaltaube’s mission in Travancore, J. Duthie writes, “he expected to find a good number of Christians there.”¹⁶ When Hacker explained about the conversion of Vedamanickam¹⁷ (whose name in Malayalam means “Pearl of Holy Scripture”), he says, “There were some who had embraced the truth before him.”¹⁸ This supports the argument that there were Christian Protestant converts in South Travancore before the London Mission began to work there. These converts were not from *Sambavar* community, but most probably from *Shanars*.¹⁹

Ringaltaube’s Mission at South Travancore

The London Missionary Society (LMS) founded in 1796 was at first a nondenominational organization; later it became more Congregational in regard to its doctrinal orientation. However, the LMS continued to recruit and send out missionaries belonging to different church bodies, including many Lutherans. The LMS understood itself to be an international enterprise whose mission was to spread the knowledge of Christ among the “*heathen*”²⁰ and other unenlightened nations.²¹ William Tobias Ringaltaube (1770–1816) was destined to be the first European Protestant missionary to Travancore. He came to Travancore by travelling in a

Danish vessel, “Kind Packet.” He was a German Lutheran and a graduate of the University of Halle. I. H. Hacker describes him as “A Prussian by birth and a Lutheran by religion.”²² As Ringaltaube was drawn towards the South, he began to learn Tamil.²³

Ringaltaube arrived in South Travancore on April 25, 1806. In two days, he reached Palayamcotta, which became his headquarters for the next three years. He came back again in March 1809 and settled at Mylady in South Travancore and remained there until 1816. Ringaltaube is credited with the founding of seven congregations in South Travancore, including the church in Mylady, although, as we have noted, it was the Indian Lutheran evangelist Vedamanickam who brought the Gospel to Mylady and invited Ringaltaube to help him. Ringaltaube won many converts for the Protestant cause.²⁴ He received financial help from some of his friends in Travancore and elsewhere, particularly from British Army officers and civilian officers of the East India Company. After twelve years of labor in South India, Ringaltaube handed over his charge to the indigenous leader, Vedamanickam of Mylady, and returned to his homeland due to ill health. The meritorious services of missionaries like Ringaltaube helped attract members of the depressed classes. This in turn resulted in a Christian mass movement in South Travancore.

Relationship Between Tranquebar, London, and Other Mission Societies

The work of Tranquebar Lutheran missionaries was strengthened by the financial support from the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge (SPCK) which was started in London in 1698. SPCK was formed by a group of Anglicans in England in 1698. Its aim was “to promote Christian Knowledge at home.” Thus, its focus was mainly in the field of education and publishing.²⁵

From 1709, the SPCK contributed to the funding of the Lutheran Mission; and, after 1734, the main responsibility for the mission outside Tranquebar rested on this society. From Tranquebar mission activities spread far and wide. From Tranquebar, native Christians went out and started new stations in Cudallore, Madras, Tanjore, Trichnopally, Palayamcotta, Tinnevelly, and Travancore and even in Calcutta. Even the celebrated Baptist missionaries that formed the Serampore Trio were inspired, when they came to Calcutta almost a century later.²⁶

It should be noted that a century of growing rationalism in Europe caused a lack of missionary zeal and contributed to the discontinuation of the Danish Mission and a gradual decline of Danish involvement in the SPCK. With Europe’s involvement in the Napoleonic wars, the SPCK fell into decline. In 1826, the SPCK handed over its responsibilities to the Society for Propagation of the Gospel (SPG). The SPG was the second Anglican Mission Society to be formed. The first meeting of the society was held in 1701. Rev. Dr. Thomas Bray was responsible for starting both the SPCK and the SPG. The main purpose of starting SPG was to support the Anglican Church in

Copyright 2017 Lutheran Society for Missiology. Used by permission.

View *Lutheran Mission Matters* 25, no. 2 (2017) at <http://lsfm.global/>.

Membership in LSFM is available at <http://lsfm.global/joinlsfm.htm>.

E-mail lsfmissiology@gmail.com to purchase a print copy of a single issue.

the American colonies and the West Indies. The SPG decided to begin its work in India and also in Ceylon from 1818 onwards. Upon taking over the work of the SPCK, some Anglican members of the SPG would begin to question their continued support of Lutheran missionaries in the society who had not been ordained by an Anglican bishop.²⁷ At this time there were Anglican bishops in India; and though the Anglican societies accepted the Lutheran orders of existing missionaries and Indian clergy, they required that in the future all ordinations should be in accordance with Anglican practice. Hence all the fruits of the blessed labours of the old Lutheran missionaries in the eighteenth century fell into the helping hands of Anglican missionaries and their supporting societies.²⁸

In 1813 the first CMS (Church Missionary Society) missionaries arrived in South India, and in Tinnevelly the members of the CMS mission soon became more numerous than those of the earlier missions. The first CMS missionaries included a substantial number of German Lutherans. Seeing Lutheranism in India beginning to falter with the demise of the Danish Halle Mission, the Leipzig Evangelical Lutheran Mission society began to send out missionaries to strengthen the cause of Lutheranism in India. The Leipzig Evangelical Lutheran Mission (LELM) was founded on August 17, 1836. The Leipzig Evangelical Lutheran Mission continued the work of the Tranquebar Mission when the Danish East India Company sold its property to the British East India Company in 1845.²⁹

From Tranquebar to Travancore

As we have noted earlier, there were Protestant Christians in South Travancore before the arrival of the LMS missionaries. The first Protestant Christians in South Travancore were directly related to the Tranquebar Lutheran Mission. They were converted and baptized by the Lutheran missionaries. The early evangelists in South Travancore also had the Lutheran roots. In

1790, C. F. Schwartz ordained Sathyanathan in Tranquebar and sent him as a pastor to Palayamcotta. Vedamanickam was trained and baptized by John Caspar Kohlhoff, the successor of Schwartz.³⁰ The first London Mission Society missionary, Ringaltaube, was also an ex-Danish Halle Lutheran. Before the arrival of Ringaltaube in South Travancore, the form of worship adopted by these early Protestant Christians was Lutheran. The form of church worship and church government was also Lutheran, as was also the case in Tharangampadi and Tanjavur. Several Lutheran rites and traditions continued to be observed in these congregations. Women were taught to cover their heads when they assembled for

The first Protestant Christians in South Travancore were directly related to the Tranquebar Lutheran Mission.

worship and were seated separately. Ringaltaube was aided in the preparation of his sermons and discourses by the tracts and books published by the Lutheran missionaries in Tranquebar.³¹ Further, C. M. Augur—in his description of the agreement made by Ringaltaube, the new Travancore missionary, and J. C. Kohlhoff, then head of the Society for Propagation of Christian Knowledge—notes that: “The reason why Mr. Kohlhoff entered into such an agreement with Mr. Ringaltaube was that Mr. Ringaltaube was equally in agreement with the use of Lutheran orders, and so he had the assurance that . . . during his temporary direction of the society, the churches would maintain the Lutheran principles he shared with them.”³²

While describing the mission work of the first Protestant missionary of South Travancore, R. N. Yesudasan wrote that that Ringaltaube, who was a German Lutheran, taught new converts with Lutheran catechisms. Tamil prayer books and the Catechism (*Gnanopadesha Kuripadam*) of the Lutheran Church of Tanjore were widely used by the majority of the Christians and their brethren in the mission.³³

It should be noted that even though Ringaltaube was the pioneer Protestant missionary, with a groundbreaking ministry of twelve years in Travancore, the credit of being the “Father of South Travancore protestant mission” was given to Rev. Charles Mead (1792–1873). With Mead, the mission saw a gradual transformation from its Lutheran roots to Methodism. Augur writes: “one of the most important events of the earlier years of Charles Mead’s period of administration of the mission was the gradual transformation of the Lutheran Church practices of the early church into Methodist forms of worship.”³⁴ G. Devakadaksham further supports this statement, when he writes, “in the early period of the mission, the Lutheran form of worship was practiced.”³⁵ Gradually, Rev. C. Mead introduced the Methodist form of worship. The church at Mylady was constituted after the model of the Tanjore and Tranquebar churches, which mostly followed German Lutheranism. Early Mylady Christians and their brethren in mission used the Tamil prayer books and catechisms of the Lutheran church of Tanjore. When Ringaltaube ordained Vedamanickam, he put on him his own surplice and called him a “native priest.”³⁶

In South Travancore, Protestantism experienced great success due to the work of Vedamanickam and the LMS missionary, Ringaltaube. However, there were already Protestant Christians in South Travancore before they came. Before the conversion of Vedamanickam of Mylady, there were Protestant Christians in South Travancore with clear connections to the Tranquebar mission. It is probable that among the early converts to Protestant Christianity many were from the Shannar/Nadar community. The historians of S. Travancore Protestant Christianity so far have acknowledged the origin of Protestant Christianity in Kerala only with Vedamanickam of Mylady and Ringaltaube. Even so, it must be pointed out that the first Protestant Christian, the first Protestant missionary, the first Protestant church and the first Protestant native pastor in Kerala were Lutheran. The first Protestant Christian in South Travancore,

Maharasan Vedamanickam, was baptized by a Lutheran missionary and was also ordained as the first Protestant pastor in South Travancore in the Lutheran order. The first Protestant missionary to South Travancore was a German Lutheran, William Tobias Ringaltaube (1770–1816), who came with the help of the London Missionary Society. Until the arrival of the Methodist LMS missionary, Charles Mead in South Travancore, the first Protestant community in Kerala remained Lutheran in character.

Conclusion

Protestant Christianity in Kerala has an exceptional history, unlike that of other church bodies in India. Though a Christian church existed in Kerala long before Christian churches were established in many parts of Europe, the rest of India had to wait for many centuries to hear the Good News. It is clear that it was only after the coming of the Portuguese that Roman Catholic Christianity was introduced in South Travancore. With the arrival of St. Francis Xavier in 1542, the Roman Catholic mission enjoyed great success. Protestant work in India is the result of the missionary activities of several different Protestant mission societies during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. German Lutherans were sent to South India as the first Protestant missionaries early in the eighteenth century. During this time, Denmark played an important role in the establishment of the Protestant Church in India. The Danish royal family was responsible for the sending of the German Lutheran missionaries to the small Danish colony in Tranquebar. They were the first Protestant missionaries to work in India (1706). The existing histories about the origin of the Protestant Christianity in Kerala, however, need to be read anew to appreciate the extent to which indigenous Lutheran believers were involved in the spreading of Protestantism in Southern India. Our understanding of contemporary Christianity will be incomplete if we ignore their contribution.

There are various studies about Christianity and the establishment of Christian church bodies in Kerala. These histories have been written by both Christian and non-Christian historians. But most of these investigations ignore the part played by native Lutheran Christians in the evangelization of Kerala. The picture painted of the coming of Protestantism in most books and articles is deficient and incomplete because it passes over the contributions of low caste Lutheran Indian believers in extending Christianity in Kerala. Against this background, the present study seeks to set the record straight. This is in

The picture painted of the coming of Protestantism in most books and articles is deficient and incomplete because it passes over the contributions of low caste Lutheran Indian believers in extending Christianity in Kerala.

the author's opinion an extremely important issue, as it regards not only a concern for scholarly truth, but also as counterweight to some of the cultural, racial, and denominational imperialism implicit in many books and articles written in the past. A historiography sensitive to the perspective of those who have been neglected in the past accounts will give to history a more holistic approach.

The history of the Protestant Christianity in the then South Travancore was different from that of other mission traditions in India. People from outside of this country brought the Syrian and Roman Catholic Christian faiths into Travancore. But it was indigenous Lutheran people who were the first to bring the Gospel to South Travancore. Lutheran mission was primarily a movement among the aboriginal people in South India. Among the many Christian denominations in India today, the Lutherans are still standing with strong convictions and distinctive doctrines and practices. In this five hundredth anniversary of the Reformation, the Indian heirs of Luther's Reformation strongly believe that they should keep their identity as Lutherans, as they have a definite and distinctive message to share with the world.

Endnotes

¹ In a civilization there are great traditions of the reflective few, and there are little traditions of the largely unreflective many. One is the tradition of the philosopher, the other that of the little people. One is literary and the other oral. In Indian Christianity, great tradition represents the mainline churches and little tradition represents small churches and other indigenous movements. For more details see, Roger Hedlund, *Quest for Identity: Indians Churches of Indigenous Origin, the Little Tradition in Indian Christianity* (Delhi: ISPCK, 2000).

² Travancore is the Anglicanized form of *Thiruvithamcode* or *Sreevalum code*. Travancore occupied a prominent place among the then Indian states. It was one of the Southern princely states of South India.

³ A. Mingana, *The Early Spread of Christianity in India* (Manchester: University Press, 1925), 18.

⁴ G. T. Mackenzie, *Christianity in Travancore* (Trivandrum: Travancore Government Press, 1902), 4.

⁵ The name Tranquebar was a European term. According to Tamil, it was spelled *Tharangampadi*, which means village waves, wave dancer, or even wave singer. It was a seacoast village of the Madras presidency.

⁶ C. B. Firth, *An Introduction to Indian Church History* (Madras: CLS, 1992), 156.

⁷ C. M. Augur, *Church History of Travancore* (Madras: SPS Press, 1903), 447.

⁸ The Danish Halle missionaries, Bartholomaeus Zeigenbalg (b. 1682) and Henry Plutschau (b. 1676), arrived at Tranquebar on July 9, 1706.

⁹ *The Travancore Times* 81/5 (June 25, 1952), 2.

¹⁰ John A. Jacob, *A History of the London Missionary Society in South Travancore 1806–1959* (Nagercoil: np, 1956), 17.

¹¹ J. W. Gladstone, *Protestant Christianity and Peoples Movements in Kerala 1850–1936* (Trivandrum: KUTS Publications, 1984), 58. Gladstone says that due to the protest from the high caste people Yesuadiyan was not able to build any church. That shows the possibility of conversion to Protestant Christianity from the low caste people.

¹² *The Travancore Times*, 2.

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ T. K. Velupillai, *Travancore State Manual* (Trivandrum: Government of Travancore, 1940), 770.

¹⁵ William Robinson, *Ringaltaube the Rishi* (Sheffield: Independent Press, 1902), 99.

¹⁶ J. Duthie, "A Century of Protestant Missionary Work in South Travancore," *Harvest Field* 17 (1906): 412–414. This was a paper read at the Kodaikanal Missionary Conference in May 1906.

¹⁷ Vedamanickam was the first convert from Hinduism in Travancore.

¹⁸ I. H. Hacker, *A Hundred Years in Travancore: 1806–1906* (London: H. R. Allenson Limited, 1908), 17.

¹⁹ *Shannars* were the community of toddy tappers from palmyra trees and land laborers who had migrated to Southern Travancore. They are prominent in South Indian Districts. Now they are called as the Nadars.

²⁰ This term is frequently seen in Indian history books written by foreigners. They mean it as "a person who does not belong to a widely held religion as seen by those who do" (Catherine Soanes, *Compact Oxford Dictionary* [Oxford: OUP, 2004], 415). But now this term has a negative impact among Indian society. In this paper, when unavoidable, the present researcher would give the word within quotation marks.

²¹ G. P. Fisher, *The History of Christian Church* (London: Hider & Slaughter, n.d.), 985.

²² Hacker, *A Hundred Years in Travancore*, 20.

²³ Samuel Mateer, *The Land of Charity* (London: John Snow & Co., 1871), 158–159.

²⁴ John A. Jacob, *A History of the LMS in South Travancore 1806–1857* (Nagercoil: Diocesan Press, 1990), 45.

²⁵ Beth Walpole, *Venture of Faith: A Brief Historical Background of the Church of South India* (Madras: CLS, 1993), 34.

²⁶ Joseph G. Muthuraj, *We Began at Tranquebar*, Vol. 1 (Delhi: ISPCK, 2010), 104–121.

²⁷ Walpole, *Venture of Faith*, 47–51.

²⁸ H. M. Zorn, "The Background and First Twenty-five Years of the Missouri Evangelical Lutheran India Mission (1894–1919)" (unpublished STM thesis, St. Louis: Concordia Seminary, 1969), 23.

²⁹ Daniel Jeyaraj, "Lutheran Churches in Eighteenth-Century India," *Lutheran Quarterly* 17 (2003): 90.

³⁰ The Kohlhoff's connection with South India, including the places of Nagercoil and Trivandrum of South Travancore, is clearly shown in the map appeared in Elizabeth A. Kohlhoff (compiler), *Pastoral Symphony—The Family and Descendants of J. B. Kohlhoff* (Richmond: University of Western University, 1989), 76.

³¹ Joy Gnanadasan, *A Forgotten History* (Madras: Gurukul Publication, 1994), 59–60.

³² Augur, *Church History*, 487.

³³ R. N. Yesudhasan, *A People's Revolt in Travancore, A Backward Class Movement for Social Freedom* (Trivandrum: Kerala Historical Society, 1975), 56–57.

³⁴ Augur, *Church History*, 701.

³⁵ G. Devakadaksham, "The Kannyakumari Diocese," in J. W. Gladstone (ed.) *United to Unite, History of the Church of South India 1947–1997* (Chennai: CSI Synod, 1997), 204.

³⁶ Augur, *Church History*, 701.