



Anthony Wallace and Muslim Reform Movements: A Comparative Understanding from Central and South Asia

This article is about a comparative understanding of Muslim reform movements in Ferghana Valley (Central Asia) and Malabar region (in the south of India, South Asia) in the context of the revitalization theory of Anthony F.C. Wallace. The historical-evolutionary approach of colonialism and the waves that it created in the 'colonies' show a similar trend in both regions. Both these regions witnessed a degeneration of communities, both in terms of religious and secular yardsticks. Reformation activities were initiated by individuals who attracted severe friction from society and faced alienation in different spheres of their lives. This can be depicted as a manifestation of 'cultural lag' in these regions. By the start of the twentieth century, international mercantile-politics took a new turn, and the globe witnessed some hitherto unheard things. When we extrapolate the graph to contemporary times, we can easily understand the repercussions these movements had produced. It helps to understand how to lead Muslim communities in other parts of the world. The methodology has been based on primary and secondary sources from libraries and online repositories. Research findings include elucidating the pattern of reform movements in geographically distinct regions at the beginning of the twentieth century and their influences on the present scenario. The novelty of this article is that the sociology of religion and reform is used in connection with historical and religious dimensions. Generally, religious reform movements are written from a religious point of view.

Keywords: Reform movement; Anthony Wallace; Degeneration communities; Modern politics.

Artikel ini membandingkan pemahaman gerakan reformasi Muslim di Lembah Feghana (Asia Tengah) dan wilayah Malabar (di selatan India, Asia Selatan) dalam konteks teori revitalisasi Anthony F.C. Wallace. Pendekatan historis-evolusi kolonialisme dan gelombang yang diciptakannya di 'koloni' menunjukkan tren yang sama di kedua wilayah. Kedua wilayah ini menjadi saksi degenerasi komunitas baik dari segi agama maupun tolak ukur sekuler. Kegiatan reformasi diprakarsai oleh individu-individu yang menarik gesekan keras dari masyarakat dan menghadapi keterasingan di berbagai bidang kehidupan mereka. Hal ini dapat digambarkan sebagai manifestasi dari 'cultural lag' di wilayah tersebut. Pada awal abad kedua puluh, politik dagang internasional mengambil giliran baru dan dunia menyaksikan beberapa hal yang sampai sekarang belum pernah terdengar. Ketika kita mengekstrapolasi grafik ke zaman kontemporer, kita dapat memahami dampak yang ditimbulkan oleh gerakan-gerakan ini. Tulisan ini membantu untuk memahami bagaimana memimpin komunitas Muslim di bagian lain dunia. Metodologi didasarkan pada sumber primer dan sekunder dari perpustakaan dan repositori daring. Temuan penelitian ini antara lain menjelaskan pola gerakan reformasi di wilayah yang berbeda secara geografis pada awal abad ke-20 dan pengaruhnya dalam skenario saat ini. Kebaruan artikel ini adalah bahwa sosiologi agama dan reformasi digunakan dalam kaitannya dengan dimensi sejarah dan agama. Secara umum, gerakan reformasi agama ditulis dari sudut pandang keagamaan.

Kata Kunci: Gerakan reformasi; Anthony Wallace; Degenerasi komunitas; Politik modern.

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Introduction

Ferghana Valley has a significant proportion of Muslims. Islam first arrived in Central Asia in the mid-seventh century, shortly after the death of Mohammed. Islam became a dominant religion in most of the region by the early eighth century, at least for its elites and mercantile.¹ The Malabar region has a significant proportion of Muslims.² The Islamic community in both regions had to combat the colonial forces in the wake of modernism and the degeneration of religious doctrines. Many superstitions had also crept into their lives. Reformers in these regions helped them to deal with these issues.³

Islam spread to all parts of the world where other religions were present. Ancient religions such as Hinduism and Buddhism were present in the Asian context. Islam initially arrived in Central Asia in the mid-seventh century, shortly after the death of Prophet Mohammed.⁴ The arrival of Malik b. Dinar is considered the first missionary in Kerala.

The Muslims of Kerala, known as Mappilas, are considered India's first and oldest Islamic community. The term *Mappila* is specially used to indicate the indigenous Muslim population of the Malabar region.⁵ Mappilas emerged out of an Indo-Arabian community formed through marriage between the indigenous women and

the Arab merchants.⁶ Yet over the course of time, changes in religious practices happened as a result of the existing local conditions, and also the wave of modernity posed concerns to these societies. The reformers had to deal with both these issues.

This article is a comparative study of two distinct regions, adopting Anthony Wallace's theory of revitalization. The data is acquired from both primary and secondary sources, along with government data, where adequate focus is given to theoretical aspects. Conversations with people from these regions have also helped in the writing of this paper. The purpose of this paper is to draw parallels between Ferghana Valley and Malabar region. The research argues that the mobility of Islamic reformation has revealed the globality of reform movements between geographically disconnected regions. The findings can be referred to as a process of social engineering in other regions.

Wallace and Revitalization Theory

With respect to the theoretical aspects of social movements, Neil J Smelser, in structural strain theory, traces structural strain as the underlying factor that leads to movements. He provided the concept in both structural and functional perspectives that the structure of society influences the trajectory of a movement. Various systems and subsystems of society are interdependent, and strain in one component would influence other components. For instance, introducing new values in a traditional society would lead to collective mobilization and then a movement.⁷ Relative deprivation was coined by Samuel Stouffer in his book *The American Soldier* (1949). It refers to a general feeling of people that they are at a disadvantage compared to others. Peter Townsend has traced many persisting social issues to relative deprivation. It

¹ Hassan Saab, "The Spirit of Reform in Islam," *Islamic Studies* 2, no. 1 (1963): 17–18.

² K.M. Mohamed, "Arab Relations with Malabar Coast from 9th to 16th Centuries," *Proceedings of the Indian History Congress* 60 (1999): 228–29.

³ Maurits Berger, "Islam and the 'Islamization' of Discourse," in *Religion and Islam in Contemporary International Relations* (The Hague: Ragnhild Drange, 2010), 5–8, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/resrep05530.5>.

⁴ Eric R. Wolf, "The Social Organization of Mecca and the Origins of Islam," *Southwestern Journal of Anthropology* 7, no. 4 (1951): 329–56.

⁵ P.P. Abdul Razak, "'Vernacular Histories and the History of Remembering': A Study of Historical Consciousness of He Muslims of Malabar," *Proceedings of the Indian History Congress* 72 (2011): 876–78.

⁶ Panikkar Kavalam Madhava, *Against Lord and State: Religion and Peasant Uprisings in Malabar, 1836-1921* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1989), 50–51.

⁷ Neil J. Smelser, *Theory of Collective Behavior* (New York: Free Press, 1965), 17–39.





can also be seen in the works of Karl Marx as a reason for class conflict and the subsequent proletariat revolution.⁸ Robert King Merton took the concept into mainstream sociology as a tool to analyze social mobility by associating the concept with his reference group behavior.⁹ According to resource mobilization, the rise and fall of social movements are based on the ability to acquire and utilize resources. Issues of different kinds are common in society and may lead to relative deprivation, but this is not enough to launch a movement. Examples of resources that can be mobilized are labor, money, ideology, media, etc. In this context, social movements are seen as an extension of institutionalized actions which are characterized by rational actions in pursuit of explicitly defined goals and expected outcomes. Resource mobilization was developed into a theoretical framework for use in research by McCarthy and Zald. The resource mobilization approach emphasizes both societal support and constraint of social movement phenomena. It examines the variety of resources that must be mobilized, the linkages of social movements to other groups, the dependence of movements upon external support for success, and the tactics used by authorities to maintain incorporation and control over such culture¹⁰ John D McCarthy and Mayer N Zald, "Resource Mobilization and Social Movements: A Partial Theory," *American Journal of Sociology* 82, no. 6 (April 27, 1977): 1212–41. Nevertheless, these current studies do not speak about the aspect of revitalization with respect to the research paper, which is why Wallace becomes crucial.

Anthony Wallace defines a revitalization movement as a deliberate, organized, conscious effort by members of a society to construct a more satisfying culture. Revitalization is thus, from a cultural standpoint, a special kind of culture change phenomenon: the persons involved in the process of revitalization must perceive their culture, or some major areas of it, as a system (whether accurately or not); they must feel that this cultural system is unsatisfactory, and they must innovate not merely discrete items but a new cultural system, specifying new relationships as well as, in some cases, new traits.¹¹ He accepts that there are other processes of change also, such as evolution and diffusion, but the basic difference is that we don't witness planned efforts from its members. But in the case of revitalization, explicit results and means are seen in mind. It is all about a chain reaction effect in the context of other modes of change.

In the context of Darwinian evolution here, though it also includes change, it takes place over centuries and keeps continuing but, on the other side, participants keep the frame of calculable years in a revitalization movement. This can be connected to the reform movements as the reformers were deliberate about their plans that were to be undertaken for the eventual results. He draws an analogy between human society and an organism to clarify his idea of revitalization. Human society is a particular type of organism whose culture is the characteristics its components, either groups or individuals, possess and exhibit. He takes the principle of homeostasis regarding humans, which is the ability to maintain a relatively stable internal state irrespective of the changes happening outside. Society works similarly through coordinated efforts to preserve integrity and its functioning. This can be connected with the structural-functional perspective of

⁸ Karl Marx, *Das Kapital: A Critique of Political Economy* (Gateway Edition), ed. Fredrich Engels, 6th ed. (Chicago: Henry Regnery Company, 1970), 142–45.

⁹ Robert K. Merton, *Social Theory And Social Structure*, Enlarged Edition (New York: Free Press, 1968), 286–89.

¹⁰ J.D McCarthy & M.N Zald "Resource Mobilization and Social Movements: A Partial Theory" *American Journal of Sociology* 82 no. 6 (The University of Chicago, 1977): 1212–1241, accessed May 31, 2022.

¹¹ Anthony F. C. Wallace, "Revitalization Movements," *American Anthropologist* 58, no. 2 (1956): 264–81, <https://doi.org/10.1525/aa.1956.58.2.02a00040>.





sociology. Nevertheless, Wallace posits that emergency actions are taken up in cases of stress to maintain constancy. This is similar to the “adaptive upgrading” component of the Parsonian cybernetic hierarchy. Stress at one point is stress at other points as well, as everything is connected and is definable as a network of intercommunication.

Reformers resorted to emergency actions when they realized that their community was facing degeneration in the context of the stress they faced. But he brings out a difference between an individual and society in that parts of society can be interchanged, but the possibility of the same in humans is less. Furthermore, that regularity of patterned behavior that we call culture depends on constituent units' autonomous ability to perceive the system of which they are a part, to receive and transmit information, and to act in accordance with the necessities of the system, rather than on any all-embracing central administration that stimulates specialized parts to perform their function.¹² In this sense, it follows that each individual in a society is supposed to maintain an idea of the society and culture along with his own body and its biological normative functioning so as to reduce the risk of stress anywhere. Wallace compares this dynamic to a maze way, and then he discussed how this maze way can be manipulated so as to reduce the intensity of stress generated.

One has to select between his present maze way or alter it so as to reduce the stress that, in case, he is feeling. The effort to work a change in maze way and “real” system together so as to permit more effective stress reduction is the effort at revitalization; and the collaboration of a number of persons in such an effort is called revitalization movements.¹³ Wallace mentions that revitalization is an umbrella term that comprises many social transformations and it

includes ‘sub-classes’. Such subclasses are not exclusive in themselves, as a single revitalization movement may include nativistic, millenarian movements also. Revitalization movements can be seen in common throughout the history of humankind. It is so common that everyone experiences it at least once in his or her lifetime. It is important historically also, as religions like Islam and Christianity originated in the context of revitalization. He also traces the origin of many sects to the unsuccessful effort to revitalize the traditional institution in the wake of severe stress. It is easy to understand how he equates everything to stress.

Wallace finds five stages in the process of revitalization where it evolves to the fullest, though he says that some are interconnected as well at times. Those are: *First, steady state*: Most people face stress but within tolerable limits, and their needs are met properly within those levels. Some of them would develop initial shades of deviance if the stress goes beyond their level of tolerance. Alteration or replacement of techniques might happen to satisfy some needs without threatening this steady state. Changes in techniques would happen within the range in which techniques used to satisfy other needs are not seriously threatened. This state is similar to the initial position, where everyone was not aware of the plight of the community. This is because everyone was not on the same level to understand their positional coordinates. In both regions, we will see people who recognized their plight and became social luminaries;

Second, the period of increased individual stress: over a period of time, individuals or a section of the society begin to feel intense stress due to the decreasing efficiency of some tools to which they resort to stress reduction. In this state, the culture may witness some alterations or may remain completely unaltered; but its efficiency keeps plotting the downward curve. Various agencies interfere with the efficiency of a cultural viz. political subordination, climate, economic distress, and so forth. The situation is

¹² Wallace, 266.

¹³ Wallace, 267.





often, but not necessarily, one of acculturation, and the acculturating agents may or may not be representatives of Western European cultures.¹⁴ One can manage stress to a level such that he can carry on his usual behavioral pattern, but at the threshold he will be forced to think of an alternative. Here, what happens is that the possible adoption of an alternative may increase stress because of the increase in anxiety that the alternative may turn out to be less effective than the original one. One more possible source of anxiety is that the alternative might interfere with other usual characteristics. It might lead to the disintegration of maze way as the alternative technique may be inappropriate. In both regions, they waited for the authorities to take proper actions. But they had to devise plans themselves as it was not the case;

Third, the period of cultural distortion: Everyone has a unique way of reacting to the factor of stress that has produced the inefficiencies of those techniques. It is also applicable to the factor of anxiety that is related with the possibility of change in behavior patterns. Those who are rigid will be able to tolerate high levels of stress than making adaptive alterations. On the other side, those who are flexible try small-scale alterations to lessen the factor of stress. Some people resort to alcoholism, violence, etc., and develop neuro-disorders. This is relatable to the concept of deviance given by Robert Merton. Some of these regressive engagements may become new cultural patterns in society. At this stage, cultural elements show inconsistency and are not in harmony as they are not internally stable, and this allows stress rise. Those who exhibit 'deviance' would help the level of stress climb high. The inefficiency of existing mechanisms to reduce stress becomes more evident and people develop concerns about the possible loss of a meaningful life. Some people advocate their 'new world' whereas others are still to realize their situation;

Fourth, the period of revitalization: The process of rupture, if not controlled, would lead to the end of society. Issues of extinction would become evident in the form of increasing deaths and decreasing births. It could also be due to war that can lead to the subordination of social practices. But such possibilities are obstructed by or delayed by a revitalization movement. Wallace holds that many of these are religious in nature, and that such movements must carry out the following six functions. This is important in the context of the study as both have a religious connection. These functions consist of the reformulation, communication, organization, adaptation, transformation, and routinization;

The last is reformulation. The reconstruction of the maze way, which was a 'social fact', is the main process. The leader-to-be is familiar with the existing practices and is aware of different possibilities and challenges.¹⁵ These moments are called inspiration or revelation. This is comparable to the Mertonian notion of 'rebellion'¹⁶ in which the deviant individual dreams of a new order. The restructuring starts with an individual rather than being the result of a collectively constructed group narratives. It can be verified using religious or sect-based movements. The visionary rebel explains to his fellows that the turmoil has something to do with the violation of certain common values and elucidates the path to rejuvenation to

¹⁵ See also Yanuarius Seran, "The Role of Christian and Islamic Leaders to Strengthen Local Wisdom in Atambua," *ESENSIA: Jurnal Ilmu-Ilmu Ushuluddin* 22, no. 2 (2021): 278–98, <https://doi.org/10.14421/esensia.v22i2.3246> Seran provides a similar case where tribal chiefs, religious leaders, and government officials are challenged to refresh their local wisdom, even though it is eroding and fading due to the downfall influence of "Western" globalization and modernity.

¹⁶ Rebellion is a type of Mertonian deviance wherein the individual rejects both the cultural goals and means of achieving them but actively attempts to replace both elements of the society with different goals and means. See Robert K. Merton, *Social Theory And Social Structure*, 209–11.

¹⁴ Wallace, 269.





them.¹⁷ Those sorts of things may also be seen works of Mahmud Koja Behbudi and Sanaullah Makthi Tangal. These dreams express the dreamer's wish for a satisfying parental figure, world-destruction fantasies, feelings of guilt and anxiety, and longings for the establishment of an ideal state of stable and satisfying human and supernatural relations. Wallace holds that these dreams also function as a funeral ritual, and the 'dead' way of living is considered to have expired and a new way has to be carved out. A new path is presented with alteration with regard to the specifications of the content. The prophet has a 'messiah' character and shares his perceptions with others. This can be connected to the concept of charismatic authority given by the great late sociologist, Max Weber. He may exhibit characteristics like personality transformation and a purposeful lifestyle.

Communication includes two dimensions; one is that the convert will be safeguarded by a supernatural force and he and his people are going to materially progress as they get into the new cultural system. The second one has a crucial connection in the context of this article. Articulation of the precious ideals would be as collective temptations or on a personal front. It can also be directed at either the elites or the common people. Gradually, his followers would increase, and this tool of communication would help to keep the momentum. This is very much what happened in both regions, as in the starting, people were hesitant to change, or at least to think, but when the tool of communication started making ripples, the movement gained momentum.

In the case of an organization, a small group of very close disciples surrounds the prophet, and an organization takes root with three levels

of personnel.¹⁸ At the top, obviously, is the prophet, then come his disciples and then the followers. Followers undergo revitalization of their personalities at this stage. In the case of both these movements, we find the organization and efforts of reformers with their close aides and the common people in making sure the longevity of the movement benefits future generations.

As far as the next function is concerned, i.e., adaptation, in most cases, movements will have to face resistance from those who are in the opposition. Resistance may be mild in some cases, but otherwise will be very severe and planned well by the 'ruled'. In such a situation, the movement will have to resort to some techniques of adaptation that can be forced, altered, and indoctrinated. These alterations are not always permanent in nature throughout the movement and are not interdependent per se. The original doctrine is subjected to changes in the context of criticism and practical difficulties. Reshaping the doctrine so did would mostly fit into the context well and takes into account the needs of the time. It will be accepted by the followers too. Having said this, Wallace talks about the possibility of counter hostility. This happens when the movement is faced with organized and planned hostility to uproot it. This can be connected to the Newtonian law; 'every action has an equal and opposite reaction'. In such a situation, the main aim of the movement may change from doctrinal dissemination to sending back the opponents. In both movements they faced resistance from those in power; in the case of Ferghana it was Russian forces where as in Malabar, it was from the British power.

In the case of cultural transformation, multiple collective actions take place as more

¹⁷ A. Singgih Basuki, "Religions, Violence, and Interdisciplinary Dialogue," *ESENSIA: Jurnal Ilmu-Ilmu Ushuluddin* 19, no. 2 (October 23, 2018): 171–83, <https://doi.org/10.14421/esensia.v19i2.1401>.

¹⁸ Azim Malikov, "Sacred Lineages in Central Asia: Translocality and Identity" in *Mobilities, Boundaries, and Travelling Ideas: Rethinking Translocality Beyond Central Asia and the Caucasus*, ed. Manja Stephan-Emmrich and Philipp Schröder (Open Book Publishers, 2018): 128, <https://doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0114.03>.





and more people become part of the movement. Such programs would be generally realistic and adaptive, some of which are detrimental, some are well planned and turn out to be successful whereas some face failures. Failures do not happen because of pitfalls in planning and execution, but simply because situations did not warrant so. These three points can be seen in many contexts and the last one particular has many things on offer especially due to the macro-structures in action. In the case of reform movements, efforts related to the emancipation of women was not equally agreed upon by all, may be reformers were on time or ahead of their times, yet the many cases of societies were lagging behind due to different backgrounds;

Next, routinization; institutionalization begins when these collective efforts are able to reduce the strain they face. This can be seen in society on multiple fronts, such as social, cultural, etc. Now the movement faces the question of routinization as mentioned earlier. In both movements, we discussed how the changes that were visualized by reformers were routinized in the respective regions. Rarely does the movement organization assert or maintain totalitarian control over all aspects of the transformed culture; more usually, once the desired transformation has occurred, it contracts and maintains responsibility only for the preservation of doctrine and the performance of ritual.¹⁹

The new steady state: As the process of transition in culture is over and the new cultural system has come to be in place, there is a steady state. The movement organization would have solved the question of routinization also. This new cultural system would differ in terms of its structure and organizational dynamics from the earlier system. Here, in the case of movements, the new steady state and the extent of changes they have produced are significant in both these regions.

¹⁹ Wallace, "Revitalization Movements," 275.

Comparative Understanding

Ferghana Valley is spread across Eastern Uzbekistan, Southern Kyrgyzstan, and Northern Tajikistan in Central Asia. It has an area of 22,000 km² and is drained by the famous Syr Darya River. Around fourteen million people inhabit the valley. The traditional religious orientation of Muslims of Central Asia is most frequently described as being that of Sunni Islam of the *Hanafi* jurisprudence (*madhab*) of interpretation (*fiqh*), the oldest of the four Islamic schools of interpretation.²⁰ Sufi orders are also present in the valley. It is a zone of border conflict due to its regional location. The Malabar region lies on the southwestern coast of the Indian subcontinent. This paper limits the extent of the coastal area in the context of Kerala.²¹ It is flanked by the Arabian Sea on the west and the Western Ghats on the east, spread across ±15,000km². An approximate amount of 17 million people inhabit the region, with most Muslims inhabitants belonging to the Sunni, adhering Shafi'i school of thought while the Shia branch is almost absent.²²

Jadidism began as an educational attempt to empower society in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century induces not just in Ferghana but well beyond the geographical constraints.²³ This increasing interest is explained by the fact that the ideas formulated by Jadids have repercussions in their society which is visible even these days. This is because the reform movement had produced profound impacts on

²⁰ Svatopluk Soucek, "A History of Inner Asia" (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000): 72–74.

²¹ Khadeeja P., "Social Reforms Movements Among the Kerala Muslims (19th to 20th Century)," *Proceedings of the Indian History Congress* 56 (1995): 687–91.

²² Compare with Ahmad Zainal Abidin et al., "Between Conflict and Peace: The Government Policies and Sunni-Shia Relationship in Sampang and Yogyakarta," *ESENSIA: Jurnal Ilmu-Ilmu Ushuluddin* 21, no. 2 (October 30, 2020): 135–50, <https://doi.org/10.14421/esensia.v21i2.2243>.

²³ D. A. Alimova, "Turkestan Djadidism and Islamic Reformism in Egypt: Points of Contact" *Oriente Moderno* 87, no. 1 (August, 2007): 15–16.





society. There were many Jadidisms in the Russian empire and each of them was rooted in their local social struggles.²⁴ Furthermore, the individuals who were part of the movement came from different educational and socio-economic backgrounds, hence they followed very different paths, even though they shared common ideas.²⁵

Baldauf is of the view that compared with similar movements in other parts of the world, it can help in having a better understanding of Jadidism in Central Asia. This is the point where we have to connect the genesis of the movement in Ferghana to that of Malabar and decipher similarities. Shorish sees Jadidism as a movement that affects all Muslims in the Near and Middle East, not just those in Colonial Russia. It did not originate in any single country and was spontaneous in most of the so-called Muslim World.²⁶ It was not a revolution, but a movement of reformation. The Jadids believed firmly that changes in the education system, as well as in other aspects of their societies, would have to take place for the Muslims to resist colonization and backwardness.²⁷ The Jadids spoke in favor of the need to eliminate some of the vestiges of feudalism, which was restricting the rising bourgeoisie, in favor of the limited reform of Islam and education, the adaptation of Islam to the bourgeois development of the borderlands of the Russian Empire and the needs of the national bourgeoisie. The feudal system in their society was restricting the

changes in the social structure. In the period of the revolution of 1905-1907 and during the subsequent years, Jadidism in Central Asia fell outside the initial limits of cultural nature and acquired a distinct coloration of the bourgeois-liberal political and ideological movement.²⁸

The problem was that the Jadids had neither a definite program nor a leading center or statute. They were grouped around individual Jadids who published newspapers and magazines. Even though they faced a lot of friction from conservatives; slowly people started recognizing their efforts. Despite the fact that the Jadids and colonial goals of education were along similar lines, from an ideological pointview they were mutually contradictory.²⁹ Hence the Jadid educational system was not supported by the colonial powers. But with the support of the local population, their new-method schools became widespread in the region and made significant progress in the improvement of literacy rates. It is very significant that the educational activities of the Jadids also covered the economic modernization of their society. Jadid education could not last long as it was destroyed by the hostility of the local rulers and Russian colonizers. Russian officialdom approached Jadidism as basically a political process, which is what most historians have opted for. This concern is largely baseless for the following two reasons; there was no institutional framework to stand for their political goals and opposition from within the religion was not over. This movement continued as a cultural movement rather than a political one, which can be substantiated by the meagre engagement of Jadids in political activities till 1917.

²⁴ Marat Gibatdinov, "The Image of Islam in Tatar and Russian History Textbooks" *International Schulbuchforschung* 29 no. 3 (Berghahn Books, 2007): 273-287.

²⁵ I. Baldauf, "Jadidism in Central Asia within Reformism and Modernism in the Muslim World, Die Welt Des Islams" *Die Welt des Islams* 41 no. 1 (Brill, 2001): 72-88, accessed May 31, 2022.

²⁶ M.M. Shorish, "Back To Jadidism: the Future of Education in Central Asia" *Islamic Studies*, 33 no. 2/3 (Brill, 1994): 161-182, accessed May 31, 2022.

²⁷ Suchandana Chatterjee, "Modernizing Education in Central Asia: Limitation of Jadidism in the Emirate of Bukhara," *Proceedings of the Indian History Congress* 61 (2000): 1128-29.

²⁸ Bazarbayev Kanat Kaldybekovich, Tursun Hazret, and Sadykova Raikhan, "Jadidism as an Educational System and a Political Movement in Turkestan (Central Asia)" *International Education Studies* 6, no. 1 (November, 2012): 87-88.

²⁹ Ömer Turan and Kyle T Evered, "Jadidism in South-Eastern Europe: The Influence of Ismail Bey Gaspirali among Bulgarian Turks" *Middle Eastern Studies* 41, no. 4 (Taylor & Francis, 2005): 492-493.





K.M. Panikkar, an Indian statesman and historian (1895-1963), argued that different religious communities coexisted with absolute toleration in Malabar during pre-colonial period. Such harmony disrupted with the incoming of colonial powers as they tried to play one against the other, which led to serious changes in the socio-economic characteristics of the region. Mappilas engaged in a continuous struggle against them as they were at the receiving end time and again. Initial signals of reform in the region came towards the end of the nineteenth century and at the start of the twentieth century. It is during this time that people started to recognize their plight and the intensity of degeneration. As for Muslims, a major chunk of them received education from religious institutions known by some specific terms such as *othupally*, *madrasa*, *dars*, etc. Each mosque had a *dars* associated with it and had a Musaliar and some disciples attached to it. They were under the control of the mosque, and secular education was not given much emphasis here.

The presence of ulama in Malabar can be seen in historical records also, for instance in the works of Ibn Batuta, a Moroccan traveler. He mentions the practice of the *dar* system in the region and goes on to say that contacts with distant lands were also maintained by them. The general hatred towards 'Western' also made them feel pessimistic about the schools and also about the extent to which it would influence the socio-cultural fabric. The ulamas saw the arrival of *darul-harb* in colonial rule as it led to the intrusion of Christian practices. This was in stark contrast to *darul-islam* that existed here till the advent of the colonial powers. Many of the ulamas persuaded believers to either resort to jihad or migrate as a response. The destruction of the "sociology of knowledge", as well as knowledge transmissions orchestrated through mercantile linkages, had all contributed to these thoughts. The prevailing social conditions also led to the absence of a middle class among the Mappilas who are seen as the drivers of social change.

The present situation in Malabar has a different story to tell; that is, we find a significant chunk of Mappilas in the middle class, which largely can be attributed to the remittance-based economy. They are in a position to fight for their rights, redress their grievances, and present themselves on the political front.³⁰ But as Max Weber puts it, class is just one source of stratification, the others being status and power, which Muslims still struggle until the date. Colonial administrators portrayed the Mappilas as uncivilized in order to weaken the collective consciousness of the society through their divide and rule policy. One instance can be that of Thomas Munroe, the Governor of Madras in 1882, who had described Mappilas as the worst race in Malabar. Britain, as they were encountering Muslim rulers in different parts of the world coupled with the presence of the Muslim Mughal empire in the northern part of the country, played their card right in singling out the community. The colonial project of missionary activism also induced tremors in the minds of the religious elite, which became a difficult task for them to handle.

The waves of modernity were getting into Malabar, and the religious elite found it difficult to answer all the questions.³¹ It was a kind of dialectics among them in which one wanted to succeed here and the other did not want to lose its hold in the region. The agony that the followers had with the colonial power was not just political nausea but a bigger threat to their foundation. Muslim reform movements started in this context in the pursuit of empowerment in terms of education, social standards, and materialism. This reform was not limited to the external world, but to the 'internal world' too, where many religious practices had to be innovated or to be done

³⁰ Igor P. Lipovsky, "Central Asia: In Search of a New Political Identity," *Middle East Journal* 50, no. 2 (1996): 219-20.

³¹ Rajiv Ahir et al., "A Brief History of Modern India" *Spectrum Books* (New Delhi, 2019): 188.





away with as superstitions and 'un-islamic' practices had crept in.

Reformation in terms of education and political participation was visualized to be taking the community forward.³² The Marxian Asiatic mode of production holds relevance in the context of Malabar. Britain, as a tool to align the subcontinent in their favor- the famous 'Indian in blood and English in spirit', came up with different commissions on education like the Hunter Commission in 1882 and University Commission in 1902 that by inculcating the idea of the Western reference group and propelling the Mertonian anticipatory socialization would serve the colonial purpose. Penetration into civil service, government payroll, and universities made them realize the extent of the colonial brain drain that was happening under British surveillance. This transformation can be applied to the exploitation in Ferghana also. They tried to take their society from darkness to an open world where there were various other sorts of knowledge that were to be acquired in an individual life. Even though they faced a lot of friction from conservatives; slowly people started recognizing their efforts.

Reconsidering Reform Movements in Ferghana

The historical-evolutionary approach of colonialism and the waves that it created in the 'colonies' show a similar trend. Colonialist narratives exhibit the inability or the inefficiency of the local culture to cope with the colonial power and their stakes of "modernity". Both these regions witnessed the degeneration of communities both in terms of religious and secular yardsticks. Also, many superstitions had also crept in, which was a crucial issue that the reformers found very difficult to deal with. Scholars from these regions had connections with the wider world, and this helped them draw similarities in order to compare the plight

of their society. Reformation activities were initiated by individuals who attracted severe friction from society, and because of this, they faced alienation in different spheres of their life. People were initially reluctant to even listen to them, but slowly things started to change and they started to make use of new techniques of education and participate in 'modern political activities.'

During the early 21st century, international mercantile politics took a new twist and the globe witnessed some hitherto unheard things. If the First World War was a common point for both these regions, on a segregated level, Russian Revolution and the Non-Cooperation Movements brought in ripples in Ferghana and Malabar respectively. The numerical strength of schools had aided the discourse of the reformers who had received the wrath of authorities. In the context of Malabar, The Aikya Sangham, which was active then, can be traced as the origin of the contemporary Mujahid ideology in the region. In the present Malabar context, a lot of factions exist within Islam, such as the modernist *Jamiyyathul Ulama* as mujahid-salafis, the conservative group that is connected with Sunnis identified as Samastha, and *Jam'at Islami* which is an active participant in the political questions in the region.³³

Wallace also speaks about the following four, out of many of possible variations: the choice of identification; the choice of secular and religious means; nativism; and the success-failure continuum. The choice of identification states that a movement can be divided into two types: as one that strives for the revival of traditional cultures, second as one which tries to import an alien cultural system and there are movements that do not strive for the above two but disseminate that the preferred 'to-be-state' will be achieved in the future which was not seen by the previous generations. According to

³² Asghar Ali Engineer, Ashgar Ali Engineer, "Muslims and Education," *Economic and Political Weekly* 36, no. 34 (August 25, 2001): 3221, <https://www.epw.in/journal/2001/34/commentary/muslims-and-education.html>

³³ R. Charles Weller, "Modernist Reform and Independence Movements" *The Journal of American-East Asian Relations* 21, no. 4 (November 2014): 346, <https://doi.org/10.1163/18765610-02104004>.





Wallace, these varieties are ideal because the field realities would cut across. Following Max Weber who holds that ideal types are mental constructs and do not represent reality, it can be seen that both these movements witnessed a combination of the varieties. Regarding the second one, Wallace argues that both of them depend on the circumstances, and none of the revitalization movements can be completely non-secular, though some may vary their religious components with other movements on a comparative note.

Movements become political in nature and resort to secular means rather than religious ones due to the variables of community, communication, and routinization. It is also common that many socio-political movements carry out their activities through a secular route rather than a religious one and resort to the latter only in a causal way. Both these reform movements witnessed the adoption of the secular path along with the religious path for 'revitalization'. Many revitalization movements have been called 'nativistic' movements as major stress has been the removal of foreign elements. Wallace holds that the nativistic component generally will be on the lower side at the time of the genesis of the movement, but it will pick up momentum and will increase significantly towards the stage of adaptation. He explicitly mentions that situational factors are crucial for a better understanding of the nature of a movement. Both these reform movements experienced dynamics with the component of nativism. The fourth variation is regarding how to treat a movement as a success or a failure. Now, the main question would be how many stages enlisted are to be covered so as to include them in the category of success and failure. Here, Wallace holds that from a logical perspective, as the foundational goal was revitalization by culture change, there should be no compulsion in terms of stages. In reaching the conclusion of either success or failure, the amount of force exerted against the opponents is very significant. If the group

cannot plan and execute properly the consequences of its own actions and those of its opponents, then the end of the movement is very much in the vicinity. In both these movements, we find that changes that took place in the fields of education and social engagement made a wide impact and have still got relevance. In that sense, both movements were a success. They tried to take their society from darkness to an open world where there were various other sorts of knowledge to be acquired in an individual's life; hence, they actually revitalized their societies.

Conclusion

When we extrapolate the graph to modern times, we can easily understand the everlasting repercussions these movements had produced in these regions. The idea of empowerment among Jadids gained influence as can be seen in the public policy of independent Central Asian republics that came into being after the collapse of the Soviet Union.³⁴ For instance, 541 teachers and public education personnel, and a number of scholars were sent to study in foreign countries, to take part in international seminars and symposiums in the academic year of 1994-1995. UniCEN, a platform to increase sustainable collaborations between Central Asian and US higher education institutions, builds expertise in areas of strategic planning, faculty policies, administration, student mobility, curriculum development, and alumni relations to advance the mutual partnerships and Ferghana State University is a participant in this initiative. Hence, the reform movement in the valley was not just a historical movement, but one with everlasting consequences.

The Mappila Muslims of Malabar are very much instrumental in the socio-economic political scenario of the region and the state of

³⁴ Hélène Carrère d'Encausse, "Islam and the Russian Empire: Reform and Revolution in Central Asia" *Comparative Studies on Muslim Societies* 8 (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988): 119-125.





Kerala.³⁵ The community is economically sound due to the factor of remittances from the Middle East. A noticeable amount of Mappilas are successful businessmen in the Arabic Peninsula which is the favorite destination of people in Malabar. Though there are differences between Muslim religious organizations, the Mappilas provide scholarships for students preparing for prestigious competitive exams like JEE, NEET, and UPSC, thus making sure the community is enjoying upward mobility. The Malabar region has been facing regional disparities in terms of development when compared to the southern side of the state in terms of public facilities and institutions.

Due to constant demands from the side of people in Malabar, the development of the community there has shown positive trends in recent years. This improvement is due to the fact that Mappilas are aware of the ignorance given by the state authorities and have been raising it on multiple fronts. Mappilas are getting into government services, which help to raise the collective issues from within. Mappilas were active in the anti-CAA-NRC (Citizenship Amendment Act, National Register of Citizens NRC) protests and also in the recent controversy of granting reservations to economically weaker sections. The basis for reservation in the Indian context is to address the historical injustice and is not a poverty alleviation scheme. But if reservation turns out to be on an economic basis, then the very purpose of reservation is uprooted. In both these cases, the scholars can trace present engagements to the reformation activities and cultural movements undertaken at the dawn of the twentieth century.

The research faced limitations in collecting primary data from the field in both regions due to travel restrictions during the COVID-19 pandemic. Adding more statistical data to show the repercussions would substantiate the claims

better. I suggest future researchers go to the field and gain some practical understanding.

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Competing Interests

Not as such, because I have been trained to make my research a purely academic one rather than a religious interpretation.

Author's Contributions

I had to read similar reforms from other parts of the world to have a better picture before coming down to two of them. I have written them from the concept of revitalization.

Ethical Considerations

The research paper has been done in an academic style rather than as a religious interpretation. This comparative understanding has been done in an objective manner by giving due credit to others.

Funding Information

I was granted Junior Research Fellowship by the Government of India for this research work.

Data Availability

I used primary and secondary sources in this work. I found it difficult to get statistical data in the wake of pandemic, for which field visit is must to government offices.

Disclaimer

This paper represents research in progress. I am working to build expertise in aspects related with twentieth century of this study. I would like to go field and get more data once things become normal.

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³⁵ P. R. Gopinathan Nair, "Education and Socio-Economic Change in Kerala, 1793-1947" *Social Scientist* 4, no. 8 (March 1976): 31-33, <https://doi.org/10.2307/3516378>.





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