
CHRISTIAN MUSIC AND CULTURE IN INDIA

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Abstract

This paper focuses on the origin of Christianity and Christian music in India, how it originated during the early stages and its development till date. Until the late 1960s, Christian music invoked images of church, hymnals and organs. Traditional was the word of the day but not anymore. The face of Christian music has spent the last 30 and more years evolving and growing. Pipe organs have been set aside for electric guitars and drums. Hymnals have been replaced by hard hitting lyrics that speak of today and a God that is fully in control of our times. Christian music has gone farther than the church and can be found on radio, TV, in concert halls and at huge rallies and festivals. It has expanded to include a vast array of styles. Rock, metal, rap, country, gospel, urban gospel, easy listening, and pop are all covered so regardless of taste in music style. Today's Christian can find something of interest to listen to. Christian music is on the go with its own video shows, radio stations, awards, publications and web sites. The change itself hasn't been sudden. It has taken many years. Through the sacrifices from artists who were bold enough to go against tradition and giving music its shape according to its times.

Key Words : Church music, Westernization, Carnatic music, Catholic rite, Indian culture.

Introduction

Stephen Neill in his book "the History of Christianity in India" has given a detailed account on Christianity as the India's third-largest religion according to the census of 2001, with approximately 24 million followers, constituting 2.3 per cent of India's population. The works of scholars and Eastern Christian writings state that Christianity was introduced to India by Thomas the Apostle, who visited Muziris in Kerala in 52 CE to spread the gospel amongst Kerala's Jewish settlements. Although the origins of Christianity in India remain unclear,

there is a general scholarly consensus that Christianity was established in India by the 6th century AD, including some communities who used Syriac liturgically, and it is a possibility that the religion's existence there goes back to 1st century. Christianity was as such established in India even before some nations of Europe had been Christianised.

Christians are found all across India and in all walks of life, with major populations in parts of South India, the Konkan Coast, North-East. Indian Christians have contributed significantly to and are well represented in various spheres of national life. They include former and current chief ministers, governors and chief election commissioners. Indian Christians have the lowest sex ratio figures among the various religious communities in India. Christians are considered to be one of the most progressive communities in India.

Stephen also has discussed specifically about Christians in India are Catholics of the Latin Church. The state of Kerala is home to the Saint Thomas Christian community, an ancient body of Christians (Syriac Christianity) who are now divided into several different churches and traditions. There are two Eastern Catholic Saint Thomas Christian churches: the Syro-Malabar Catholic Church and the Syro-Malankara Catholic Church. There are also several Oriental Orthodox and independent churches in the Saint Thomas Christian community, including the Malankara Orthodox Syrian Church, the Malankara Jacobite Syrian Church and the Malankara Mar Thoma Syrian Church. Since the 19th century Protestant churches have also been present; major denominations include the Church of South India (CSI), the Church of North India (CNI), the Presbyterian Church of India, Baptists, Lutherans, Traditional Anglicans and other evangelical groups. Roman Catholicism was first introduced to India by Portuguese, Italian and Irish Jesuits, whereas Protestantism was later spread to India by the efforts of British and American missionaries.

According to Indian Christian traditions, the apostle Thomas arrived in Kodungallur (also Muziris), Kerala, established the Seven Churches and evangelised in present day Kerala and Tamil Nadu (Medlycott, 2005). As with early Christianity in the Roman Empire, it is assumed that the initial converts were largely Jewish proselytes among the Cochin Jews who are believed to have arrived in India around 562 BC, after the destruction of the First Temple. Many of these Jews presumably spoke Aramaic like St. Thomas, also a Jew by birth, who is credited by tradition with evangelising India. A historically more likely claim by Eusebius of

Caesarea is that Pantaenus, the head of the Christian exegetical school in Alexandria, Egypt went to India during the reign of the Emperor Commodus and found Christians already living in India using a version of the Gospel of Matthew with "Hebrew letters, a mixture of culture. "This is a plausible reference to the earliest Indian churches which are known to have used the Syriac (a dialect of Aramaic) New Testament. Pantaenus' evidence thus indicates that Syriac-speaking Christians had already evangelised parts of India by the late 2nd century.

The world's oldest existing church structure, which was believed to be built by Thomas the Apostle in 57 AD, called Thiruvithamcode Arappally or Thomaiyar Kovil as named by the then Chera king Udayancheral, is located at Thiruvithancode in Kanyakumari District of Tamil Nadu, India. It is now declared an international St. Thomas pilgrim center.

Although little is known of the immediate growth of the church, Bar-Daisan (AD 154–223) reports that in his time there were Christian tribes in North India which claimed to have been converted by Thomas and to have books and relics to prove it. Certainly by the time of the establishment of the Sassanid Empire (AD 226), there were bishops of the Church of the East in northwest India, Afghanistan and Baluchistan, with laymen and clergy alike engaging in missionary activity.

The arrival of the Latin Catholic Rite

The French or Catalan Dominican missionary Jordanus Catalani was the first European to start conversion in India. He arrived in Surat in 1320. After his ministry in Gujarat he reached Quilon in 1323. He not only revived Christianity but also brought thousands to the Christian fold. He brought a message of good will from the Pope to the local rulers. As the first bishop in India, he was also entrusted with the spiritual nourishment of the Christian community in Calicut, Mangalore, Thane and Broach (north of Thane).

In 1453, the fall of Constantinople, a bastion of Christianity in Asia Minor to Islamic Ottoman Empire; marked the end of the Eastern Roman Empire or Byzantine Empire, and severed European trade links by land with Asia. This massive blow to Christendom spurred the age of discovery as Europeans were seeking alternative routes east by sea along with the goal of forging alliances with pre-existing Christian nations. Along with pioneer Portuguese long-distance maritime travellers that reached the Malabar Coast in the late 15th century,

came Portuguese missionaries who made contact with the St Thomas Christians in Kerala, which at that time were following Eastern Christian practices and under the jurisdiction of Church of the East. The missionaries sought to introduce the Latin liturgical rites among them and unify East Syrian Christians in India under the Holy See.

The history of Portuguese missionaries in India starts with the neo-apostles who reached Kappad near Kozhikode on 20 May 1498 along with the Portuguese explorer Vasco da Gama who was seeking to form anti-Islamic alliances with pre-existing Christian nations. The lucrative spice trade was further temptation for the Portuguese crown. When he and the Portuguese missionaries arrived they found Christians in the country in Malabar known as St. Thomas Christians who belonged to the then largest Christian church within India. The Christians were friendly to Portuguese missionaries at first; there was an exchange of gifts between them, and these groups were delighted at their common faith

After four decades of prosperous trading, the missionaries started the proselytisation around 1540 and during this period, foreign missionaries also made many new converts to Christianity. Early Roman Catholic missionaries, particularly the Portuguese, led by the Jesuit St Francis Xavier (1506–1552), expanded from their bases on the west coast making many converts. The Portuguese colonial government supported the mission and the baptised Christians were given incentives like rice donations, good positions in their colonies. Hence, these Christians were dubbed Rice Christians who even practised their old religion. At the same time many New Christians from Portugal migrated to India as a result of the inquisition in Portugal. Many of them were suspected of being Crypto-Jews, converted Jews who were secretly practising their old religion. Both were considered a threat to the solidarity of Christian belief. Saint Francis Xavier, in a 1545 letter to John III of Portugal, requested the Goan Inquisition, which is considered a blot on the history of Roman Catholic Christianity in India, both by Christians and

Mangalore is another significant region on the west coast which has a huge Christian population. In 1321, the French Dominican friar Jordanus Catalani of Severac (in southwestern France), who also worked in Quilon arrived in Bhatkal, a place near Mangalore and established a missionary station there. Many locals were converted to Christianity by Jordanus. The Portuguese were however unable to establish their presence in Mangalore as a

result of the conquests of the Vijayanagara ruler Krishnadevaraya and Abbakka Rani of Ullal, the Bednore Queen of Mangalore. Most of Mangalorean Catholics were not originally from Mangalore but are descendants of Goan Catholics who fled Goa during the Portuguese-Maratha Wars and the Goan Inquisition. These different experiences from the rest of India made Goan music very unique. Latin hymns translated into Konkani and newly composed Konkani hymns have been sung by Goan Catholics till today. Not only religious music but also folk and popular music were influenced by the Portuguese. Mando is a dance music that evolved during the nineteenth and twentieth century among Goan Catholics, which represents both the Indian and Western musical traditions. Deknni is a semi-classical dance form that might have originated in the Hindu musical tradition though it is popular among Goan Catholics. The ghumot, a musical instrument made using an earthen pot, is used while performing the mando and other music especially for weddings along with Western musical instruments such as the guitar, the bass, and the keyboard.

Christian Music during the British Rule

Maratha King of Thanjavur (in present Tamil Nadu), who is said to have been the first Indian composer appropriating Western music. He collected sheet music of popular works published in England. As the informants on music around him were British officials, residents, missionaries, and musicians belonging to the Governor's band, Serfoji II became more familiar with military band music. He established the Tanjore (Thanjavur) Band attached to his palace and composed music for the band (Nelson, 1989). Serfoji II had a close friendship with the Christian missionaries who introduced him to Western learning and culture, which nurtured his knowledge of Western music. A collection of Western-style songs with Sanskrit lyrics composed by Muttusvami Diksitar (1775-1835), is an example of an Indian reconstruction of Western music (Nettl Bruno, 1985). As we can see through these songs, the Western major scale and simple beats (three or four beats) can be regarded as a typical Indian understanding of Western music, which might strengthen the Indian perception of the complexity of their own music. The adoption of the violin as an indispensable instrument for Carnatic music (South Indian classical music) today. The violin had been totally indigenized by its tuning, playing techniques, and the way of holding it. Serfoji II lived in a transitional period from native rule to the British Raj. He lost his political power and seems to have acted as a good friend to the British. While he did not convert to Christianity but remained a

staunch Hindu, he was a generous patron of both native and Western culture as his ancestral rulers were. The conventional historiography of Carnatic music is usually constructed along with the Hindu religious tradition in the nationalist line promoted by dominant Hindu leaders against British rule. According to this kind of historiography, the period in which Carnatic music flourished under Thanjavur Maratha rule is regarded as the golden era. Tyagaraja (1767-1847), Muttuswami Dikshitar (1775-1835), and Syama Sastri (1762-1827), the so-called Trinity of Carnatic Music, belong to this period. They were all Brahmans who composed either in Telugu, the official language of the Nayakas (local rulers after the Vijayanagara Empire before the Marathas) or in Sanskrit, a literary language used by the Brahmans. They hardly composed in Tamil, a local language of this region, since then. The lack of a Tamil repertoire in Carnatic music prompted the Tamil Isai (music) movement, propagating Tamil songs at the beginning of the 1940s. For reconstructing an alternative historiography of Carnatic music, four distinguished native Christians: Vedanayagam (Pillai) Sastiriyar (1774-1864), Mayuram Vedanayagam Pillai (1826-89), A. M. Chinnaswami Mudaliyar (1813-1901), and Abraham Pandithar (1859-1919). It is important to point out that their activities were the result of interactions with Christian missionaries, British residents, and officials, while the musical Trinity of Carnatic Music was closely related with native rulers. The differences in their approach to music are as follows. Vedanayagam Sastiriyar's purpose was to promote evangelical thought through music. Vedanayagam Pillai intended to be secular by not addressing any personal god. Chinnaswami Mudaliyar tried preserving and promoting the music of his time. And Abraham Pandithar constructed a great history of the Tamils and Tamil Isai (music). Though their approaches and intentions varied, their strategic use of dichotomous categories, that is, Hindu/Christian, Indian/European, Brahman/Non-Brahman, upper/lower caste etc., were common to all of them. Thus, they were expressing themselves through music as a powerful cultural medium and constructing their identities between the colonizer and the colonized in the transitional period from native rule to the British Raj. In India under the British Raj, there has been no movement of Westernization that can be found in the New Culture Movement of China. As I said before, Rabindranath Tagore delivered lectures in China warning of the detrimental effects of rapid Westernization. Colonization by the British and the founding of the Indian Empire in the mid-nineteenth century and the rise soon after of the nationalist movement against British rule might have prevented the spread of Westernization. Consequently, Indian musicians and scholars hardly

learned European classical music; instead, they adhered to the Indian musical tradition as being as spiritually and scientifically lofty as European classical music.

On the occasion of The Golden Jubilee of Queen Victoria, the Christians of North Konkan, in Maharashtra who were known as Portuguese Christians discarded that name and adopted the designation East Indians. Marathi Christians are Protestants and are therefore distinct from East Indian Christians who are predominately Roman Catholics and inhabitants of the North Konkan region. Marathi Christians can be found in the areas of Ahmednagar, Solapur, Pune and Aurangabad. They were converted through the efforts of the American Marathi Mission, The SPG Mission, and the Church Mission Society of Church of England in early 18th century. British Missionary William Carey was instrumental in translating the Bible into the Marathi language.

Missionary work progressed on a large scale and with great success along the western coasts, chiefly at Chaul, Bombay, Salsette, Bassein, Damao, and Diu; and on the eastern coasts at San Thome of Mylapore, and as far as Bengal etc. In the southern districts the Jesuit mission in Madura was the most famous. It extended to the Krishna river, with a number of outlying stations beyond it. The mission of Cochin, on the Malabar Coast, was also one of the most fruitful. Several missions were also established in the interior northwards, e.g., that of Agra and Lahore in 1570 and that of Tibet in 1624. Still, even with these efforts, the greater part even of the coast line was by no means fully worked, and many vast tracts of the interior northwards were practically untouched. With the decline of the Portuguese power, other colonial powers – namely the Dutch and British and Christian organisations gained influence.

Beginning in the 18th century, Protestant missionaries began working throughout India, leading to the establishment of different Christian communities across the Indian Subcontinent. In 1793, William Carey, an English Baptist Minister came to India as a Missionary. He worked in Serampore, Calcutta, and other places as a missionary. He started the Serampore College. He translated the Bible into Bengali, Sanskrit, and numerous other languages and dialects.[67] He worked in India until his death in 1834. The Medak Cathedral of Church of South India is the largest Cathedral Church in India

The London Missionary Society was the first Protestant mission in Andhra Pradesh which established its station at Visakhapatnam in 1805. Anthony Norris Groves, a Plymouth

Brethren missionary came to India in 1833. He worked in the Godavari delta area until his death in 1852. John Christian Frederick Heyer was the first Lutheran missionary in the region of Andhra Pradesh. He founded the Guntur Mission in 1842. He studied Sanskrit and medicine in Baltimore, and set sail for India from Boston in 1841 with three other missionary couples on the ship Brenda. He travelled to India a second time in 1847, spending a decade, mainly in the Guntur district of Andhra Pradesh state, in southern India, where he ministered and performed yeoman service to the people there. Supported initially by the Pennsylvania Ministerium, and later by the Foreign Mission Board of the General Synod, Heyer was also encouraged and assisted by British government officials. He established a number of hospitals and a network of schools throughout the Guntur region.

Goa was colonised by the Portuguese in 16th century AD; as a result of which Goan Christians have adopted a more western culture. The dance, song and cuisine of Goa has been greatly influenced by the Portuguese. Contemporary Goan Christian culture can be best described as an increasingly anglicised Indo-Latin culture. Mangalorean Catholics are descended mainly from the Goan Catholic settlers, who had migrated to South Canara from Goa, a state north of Canara, between 1560 and 1763 during the Goa Inquisition and the Portuguese-Maratha wars. After migration to Mangalore, they adopted the local Mangalorean culture, but retained many of their Goan customs and traditions. Christianity in other parts of India spread under the colonial regimes of the Dutch, Danish, French and most importantly the English from the early 17th century to the time of the Indian Independence in 1947. Christian culture in these colonial territories has been influenced by the religion and culture of their respective rulers.

Contemporary Latin Christian culture in India draws greatly from the Anglican culture as a result of the influence of the erstwhile British Raj. The Anglican Book of Common Prayer is a widely used supplement for worship in the two major Protestant denominations: Church of South India and Church of North India. Today Christians are considered to be one of the most progressive communities in India. Urban Christians are to a greater extent influenced by European traditions which is considered an advantage in the business environment of urban India; this is given as an explanation for the large number of Christian professionals in India's corporate sector. The Christian church runs thousands of educational institutions which have contributed to the strengthening of Christian culture in India.

The Saint Thomas Christians are so called due to their reverence for Saint Thomas the Apostle, who is said to have brought Christianity to India. The name dates to the period of Portuguese colonization. They are also known, especially locally, as the Nasrani or Nasrani Mappila. "Nasrani" is a term meaning "Christian"; it appears to be derived from Nazareth, the home town of Jesus. Mappila is an honorific applied to members of non-Indian faiths, including Muslims (Jonaka Mappila) and Jews (Yuda Mappila). Some Syrian Christians of Travancore continue to attach this honorific title to their names. The Indian government designates members of the community as "Syrian Christians", a term originating with the Dutch colonial authority distinguishing the Saint Thomas Christians, who used Syriac as their liturgical language, from newly evangelized Christians who followed the Latin liturgy. The term Syrian relates not to their ethnicity but to their historical, religious and liturgical connection to the Church of the East, or East Syrian Church. Though Syrian is used as their liturgical language, the Rite of the St. Thomas Christians is the most indigenized among those of the Indian Christians. They accommodated the way of worship and the manner of priests practiced in local Hindu temples into their rite. The structure of churches and their decorations resemble local Hindu temples. Today, the music for their rites and worship includes diverse musical styles existing in India. Prayers chanted by priests in the Syrian Rite are musically monophonous, keeping the way of the Syrian Orthodox Church though there are prayers in Malayalam (or sometimes in Sanskrit) that sound like Hindu chants. Congregational songs in Malayalam (Sanskrit) are often composed in the call-and-response style of the Hindu bhajan or kirtana (religious song). Malayalam devotional songs by solo singers and choirs are composed in the popular Indian music style accompanied by both Indian and Western musical instruments (violin, keyboard, tabla, sitar, and so on); some songs are highly Westernized and others are not. Such musical and linguistic diversity observed in the Liturgy of St. Thomas Christians can be more or less recognized in the Roman Catholic and Protestant churches that I consider in the following sections.

The most commonly believed tradition of origin among Saint Thomas Christians relates to the evangelical activity of Thomas the Apostle, who is said to have come to India in middle of the 1st century. There is no contemporary evidence for Thomas being in the subcontinent, though it was possible for a Roman Jew of the time to make such a trip. Groups such as the Cochin Jews and Bene Israel are known to have existed in India around that time. The earliest

known source connecting the apostle to India is the Acts of Thomas, likely written in the early 3rd century, perhaps in Edessa. The text describes Thomas' adventures in bringing Christianity to India, a tradition later expanded upon in early Indian sources such as the "Thomma Parvam" ("Song of Thomas"). Generally he is described as arriving in or around Maliankara and founding Seven Churches, or Ezharapallikal: Kodungallur, Kollam, Niranam, Nilackal (Chayal), Kokkamangalam, Kottakkayal (Paravoor), Palayoor (Chattukulangara) and Thiruvithamcode Arappally (a "half church"). A number of 3rd- and 4th-century Roman writers also mention Thomas' trip to India, including Ambrose of Milan, Gregory of Nazianzus, Jerome, and Ephrem the Syrian, while Eusebius of Caesarea records that his teacher Pantaenus visited a Christian community in India in the 2nd century.

As the community grew and immigration by East Syrians increased, the connection with the Church of the East, centred in the Persian capital of Seleucia-Ctesiphon, strengthened. From the early 4th century the Patriarch of the Church of the East provided India with clergy, holy texts, and ecclesiastical infrastructure, and around 650 Patriarch Ishoyahb III solidified the Church of the East's jurisdiction over the Saint Thomas Christian community. In the 8th century Patriarch Timothy I organised the community as the Ecclesiastical Province of India, one of the church's Provinces of the Exterior. After this point the Province of India was headed by a metropolitan bishop, dispatched from Persia, the "Metropolitan-Bishop of the Seat of Saint Thomas and the Whole Christian Church of India". His metropolitan see was probably in Cranganore, or (perhaps nominally) in Mylapore, where the shrine of Thomas was located. Under him were a varying number of bishops, as well as a native Archdeacon, who had authority over the clergy and who wielded a great amount of secular power.

Some contact and transmission of knowledge of the Saint Thomas Christians managed to reach the Christian West, even after the rise of the Islamic empires. Byzantine traveller Cosmas Indicopleustes wrote of East Syrian Christians he met in India and Sri Lanka in the 6th century. In 883 the English king Alfred the Great reportedly sent a mission and gifts to Saint Thomas' tomb in India. During the Crusades, distorted accounts of the Saint Thomas Christians and the Nestorian Church gave rise to the European legend of Prester John.

The great distances involved and the geopolitical turmoil of the period caused India to be cut off from the church's heartland in Mesopotamia at several points. In the 11th century the province was suppressed by the church entirely, as it had become impossible to reach, but effective relations were restored by 1301. However, following the collapse of the Church of the East's hierarchy in most of Asia later in the 14th century, India was effectively cut off from church, and formal contact was severed. By the late 15th century India had had no metropolitan for several generations, and the authority traditionally associated with him had been vested in the archdeacon.

In 1491 the archdeacon sent envoys to the Patriarch of the Church of the East, as well as to the Coptic Pope of Alexandria and to the Syriac Orthodox Patriarch of Antioch, requesting a new bishop for India. The Patriarch of the Church of the East Shem'on IV Basidi responded by consecrating two bishops, Thoma and Yuhanon, and dispatching them to India. These bishops helped rebuild the ecclesiastical infrastructure and reestablish fraternal ties with the patriarchate, but the years of separation had greatly affected the structure of the Indian church. Though receiving utmost respect, the metropolitan was treated as a guest in his own diocese; the Archdeacon was firmly established as the real power in the Nasrani community.

Goa Inquisition and Portuguese Inquisition

The Saint Thomas Christians first encountered the Portuguese in 1498, during the expedition of Vasco da Gama. At the time the community was in a tenuous position: though thriving in the spice trade and protected by their own militia, the local political sphere was volatile and the Saint Thomas Christians found themselves under pressure from the rajas of Calicut and Cochin and other small kingdoms in the area. The Saint Thomas Christians and the Portuguese newcomers quickly formed an alliance.

The Portuguese had a keen interest in implanting themselves in the spice trade and in spreading their particularly bellicose version of Christianity, which had been forged during several centuries of warfare in the Reconquista. Facilitating their goals was the Padroado Real, a series of treaties and decrees in which the Pope conferred upon the Portuguese government certain authority in ecclesiastical matters in the foreign territories they conquered. They set up in Goa, forming a colonial government and a Latin church hierarchy

under the Archbishop of Goa, and quickly set to bringing the Saint Thomas Christians under his authority.

The Portuguese subjection of the Saint Thomas Christians was relatively measured at first, but they became more aggressive after 1552, the year of the death of Metropolitan Mar Jacob and of a schism in the Church of the East, which resulted in there being two rival Patriarchs—one of whom entered communion with the Catholic Church. Both patriarchs sent bishops to India, but the Portuguese consistently managed to outmaneuver them, and effectively cut off the Saint Thomas Christians from their hierarchy in 1575, when the Padroado legislated that neither patriarch could send representatives to India without Portuguese approval.

By 1599 the last Metropolitan, Abraham, had died, and the Archbishop of Goa, Aleixo de Menezes, had secured the submission of the young Archdeacon George, the highest remaining representative of the native church hierarchy. The Archbishop convened the Synod of Diamper, which implemented various liturgical and structural reforms in the Indian church. The Synod brought the parishes directly under the Archbishop's purview; anathematised certain "superstitious" social customs characteristic of their Hindu neighbors, including untouchability and a caste hierarchy; and purged the indigenous liturgy, the Malabar Rite, of elements deemed unacceptable according to the Latin protocol. A number of texts were condemned and ordered burnt, including the Peshitta, the Syriac version of the Bible. Some of the reforms, especially the elimination of caste status, reduced the Saint Thomas Christians' standing with their socially stratified Hindu neighbors. The Synod formally brought the Saint Thomas Christians into to Catholic Church; however, the actions of the Portuguese over the ensuing years fueled resentment in segments of the community, and ultimately led to open resistance to their power.

This was the last straw for the Saint Thomas Christians, and in 1653 Thomas and community representatives met at the Church of Our Lady in Mattancherry to take bold action. In a great ceremony before a crucifix and lighted candles, they swore a solemn oath that they would never obey Garcia or the Portuguese again, and that they accepted only the Archdeacon as their shepherd. The Malankara Church and all its successor churches regard this declaration, known as the Coonan Cross Oath after the outdoor cross in the churchyard, as the moment

when their church regained its independence. Shortly after, the leaders of this newly independent church decided Thomas should be elevated to bishop. Thomas was consecrated in a ceremony in which twelve priests laid hands on him, and he became the metropolitan of Malankara.

After the Coonan Cross Oath the Portuguese missionaries attempted for reconciliation with Saint Thomas Christians but was not successful. Later Pope Alexander VII sent the Syrian bishop Joseph Sebastiani at the head of a Carmelite delegation who succeeded in convincing majority of Saint Thomas Christians, including Palliveetil Chandy Kathanar and Kadavil Chandy Kathanar that the consecration of Archdeacon as metropolitan was not legitimate. Later Palliveetil Chandy Kathanar was consecrated as the bishop for the Syrian Catholics with the historic title 'The Metropolitan and the Gate of all India' which denotes a Quasi Patriarchal status with all India jurisdiction. This led to the first permanent split in the Saint Thomas Christian community. Thereafter, the faction affiliated with the Catholic Church under Parambil Mar Chandy was designated the Pazhayakuttukar, or "Old Party", while the branch affiliated with Mar Thoma was called the Puthankuttukar, or "New Party". These appellations have been somewhat controversial, as both groups considered themselves the true heirs to the Saint Thomas tradition, and saw the other as heretical.

After the Coonan Cross Oath, between 1661 and 1662, out of the 116 churches, the Syrian Catholics claimed eighty-four churches, and Archdeacon Mar Thoma I with thirty-two churches. The eighty-four churches and their congregations were the body from which the Syro-Malabar Catholic Church and Chaldean Syrian Church have descended. The other thirty-two churches and their congregations were the body from which the Syriac Orthodox (Jacobites & Orthodox), Thozhiyur (1772), Mar Thoma (Reformed) (1874), Syro-Malankara Catholic Church have originated.

In 1665, Mar Gregorios Abdul Jaleel, a Bishop sent by the Syriac Orthodox Patriarch of Antioch arrived in India and the St.Thomas Christians belonging to the "New Party", under the leadership of the Archdeacon, welcomed him.[full citation needed] This visit resulted in the Mar Thoma faction claiming spiritual authority of the Antiochean Patriarchate and gradually introduced the West Syrian liturgy, customs and script to the Malabar Coast. Those

who accepted the West Syrian theological and liturgical tradition of Mar Gregorios became known as Jacobites.

The "Old Party", who continued with East Syrian and Latin theological and liturgical tradition and stayed faithful to the Synod of Diamper and the Roman Catholic Church came to be formally known as the Syro-Malabar Catholic Church from the second half of the 19th century onward. Syro-Malabar Hierarchy was established on 21 December 1923 with the Metropolitan Mar Augustine Kandathil as the Head of their Church.

The foreign Jacobite prelate Mar Gregorios who came to Kerala in 1751 AD, consecrated Rev. Kurian Kattumangat as bishop Abraham Mar Koorilose in 1772 AD at Mattancherry church, Cochin. He was driven into exile from the states of Travancore and Cochin where the majority of St. Thomas Christians lived, to Anjoor in the state of Malabar. He spent his days in prayer and meditation in a hut. A few relatives and friends joined him there. This group was known as Thozhyoor Church later named as Malabar Independent Syrian Church, after a court verdict on 28 May 1863.

Christian Music after Independence

The Protestant missionaries had no restriction in using the native language and adopting indigenous customs, the Catholic missionaries sometimes imposed Latin on the natives. The Second Vatican Council was convoked by Pope John XXIII to "open up the windows and let the fresh air in." The document issued in 1963 says that the Church approves of all art that can be best used for the Liturgy, allows the use of the vernacular in the Mass and the Sacraments, and even encourages the use of the vernacular in the readings and common prayer. Accordingly, the music of the native people is adapted for use in the Liturgy of Churches, and missionaries have been encouraged to learn indigenous musical traditions. Thereafter, no prohibition has been imposed upon the musical styles used in the Liturgy. In India, this decision brought a great change to Christian music in Catholic churches. The Catholic Bishops' Conference of India (CBCI) was established as a permanent association of the Catholic bishops of India. It was formally constituted in September 1944 at the Conference of Metropolitans held in Madras. After the Second Vatican Council, a number of bishops started learning either Hindustani (North Indian classical) or Carnatic music intensively and composing devotional songs where the popular styles of Hindu devotional

song called bhajan and keertana are preferred. These songs were recorded and CDs and cassettes are sold widely. Today, the Christian music of India greatly varies both in musical form and language. When major churches in metropolitan cities such as Bangalore, Chennai, Panaji, and elsewhere are visited, the Mass is held in various languages particularly on festival days: English, Kannada, Malayalam, Telugu, Tamil, and Hindi are used in Bangalore, while English, Portuguese, Konkani, Marathi, Hindi, and Kannada are used in Panaji and so on. The music performed by the choir and both prayers and hymns by the bishop and congregation vary in accordance with the language used, even from one church to another. The English devotional songs sung in the English Mass are famous even in Japan for their Japanese translations. This extreme variety can be observed neither in Russian Orthodoxy nor in China. It is assumed that this ultimate diversity of Christian music is the most characteristic feature of the Christian music of India.

Conclusion

Western music had its rise through the spread of Christianity in India through foreign missionaries. As seen above, the mix of eastern and western music has thus given rise to modern music. As we are influenced so much by the westerners through media and other sources, Christian gospel music is available in all genres.

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