Cochin Jews - The Cultural Fusion in Central Kerala

Janal Team and Gopika P.

Summary: *A close look at the emergence of Cochin Jews as a distinct religious community and their unique cultural history.*

JANAL Archive is the Kerala Museum's digital canvas for exhibitions on the history of Kerala. Produced in Kochi, Kerala in partnership with the Geojit Foundation.

Introduction

Kerala, as a geographical region, has been home to many religions and cultures, which can be understood from the trade relations that go back to the days of King Solomon. A few Jews are said to have settled on this land back then. This interaction is also linguistically supported, as evidence shows that the Hebrew words for ivory, peacock, and monkey have been derived from a Dravidian language. The earliest record of Jews in Kerala is the Kollam copper plates (849 CE), a royal grant inscribed in old Malayalam which mentions Manigramam (merchant guild) in the port city Kollam with Maruvān Sapir Īśo, a Nestorian Christian as the beneficiary who afterwards launched a marketplace by the name Tharisapalli. The ruler of Venad, Ayyan Atikal, was the benefactor of the grant, with Zoroastrians and Jews as witnesses. The second one is the Jewish copper plates of 1000 CE by Bhaskara Ravi Varman to Joseph Rabban (Isuppu Irappaṉ), by which he was appointed as the head of Anchuvannam in Muyirikkoṭe (Muziris) with the additional assurance that its future rights were to his nephews.

The Anjuvannam copper plates granted the Jews some benefits and freedom that only the ruling class enjoyed. This provides evidence of the acceptance that Jews received in Malabar. These privileges comprised "a cloth spread before the bridegroom in a wedding procession or before the child taken in a procession to the synagogue for his circumcision; a brass lamp with lights around carried on a chain; a silk umbrella or a piece of silk spread on an umbrella made from the fronds of the palm trees; to ride on an elephant; to be carried in a palanquin. Also, to use wooden slippers with a piece of wood attached on the top which is held between the first two toes, this stump will be made of gold, and so on." Jewish settlements in other parts of the state, such as Kunnamkulam, Kozhikode, Paravoor, Palayur, and Mala, where their synagogues were built were constantly disturbed due to the political instabilities caused by the power struggle between the Kozhikode and Kochi kingdoms, and further, the conflict between the Dutch and the Portuguese.

Moving to Kochangadi

A cataclysmic cyclone and flood in the river Periyar in 1341 altered the region's geography and destroyed the port of Muziris/Cranganore. This loss and the loss of land and property in the river overflow led the Jewish communities to move to the port and market of Kochangadi. Their synagogue was built in 1344, and only a slab with an inscription remains as a souvenir. Soon, they split into many congregations. The Jews did not move up the economic ladder, and the Moors posed a difficult competition. Amidst this uncertain political situation, the Jewish settlement formed a fusion of cultures through their lifestyle.

It was in 1567 that the Jew Town was built, which was inhabited by the *meshuharim* (freed enslaved people) and *meyuhasim* (the upper class). Many of their successors now assemble in front of those old houses and the synagogue, remembering and connecting to their roots. Standing amidst the crowded tourists, they proudly recognise themselves as Malayalis despite the emigration to their Jewish homeland. The land they stood on was once a model for harmony between religions and communities—an idea that we often forget now.

“The Jews in Cochin had always been happy. They lived in peace and harmony with their Hindu, Muslim, and Christian neighbours.”

— Professor Shalva Weil, Hebrew University of Jerusalem.

The king of Cochin donated the land to build the synagogue. The rear side of the street opens to a temple and a park where both communities interact. Two or more cultures meeting at a point and then having a fusion of the same is a symbol of learning, acceptance of each other, and the peace the communities maintain. As the phenomenon was not an overnight process, years of Jewish interaction with the demography of Kerala can be observed from certain aspects of their lifestyle as it evolved here. Much can be learned from the Jew Street in Kochi and several other Jew streets where they had settled.

It is to be understood that Kerala was a meeting point for the Jews, who traced their ethnic origin to different geographical locations around the world. Families such

as the Rahabis were originally from Aleppo, Syria and were brought in by the Dutch East India Company for trade in the seventeenth century. Another family, the Halleguas, have Spanish roots, whereas the Koders are from Iraq. They had interactions with the Shingly (Cochini) Jews who had already settled here. The communities' interaction happened in the background of the Dutch and Portuguese settlements. This made way for the interesting practices, art, architecture, cuisine, and language of the Jews.

A disquieting fact was the existence of two other synagogues on the same street, one separately for the black Jews.

Influence of Caste System

Cochin Jewry was the only Jewish diaspora to observe strict caste segregation. They descended from various lineages. "They are almost entirely Sephardim from Baghdad, other parts, and even Europe. There are also a few Ashkenazim. The black Jews are of mixed race." Jews descended from Joseph Rabban are said to have been Sephardic, and the gradual influx of other Jewries from different parts of the world, like the Spanish and the Turkish, who came in the 16th century as a result of persecution from Spain and Portugal, created an amalgamation of different races and cultures within the area. De Costa divides the Cochin Jews into five categories—brown *meyuhasim*, black non-*meyuhasim*, whites, *meyuhasim* or the formerly enslaved people, and the enslaved people. They were also divided into black Jews, brown Jews, and white Jews based on colour, wherein the black Jews were said to be the original descendants of Joseph Rabban. The brown Jews came from the south. The whites are those Spanish and Italian Jews who settled here in 1568. Based on their origin, they are further divided into Malabarees and *Paradesis* (the term meaning foreigners in Malayalam).

"The Black Jews who were brought in as slaves were initially not even given a space for a synagogue or cemetery by the elite White Jews."

— Elias Josephai, caretaker of the Kadavumbhagom Synagogue, Ernakulam

The Jews here were segregated into *meyuhasim*—the Paradesis—and *meshuharim*—the non-*Paradesis*—based on their birth. *Meyuhasim* was not only a term to define *Paradesis* but also the rich Malabarees and brown Jews who were from the upper strata of society and those patronised by the king. The *meshuharim* were discriminated against by the *meyuhasim* and were not included by the latter in any celebration in their synagogue. They were not even allowed entrance. They sat outside on the floor or on the benches to see the practices and pray. Both were strictly endogamous, and intermarriage was always seen as taboo. The communities had different congregations. The *meshuharim* belonged to the Paravoor, Mala, and Thekkumbhagam synagogues, whereas the *meyuhasim* usually belonged to the Paradesi congregation. The meyuhasim and *meshuharim* never shared a shohet.[1] But after centuries, when many left for Israel, the whites had no other choice than to accept a Malabari Jew shohet. Mr. Babu is the only shohet the Jews have at present.

Looking at Architecture

An aerial view of the Jew town provides an understanding of the vestiges of a settlement that had cultivated memories and traditions for thousands of years. The gabled roofs with patches of greens in between are now mostly lifeless and visited only by tourists to enjoy their external, vintage glory. However, this external glory has stories to narrate as it is integral to Jewish lives and practices. The houses built horizontally reminds one of the lanes of Spain or Italy but at the same time, of the agraharams that existed in Brahmin colonies.

According to Portuguese sources from the 16th century, Jewish houses in Kerala were fair stone residences. They typically had a shelter made of bamboo in the front of the house. This regulated heat and kept the house cool, making it wet. These gated houses generally had star shapes etched somewhere, representing their religion. Their window rods also had the same. Wells were a necessity and a usual element in an Indian house. They were separated by doors

[1] A person certified by a rabbi or Jewish court of law to slaughter animals for food in the manner prescribed by Jewish law.

that were kept open for more space and celebrations.

Figure 1. An erstwhile Jewish house. Image: Gopika P., 2023

These houses later had a quote from the Torah kept at the front of the door out of belief in auspiciousness. Now, they have been modified with time. However, European influence cannot be unseen, especially in the windows with vegetal scrolls and divisions, balcony balustrades with mouldings, different types of flooring, and so on.

Judaism has no speculations, or organisational or ascetic requirements, for synagogues prescribed by religious texts. Hence, there has not been any strict typology to be followed. However, as a representative of an institution in a society, it was normal to undergo structural and necessary establishments. The Court of Tabernacle was the first ever Jewish temple built according to some structural speculations. The Court of Tabernacle also follows a sequential plan in its arrangement that can be recognised in the synagogues of Kerala. During the era in which the Ark of Covenant gained importance, the Beit-ha-Mikdash served as their temple for over 3000 years. David started collecting raw materials such as metals and stones for the foundation, and stories to construct a temple for God.

Figure 2. A building with star-motif decoration. Image: Gopika P., 2023

King Solomon continued to collect materials from Kerala, such as ivory, sandalwood, timber, and many more. His temple was the stone version of the Court of Tabernacle. The entrance is at the latitudinal end between a pair of external columns 18 cubits high, made of copper, which can also be seen in the synagogues of Kerala. Past these was the temple's first room—*ulam*. This is also present in the synagogues of Kerala with the same proportion of length and width. But the room is called the *azara*. The next space was divided with a wooden door—*heckal*/holy place. Then was the holy of the holiest place—devir—in a perfect cubical shape. This was where the Ark of Covenant was placed.

Observing the synagogues of Kerala and the temples, the strong walls of the building, the latitudinal entry orientation, a prominent gatehouse, the east-west axis; a hierarchy of spaces; clerestory windows (windows above eye-level); thick masonry load-bearing walls and the columns of Boaz and Joachim[2] were incorporated religiously,

[2] Two copper, brass, or bronze pillars which stood on the porch of Solomon's Temple, the first Temple in

while adopting the indigenous style. This substantiates that the Jews of the Malabar coast had first-hand information about the organisation of the temples and passed it down to their line of successors.

However, where the structure of a synagogue is concerned, there are a few important spaces or entities, including an ark with different meanings in different contexts. It drew its meaning to be a box from the Ark of Covenant. In the Hebrew Bible, this was called the *tebah*. In a Sephardic context, tebah signifies a pulpit in the Sephardic synagogues, i.e., the table on the bimah[3] where the Sefer Torah[4] is resided. The term *heckal* has evolved in Kerala to denote the ark, and *tebah* refers to the free-standing reader's table, not the ark. Every Kerala synagogue contains a room called azara. The ancient temple was a place for animal sacrifice, etc. situated externally. In Kerala, it almost serves as a foyer.

The Paradesi synagogue was erected in 1568, after the arrival of the Paradesi population in Cochin on the land gifted by the then king of the Kingdom of Cochin, HH Keshava Ravi Varma, who encouraged a harmonious society with different communities residing in it. The synagogue, sharing the boundary wall with the Mattancherry Sri Krishna temple, is situated in Mattancherry, a small cosmopolitan town in Cochin, at the northern end of the synagogue lane, where the congregation resides. A 45 feet tall clocktower built in 1760 by the great merchant of Cochin, Ezekiel Rahabi acts as a focal point of the street with four sides of its majestic structure carrying one clock on each side, all in different numerals—the one facing the Maharaja's palace shows Malayalam numerals, the synagogue floor face has Hebrew numerals, the next face has roman numerals to help traders, and the last side has been left blank.

The main building of the synagogue is constructed like any other traditional structure of Kerala—primarily using laterite stones that are easily available. It forms the basic structure above the foundation stone made of granite, a scarce resource in Kerala. The laterite walls are polished with chunam into two storeys. Unlike other synagogues, most of the Malayali synagogues showcase a contorted distinction of spaces rather than the smooth flowing plan. The same can be noticed in the construction of the Paradesi synagogue as well.

Figure 3. Paradesi Synagogue - exterior. Image: Gopika P., 2023

After the gate carrying star symbols, the building entry commences with a breezeway termed *tallam*, and continues to reach the outer courtyard, which leads to the anteroom—azara. An *azara* can be found even in the ancient temples. Here, it acts as a transitional space between the main sanctuary and the outside world where latecomers, mourners, and the *meshuharim* sit; this place continues to the sanctuary.

"The largest and most important space of the Paradesi Synagogue compound is the sanctuary. In the tradition of all Kerala Jewish houses of worship, it is rectangular in plan and double height. Measuring 27' (8.2 m) wide, 42'-8" (12.8 m) long, and 19' (5.8 m)

Jerusalem.

[3] Podium or platform in a synagogue from which the Torah is read.

[4] Sefer Torah is a long scroll containing the entire text of the Five Books of Moses, hand-written by a pious scribe in the original Hebrew.

high."

— Mr. Jay Waronker, architectural historian of Kochi.

Figure 4. Paradesi synagogue - interior. Image: Gopika P., 2023

In the sanctuary is one of the most important spaces, the *tebah,* situated. Tebah is a podium on which Torah scrolls are read. They are surrounded by temporary seats, and the design of the *tebah* is detailed with twenty-five brass balustrades and the primary medium is teakwood. This timber is lavishly used in most of the religious places in Kerala. It is the nearest place to the *heckal*. The *heckal* is the wooden cupboard, situated on the western wall—nearest to Jerusalem—constructed in teak to store the Sefer Torah scrolls. They are decorated with floral motifs and covered with a *parokhet*.[5] The floorings are finished with Chinese tiles, underscoring the rich trading past of Cochin. The shallow tray ceiling above is embellished with lotus motifs which is typical of Hindu religious buildings in Kerala. From the ceiling hangs lamps that are lit in the evenings of which the most peculiar one is fuelled by coconut oil.

Figure 5. *Heckal* and the Chinese tiles. Image: Gopika P., 2023

Figure 6. Moroccan lamps, chandeliers, and the first floor of the Paradesi Synagogue. Image: Gopika P., 2023

Moving to the second floor from the *azara* are the women's seats and *tebah* on which the Sefer Torah is recited on Shabbat days. A different prayer section for women with a similar enclosure that does not attract much attention was introduced in the Delhi Sultanate as well. Hence the roots of this tradition might have a longer history. The roof is supported by a beam and frame arrangement of wooden planks that form

[5] The curtain of the Sanctuary.

the skeleton to pave clay tiles. The roof gables at the eastern end and is hipped at the west. This provides evidence for the active architectural collaboration between the Jews and Kerala.

Language, a Rich Blend

The Jewish copper plates of the 9th and 11th centuries are a great source to study the old Malayalam language. The proper formulation of the language happened only between the 12th and the 14th century. Before their settlement, Tamil and Malayalam had influenced the Hebrew language and were used to denote words for various spices, ivory, monkey, and peacock. After the settlement at various places like Kollam, Cranganore, and Calicut, they developed their own new castelect (caste dialect). Judeo-Malayalam, used orally and literally by the Jews of Kerala today, faces the acute threat of extinction. It was a mixture of Hebrew and Malayalam words, but primarily Malayalam in the folk style.

Conversational genres are rather oral. They carried the social structure that the Jews lived in and used different terms under Blason Populaire,[6] coinages, and technical terms to denote different populations, names, occupations, status, and so on. To denote a position, they used terms such as *Onnankaranor*—first headman or ancestor, out of which the Cochin Jews developed a tradition of going to the Onnankarnor's house for their processions. *Karnoru* and *Taravatici*, the male and female heads of *tharavad* are also certain coinages that the Jews used in the background of the Nayar and Namboodiri system of joint and extended family. This included idioms and stylish speeches.

Blason Populaire brings out nicknames for other families based on their history, social background, occupation, and status. "Puliyosephu" was the name given to Joseph who sold tamarind or puli. This system is very common in Kerala. As for families, they call the Mala group *palasakkar* which means Polish folk as they are believed to have a Polish lineage. They are also called *pambus* (snakes) due to their cunning nature as represented in the Hebrew texts.

Complex terms in Hebrew-Malayalam combine both Malayalam and Hebrew terms. This could be an evolved Malayalam term with total Hebrew references such as *Miniyan Kutalu* (joining the quorum) or *Ottumatham* (recital gallery), for example, is a place where religious lessons are taught to children. There are also other terms such as *moilyakkanmaru* that refer to the rabbis. The singular term of the same word *moilyaru* derives itself from *mudaliyar* which is an old Malayalam word to call anyone who leads a group. This became a term then on, to address the religious heads of Muslims and Jews. Simple forms consist of jokes, rhymes, proverbs, and riddles that are rather short and used colloquially. A proverb such as "*kalante pere poyalum, Jutante pere povalle*" is an example of simple forms.

Jewish songs are considered an integral part of the *pattu* culture of Kerala. They can be religious such as prayer songs, or ceremonial, as also common songs, such as lullabies. These songs are further divided into different categories according to their technical linguistic features. For instance, the song starting '*tambiran*' is an example of a prayer song sung during Jewish weddings at synagogues. Evidence of a confident acculturation is noticeable in the verses of this song, where the language used is Malayalam, with special reference to their texts such as '*seddhayi*'. Mentioning their god as *'tambiran'*—a Malayalam term for God or Lord—makes the newly formed fusion apparent. An attractive feature of the Jewish songs is the manipulation of the local and colloquial language to address their God affectionately, after embellishing the words. These are documented in the notebooks that Jewish women have preserved. They also serve as historical records for certain events, such as the attack on their congregation by the Zamorin at Cranganore, the establishment of their synagogues, the activities of Joseph Rabban, and many more, explained in the songs contained in the notebooks.

Judeo-Malayalam continues to be a part of their lives when they spend their days in Cochin Street in Israel. Malayalam terms make their appearance in their daily conversations, songs, and even in the form of the indigenous plants they took from

[6] Blason populaire is an umbrella genre in the field of folkloristics used to designate any item of any genre which makes use of stereotypes, mostly, negative stereotypes, of a particular group.

Kerala when they emigrated.

Dress and Fashion in the Tropics

Another important and interesting facet of their assimilation into Kerala society is the attire of the Cochin Jews. What the Cochinis wore was highly influenced by the climatic conditions and the socio-cultural setting that they were living in. Kerala is a tropical region on the west coast of India; Cochin being one of its most important coasts. Here, due to the humid and tropical climate and meagre availability and affordability of other raw textile materials, common people used cotton as their primary cloth material. This was mostly in white as well.

The fashion of each community reflected their socio-economic status in feudal Kerala. Hence, clothing became an identity marker to recognise different castes and communities and their social status.

Discussing the fashion of Cochini women of the past, they wore both white mundu or checked colourful lungis known by the term *podava* with a long blouse that was usually on a lighter palette and maybe floral. This was said to be influenced by the Muslim community who were an important proportion of the Cochin population then. These Muslim women were easily recognizable because of their *thuni*. It was *kachithuni* initially, with white or light-coloured mundu with a thick bright-coloured border. This became *soorithuni* (with thinner and lighter borders) and *chinaithuni* (colourful *thuni*) eventually. This was worn with a *pen kuppayam*, a long-sleeved white top, maybe embellished with beads. Even they are said to have worn the *thuni* with *kasavu* borders on some occasions. Their attire was complete with a veil which fell from their head across their shoulders. Fascinating similarities can be identified within the Jewish community also. On special occasions, the Jewish men wore a vest, coat, and a kippah whose colours varied according to the events they attended. They also covered their head with a scarf (*talachuttu*) without hiding the kippah as the kippah symbolised God's presence and acted as a reminder of the Ten Commandments, protecting them from committing sins.

Cochin was an area of fishermen and marine traders. The fisher communities' typical attire was the checked lungi. This was adopted not only by the Jews of Mattancherry but also by the Jews of Paravoor and other places. This establishes the Cochini community's connection with the cloth that they wore—that they were marine traders primarily, who had all the know-how of the west coast market to the extent of owning ships even at places like Surat. According to Francis Day, the richer ladies wore ornaments like *kashumala* and other jewellery for special occasions. He also says that some white Jews dressed like the Baghdadis and did not prefer the Malayali version of clothes.

Figure 9. A family of Cochin Jews, c. 1900. Image: Wikimedia, 1901-1906. Jewish Encyclopedia

Men of the Cochin Jew community wore mundu or lungi around the waist and *kuppayam* on the upper body. With time, the *kuppayam* was replaced by long shirts with full sleeves. They draped the mundu in several ways that denoted their occupation. This was very typical of Kerala, and moreover was a matter of comfort. The mundu was either let free after a knot at the waist if the person was doing a managerial or a government job; or tied above the knees if he was doing a physically active job. The mundu was replaced by white pants or *kakuppayam* on the sabbath, and a long white shirt or *qamisa* became the substitute for *kuppayam* over which they wore their fringes and tzitzit.[7] On other special occasions, they wore a *sattriya* and a *kappa* on top of it. Their cap, the kippah, was very similar to the Mohammedan caps. The Jews also wear round flat caps.

The wedding costumes of the Cochinis

[7] Tzitzit are specially knotted ritual fringes, or tassels, worn in antiquity by Israelites or Jews.

were similar to that of the Mohammedans and the Hindus. They wore their podavas unusually embellished with hand embroidery using threads, beads, and sequins that the bride-to-be herself or tailors designed. These designs are said to be influenced by the Spanish and Baghdadi traditions. It is also claimed to be an inspiration from the royal wear of Kerala. These clothes were mostly sewn with silk and were off-white in colour. On the subsequent days of the wedding ceremony, they wore colourful dresses. Their ornaments included the *kashumala*, *mullamala*, and other necklaces. From the day of the wedding, they wore a silver ring, a *talimala,* which married women usually wore in Kerala.

In one of the recent interviews, a woman over 70 years of age from Israel was seen happily sharing her thoughts about her wedding ring with a star and blue tint, with her husband's name on it. She was gaily sharing that such rings are only found in India, not Israel.

Figure 10. A Kerala Jew Talimala. Image: Israel Museum, Jerusalem[8]

The groom usually wore his *kakakkuppayam* and *qamisa* with *sattriya* and kappa over it. They are richly embellished with embroidery and gold or silver borders. Additionally, a gold chain with a golden pendant or a set of pendants was worn diagonally across his body (*pavan mala*), and a chain of jasmine embellished his neck (*puvumala*). Methiyadi—a type of commonly used footwear—was also a part of this.

Conclusion

For over a thousand years, the Jews of Cochin clung to the traditions and laws of Israel. The outmigration of the Cochin Jews started in 1950, whereby some congregations fully migrated with no members left in Kerala. In contrast, some partially moved, making the Paradesi synagogue the only practising synagogue in Kerala at present. But by this time, they had contributed much to the history and culture of Kerala and taken back many with them. When social acculturation is taken into the picture, the caste system that divided them into *meyuhasim* and *meshuharim* can be considered the best evidence. It is the same system that instructs shohets to belong to the same caste as the community they provide kosher meat for. Synagogues in central Kerala have contributed to creating new structures incorporating ritualistic structures of the Jewish religious system into majestic architectural features of Kerala. Their residential architecture also reflects the hybrid culture they belonged to. Moreover, the introduction of the talimala can be taken as the perfect example of acculturation, where a new element was added to the marriage ceremony. Cochin Jews living in Israel still maintain their Malayali ornaments like *kashumala* and mullamala, viewing them as a part of their culture. Costumes such as *kallimundu* or mundu with the checked pattern were adopted by them for their traditional wear.

Kasavu, the peculiar technique of design used by the Nambudiris and Nayars, was also embraced by the Jews in their lifestyle. Even though the community has rooted back to their ancestral land, traces of language followed them in the form of songs they recite during their ceremonies and books they hold onto with much sensitivity. It can be concluded that the Jews channelled a meeting point of many cultures through their gradual settlement, along with adopting and adapting to the new land they called home.

The Cochin Jews provide a fine example of how a small religio-ethnic community can

[8] From, https://www.imj.org.il/he/collections/225908-0.

acculturate within a larger society. By developing an appropriate historical legend, adapting symbols from Hindu society, and fitting into the caste hierarchy of Kerala, a secure place in that hierarchy was achieved.

References

Day, Francis. The Land of the Perumals, Or, Cochin, Its Past and Its Present. India, Gantz Bros., at the Adelphi Press, 1863.

Gamliel, Ophira. "Voices yet to be heard: On listening to the last speakers of Jewish Malayalam." *Journal of Jewish Languages* 1, No. 1 (2013): 135-167.

Gamliel, Ophira. "Jewish Malayalam." *Handbook of Jewish Languages* (2016): 503- 516.

Inchikalayil, Dona. “Cochin Jews Home in Nevatim Israel: One Day Spend with Cochin Jewish”. 37:25. November 5, 2019. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Fn7GvFbF2QQ

Linschoten, Jan Huygen Van. *The Voyage of John Huygen Van Linschoten to the East Indies*. United States, Burt Franklin, 1970.

Niraksharan (Manoj Raveendran), Muzirisiloode. Mentor Books, 2015.

P., Gopika. “Impact of Jewish Settlement on the Culture of Central Kerala.” 2021. Women’s Christian College, Chennai, unpublished dissertation.

Sebastian, Shelvin. “19th-century sketch put up online by Israeli Prof draws attention to dying community of Cochin Jews”. *Mathrubhumi*, October 01, 2023.

Segal, J. B. “White and Black Jews at Cochin, the Story of a Controversy.” *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland*, no. 2, 1983, pp. 228–252. www.jstor.org/stable/25211536.

Sreedhara Menon, A. *Cultural Heritage of Kerala: An Introduction*. India, East-West Publications, 1978.

Spector, Johanna. "Shingli Tunes of the Cochin Jews." Asian Music 3, no. 2 (1972): 23-28.

Waronker, Jay. "The Synagogues Of Kerala, India: Their Architecture, History, Context, And Meaning." eCommons, Cornell University Library (2010).