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Social Reform Without Colonial Critique: Hussain Salahuddeen's Dhivehi Novel Rivaayathu Nu'maan va Maryam, 1934

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ABSTRACT *In early novels authored by upper-class and English-educated men in South Asian languages like Bengali, Malayalam, Tamil, and Urdu, colonial modernity often surfaced in the form of didacticism—that is, the use of moral plots designed to raise awareness of social issues. The cross-lingual effort by male authors to impact morals of other male readers often focused on the reform of women, reforms that were shaped by the colonial critique of Indian society as backwards. The Dhivehi-language novel, Rivaayathu Nu'maan va Maryam, written in 1934 by the Maldivian nobleman Hussain Salahuddeen, also sought to persuade Maldivian noblemen that women should be educated. But unlike early Bengali, Malayalam, Tamil, and Urdu social reform novels, Salahuddeen was not responding to a colonial critique of the Maldives. The British concern with and presence in the Maldives was circumscribed. Salahuddeen wrote the novel while exiled in Colombo, Ceylon after the Sultan of the Maldives banished him for co-authoring the first constitution. I argue that Salahuddeen's articulation of social reform was frustration with the Maldivian monarchy coupled with admiration of colonial Colombo as a land of freedom. And I reveal that Salahuddeen's novel advocated for the growth of cultural tourism to combat the country's insularity in relation to cosmopolitan Colombo.*

Key Words: Dhivehi Literature, Hussain Salahuddeen, Social Reform Novel, The Motorboat Revolt, Educational Reform, Cultural Tourism

Introduction

In 1932, a mob in Malé rushed the grounds of Sultan Shamsuddeen III's palace. The mob called upon their monarch to tear up the new constitution, which had been passed on December 22, 1932, and they demanded the Sultan banish the seven ministers who had co-authored it. According to Maldivian statesman and poet Ibrahim Shihab (1966/2003, pp. 4-9; 2021, pp. 16-21), the riot was secretly organised by Shamsuddeen III and his Prime Minister, Abdul Majeed Rannaban'deyri Kilegefaan, who were not pleased with the new democratic constitution that curtailed their dictatorial powers. Abdul Hakeem Hussain Manik (1997) has also written that "during this infamous Motorboat revolt, the ministers and their deputies were sent away. The visible instigator of the revolt was king Mohamed Shamsuddeen III, and the mastermind behind it all was the person who had directly opposed the preparation of the constitution, Abdul Majeed Rannabandeyri Kilegefan" (p. 13). At this time, the Chief Justice of the country was the nobleman Hussain Salahuddeen (1881–1948), and as noted by Aishath Ali (2017), he was the secretary of the drafting committee for the constitution.

To placate the mob, Shamsuddeen III ordered to banish seven ministers to various

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islands within the Maldives. They were forced to wait onboard a ship owned by the Maldivian Government called the 'M.V. Fathu-hul Salaam' (Didi 1966/2003, p. 21). But they fled on this boat and safely navigated to Colombo, Ceylon, where they lived for one year. The seven ministers that fled on the motorboat were (1) Minister of Justice, Hussain Salahuddeen; (2) Minister of Health, Ibrahim Ali Didi; (3) Deputy Minister of Trade, Mohamed Ismail Didi; (4) Attorney General, Sheikh Ibrahim Rushdy; (5) Deputy Minister of Finance, Ibrahim Hassan Didi; (6) Member of People's Majlis, Kanzudhoshuge Seedhi; and (7) Deputy Minister of Agriculture, Hilihilaage Moosa Ibrahim Didi (Didi, 1966/2003, p. 34; Didi trans. Farook, 2021, p. 51). Ahmed Kamil Didi, who was serving as the Minister of Education and Minister of Home Affairs, was also banished. But he was already in Colombo to purchase a cargo boat for the Maldivian government. In the Maldives, this historical event is known as 'the motorboat revolt' *(motaruboatge gadubadu)*. While in exile in Colombo, the ministers still received their government salaries while residing together at the house of the Maldivian foreign minister to Ceylon.

While exiled in Ceylon, Salahuddeen authored a novel in Dhivehi entitled, *Rivaayathu Nu'maan va Maryam* (The Story of Nu'maan and Maryam). (In this article, Dhivehi words are transliterated according to the official Dhivehi romanisation system known as Dhivehi Latin or Malé Latin. Arabic words are transliterated according to the IJMES Transliteration System for Arabic, Persian, and Turkish.) Salahuddeen wrote the novel under the penname of 'Mirzā Shakīb', Persian for 'Prince of Patience'. Although the novel was written in Dhivehi, Salahuddeen originally titled the work in Arabic, *Riwāyatu Nu'mān wa Maryam.* However, in the 2010 edition I studied, the title was spelled in Dhivehi as Rivaayathu Nu'maan va Maryam, which is how I transliterate the title in this article. In the afterward, Salahuddeen (1934/2010, p. 189) explained that he cast his novel in the future, where life in the Maldives had changed in ways Salahuddeen envisioned:

> މި ރިވާޔަތު ލިޔުނު މީހާ ބުނެއެވެ. މި ރިވާޔަތާއި، އަދީހާ ١٣٥٢ ވަނަ އަހަރު ސިލޯނުގެ ކޮޅުބުގައި
> އަރާމުކުރާން ހުރި ދުވަސްވަރުގެ ތެރޭގައި ލިޔުނު ތަކެއްޗެއްގެ ތަކެތީގެ ކުޅިވަރު އެއްޗެކެވެ.
> އަދި މި ރިވާޔަތުގައި ދިވެހިރާއްޖެއަށް ވާން އެދޭ ގޮތްތައް ބަޔާންކޮށްފައި ވެއެވެ. އެއީ އެކަލޭގެ خيالي ފުރަތަމަ ދުނިޔެއެވެ

The author of this story states that he wrote this novel and other writings for amusement in the *hijri* year 1352 during the days he was relaxing in Colombo, Ceylon. In this novel, he has depicted what he wishes for the Maldives. That is, it is his daydream.

The fact that Salahuddeen narrativised his hopes for the future in the Maldives is supported by a diary entry written by a minister who fled from the Maldives with Salahuddeen: Mohamed Ismail Didi, Deputy Minister of Trade. In Ismail Didi's diary, he wrote about reading a final draft of Salahuddeen's just-written novel. Ismail Didi (1966/2003, p. 86) described the story as a 'progressive vision' and suggested that Salahuddeen was impacted by living in Ceylon:

> ހުދުންކޮގެ ނޫސްބަލާ އަވަދިރިފަގެން ދޫރި ދިލުވަނީ، ކޮންމެވެސް ވާހަކަ ދޮމްއެގެ މޮޅެރާކައެވެ. މީޔޮޖޭގެ އައްދުޔާއި
> ތަރަވަންދުރުގެ ބޭބޭ މިތާ ހުންނަވައިގެން ލިޔުއްވަމުން އެގޮސްތަރާވާ نعمان ދިރީގެ ވާހަކައެވެ. ހުރިހާ ގޮތެއްކުން ނުވަތަ
> ސިނގަމަގުން ދުރުވި ޗާއްޗަ މިހާރުން ތަވަޖަދައަކަވަން ވައްޖިދުމި އެއްވާ އަދަތަރާ ترقّي خيالދައް އެބޭބެ ހިޔާދުކުން އަރި
> ޔޭއްވެގެން ބޭވައާ ވެސް ހިވެއެވެ. ސިލޯނުގެ މިނިވަން جوّ ގައި ހުންނަވައިގެން ލިޔުއްވި ކަމުގައިވެސް ވެދާނެއެވެ

> In the morning, after I finish reading the news, I relieve my boredom in a novel. One book among these is the story of Nu'maan Didi that Dharavandhoogey beybe [elder brother Salahuddeen of the Dharavandhoogey household] is writing while staying here. I wonder how elder brother [Salahuddeen] has such a progressive vision at a time when the Maldives has fallen so low in every way or in many ways. Perhaps it is because he is writing it in this open environment of Ceylon.

Thus, from Ismail Didi and Salahuddeen's perspective, the free atmosphere in colonial Ceylon inspired Salahuddeen to envision a new Maldives.

The novel can be summarised as follows: the first three chapters of the novel offer an introduction to Salahuddeen's vision of a future Maldives. In chapter 1, Salahuddeen focuses on the Maldivian nobleman Numaan Didi's ideas about the importance of education, and in chapter 2, he portrays the progressive ideas of the heroine Maryam Manike. Chapter 3 shifts to a handicraft exhibition, attended by Maryam Manike and Numaan Didi. The event attracts tourists and dignitaries to the island of Vandhoo in Kolhumadulu Atoll. In chapter 4, Numaan Didi is now in Sri Lanka, where he meets with elite Sinhalese and British officials who work for the British empire. Chapters 5 and 6 depict the wedding in Malé of Maryam Manike's brother, Nizaar Maniku, who had recently graduated from Oxford University. Chapter 6 focuses on a boat race in Malé attended by Maryam Manike. The race, and Maryam's boat, is struck by a thunderstorm. In chapter 8, Maryam Manike is discovered barely alive. Numaan Didi nurses her back to health. The novel ends when Maryam Manike and Numaan Didi fall in love and wed.

The structure of the article is as follows: it commences with a literature review on male-driven didacticism in the early South Asian novel, reflections on Salahuddeen's didacticism in Rivaayathu Nu'maan va Maryam, and a brief discussion of possible literary motivations behind its creation. Next, in the findings and discussion, I examine ideas Salahuddeen presented in the novel about women's education, and I explore Salahuddeen's depiction of cultural tourism in the form of a handicraft exhibition. In the conclusion, I suggest that Dhivehi literary culture cannot be understood through the lens of common historical frameworks used to study literary cultures in South Asia—precolonial, colonial, postcolonial—and associated theoretical frameworks like postcolonial theory.

Literature Review

Male-Driven Didacticism in Early South Asian Novels

When upper-class and English-educated men wrote early novels in South Asian languages like Bengali, Malayalam, Tamil, and Urdu, colonial modernity surfaced in myriad ways. One identifiable form it took was the articulation of didacticism. 'Didacticism' means that the authors of early novels in Bengali, Malayalam, Tamil, and Urdu often published moral tales to raise their readers' awareness about certain social issues such as women's education; sati or widow self-immolation; widow remarriage; and abstinence from alcohol. They often wrote novels to persuade their readers to support reform of societal problems. In some novels, didacticism could be found in lecture-like monologues. In other novels, it surfaced implicitly through plot developments (Ebeling, 2010, p. 218).

The cross-lingual effort by elite male authors to impact morals of other elite male readers often focused on the reform of women, reforms that were shaped by the British colonial critique of Indian society as backwards (Shandilya, 2016, p. 273, p. 282). Yet South Asian women themselves were marginal to the debate. They were, in the words of Lata Mani (1998), "neither subjects, nor objects but, rather, the ground of the discourse" (p. 70). For example, in the early Malayalam novel *Marthanda Varma* (1891) written by C. V. Raman Pillai, a visible facet of colonial modernity was his fetishisation of female chastity and the nuclear family (Pillai, 2012, p. 60). Raman Pillai wrote the novel when male Nair reformers stigmatised Nair matriliny and polyandry and were transforming it into what they deemed more respectable practices of monogamy and patriarchy. Raman Pillai's early Malayalam novel sought to civilise women within a reconstructed patriarchal regime (Pillai, 2012, pp. 55-58).

Male-driven didacticism regarding the reform of South Asian women is also evident in Nazir Ahmad's Urdu novel *Mirāt ul-'Arūs (The Bride's Mirror)* (Lal, 2008, pp. 15-30). As noted by Lal, Ahmad wrote the novel for a contest created in 1868 by the colonial government of the North-Western Provinces to award educational books written in Hindi or Urdu, especially books for Indian women. In Mirāt ul-'Arūs, Ahmad juxtaposed a bad-tempered illiterate older sister, Akbari, against her literate and intelligent younger sister, Asghari, to depict proper and improper female behaviour in colonial Delhi (Dubrow, 2016, pp. 289-311). The purpose was to encourage Indian Muslim elites of colonial Delhi to educate their daughters. Ruby Lal (2008, pp. 15-30) argues that Ahmad's reformist novel was ultimately an attempt in the colonial context to envision a new form of respectability for elite (in Lal's words, *'sharīf'*) women.

The pioneering Tamil novelist, Vedanayakam Pillai was also an advocate of women's rights. In his second novel, *Suguna Sundari* (1887) he criticised early marriage and widow celibacy. And he championed the importance of girls' education (Raman, 2000, pp. 95–96). However, as noted by Sita Anantha Raman (2000), reformers like Vedanayakam Pillai were not radical reformers: Pillai endorsed chastity and traditional motherhood. In the first Tamil novel Piratāpam Eṉṉum *Piratāpa Mutaliyār Carittiram* (1879), Pillai advocated for the right of women to choose their husband and inherit property, but in the novel, when the people asked the heroine Nānāmpal to be the monarch, she adopted a man's disguise and later eagerly returned to the duty of domestic life (Raman, 2000, p. 105).

Likewise, Bankimchandra Chatterjee and Rabindaranath Tagore wrote Bengali novels presumably to advocate for widow remarriage. However, Krupa Shandilya (2017, pp. 22–24) notes that Bankimchandra's *Bisha Briksha* (The Poison Tree, 1873) and Tagore's *Chokher Bali* (A Grain of Sand in the Eye, 1902) ended with the death of the widow protagonist, thereby enforcing the notion of the difficulty of widow remarriage.

Didacticism in Salahuddeen's *Rivaayathu Nu'maan va Maryam*

Salahuddeen's early-twentieth century novel also sought to persuade men that women should be educated. In fact, Salahuddeen may have drawn influence from Nazir Ahmad's *Mirāt ul-'Arūs.* But unlike early Bengali, Malayalam, Tamil, and Urdu social reform novels, Salahuddeen was not responding to a colonial critique of the Maldives. The British concern with and presence in the Maldives was circumscribed. Salahuddeen wrote *Rivaayathu Nu'maan va Maryam* for Maldivian-Muslim noblemen in Malé who had a more limited experience with colonial modernity's gendered colonial practices, English education, missionary activity, and attendant cultural nationalism. Beginning in 1887, the Maldives became a British protectorate. But British colonial officials in Ceylon would visit the Maldives only sporadically, such as when they needed to put a stamp of approval on the legitimacy of a new Sultan when the previous Sultan had been overthrown in a coup. This occurred in 1894 (Bell, 1940, p. 35) and 1903 (Bell, 1940, p. 54).

To say that Salahuddeen wrote his social reform novel in the absence of a colonial critique of Maldivian society is not to say that colonial modernity was not a factor. It was: Salahuddeen wrote the novel while exiled in the British colonial metropolis of Colombo, Ceylon after the Sultan of the Maldives banished him for co-authoring the first constitution. In this article, I argue that Salahuddeen's social reform was a combination of frustration with the Maldivian monarchy coupled with his admiration of Colombo as a cosmopolitan land of comparative freedom. I further conjecture that Salahuddeen's depiction of cultural tourism in the novel (at a time the Maldives was not open to foreigners) was an effort to combat the country's insularity in relation to cosmopolitan Colombo.

Potential Literary Motivations

To understand Salahuddeen's *Rivaayathu Nu'maan wa Maryam* it is also important to tease out literary influence he likely drew from the first Dhivehi novel written in 1920: Ahmed Kamil Didi's (1892–1961) *Rivaayathu Moosa va Zuleykhaa* (The Story of Moosa and Zuleykha) and its parent-novel, Nazir Ahmad's (1869) Urdu-language *Mirāt ul-'Arūs*. One can assume Salahuddeen was acquainted with Rivaayathu Moosa va Zuleykhaa because in the introduction to Salahuddeen's first novel, *Dhonbeefaanu Vaahaka* (The Story of Dhonbeefaanu, 1920), he commended Kamil Didi for his pioneering work (Salahuddeen, 1920/2019, p. 3). (Salahuddeen presented his first novel, Dhonbeefaanu Vaahaka, as an offering to the son of Sultan Imaduddin V, Prince Abdulla Imaduddeen. Prince Abdulla Imaduddeen was the same nobleman in whose presence Kamil Didi wrote his first novel.) Kamil Didi had crafted a plot for his social reform novel based on Nazir Ahmad's use of contrasting character pairs in *Mirāt ul-'Arūs.* At the heart of Kamil Didi's Dhivehi novel was a similar contrast of foolish and wise characters. Kamil Didi even referenced Ahmad's Urdu novel in the opening scene of his Dhivehi novel. The impolite character Mohamed Didi visits the house of the polite character Moosa Didi. They sit down for tea, and Moosa Didi tells his visitor about *Mirāt ul-'Arūs*:

> [illegible] "مرآة العُرُوس" [illegible] اشارة [illegible]
> [موسى ديدي] - محمّد [illegible]
> محمّد ديدي - [illegible] موسى ديدي - [illegible] نصيحة [illegible]
> حاضّ [illegible] اصغري [illegible] اكبري [illegible]
> [illegible] اكبري [illegible] خلاف [illegible] اصغري [illegible]
> [illegible]
> [illegible] نذير احمد [illegible] انعام [illegible]

He pointed to the novel *Mirāt ul-'Arūs* on the small table:

> [Moosa Didi:] Brother Mohamed, this is a great story.
> Mohamed Didi: What kind of story is it?
> Moosa Didi: It is a moral tale. It is especially a story written for women. It tells a tale of two women: Akbari and Asghari. Akbari is a careless, ill-mannered, irritable, and ill-behaved girl. In contrast, Asghari is a well-mannered, polite, and well-behaved girl. It is a story that would bring us much benefit if translated it into Dhivehi. After Nazir Ahmad wrote the story the British government awarded him 500 rupees' (Didi, 1920/2012, p. 30).

Given the fact that Salahuddeen praised Kamil Didi's novel, one can assume that Salahuddeen read this opening scene in which the well-mannered character of Moosa Didi explained the fundamental juxtaposition of characters in *Mirāt ul-'Arūs* and recommended translating it into Dhivehi.

It is also possible that Salahuddeen read Nazir Ahmad's *Mirāt ul-'Arūs*. Salahuddeen knew Urdu well. In *Rivaayathu Nu'maan va Maryam*, Salahuddeen quoted Urdu ghazals. In his diary that was later published as *Suveyhu Kaivenifulhu (The Marriage in Suez)*, Salahuddeen described how he served as an Urdu-Dhivehi interpreter for Sultan Imaduddeen VI. The Sultan travelled from Colombo to the British hill country retreat of Nuwara Eliya to meet with the Governor of Ceylon, Joseph West Ridgeway. That day, Ridgeway spoke in Urdu, and Salahuddeen translated it into Dhivehi (Salahuddeen, 2003, p. 48/Salahuddeen, 2021, p. 46, trans. Farook).

One can only conjecture that Salahuddeen read *Mirāt ul-'Arūs,* as there are moments in *Rivaayathu Nu'maan va Maryam* that echo Nazir Ahmad's reflections on gender and social attitudes. For example, Ahmad (1903, 14; trans. Ward) critiqued prevailing patriarchal customs and the ways in which religious interpretation was sometimes used to justify women's subordination. In a similar vein, Salahuddeen explored the idea that chauvinistic attitudes were deeply rooted in cultural narratives, referencing the story of Adam and Eve:

> މި ބިން މަތީގައި ފިރިހެނުންނާއި، އަންހެނުން އުޅުއްވިފަ ދުނިޔެ އުފެއްދެވުނީއްސުރެ، އަދި އަދަށް ދާންދެންވެސް
> ފިރިހެނުންގެ އެއްމެ ސަމާލުކަމާއި އަންހެނުންގެ ނުބައި ފަސާދައާއި އަލަބޮޑުންގެ ރިޔާ މަކަރު އިތުރުކުރި ކަމުގެ خبر
> ތަކާއި، ބޮޑުފަތާލުގެ ބަޔާންތަކާ އެޔާއިރީގެތަކުން ފޮތްތަކުގެ. މިގޮތުމެދުން ހިތުފުޅުކޮށް ގޮސްތަކާއި، ޝިއުރުފުރިހަމަ
> ފޮތްތަކާއި، ހިތުފުޅުގައިހުރި ވަރަށްތަނަވަސް މިހާރު ހަދަށްވެއްޖެ ޔަގީން ބޮޑު ބޮޑު ދޭވު، ސައިތާނު،
> ޖިންނި، ފިހާރަތަކުން ޝަރު، އަރިހުން ބިރުގަނެގަތުން ތަކުރާރު އަލަބޮޑުކަމުތަކުގައި. އަންމަ ފުރަތަމަ ސަލާމުޅައިގެ
> އަހަރެމެންގެ ބައްޕާ آدم ގެފާނަށް ބަލާ مُصِيبه ތަކާއި ސުވަރުގެއިން ބޭރުވުން ތަކުރާރުވީ ސަބަބަކީވެސް حوّاء
> ގެފާނުންގެ ނުބައިކަން ކަމުގައި اهْلُ كتابُން އެމީހުންގެ آسماني ފޮތް ތަކުގައި ހުރި ކަމަށް ރިވާކުރަނީ

From time immemorial of the co-existence of men and women on earth, men have sought to circulate tales of women's wickedness, trickery, hypocrisy, and deceit. Anyone who reflects on such stories, books, and poems might be led to fear women more than a great horned monster, Satan, jinn, or sea dragon. According to the scriptures of the Abrahamic faiths, it was through the actions of Eve that our forefather Adam, peace be upon him, was made to face hardship and misfortune and was expelled from Paradise.

(Salahuddeen, 1934/2010, p. 28)

Methods

In this article, the method of analysis is loosely aligned with the practices of thematic analysis outlined by Braun and Clarke (2006). My first step was immersion: I translated the first five chapters of *Rivaayathu Nu'maan va Maryam* from Dhivehi into English. As I translated, when I struggled to understand meanings of the sentences, I raised questions to the members of the *Bas Jagaha* forum, a Facebook forum dedicated to the study of the Dhivehi language. This collaborative process was an indispensable way to deepen my understanding of the text.

A turning point occurred when I read Salahuddeen's afterward, where he stated, "In this novel, he [the author] has depicted what he wishes for the Maldives. That is, it is his daydream" (Salahuddeen, 1934/2010, p. 189). This prompted me to approach the novel with a new question: what vision of the Maldives was Salahuddeen imagining? As I translated, I began to identify recurring thematic concerns. I noted how Salahuddeen, in chapters 1 and 2, foregrounded the importance of education and women's education, in particular. Yet, in chapter 3, he focused the plot on cultural tourism. From this point onward, I isolated passages with thematic connections and constructed an interpretive framework to understand how the novel articulated Salahuddeen's daydream for Maldivian society. In the following two subsections in Results and Discussion, I explore passages of the novel in which Salahuddeen advocated for (1) girls' education and (2) cultural tourism.

Results and Discussion

'May God Grant Success to All of Our Maldivian Girls'

In chapter 1, Salahuddeen (1934/2010, p. 21) depicted a scene with Maldivian schoolchildren:

> މިއަދަކީ ބަންދު ދުވަހެއް ކަމުން ވިޔާފާރި ވެރިން ކުޑަ ދޭސީން ބިދޭސީންނާއި އެކުވެރިންގެ رحمةތެރިކަމާއި ބައްދަލުވުން
> ހިނގާފެންނަކާއި، مَدْرسة مَدْرسةގެ ކިޔަވާ ކުދިން ހަހަކުން އަށަކުން ދިހަބަޔަކުން ބާރަބަޔަކުން އުފާވެރިކަމުން ތިމާގެ
> ޓީޗަރުންނާއި مُدَرِّسُ ންގެ ގޭގޭއަށް ޒިޔާރަތަށް ދިއުމުން އުފާވެރިވެ ހިނގާފެންނަކަން މަގުމަތި އެންމެހާ ގަނޑުވެގެންނެވެ
>
> As today is a holiday, the road are bustling with relaxed, strolling figures: local and expatriate businessmen visiting their friends, and schoolchildren in groups of six, eight, ten, or even twelve jovially make their way to pay social visits to relatives and teachers at their homes.

The passage might appear insignificant, but it was part of Salahuddeen's reverie. Salahuddeen portrayed a scene in which two Maldivian men observed children of various schools in Malé walking cheerfully along the road. The significance of this passage becomes evident when compared with a similar passage that Maldivian Deputy Minister of Trade, Mohamed Ismail Didi (Salahuddeen's colleague in exile) wrote in his diary while living in Colombo:

> Our current residence 'Zion House' [where he and Salahuddeen and the other Maldivian ministers were staying] is located on High Street, where I see many students walking to and from school carrying big bundles of books. As I sit on the verandah of the house watching the students, many thoughts

> enter my head. I am especially reminded of my own children at home in Malé. Children of their age in this country [Ceylon] went to school. It was sad that in Malé, children are growing up without going to a school. Even though Ceylon is under foreign rule, they are spending a lot of money and putting up a lot of effort on their children's education. Thousands of children graduate from high school every year. By then, the children are fully prepared for life. Their minds have opened up. They are well-versed in the concepts of freedom and liberty. And they are breathing in a free atmosphere devoid of suppression. (Didi 2021, p. 103, adapted from trans. Farook)

As perceived by Ismail Didi, although Ceylon was under foreign rule, children in Ceylon were fortunate to breath in a 'free atmosphere devoid of suppression'. Such a sight of children carrying bundles of books may have inspired Salahuddeen to write about schoolchildren joyously walking along the road for his Maldivian audience.

Salahuddeen (1934/2010, pp. 21-23) also meticulously described the schoolgirl's tidy uniforms (fig. 1):

> [illegible]
> [illegible]
> [illegible]
> [illegible]
> [illegible]
> [illegible]

> The girls wore beautiful, clean, white garments. The sleeves were wide and pleated at the shoulders, tapering to enclose the upper arm just above the elbow. The dresses fell slightly below the knee. Beneath the hem of the dress, their stockings, matching the tone of their skin, could be seen. They wore impeccably clean black sandals. On each dress a beautiful flower was pinned just above the chest. Their neatness and elegance inspired a feeling of profound delight in anyone who saw them.

Fig. 1. An image from a drawing in the 2010 reprint (Salahuddeen, 1934/2010, p. 22). The caption says, Maryam Manike, anhen kudheen kolhakaai eku hingavailavvaan dhuruvanee (Maryam Manike and a group of girls are going for a walk). The honorific verb hingavailavvaan dhuruvanee implies that the girls were from the noble class.

Salahuddeen was imagining a future Maldives where girls not only could attend school, but also where their schooling experience was intensified with the attire of school uniforms. It is most likely that he saw female students wearing such uniforms in Colombo.

Nu'maan Didi, the progressive nobleman who later saves the life of the heroine Maryam Manike and weds her in the final chapter, notices one girl. Salahuddeen describes her like this:

> މާބޮޑު ހިގުމެއްގައި މުލްކީނާއި އިގިރޭސި ބަހުން ވާހަކަދައްކަމުން މާރީ ގޮތަކަށް
> ހިގަމުން ކޮންމެ ހައްއަކަ ފިޔަވަޅަށްފަހު، ހިގުމުގެ މޫރި އާކުރަމުން އަންނާތީ ފޮނުފޮ
>
> She was strutting around while speaking English to the other girls and renewing the gracefulness of her stride every five or six steps. (Salahuddeen, 1934/2010, p. 22).

Nu'maan Didi then asks his friend:

> نعمان ديدي) موسى ކަލޭގެފާނު. މިދަނީ ދަންނަ ކުއްޖެއްތަ
> موسى ކަލޭގެފާނު) އާދޭ! މިވަނީ ފިރޯޒުގޭ مَرِيَم މަނިކު. މިވަނީ މިހާރު مَدْرسة ކުދީން
> ކުރެން ވަރަށް ކުރިއަށް އަރަމުންދާ ކުއްޖެކޭ. އަޅުގަޑުގެ ބޮޑުކަބަލު ބުނާތީ އަހަން. އަދި މިހާރު
> އެމަނިކުގެ ބައްޕާ ދޮންމަނިކު قَصْدُ ކުރައްވަނީ، އެމަނިކު، އިންޑިޔާގެ އިސްކޫލަކަށް ފޮނުއްވަވަން
> نعمان ديدي) އާން. އާން. ކޮންމެއަކަސް އަންހެން ކުދިންގެ تَعْلِيمُ ކުރިއެރި ވަރަކަށް ނޫނީ ރަށެއް ތަރައްގެއް ނުވާނެ
>
> "Moosakaleygefaanu, do you know who that girl is?" said Nu'maan Didi. "Yes ," Moosakaleygefaanu replied, "That is Firoazugey Maryam Manike. I hear she's progressing quite rapidly among the current students; that's what my eldest daughter tells me. And I hear that her father, Dhonmaniku, intends to send her to a school in India." "Oh, I see," said Nu'maan Didi. "In any case, a country cannot progress without the development of girls' education". (Salahuddeen, 1934/2010, pp. 23-24)

In 1934, the notion that girls' education was a form of progress was a contested idea in the Maldives. The first government-funded girl's school in the Maldives would be established ten years after Salahuddeen wrote *Rivaayathu Nu'maan va Maryam.* The idea that girls should have the opportunity to attend public school was spreading only among certain liberal members at the highest echelon of the government. For example, in 1933, Mohamed Amin Didi (then, Minister of Trade) had published a Dhivehi article in the first Maldivian government-sponsored publication, the journal *al-Iṣlāh* (The Reformation). The article was entitled, *'Rasheh kuri araanee erashehge anhenunge eheeyaai laigenneve,'* which means 'An island's progress is achieved with the support of its women' (Amin Didi, 1933, pp. 48-55).

Additional passages about Salahuddeen's vision of girls' education can be found in the second chapter of the novel, which focuses on Maryam Manike. The reader learns that Manike had studied abroad in India. When she returned to Malé, the girls studying at her school organised a welcoming assembly. That evening, fifteen girls gave speeches in one of three languages: Arabic, English, or Urdu. Then Maryam delivered her speech in English; a Maldivian nobleman charmed the audience with a Dhivehi speech; and a Maldivian woman from Colombo spoke in Sinhala:

> ނޫމަރާ ގެފުޅުގައި އިންނަވާ لطيفة ގޯމާ އެތަނަށް ވަޑައިގެންނެވުމުން އެ جلسة މާތްކުރައްވައި، مريم މަނިކުފާނަށް
> عِزَّةْ ދެއްވިކަމުގެ ސަބަބުންނެވެ. މި جلسةގައި [illegible]
> [illegible]
> [illegible]
> جلسةގެ [illegible] شُكْرِيَّة [illegible] مَريم މަނިކެ އިނގިރޭސިބަހުން [illegible]، [illegible]
> [illegible] މި جلسةގެ އެންމެ ފަހު [illegible]
> [illegible] حوّاء [illegible]. [illegible] ބަހުންނެވެ

> When Lateefa Gomaa of the Noomaraa Palace arrived there, she graced the occasion to bestow honour onto Maryam Manike. Although the princess's speech was slightly shorter than those of the other girls at the assembly, everyone in attendance was astonished and deeply impressed by her melodious voice, graceful composure, and dignified mannerism. She delivered her speech in the Dhivehi language. When Maryam Manike presented the assembly's vote of thanks in English, the eloquence and refinement of her speech surpassed that of most men of the time. The final address was given by Nilandhoo Hawwa, who had recently returned from Colombo, and she spoke in the Sinhala language. (Salahuddeen, 1934/2010, pp. 36-37)

And the assembly concluded with the female chairperson's prayer in Dhivehi for the advancement of Maldivian women: "May God grant success to all of our Maldivian girls to gracefully walk along the path of advancement for the Maldives, for the prosperity of the Maldives and the [Islamic] religion. Amen" (Salahuddeen, 1934/2010, p. 37).

In these passages, we are immersed in Salahuddeen's daydream. As mentioned, the first school for female students would be established in 1944. Also, even the presence of an English speech is a reverie. In 1934, when Salahuddeen wrote the novel, it was not common to hear English speeches in the Maldives. I make this claim because in the 1930s, in the Maldives, there was no established system for English education. In the following decade, Mohamed Amin Didi became the first Maldivian to publish an English primer, *The Orchard Readers Book 1*. Salahuddeen depicted an elite Maldivian woman speaking English better than Maldivian noblemen. Only in the 1940s did English begin to become more widespread with the reforms of Mohamed Amin Didi. However, in Colombo, where Salahuddeen was residing while writing the novel, English was spoken in bureaucratic institutions.

'The Maldivian Handicrafts Exhibition'

If Salahuddeen's vision of girls' education was progressive so too was his portrayal of a tourist event—a handicraft exhibition. He depicted this event at a time when the Maldives was not open for tourism. The title of the third chapter in Rivaayathu Nu'maan va Maryam (Salahuddin, 1934/2010) was: 'The Maldivian Handicrafts Exhibition' *(Dhiveheenge Athumasahkathuge Mau'raz)*. As historian Abdul Hakeem Hussain Manik (Manik, 1997, p. 23) has explained, Mohamed Ameen Didi, de facto ruler of the Maldives between 1943 and 1953, read Salahuddeen's novel, valued this fictional idea almost as a policy recommendation, and organised a real exhibition in 1945:

> Maldives' first handicraft exhibition was also held when Mohamed Ameen was in charge of the government, after the death of [the previous de factor ruler] Hassan Fareed. People brought beautiful items to the exhibition, and it was very successful. The exhibition's name *[ma'uraz]* came from an Arabic term for exhibition, which is mentioned in the book Nu'maan va Maryam by Hussain Salahuddeen. The same name is still used today in Maldives. Hence, the credit for the idea must go to Hussain Salahuddeen, and it was Ameen Didi who made the exhibition a reality on September 9, 1945. (Manik, 1997, p. 23; Manik, 2010, trans. Abdullah & O'Shea)

The chapter commenced with a narrator who explained that the location of the event was announced by the Maldivian Sultan at the previous year's handicraft exhibition:

> ފާއިތު އަހަރުގެ مَعْرَض ހުޅުއްވުމުގެ ދުވަހު، ޢިޒީ މަހާ ހަޟްރަތުން ދެއްވި ޚުޠުބާގައި އަންގަވައިދެއްވައިފައިވާ
> މިއަންނަ އަހަރުގެ مَعْرَض ކޮޅުމަޑުލު ތިލަދުންމަތީ ބޭއްވުމުގެ ވަންދޫގައި ބާއްވަވާ. މިކަމަށްޓަކައި، ވަންދޫގެ އަތިރި
> މަތީގައި ޖަހާފައިވާ ތިރީސް އަށް ވިހި ރިޔަން ބޮޑު ފާރު މިސްކިތުގެ ތިރީގައި ހުރި ހުރިހާ ރަށްރަށުން
> ގެނެސްފައިވާ އެއްޗިއްސަކީ މި مَعْرَضއަށް ހުށަހެޅިފައިވާ ތަކެތި އެވެ. އެހެން ރަށްރަށުން ތަކެތި ބަލައިލެވިފައި

> At the opening ceremony of the previous year's exhibition, the noble and great Sultan announced in his speech that the exhibition should be hosted next year in Vandhoo, Kolhumadulu. Accordingly, the thirty-by-twenty riyan marquee that we see set up on the beach of Vandhoo is displaying exhibits brought from various islands across the Maldives. (Salahuddeen, 1934/2010, p. 60)

Note how it is the Sultan who supports the handicrafts exhibition. In this chapter, Salahuddeen portrayed the Maldivian monarch in a positive light despite the fact that Shamsuddeen III plotted to banish Salahuddeen for curtailing the monarch's powers in the first constitution. Salahuddeen was envisioning an ideal ruler of the future. For example, in the passage below, Salahuddeen depicted the Sultan reciting the Qur'an at the Vandhoo mosque on the first day of the exhibition. His voice was so powerful that worshippers were shedding tears:

> ރަސްގެފާނާއި ދޮށިބޭފުޅާ މިސްކިތަށް ވަޑައިގެންނެވުމުން މާ މުދިމު عبدالقادرِ إِقَامَة ދެއްވިއެވެ. امامُ ވެ
> ވަޑައިގެން ހުރެއްވީ ރަސްގެފާނެވެ. ފުރަތަމަ رَكْعَةُ ގެ قِيامُ ގައި ކިޔަވައިދެއްވީ وَالْفَجْرِ
> سورة އެވެ. ދެވަނަ رَكْعَة ގައި لاَأُقْسِمُ بِهَذَا الْبَلَدِ سورة އެވެ. ކިޔަވައިދެއްވުމުގައި މަޑުމަޑުކޮށް
> އަޑުފުޅުގެ ރިވެތިކަމާއި ނިކަމެތިކަމުން ގިނަ ބޭފުޅުން ހިތި ކަރުނަ ރޮއި ރޮއި އައި އެވެ

> When the Sultan and the prince arrived at the mosque, the chief muezzin, Abdul Qadir, gave the second call to prayer [signaling the formation of lines and the start of the prayer]. The Sultan who led the congregation as imam. In the standing position of the first unit of prayer, he recited Surah al-Fajr, and in the second unit, Surah al-Balad. And for the second set of supplications, the Surah al-Balad. Many of the worshippers were moved to tears, perhaps by the serenity and humility of his recitation, as well as the beauty of his voice. (Salahuddeen, 1934/2010, p. 71).

One can also interpret the passage as Salahuddeen's recommendation that tourism coexist in harmony with the country's religion, Islam.

Salahuddeen sought to portray the vividness of the exhibition through three narrative approaches. First, he catalogued the cultural items on display, including a variety of birds (see Appendix). Salahuddeen's inventory suggests that he valued locally handmade items such as Maldivian textiles, lacemaking and sewing implements, lacquered objects, kitchenware, natural objects from the lagoon, and coconut products. For instance, he expressed pride in the skills of the carpenters from Kandoodhoo, Kolhumadulu:

> މި معرضއަށް [illegible] ކަނޑޫދޫގެ ކުޅަދާނަ ވަޑީން ވައްތަރު ވައްތަރުގެ [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]
> [illegible] ކުދިބޮޑު [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]
> [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]
>
> The artistry is boundless, evident in both large and small wooden items such as almirahs, chests, and specially crafted wooden boxes created by the skilled craftsmen of Kandoodhoo for the exhibition. The finesse of their carpentry, the smoothness of the finish, and the beauty and vividness of the artwork are all worthy of praise. (Salahuddeen, 1934/2010, pp. 62-63).

In addition to cataloguing the items at the exhibition, Salahuddeen described a future Maldives as a country in which tourists could freely travel. Consider his account of the opening day:

> ذوالقعدة މަހުގެ [illegible] ދުވަހުގެ އިރު އުފާވެރިކަމުގެ [illegible] ކޮޅުމަޑުލު ވަންދޫގެ [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]
> [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]
> [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] مَعْرَض [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]
> [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]
>
> On the thirteenth day of Dhul-Qa'dah, as the sun gently rose joyfully over Vandhoo in Kolhumadulu atoll, its deep lagoon was alive with sailing crafts, small-sized boats, and sailing vessels. The sense of happiness on the island was truly indescribable. Everyone's smiling faces were bright with joy. The area buzzed and teemed with the chatter and commotion of people visiting the exhibition, browsing and buying items, and traders who had arrived from across the Maldives with their merchandise. (Salahuddeen, 1934/2010, pp. 66-67)

He also described musical events in the evening. Notice in the description below the presence of cosmopolitan instruments and musical technologies like violin, harmonium, and gramophone. In 1934, the violin, harmonium, and gramophone were rarely seen outside of elite establishments in Malé. Further, Salahuddeen mentions the name of Sinhalese girl, Somavathi, who is generously awarded by the Maldivian Sultan for her piano skills. This reference was likely also influenced from Salahuddeen's stay in Ceylon.

> [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] ސަރިންދާ [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]
> [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]
> [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]... [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]
> [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]

> ޕިޔާނާ ޖައްސަވައިފައި އިނާމަކަށް ތިންސަތޭކަ ރުފިޔާގެ އަނގޮޓިއެއް ދެއްވާ ރިވާޔަތްވެސް އިވުނެވެ

> In many households, the sounds of piano, harmonium, violin *(beylaa)*, and *sarindhaa* performances filled the air with liveliness. Furthermore, around the harbour, firecrackers crackled, coloured flares blazed, hand-held fireworks and spinning sparklers lit the air, fountains of light bloomed, and the sound of gramophones was abuzz. It was said that when the Sultan learned that Somawathi, one of the visiting girls from Ceylon, was famed as an excellent pianist, he invited her to his royal guesthouse, asked her to play for him, and presented her with a ring worth three hundred *rufiyaa.* (Salahuddeen, 1934/2010, pp. 70-71)

There are two possible meanings of *sarindhaa.* In modern Dhivehi, *sarindhaa* means bamboo flute. That said, Salahuddeen seems to have been using the term in 1934 to refer to the instrument sarinda or a similar bowed instrument for two reasons. First, in the description Salahuddeen paired the instrument with the violin—which implies it was also bowed. Second, the Dhivehi verb that Salahuddeen used for 'playing' these instruments is *jehun*. *Jehun* means 'playing' for a string instrument. If Salahuddeen was referring to the bamboo flute he would have used the term *fumun* (to blow). (A. Omar, personal communication, September 28, 2021).

At the same time, Salahuddeen portrayed traditional Maldivian ceremonial practices. The Maldivian double-headed drum, the *beru*, marked the end of the day, and the *thaalhafili* (Maldivian bugle) announced the start of the day at dawn (Salahuddeen, 1934/2010, p. 71). And when the Vandhoo handicraft exhibition ended, Salahuddeen mentioned the now-obsolete forms of Maldivian court music *(harubee)* that were performed to mark the Sultan's departure. He also quoted an Arabic *hadith* (records of the sayings and actions of the Prophet Muhammad) that emphasised the importance of a just government. This quotation, in my understanding, should be read in view of the fact that he wrote the novel after being banished by the Sultan for co-authoring the first constitution:

> [illegible]
> [illegible]
> [illegible] دُعَا
> [illegible] حِضرةގައި قبول ކުރެއްވިގެންނެވެ. މިހެންވީމާ عَدْلُ سَاعَةٍ في حُكومَةٍ خَير مِن عِبادَة
> سبعين سَنَةٍ މިފަދައިން حَديثُ ކުރެއްވި.

> At half-past six, the ceremonial cannon fire and the beating of drums announced the moment for the Sultan, the prince, and the princess to set out on their journey. Everyone paused and turned toward the Sultan's fleet of boats, their eyes brimming with affection and tears, moved by both farewell and the joy of the past days. The heartfelt blessings and prayers offered for his wellbeing were surely accepted in the sacred presence of Allah. As a saying of the Prophet ﷺ reminds us, 'An hour of justice in governance is better than seventy years of worship'. (Salahuddeen, 1934/2010, pp. 66-67)

After describing the court music that accompanied the Sultan's departure Salahuddeen concluded by personifying the sailboats like this:

> ވައިރޯޅި [illegible] ވަންދޫ ކައިރީގައި [illegible]
> حال[illegible] މިއޮތީ މެޝިނާއި، އިންޖީނުގެ ޒަމާނު [illegible].
>
> Since the winds were still, the sailboats swayed gently from side to side near Vandhoo Island. It was as though they were whispering their inner suffering, "Can't you see? The old ways will no longer do. The age of machines and engines has arrived". (Salahuddeen, 1934/2010, p. 78).

Here, Salahuddeen seems to be announcing the onset of a new era. I am led to believe that he was implicitly saying that the past political ways of the monarchy needed an update in the new era of machines and engines.

Conclusion

To conclude, from the perspective of Salahuddeen, Ceylon was a place of liberty to dream of a new Maldives. In Colombo, after Salahuddeen noted how girls were expected to attend publicly funded educational institutions he fashioned the character of Maryam Manike, who symbolised an educated Maldivian upper-class woman of the future. Salahuddeen also combatted the country's insularity in relation to cosmopolitan Colombo through his depiction of a handicraft exhibition, which sought to promote the development of cultural tourism in the Maldives. But unlike authors of early Bengali, Malayalam, Tamil, and Urdu social reform novels, Salahuddeen was not responding to a colonial critique of the Maldives. According to my knowledge, the British never disseminated colonial critiques of Maldivian society within the Maldives.

This may be the first time *Rivaayathu Nu'maan va Maryam* is being discussed in an English-language peer-reviewed journal. One could argue that this is related to the lack of a British presence in the Maldives. Early novelists like Vedanayakam Pillai and Nazir Ahmad wrote in their mother tongues but had acquired fluency in English in the British colony. When Vedanayakam Pillai published the first Tamil novel he gave it an additional English title of, 'The Life and Adventures in Tamil of Pradapa Mudalliar' (Ebeling, 2010, p. 207). In contrast, Salahuddeen cultivated foreign language fluency not in English but Arabic and Urdu. In the original edition of *Rivaayathu Nu'maan wa Maryam,* Salahuddeen titled the novel and wrote the cover page in Arabic. This act not only is a reminder that Arabic was the prestige language of letters in the Maldives. It also suggests that Salahuddeen was not attempting to share his novel with an English-speaking audience. Rather, he was interested in catching the attention of Arabic writers in the Islamic world.

Scholars have recently started to investigate of the limits of colonialism's reach on literary and musical forms created in the nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries. In so doing, they challenge the narrative of a rupture between the precolonial and colonial eras. For example, Farina Mir (2010, p. 4) argues that Punjabi literary culture was relatively independent of the colonial state, and this independence enabled writers of a Punjabi-language poetic genre called the qissa to freely engage in precolonial practices. Richard David Williams (2023, p. 3) explores Hindustani music through the lens of understudied Bengali, Persian, and Urdu sources, and he reveals how precolonial forms of patronage and creativity persisted during the colonial period.

Such studies are important because they reveal that literary and musical forms created in the colonial period were heterogenous and not dominated by a single faction like colonialism. However, a gap still exists in our knowledge about literary culture created in the countries of South Asia that were never colonised by the British, like the Maldives, Bhutan, and Nepal. The thrust of Mir and Williams's argument is that during the *colonial period* Punjabi poets and individuals like the exiled Mughal emperor Wajid Ali Shah engaged in *precolonial* practices.

Yet in the Maldives, there was no precolonial period and no transition from precolonial to colonial. This article has sought to shift the focus onto an overlooked social reform novel written in the Dhivehi-language. Future analyses of early Dhivehi literary culture will need to proceed with care to point out ways that Dhivehi literary production was similar but different from literature penned in South Asian languages in colonial India. It might be discovered that common historical frameworks used to study literary cultures in South Asia—precolonial, colonial, postcolonial—and associated theoretical frameworks like postcolonial theory do not apply, or apply differently, to the Dhivehi literary culture of the Maldives.

Appendix

Below is Salahuddeen's fictional inventory of items that were exhibited at the handicraft exhibition.

> **[textiles]** Cloth *(feyraan)* that can currently be woven in the Maldives; cloth of the past; the older style of libaas—the traditional Maldivian women's dress—with embroidered necklines *(boavalhu)*; the current style of libaas; clothes woven today like white undershirts *(ganjufaraas)* and stockings; and cotton gin (kafa fin'dhaa saraka); spinning wheel that cuts cotton *(kafa koshaa saraka)*
>
> **[sewing]** Instruments for making lace *(gathaafai)*; bobbins *(foali)*; spools for winding thread *(firoashi)*; crosses for wrapping yarn *(kaali)*; tools used in net-making *(thaka)*; wide and narrow silver or gold thread to embellish the libaas at the hem or neckline (gethi kasabu baadhalaa); decorative ribbons fitted on cuffs of libaas *(kinaaree)*; a special tablecloth *(satharanjee)* used for the recitation of mauloodh, songs performed on the birthday of the Prophet Muhammad; and a cross-shaped rack for winding thread *(ui vashaa kaali)*.
>
> **[lacquered objects]** Engraved items with two coats of lacquer *(dhe fah laajehi thakethi)* such as bowls with lids *(kuran'di)*; boxes for food *(malaafaiy)*; round boxes *(dalhu)*; dough rolling boards *(kibaavaru)*; lacquered arecanut *(laajehifoah)*; large containers to keep male headcloths *(fagudi laa bodathi dalhu)*; engraved coconut-shells and canes; lacquered Alexandrian laurel wood *(laafen kulha funa)*; lacquered Lantern tree seeds *(kan'dhu oh)*; lacquered chicken eggs *(kukulhu bihuge thoshi)*; and types of fruit made out of different types of lacquered wood.
>
> **[kitchen items]** Flat stirrers used to cook rice *(dheyfaiy)*; long wooden spoons *(un'dhulhi)*; long stirrers *(dhabu)*; large spatulas for straining off

> cookingwater *(masdhan'di)*; coconut scrapers *(huni gon'di)*; oblong wooden bowls *(thagari)*; Conical containers or baskets that cover food *(goshi)*; wicker basekts *(vashi)*; sieves *(halani)*; baskets for sifting rice *(baiyfolhi)*; brass pots *(loa kadaa)*; copper [pots] *(loa)*; zinc tins *(jasthu)*; deep sea shellfish used for spoons *(naiboli)*; coconut husk *(naashi)*; spoons *(samusaa)*; coconut timber box *(nirolhuge foshi)*
>
> **[house items]** Tables *(meyzu)*; almirah; cadjan for walls *(biyfan)*; cadjan thatch *(thoshali)*; Mats *(kunau)*; mats woven from screwpine leaves; coir rope of various sizes *(varuvaruge roanu)*; the fine coir from the shell of the undried arecanut *(fenfuvaku thosheege himaroanu)*, ornately designed coconut shells opened at the top *(un'bu)*; well-scoop for bathing (dhaani); duster *(thanfihi)*; rake *(mashandhathi)*; various traps for catching rats *(meedhau hifaa vahtharu dhathi)*;
>
> **[boats and carpenter tools]** Small-sized types of boats *(dhoani)*; sailing vessels *(bahtheli)*; sailing crafts *(odi)*; and forms of carpenter tools.
>
> **[traditional medicine]** A variety of items prepared in the Maldives like pills (gulhika); medicine *(beys)*; medicinal syrup *(sarubathu)*; and medicinal oil *(beys theyo)*.
>
> **[fishing gear]** Various types of hooks *(bulhi)*; small and large harpoons *(mada)*; scissors *(kathuru)*; strong fishing rope *(hethuru)*; detachable handle for a harpoon *(dhohdhadi)*; wooden post on boats *(kan'dhugan'du)* that skim the water, stun fish when caught, and have the appearance of various types of fish like wahoo and dogtooth tuna *(heimas)*; bait pulling net *(en dhamaa dhau)*; seine fishing net *(laan' dhau)*; long fishing net *(dhigu dhau)*; box for storing baitfish *(fes)*; wooden chest for small bait fish *(medhuri)*.
> **[crafts]** jewelry *(thileyru kuraa saamaanu)*; smithery *(kaburugey saamaanu)*; woven goods *(feyraan kuraa saamaanu)*.
>
> **[nature objects from the lagoon]** Various types of coral *(gau)*, coral ferns *(muraka)*, dead sea sponges *(huhivah)*; black coral *(endheri)*, various shells of animals living in the lagoon *(moodhugai ulhey zaaiyzaathuge thaketheege haruthoshi)*, kinds of drifting coral like raalhubis and maakanaafoshi; spirula shells *(thalhudhan'di)*; coral encrustations *(kan'duholhi)*; coral pearls *(gaumuiy)*; and golden pearls *(raiygau)*.
>
> **[coconut products]** Fibers from the coconut husk *(bon'bi naru)*; ground up coconut husk *(bon'bi kun'di)*; and spathe for pressing out coconut milk *(kirufelaa ilaa)* (Salahuddeen, 1934/2010, pp. 60-62)

Salahuddeen also presented a list of thirty-three Maldivian birds that would be showcased:

> [The Ministry of Education has] announced that various types of birds will be showcased this year, unlike other years. The following The following types of birds have been gathered there in no small quantity: Tuneful sea bird (valla); seagull (gaadhooni); white seabird (kirudhooni); white tern (kadhuvalu dhooni); brindled tern (vaali); brown noddy (maaran'ga); lesser

> noddy (kuran'gi); Greater Frigate bird (hoara); ostrich (maa dhooni); White-tailed tropicbird (dhan'difulhu dhooni); Common Greenshank (ilolhi); Lesser Golden plover (dhushin); dipper (fin'dhan); turnstone (rathafai); Greater Sand plover (bon'dan); curlew (bulhithun'bi); crab plover (theyravaa); heron (maakanaa); Maldivian pond heron (raabon'dhi); yellow wagtail (fenfoah dhooni); small duck (reyru)l; hen (kukulhu); and goose (as dhooni). As well as birds like the following: Pigeon (kotharu); small pigeon (valukotharu); crow (kaalhu); cuckoo (koveli); shearwater (hoagulhaa); Black-headed gull (boakalhu dhooni); Wilson's storm petrel (fakulakoshi), white-breasted waterhen (kan'bili), cattle egret (iruvaihudhu), and great egret (laganaa). (Salahuddeen, 1934/2010, p. 62)

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