CHAPTER IV

THE LITERARY WORKS ON THE CULTURAL HARMONY OF KERALA IN THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY

This chapter introduces five works written in sixteenth century, in Kerala in Arabic Language. These works gave great inspiration to the inhabitants of Kerala. The authors of these books are Keralite Muslim scholars. It was the period of Portuguese invasion on the Malabar Coast for their trade and business.

Among these five texts the first one induces the common people to fight against the invasion of the Portuguese. The second work is in the form of a gift to the soldiers. It induces them to fight hard against Portuguese and advocates for social awareness. The third one is a sermon to the believers, inducing them for a war against the Portuguese. The fourth one is an advice to the soldiers who fought against the enemies, to keep their own character. The last work is a declaration of victory on the Portuguese power through the capturing of the fort of the Portuguese at Cāliyam, near Kozhikkode.
These texts promote the social harmony among the people of Zamorin and his Muslim subjects. The works are Tahrīlu Ahlīlīmān alā Jihādi ābadathī Swulbān, Tuḥfatul Muḥāhidīn fī BaʿlīAkhbāril Burtuqāliyyīn, Al Khutubatul Jihādiyyah, Al-Qasīdatul Jihādiyyah, and Fatḥul Muḥīn li Sāmīrialadhī Yuhībbul Muslimīn.

**Tahrīlu Ahlīlīmān alā Jihādi Ābadati Swulbān**

Abu yahya Zainuddīn Makhduum (Zainuddīn MakhduumI ) is the author of this text, Tahrīlu Ahlīlīman Alā Jihadi Ābadati Swulbān means ‘An encouragement to the believers to fight against the worshippers of cross’. It is a poem inducing the believers to fight against the Portuguese power. According to the poet the struggle is a religious duty for all Muslims, during the period of invasion. It is translated to English by Dr. K.M. Muhammad and published from the other books, Calicut in 2012.

This poem starts in the name of God and prayers to God for peace and protection of Prophet Muhammad, and prayers for help to tolerate all the difficulties and sufferings.

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1 ZainuddīnMakhdoom I, Tahīd Ahlīlīmanala Jihādi Ābadati Sulban(Tr.), p.61
2 *idem.*
“Praise be to you, O God, in all situations
You know better our plight and needs.”

Through this poem, the poet prays to the Lord to help the people who fight for the protection of the society from insults and disbelief. The poet defines the enemy, like this, in the seventh verse, ‘we feel aggrieved by the hardships meted out by the Portuguese, who worship the Cross and images’. Images were worshipped by the Latin Christians who came from the Portuguese. Those who were already here before their coming, worshipped Cross only, not images.

**The Activities of the Enemies**

The Portuguese destroyed all which were considered as holy. They did cruelty to the children and women. The poet says in, eleven and twelve verses,

“By burning possessions, asphyxiating Muslims
Paralyzing life and blocking travellers
By devastating cities, enslaving the believers
And dolling up (their) ladies to seduce (our) women”

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3. *idem.*
4. *idem.*
5. *ibid, p.62*
The main cruelty of the Portuguese was the blocking of the travellers, especially the travellers who were on the pilgrim of Hajj. They blocked them and burned them along with their ships. This cruelty was done near the place of Māṭāyi in Kaṅṇūr. This incident is described by the author through the fifteenth and sixteenth verses as follows.

“By blocking pilgrims for the Holy Hajj

Impeding their journeys to the best of the countries.

By killing pilgrims and other believers

Persecuting and mutilating them in numerous ways”\(^6\).

They increased the price of goods and they destroyed the grace of the market. They were forced to worship the Cross. They were induced to do such work which will excommunicate them from their religion. Poet describes this in the verse twenty three:

“By inducing them to worship the Cross

And intimidating them into becoming apostates”\(^7\).

\(^6\) *idem*

\(^7\) *ibid, p.63*
**Duty of Believers**

To fight against these Portuguese is a religious duty to all believers with their wealth and body. They can come to the battle field without any permission, from master to the slave, from father to the son, from wife to the husband and vice versa. They can come to the battle field even from the place of prayer also. There is no excuse even if there is no earning. They shall fight them at every time if they have no weapon. The poem says thus in 35-36verse

“The Lord has induced us to fight against the enemy

Especially to fight for disposing of our sufferings

We are the oppressed therefore we beseech you

O God, to shower on us your kindness”

**Importance of Struggle**

Those who fight in the way of God in the battle will have to suffer a lot of difficulty. But he will get reward from the God. One who was injured in the name

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8 ibid, p.64
of God, will be brought in the day of judgement with a fragrance of musk with the
colour of blood.

A dead person does not want to return to the earth normally, except the
martyr. He wants to come from heaven to the earth and to become a martyr for
several times.

Poets says, thus in 59 and 60 verses

“The soul of martyrs will become

Flocks of green birds in the paradise.

Drinking water from the rivers there

And eating its delicious fruits”⁹.

The martyr will wear a crown of majesty in paradise. He will be removed
from the difficulties of last day, the day of judgement. He will be blessed by the
Apsaras, the heavenly girls. God says, about the misery in the battle field: “Do
not put your hands into the destruction”¹⁰ (meant the wealth is aimed for others
prosperity).

⁹ibid, p.66
¹⁰Qurān, 2:195
“Oh! God! save me from the heat of your hell fire
And from the evils of time’s destructive waves.”

Nobody can escape from the death to another land. The running away from the death does not help to escape one from it. So you, the people of the struggle, stay constantly against the Portuguese. The Lord offers help to all till they have patience and utmost care.

Thus the people are exhorted to get ready for that day, where there is no use of wealth, sons, family status and anything. Through this way of God, earn the paradise, the heavenly gifts, the kingdom, and the eternity or the wealth of battle.

Heaven is the place, where there is no disappointment and grief. It is the place of cups of Gold and silver. Earn the heaven in which one can see and enjoy the river of honey, the river of wine, the river of milk and the river of pure water.

**Social Harmony Reflected in the Poem**

The relevance of this text is revealed through the comments of Mahmood Kooria, (Institute of History, Leiden University, The Netherlands) :“the relevance 

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of Tahrîd lies in its earliness, as it provides historical back grounds and social conditions of the time at different levels.

1. It provides the accounts of the Portuguese expansion in the early stages as well as account of the protest against them in several regions.

2. It also provides the earliest accounts on the regional histories of Malabar in particular and the whole south India or western Indian ocean in general”¹².

Tahrîd provides a history of cultural symbiosis through the descriptions of the cruelty of the Portuguese. The work was in Arabic language, because its impacts were not limited in South India alone, but it had its influence in the whole Arabic and Islamic world also.

The help of the Muslim rulers against the Portuguese was an inevitable need of the Zamorin. The Muslim scholars like Zainuddîn Makhdîm I and II tried their level best to bring the Muslim rulers to their axis or a body of allies. They the poem like Tahrîdu Ahlidîmân alâ Jihâdi Abadati Swulbân, brought a

¹²ibid, p.35
wider perspective to the fight of Zamorin and his soldiers. The poet begs the help of Muslim chieftans for Zamorin, and his soldiers:

“Masters, in you we put our trust
With the grace of the Lord of the throne in all hardships”\(^{13}\)

*Tuḥfatul Muḥādīn*

*Tuḥfatul Muḥādīn* is a historical text written by a Keralite scholar, Šaikh Zainuddīn Makhdūm II at sixteenth century A.D. The full name of the text is *Tuḥfatul Muḥādīn fi baʿlākhbarīlburṭugaliyyīn* meaning ‘A gift to the soldiers (in the form of writing) with the information regarding Portuguese’.

Šaikh Zainuddīn Makhdūm II recorded the history of Kerala, in the Portuguese period, from 1498 to 1583 in this text. He completed the composition of *Tuḥfatul Muḥādīn* in year 1583 and died in the same year. Eighty five years of invasion of Portuguese is clearly recorded in this text.

Zainuddīn Makhdūm II describes in *Tuḥfatul Muḥādīn*, the advent of Islam to Kerala in the second part. Third part of this text describes about the rare customs among the Hindus. Šaikh Zainuddīn Makhdūm II was a scholar who

\(^{13}\)ibid, p.63
studied in Mecca for ten years and he was known as a Muhaddith. Muhaddith is a scholar, in the practice and actions of Prophet Muhammad, who can report the sayings of Prophet from one to another as an authority. Such a scholar studied the customs of Hindu brothers and wrote it in his text with all respect. It is the reflection of the social harmony found in the sixteenth century in Kerala.

_Tuhfatul Mujāhidīn_ is a treasure of knowledge about the Portuguese period, at same time it describes the customs of Nair soldiers who fought along with the Muslim soldiers against the Portuguese power. The religious customs of Hindus were recorded in the text with a view that the Muslim soldiers should not feel unfamiliarity with them without knowing their religious customs. The part III described the, amazing customs of Hindus of Malabār, in _Tuhfatul Mujāhidīn_14.

_Tuhfatul Mujāhidīn_ has a record of deep cultural symbiosis and a call for the struggle to the Muslims and Hindus together against the Portuguese enemy through letters and by the swords.

_Tuhfatul Mujāhidīn_ have four parts and the forth one is divided into fourteen chapters. Inducing the soldiers for fight, the history of Islam in Malabār,

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customs of Hindus in Malabār and invasion of the Portuguese of Malabār are the main subject matters in the four sections.

**Customs of Hindus in Sixteenth Century**

Zainudhīn Makhdūm II describes the culture and customs of Hindu religion in sixteenth century of Kerala. It is amazing fact that an eminent Muslim scholar who studied the fundamental teachings of Islam also studied the beliefs and customs of Hindus during at the era of sixteenth century.

Hetalks about the ‘Cāver (suicidal soldiers) system’ of Malabār. If a leader is killed in the battle, the whole members of the troop try their level best to defeat the enemy. They didn’t care about their death resulting in the war. ‘Do or Die’ is their policy. Thus, he overviews that “Therefore both side thought the idea of killing the leader of the forces of the other side. This has been one of their ancient customs, although not so much in vogue in these (the present) days”\(^{15}\).

Secondly he mentions about the honesty of the people of Malabār. They hate treachery in the battle field. “When war was found unavoidable they fixed a date for it in advance. Nobody acts against the terms of this mutual agreement”\(^{16}\).

\(^{15}\)Saikh Zainuddīn Makhdūm II, Muhammed Husain Nainar(Tr.)*Tuhfātul Mujāhidīn*, p.39

\(^{16}\)Idem
He describes that the Brāhmmins and carpenters followed the patriarchal system, and the Nairs and others followed the matriarchal system. When describing the yearlong abstinence of these societies, he records that “During the period of abstinence, it is taboo for them to trim their hair on nails, eat fish or meat, chew betal leaves or have intercourse with women”\(^\text{17}\).

Zainuddīn Makhdūm II pictures the caste system and its hierarchy in the 16\(^\text{th}\) century in Kerala. He describes in detail the marriage system of each caste in the caste division.

Zainuddīn Makhdūm II describes clearly the cultural diversity among the Muslims of Kaḷṇūr, especially in the laws of inheritance. The Muslim people in Kaḷṇūr, follow the matriarchy in their customs of inheritance, since, they read the Qurān, and they learn it by heart and follow its religious teaching. The author is amazed by these customs of the Muslims of Kaḷṇūr, because the Islamic law permits only the patriarchal inheritance system\(^\text{18}\). The system, as native one was permitted in a special latter by the kaliph by 1770’s\(^\text{19}\).

\(^{17}\text{ibid, p.40}\)
\(^{18}\text{ibid, p.39}\)
\(^{19}\text{See the Ali Rajas of Cannanore, by K.K.N.Kurup}\)
Dress code

_Tuhfatul Mujāhidīn_ pictures out the dress code of Malabar people of that time in detail. The simplicity of dress is the symbol of the dress code of Keralites in the sixteenth century. The Hindus of Malabar exposed the upper part of their bodies and wore a small piece of cloth from their waist to the knees. All people are almost same in their dress code. “Men and women, elders and youngsters, the rich and poor, the kings and the subjects, all alike! However the Brahmin women as a rule remain in indoors”\(^{20}\).

Adoption

_Tuhfatul Mujāhidīn_ gives a description of the adoption system of Hindus of Malabār. These information are based on the Smṛtis or the laws of Hindu Dharmaśāstra. Adoption is not limited to children. The adult person is also adopted as a son sometimes. He will be treated as a real son. “This custom of adoption is prevalent among all people, the high and the law. Thus through this custom, the line of succession is never broken”\(^{21}\).

\(^{20}\)SaikhZainuddīnMakhdūm II, op.cit,p.41
\(^{21}\)ibid, p.42
Social and Cultural Harmony

Zamorin, the ruler of Calicut, gave the daily requirement for the Masjid of Muccundi at Calicut. The epigraph of the Masjid Muccundi is a part of the study of the present thesis. In this text, *Tuḥfatul Mujāḥidīn*, Sheikh Zainudīn Makhūm states, “The remuneration for the Mu’adhdhins (these who are appointed for call to prayer) and the Qalwīes (religious judges) are paid by the government. The government makes special arrangements for implementing among the Muslims their own religious rules and regulations”²².

Zamorin gave punishment to the Muslims who neglected the Friday prayer, like an Islamic ruler did. Zamorin gave all facilities to improve the trade and business of Muslims. For instance, as per practice in all harbour was the ownership of wrecked vessels to the native ruler. Zamorin changed the rule and the owner of the vessel was restored with such fight. This made his port a prosperous one. The native Hindu people strictly followed the ancestral customs, and they treated the Muslim traders like their friends and family.

²²ibid, p.46
Tuhfatul Mujahidin explicitly states that the leaders of the Muslims are Hindu rulers. The Muslims obeyed the rules and regulations of these rulers.

“Muslims throughout the Malabar have no leaders of power to rule over them. But their rulers are Hindus, who exercised judicial authority and organized their affairs by enforcing payment of debt or fine, if anyone is subjected to such payment.”23. They remained as their Amir.

3. Alkhutbatul Jihadiyyah

Al Khutubattul Jihadiyya is a speech written by Allama Qalwi Muhammed to deliver the soldiers to the battle of Caliyam. The title means ‘speech of war’. Caliyam is a place near Calicut. There the Portuguese built the fort for trade with the help of the king of Vetattnat (in the Malappuram district) in 1531.24 It was a threat to the Zamorin. After the struggle of forty years, the soldiers of Zamorin conquered the fort in 1571. Nair soldiers and the soldiers of Kunali Marakkar jointly attacked the fort of Portuguese and demolished it.

23 Ibid, p.45
24 Kenneth MC pherson, From Biography to History: Essays in the History of Portuguese Asia 1500-1800, pp.163,164.
The author praises the God almighty with beautiful and relevant words. “Praise be to the God, who crushes the oppressors and whose authority spares none. He is the dictator of the universe. So nothing on the earth or in the heaven gets away from the ambit of his knowledge”\(^{25}\).

After praising of the God, he witnesses that he is a slave of the God and Muhammed is the Prophet of God. He makes a prayer to the God almighty for the goodness of the prophet and his families. These formalities are done for a religious speech on Friday. So, it was a Friday speech.

**The Topic of Speech**

Qalwi Muhammed describes in his speech the cruel actions of the Portuguese done to the Keralites. How many vessels they set on fire! How many ships in the sea were drowned by them? How many Muslims were converted by force? They blocked routes of Muslims off shore and on shore, burnt Qurān and Mosques, substituted them with churches and houses of Christian worship, exhumed graves and built castles with their stones, abused women in the presence

\(^{25}\)K.K.N.Kurup (ed.), *Ideology and Struggle*, p. 32
of Kith and Kin, tormented Muslims like people of Hell and reduced Muslims to victims and their wealth to booties”\textsuperscript{26}.

These were some of the deeds were done here by the Portuguese. Qalwi Muhammad calls for a struggle against this injustice. The battle was done under the leadership of Zamorin. Zamorin and his ministers and the famous Kuññāli Marakkār and the mother of Zamorin and the scholars and the leaders of Muslims planned the battle of Cāliyam, in the Miśkal masjid, Kuṭṭiccira, near Calicut.

**Summons**

Qalwi Muhammed summons the believers, “Servants of Allāh, you are asleep or awake? Or are you distracted away from these words? Don’t you see the ages getting elapsed year by the year? There are no but a few days between you and your death”\textsuperscript{27}.

He explains that, the struggle in the battle field never brings one to the grave before the time, staying in the land with family does not save one from

\textsuperscript{26}ibid, p.35
\textsuperscript{27}idem
death. Thus, one should fight against the Portuguese power with your health, wealth and power.

If one succeeds in this battle one will get booties. If you are killed in it, one will reach at the paradise of martyrs.

“Swear by God, the death of one among you is not expedited due to his boldness, nor his life span will be increased by running away or retreat. It is indeed predestined, and even your breaths are already limited in number”\textsuperscript{28}.

\textbf{Prayer for Martyrdom}

The ultimate goal for the battle is the thrust for the martyrdom. Qalwi Muhammad induces the audience to become to the status of the martyr. K.K.N.Kurup states in the foreword of the Malayalam translation of this text, “the relevant idea of this text is that the Māppilas of Malabār will be the martyrs for the Zamorin in the battle”\textsuperscript{29}.

The martyrdom is the supreme goal of a soldier. Qalwi Muhammad promoted the will for martyrdom through his Friday speech. “Pray God the

\begin{footnotesize}
\textsuperscript{28}ibid, PP.36,37
\textsuperscript{29}E M Sakkeer Hussain(tr.), \textit{Samutirikku Vendioru Samarahwanam}, p.18
\end{footnotesize}
exalted, with true intention for favour of martyrdom as whoever asks for favor of martyrdom, he will definitely elevate to the ranks of martyrs, although he dies on his bed, with a disease, even conjunctivitis”30.

The Martyr wants to come to the earth, and to become a martyr at ten times. “None after entering the paradise wishes to come back except for martyrs. He would indeed wish to be killed ten times because of the esteem and excessive grace he finds there”31.

Qalwi Muhammed indicates the great reward if one becomes a martyr in the sea. It is a better status than other form of death, to a believer. It is something to the states of fighting by the side of the prophet.

**War Speech**

Al Khutubatul Jihādiyya is a text with the theme of anti-colonial sentiments. This was sent to the Cāliyam fortress with a view to motive and inspire the soldiers. When the war began, the soldiers of the Zamorin had to face failures. One day Zamorin proclaimed that he would observe fast till the fortress was captured. Hearing this Muslims proclaimed a Jihad against the Portuguese.

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31ibid, p.38
They surrendered their life to help the zamorin to capture the fortress of Cāliyam. The words of the Zamorin about starvation or fasting had hurt them and that would make them strive hard to capture the fort.

The Jihād declared here was to help the soldiers capture the fort for the Zamorin. The evidence is the solidarity of the Nairs and Mappilas. The Nairs and Mappila should abreast to fight and defeat the Portuguese. The war speech or Al Khutubatul Jihādiyya was highly inspirational and motivational. The text contains Quranic verses and the Prophets sayings to lead the faithful to fight the strenuous battle with the Portuguese. This speech filled the warriors with a new energy and vigour to fight.

A paragraph has been dedicated to the rewards which are assured to the soldiers who fought this great battle. The martyrdom of the soldiers would make them the wealthiest person on the earth. If the soldiers died in the maritime warfare then he will be given the supreme most seats in the Heaven. It is stated that those who die in the sea, his debts and sins will be forgiven and he will never undergo any pain or troubles as he will be fed with chilled honey.
As an ideological mystic, Qalwi Muhammed bin Abdul Aziz, wrote this to enable to rouse the valour of the soldiers to capture the Cāliyam fort. The proclamation of Jihād was not with an intention to force the Muslim supremacy, but to help the ruler to win the battle and strengthen his power on shore and in the area of sea fare too.

4. **Al-Qasīdattul Jihādiyya**

Qalwi Muhammed is the author of this war poem. The content of this poem is to advice the soldiers to participate in a Holy war. The advices are to keep away from their other activities in the sea like blocking the sea passage of the other ships and capturing the wealth. He indicates that such activities are against the intention of the Holy war. Thus the people of Holy war against the Portuguese power, should not engage in such types of activities.

Firstly he appreciates the soldiers of the Holy war,

“Oh! The leaders, the men of valour,

who brought Islam to its peak

who from among the people, fought
with wealth, body and soul,

for the religion of Allāh,

to stand higher than all

always and all the days and nights,

well known in the horizons, the story of your war,

your killing of the enemies offshore,

you enjoyed, sold yourselves for the paradises.

You gained the satisfaction of Allāh with all boons.

The most gracious bestowed you with everlasting

reward in the here after.

And treasures of booty in its world”\(^{32}\).

He requests the scholars and the soldiers to protect the sinners from doing

the sins in the Holy war. He requests sinners among the soldiers to repentance.

“‘Oh, the preserver, make the good, forgive them. let them do good every

where. You get the reputive from the Lord”\(^{33}\).

\(^{32}\text{ibid, p.42}\)
Finally he mentions the aim of his writing “Abandon the sins and come to the God with repentance”\textsuperscript{34}.

**War Poem**

Al Qasīdatul Jihādiyya penned by Qalwi Muhammad bin Abdul Azīz was to wake up the valour of the soldiers to fight against the Portuguese. The theme of war speech and war poem is almost identical. Here the fighters are congratulated for the success in the great battle. The Portuguese were defeated. This proved the courage, dedication and valour of the soldiers. As a counsel the poet points out to the dangers one may fall into due to the pride of success. He, therefore warns and advises the fighters not to be carried away by the timely success and mar the blessings by the common, but by the supreme power, God also.

The soldiers who had risked their lives in the battle, is said to be protected and blessed by the Lord himself. To get this blessing and protection one should not be egoistic or proud of his success. In the last lines he begs the forgiveness for any hurt he has caused while writing about the behavior of the soldiers.

\textsuperscript{33}ibid, p.44
\textsuperscript{34}idem
5. **Fat-hul Mubīn**

The meaning of this title is ‘the clear victory’. Fat-hul Mubīn is a war poem written at the limp of victory of Zamorin, when he conquered the fort of Cāliyam from Portuguese power. The full name of this poem is “*fat-hul Mubīn lī samiriyalladhī yuhibbulmuslimīn*”. “The clear victory submitted to the Zamorin who loved the Muslims”.

The Cāliyam fort was conquered by the Nairs and Muslim soldiers after the war that lasted for forty years till 1571. Qalwi Muhammed is the author of this text. He wrote about the victory of Cāliyam in 537 verses\(^{35}\).

Praise for the Zamorin who liked the soldiers of the sea is the content of the poem. Qalwi Muhammed describes through this poem the story of a rare battle, between Zamorin and the Portuguese. He pictures the close relationship of the Zamorin and the Muslims. He praises the justice of the Zamorin and prays for his prosperity of all kinds.

*Fat-hul Mubīn* clearly pictures the coming of Portuguese to Kerala shore, and the torturing they did to the Keralite people. Portuguese built a fort at

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\(^{35}\)See the Fathul Mubīn translated by Maukada Abdul Azeez.
Cāliyam in 1531, with the wood and materials from the Masjid of Cāliyam. They took the materials after demolishing the Masjid. The Portuguese soldiers started their cruelty and massacre of Muslim people with the help of this fort by which the Portuguese could make the Muslims helpless.

This is very important historical information that one gets from the text. Especially the planning done led by the Zamorin in the Miškal Masjid for the purpose shows the height of communal harmony that prevailed in the land at that time. It is also curious to know that the mother of Zamorin also participated in the planning that was done in the Masjid, when the Muslim women were prohibited to enter there.

Muslim and Nair soldiers who were undoubtedly a military body, holding lands and serving as a militia\textsuperscript{36} united attacked the fort. Qalwi Muhammed describes in \textit{Fat-hul Mubīn} this as golden event, in the verses 401-403.

\textquote{Muslims soldiers pledged taking the Qurān}

we will die firstly attacking the enemy.

\textquote{Nair soldiers tell to them}

\textsuperscript{36}Edgar Thurston, \textit{Cast and Tribes of Southern India}, Vol.V, pp.283,284.
you are short in numbers

we do not allow you to do this
dangerous attack solemnly
we unitedly attack the fort”37.

After a bloody war, the Portuguese soldiers surrendered before the Zamorin. It was a clear victory for Zamorin.

**Arabi Malayalam**

The bond and interaction of Arabic language and Malayalam ended in the formation of Arabi Malayalam. The scripts of Arabi Malayalam had slight differences in structures and vocabularies too. Arabi Malayalam became the body of literature in writings and literature.

The above mentioned five texts are the exemplary records of cultural harmony. During that period the Nairs and Muslims stood together to rescue their ruler and kingdom from the clutches of the Portuguese. The Zamorin, the Hindu

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37 Mankada Abdul Azeez, (tr), *FathulMubin*, p.67
ruler, favoured the sea soldiers or the navy of his kingdom. He was very particular that each and every Muslim had to practice religious rites and rituals.

In a particular historical context, these Arabic works were written by Muslim Scholars to resist the foreign invasions on Kerala and rescue the local ruler, Zamorin. Literature in Arabic served as a resistant force against all invasions of the foreign powers. Thus Kerala could a free territory throughout the 16th century, when Goa and other territories became colonial of the Portuguese. Islam served as a barrier against the colonialization of the European powers.