Ulama and the Mappila- Portuguese Conflict

CHAPTER IV

Ulama and the Mappila - Portuguese Conflict

Colonial intervention in the Indian subcontinent started with the coming of the Portuguese in 1498. They came with a well-drawn religio-economic agenda. The ulama of Malabar were perhaps the first to realize the ulterior aims of the colonialists. In the absence of a Muslim ruling authority, the ulama were destined to give the leadership to the Mappilas in their struggle against the political domination of the foreign powers. In turn, the Mappilas complied with their directions.

In order to understand the depth and extent of the role of the ulama in the anti-colonial struggle, the socio-political and economic structure of pre-colonial Malabar, is to be investigated. The colonial conflicts and its nature are also to be analyzed. A close observation of the pre-colonial structure, trade, and inter religious relationship of the region would also be required.

Trade in Malabar before the Portuguese

Malabar, the land of spices had attracted foreigners from time immemorial. The western coast that comprises Malabar was known to have maintained a regular contact with Sumer, Akkad, and Oman Peninsula.¹ The

Greeks and Romans had also continued the trade contact. Genviere Bouchen and Denys Lombard, the two European travellers of the 15\textsuperscript{th} century, wrote that trading communities of Calicut included the people from Arabia, Persia, Syria, Egypt, Maghreb, Sumatra, Pegu, and China.\textsuperscript{2} Ludovico de Varthama states that, merchants from different parts of the world flocked to the kingdom of the Zamorin.\textsuperscript{3} Thus towards the close of the 15\textsuperscript{th} century, economically Malabar acquired an unparalleled position.

Ibn Batuta who travelled extensively on the West coast of India describes, "Calicut is one of the chief ports of Malabar coast and one of the largest harbours in the world. It is visited by men from China, Sumatra, Ceylon, Maldives, Yemen and Fers and it gathers merchants from all quarters."\textsuperscript{4} Oriental commodities flowed from the coast to all parts of the world through different routes. It is seen from Arab and Chinese accounts that spices, coconut and arecnut were exported from the ports of Malabar.\textsuperscript{5}

Nicolo Conti (1419-1441) describes Calicut as a maritime trade centre, a notable emporium for trade in pepper, lac, ginger, cinnamon, myrabalance

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and zedoary. Kolathunad (Cannanore) was also a good trading centre. It was an important seaport through which horses from Persia were imported and carried to the Kingdoms like Vijayanagar. Barbosa states that every year about 200 ships from different places came to this port to carry pepper, ginger, cardamom, myrabalance, canafistula, zerumbha and zedoary.

Since the decline of Roman Empire, trade in Malabar products was mainly in the hands of the Arab merchants and it may safely be concluded that after the retirement of the Chinese, the power and influence of the 'Mohammedans was on the increase.' Trade in Malabar flourished with the Arabs and there was no record of any conflict between the Arab traders and the local communities before the advent of the Portuguese.

Contemporary travel accounts enable us to get an insight into the nature and extent of Malabar trade with foreigners during the 15th century. Abdurrazak, a traveller from Persia wrote in 1442 about the predominance of

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7 Ludovico De Varthama, *op.cit.*, p. 120.
8 Duarte Barbosa, *op.cit.*, p. 83. See also, Ludovico De Varthama, *op.cit.*, p. 124.
Malabar trade in Arab countries and the dominant role played by the Arab communities in it.\(^{12}\)

The character of the trade during the medieval period was peaceful.\(^{13}\) Barbosa writes that, there were Moors in Calicut whom they called *pardesis* (foreigners). The *pardesi* Moors consisted of the Arabs, Persians, Gujratis, Khurasenys and the Decanis. During Mamluk rule, the *Karimi* merchants of Cairo established trade contact with Calicut.\(^{14}\) They possessed wives and children in Malabar. They also had fleets of trading ships sailing to different parts of the world. They had among them a Moorish governor to rule over them.\(^{15}\)

On the arrival of the Portuguese at Calicut, they found that the entire trade of the country was in the hands of the Moors. Ludovico de Varthama, writing in 1503-08, observed, it must be known that the pagans do not navigate much but it is the Moors that carry the merchandise. In Calicut there were at least 15,000 Moors.\(^{16}\) Correa even overestimated that in Malabar there were more Moors than the natives.\(^{17}\) Ma Huan, the Chinese traveller states

\(^{14}\) *Ibid*, p. 5.
\(^{15}\) *Ibid*, p. 11.
\(^{17}\) Correa Gasper, *The Three Voyages*, *op. cit.*, p. 156.
that the majority of the people in the Zamorin’s kingdom were Muslims.\textsuperscript{18} Sanjay Subramanyan in his illuminative work ‘The Career and Legend of Vasco da Gama’ observes that, the overseas trade was purely in the hands of Muslims and this marked the formation of a ‘Muslim lake’ or an Islamic world economy in the Indian Ocean.\textsuperscript{19}

Mappilas of Cannanore, as they appear in the Portuguese documents, had acquired so much authority that Tom Pires warned the Raja of Kolathunad about them, “If the power of your highness did not extend to this Kingdom, it would already be in the hands of the Moors, because a certain Mammali Marakkar has become all powerful here.”\textsuperscript{20}

K. M. Panikkar observes that Malabar was leading comparatively a happy though politically isolated life; in many ways her organization was primitive. Different trading communities lived here together without friction, and in absolute religious toleration.\textsuperscript{21} Each of these groups had their settlements, institutions, factories and trade organizations in Malabar.\textsuperscript{22} He also states that Zamorin encouraged and patronized the trade, and thereby the

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\textsuperscript{20} Gerviere Bouchen, Regent of the Sea, Cannanore’s Response to Portuguese Expansion, 1507-1528, Delhi, 1988, p. 11.
\textsuperscript{21} K. M. Panikkar, Malabar and the Portuguese, Bombay, 1929, p. 24.
\textsuperscript{22} K. S. Mathew, Portuguese Trade with India in Sixteenth Century, 1983, New Delhi, pp. 16-17.
\end{flushleft}
merchants, especially Muslims, from different parts of the world in large numbers reached Malabar for trade.\footnote{Ibid.} Sheikh Zainudhin praises the liberal policy of the Zamorin in trade. He states, “the rulers took from them only a tenth part of the income of their trade, and also realized the penalties, whenever they do any thing calling for a penalty. They do not levy tax on those who possess lands of fruit gardens although they are of vast extent.”\footnote{Sheikh Zainudhin, \textit{Tuhfat}, Nainar, p. 52.}

As mentioned earlier Arab trade prospered in the peaceful and steadiest atmosphere for centuries. Both the rulers and the traders benefited from the trade. The empowerment of the Zamorin was due to two factors- absence of incursion from the domineering powers of the subcontinent\footnote{K. M. Panikkar, \textit{Malabar, op.cit.}, p. 11.} and his coalition with Mappilas and the Arab traders. Thus, economically the coalition had beneficial results for both the parties. K S Mathew even observes that, people from all over the world interested in trade had their share in the trade of the Malabar coast and nobody claimed or fought for any sort of monopoly over it. Every merchant had the freedom to frequent the ports of his choice on the Malabar coast and conduct trade. The participation in trade was not in the name of any government and they did business in their individual or collective capacity.\footnote{K. S. Mathew, \textit{Portuguese Trade, op.cit.}, p. 16.}
Dar ul Islam

Before the arrival of the Portuguese the Muslims of Malabar had never suffered any kind of ill treatment from their rulers. In the words of Sheikh Zainudhin, the Muslims prospered due to the special regard shown to them by the rulers. They respected the customs and practices of Muslims and were friendly with them except on rare occasions. Qazi Muhammad in his Fath ul Mubin also praises the rulers and their bountiful benevolence towards the Muslims.

The Zamorins took keen interest in the religious observances of the Muslims. Friday prayers and Eid celebrations were made compulsory. Qazis and Muazzins were paid from the state exchequer. Qazi Muhammad admires Zamorins not only as the helpers of Muslims but also as protector of the Shariat. The Zamorin also prescribed that the reading of Friday Qutuba was to be in the name of Turkish Khalif.

It was in this context that the Muslims considered Malabar as Dar ul Islam. Sheikh Zainudhin considers Adil Shah as the upholder of Allah’s

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27 Sheikh Zainudhin, Tuhfat, Hamza, p. 34.
29 Qazi Muhammad, op.cit., verses, 510-524, p. 31.
31 One who makes call for the five times prayers from the mosque.
32 Qazi Muhammad, op.cit., verse 18, p. 4. See also, Tuhfat, Nainar, p. 51. These facts are repeated here due to the unavoidable nature of the proofs.
33 There have been debates about Dar ul Islam. The theologians prescribe three options as requirement of a state to become Dar ul Islam, either to be under Muslim rule or under
words who endeavors to root out the heretics and to extirpate the wrong doers, indicating that the Zamorin and his state is abode of Islam and believers; and by fighting with the Portuguese Ali Adil Shah upheld the words of God. It is also to be noted that, when Sheikh Zainudhin and Qazi Muhammad were eloquent of the fight against the foreign infidels, they emphasized the need to strengthen the rule of Zamorin. They never suggested a rule of the Muslims.

Advent of the Portuguese

At the end of the 15th century, Portugal, a tiny state, emerged as an important sea-faring nation. A long relentless endeavour to explore a sea route to India became historic with its triumph on 20th May 1498. The exploration was not solely motivated by the trade profit but also the propagation of Christianity in the Eastern world. When enquired of the purpose of his visit,
Gama replied, “We have come in search of Christians and spices.”36 The response of Gama explains the purpose of the voyage unambiguously.37

The capture of the Oceanic highway of Asia itself was considered a maritime extension of the Crusades. Fired with the zeal of the Crusaders,38 they aimed to suppress the growing power of Islam and subjugate them to Christian faith. The Portuguese planned to attack the Muslim world from the rear by naval operation. They, thereby, hoped to blockade Red Sea and to corner the spice trade for their own advantage.39 The objective of the Portuguese was not only conquest but also conversion. The missionaries accompanying them were sent to “conquer the lands for the king of Portugal and win the souls for the King of Heaven”.40

Hundreds of battles were fought with the Moors from the 10th to 15th century, which made the Portuguese the sworn enemies of the Muslims.41 According to Sheikh Zainudhin, the Portuguese were hostile only to the Muslims and their faith and not Nairs and other non Muslims of Malabar.42 They propagated the theory that Pope had the authority on all kingdoms on

37 C. R. Boxer quotes four motives behind the Portuguese attempt in the East. 1, Crusading zeal against the Muslims, 2, the desire for Guinea gold, 3, The Quest for Prestor John, 4, the search for oriental spices. The Portuguese Seaborne Empire (1415-1825), London, 1969, p. 18.
42 Sheikh Zainudhin, Tuhfat, Nainar, p. 62.
the earth and Portugal had the authority to conquer all the Mohammedan and pagan kingdoms. This Charter called Padroado, made it obligatory on the Portuguese to propagate the Catholic religion in all the new lands discovered by her.43

Thus one of the aims of the Portuguese was to cut off the roots of Islam.44 The explorations of da Gama were also inspired by acquisition of wealth and the dream of freeing Jerusalem from the infidels and to extend the bounds of Christendom.45

In realizing these aims, the Portuguese were not hesitant to go to any extent of barbarity. E.K.G. Nambiar cites an instance of a dreadful elimination of a society by the colonial heads of the 15th and 16th centuries. Columbus after his voyage instigated Ferdinand and Isabella, the ruling heads of Spain, to plunder the discovered regions. It culminated in the massive butchering of thousands of natives. Before the advent of Europeans, at Hispaniola, there were more than one lakh people. Sixteen years after their occupation it was reduced to 70,000 and by 1517 it was further reduced to 1112.46

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On the morning of 8th July 1497, Gama and 160 men in three ships\textsuperscript{47} sailed to India. He crossed the Indian Ocean with the help of a Moor named ‘Ibn Majid’. Finally Gama landed at Kapad near Calicut on 20th May 1498. A Moor from Tunis named Bontaybo\textsuperscript{48} introduced him to the Zamorin.\textsuperscript{49} Vasco da Gama was well satisfied with the unexpected degree of reception he received at Zamorin’s court.\textsuperscript{50} On 8th Sept. 1499, he returned to Lisbon. He was given the title of the ‘Lord of Conquest’.\textsuperscript{51} The value of the cargo he brought home was sixty times the expenses of the voyage.\textsuperscript{52} Thus the expedition was evaluated a grand success.

On account of the triumph of the first mission, the king of Portugal decided to establish lasting commercial relations with the subcontinent of India. Thus, a second voyage was arranged under Pedro Alwarez Cabral. He was instructed to make alliance with the Zamorin, if he was friendly, or with his enemies if he was hostile.\textsuperscript{53} Cabral landed at Calicut with a large fleet. He had carried letters of recommendations addressed to various rulers on the Malabar coast. He signed a contract with the Zamorins of Calicut and established a Portuguese factory there. But the Zamorin refused to show any

\textsuperscript{47} Sheikh Zainudhin, \textit{Tuhfat}, Nainar, p. 53.
\textsuperscript{49} K. V. Krishna Ayyar, \textit{op.cit.}, p. 124.
\textsuperscript{50} Sheikh Zainudhin, \textit{Tuhfat}, Nainar, p. 53.
\textsuperscript{51} K. K. N. Kurup and K. M. Mathew, \textit{Native Resistance Against the Portuguese- The Saga of Kunjali Marakkars}, Calicut University, 2000, p. 47.
\textsuperscript{52} K. V. Krishna Ayyar, \textit{op.cit.}, p. 136. See also, Ronald E Miller, \textit{op.cit.}, p. 64.
\textsuperscript{53} K. V. Krishna Ayyar, \textit{op.cit.}, p. 136.
extraordinary sympathy to the Portuguese over the Muslim merchants of Calicut.

Anticipating the demand, pepper had been horded by some agencies. Hence, Cabral could not get even half of the expected pepper from Calicut. So Cabral requested the king to give permission to search it out. The king then allowed them to search the ships in the beach. On the pretext of searching, the Muslim vessels in the harbour were attacked and seized. In retaliation the Muslims attacked the Portuguese factory; killed its leaders, Aries Correa and 53 men. The Portuguese factory at Calicut was razed to the ground. The rest fled from the town; got into their ships and fired continuously at the people on the shore. They also seized ten Muslim ships. Six hundred Moors were slain and sank several ships. Thus ended the peace that existed on the Malabar coast.

Vasco da Gama, on his second arrival, was determined to put the Portuguese power on a firmer footing. Now Gama was not a messenger as he was in his first voyage, but an avenger. He avenged upon the Moors in the most atrocious way. He demanded to expel all the merchants of Makkah and other Muslim merchants from Calicut as a precondition to start negotiation.

54 Ronald E. Miller, op.cit., p. 65.
55 K. S. Mathew, op.cit., p. 44.
56 K. V. Krishna Ayyar, op.cit., p. 146.
57 R. E. Miller, op.cit., p. 65.
58 K. V. Krishna Ayyar, op.cit., p. 149.
with the Zamorin. But the Zamorin declared that the port of Calicut would always be open to all and that it would be impossible to prohibit any one from trading with Calicut whether he be a Muslim or not. He also asserted that it would not be possible to expropriate and banish the Muslims from Calicut.\(^{59}\)

In fact, the entry of Gama into the Indian Ocean announced the claim of the Portuguese exclusive domination over India and Portugal became the mistress of the Eastern Seas.\(^ {60}\) T K Gopalapanikkar in the work ‘Malabar and its folk’ observes, “the discovery of the Cape of Good Hope was an evil day for the Moplahs. In the keen struggle for supremacy on the Eastern Seas the Moplahs came out vanquished... and never since have they regained their wealth and glory.”\(^ {61}\)

The advent of Vasco da Gama proved to be a threat to the Muslims. They protested and tried to prevent free access of the Portuguese to their ruler.\(^ {62}\) They even warned the Zamorin against the Portuguese and their piracy.\(^ {63}\) They also warned that, they would leave the city *en bloc* if his relation with the Portuguese continued.\(^ {64}\) However, the Zamorin permitted Gama to unload his goods and market it. But the Portuguese failed to get a

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\(^{59}\) K. S. Mathew, *op.cit.*, p. 45.


\(^{63}\) K. V. Krishna Ayyar, *op.cit.*, p. 131.

good market for their products and they attributed it to the intrigue played by
the Moors. Da Gama then went to Cannanore. The Kolathiri Raja, the ruler
who had enmity with the Zamorin granted all sorts of helps to him. Thus
Gama effectively exploited the unfriendly relation between the Kolathiri and
the Zamorin. 65

Gama tried to appease the officials of the Zamorin, suggesting that he
was ready to give double of the profit offered by others 66 to the king’s
treasury, provided the king would stop the business with the Moors and expel
them from Malabar. 67 The Zamorin responded to the request negatively and
expressed his inability to expel them from Calicut since there were more than
4000 of them who lived in the city not like foreigners but as natives and from
whom his kingdom received much income. 68

Following the failure of his mission Gama intensified his retaliation on
the coast. At Madayi near Cannanore he noticed a ship with 300 pilgrims
from Makkah returning to Calicut. Gama attacked the ship owned by the
brother of Shahbander Koya. The passengers of the ship offered all their
valuables if they were allowed to land any where on the coast. Sultan of

65 Logan, Malabar, op.cit., p. 306.
66 Sheikh Zainudhin, Tuhfat, Nairar, pp. 54 & 62.
67 'Kerala Varthamanam’ Quoted in K. K. N. Kurup (ed.), India’s Naval Tradition (The Role
of Kunhali Marakkars), New Delhi, 1997, p. 58.
68 Correa Gasper, op.cit., p. 328.
Egypt even promised ships full of spices for their release. But Gama was inexplicable; his aim was revenge and not spices. After plundering all the valuables of the passengers he set fire to it. The passengers, however, extinguished it and pleaded for mercy. "Vasco da Gama", says Loppes, "looked on through his port hole, and saw the women bringing up their gold and jewels and holding up their babies to beg for mercy, but there was no mercy". For eight days and nights the effort to burn the vessel and the counter effort continued. Finally as they were on the point of giving up the attack in despair a hunch-backed traitor set the ship once more on fire.

Despite all these brutal acts, the Zamorin was inclined to ally with the Portuguese and sent envoys to them. But Gama, being intoxicated by the desire for vengeance, demanded the banishment of all the Moors and Mappilas from Calicut. The Zamorin rejected the demand frankly stating that neither honour nor prudence would allow him to comply with it. Gama gave an ultimatum of twenty-four hours time to take a positive action on his demand.

When the time of ultimatum expired, da Gama opened fire. A number of thatched huts of the fishermen on the shore were burnt and a number of

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69 K. V. Krishna Ayyar, op.cit., p. 149.
70 Ibid, p. 150.
72 K. V. Krishna Ayyar, op.cit., p. 151.
godowns in the bazaars were damaged. The anger of da Gama fell upon a fleet of twenty-four ships that arrived with rice from Mangalore. He captured all the vessels; seized all their crew numbering 800; cut off their hands, ears and noses; tied their legs and knocked out their teeth with sticks. To prevent escape, heaped them on board, covered with mats and leaves and set ashore in a small vessel with a palm leaf letter to the King, telling him to have a curry made of them. Later, when a Brahmin envoy was sent to da Gama, he too was insulted; his ears were cut off and a dog’s ears were sewn to his head and sent him back to the Zamorin. Then da Gama set sail to Cochin.

The Zamorin found the Portuguese incorrigible. He declared open enmity with them. This change in his attitude brought him closer to the Muslims. In pursuit of the Portuguese the Zamorin led a force to Cochin. Hearing the news of Zamorin’s arrival, da Gama escaped to Lisbon with his vessels full of spices. The Zamorin met the Raja of Cochin in the battlefield but the Zamorin was defeated.

The Zamorin also suffered a severe defeat off Cannanore. More than 3000 Muslim sailors lost their lives in the fight. Thus the advent of the Portuguese and their trade became a cause of constant conflict on the coast. The Portuguese even declared their supremacy on the sea and no ship was

73 Ibid, pp. 151-152.
75 Ibid, p. 91.
76 Ronald E. Miller, op.cit., p. 67.
allowed to sail without having Cartaz from them. Cochin and Cannanore recognized the supremacy of the Portuguese and traded with their Cartaz. Each ship, however, small it might be, was provided with a pass, for which the Portuguese fixed a certain fee. Whenever the Portuguese found any ship without Cartaz, they seized it with its crew and cargo.  

The Zamorins and the ulama

A close study of the contemporary Arabic accounts would reveal that the Mappilas considered the Zamorin as their lord and savior. In the pre-Portuguese period they enjoyed peace and stability in social and economic spheres. The relation of Muslims with the Zamorin was so passionate and sincere that Qazi Muhammad, the head of the Mappila community of Calicut has dedicated his work in the name of Zamorin and entitled it Al Fathul Mubin Lissamiriyyi Iladi Yuhibbul Muslimeen (The Manifest Victory of Zamorin who Loves the Muslims). The Qazi states that, the purpose of his writing was only to get the pleasure of God. Thus it is to be inferred that to dedicate his work to a non-Muslim ruler was considered as a religious virtue.

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77 The king of the Portugal believed that he had the prerogative to appropriate monopoly over the spice trade. It was with this objective in mind that he instituted a system of safe conduct (Cartaz) that the Asian navigators had to buy from the Portuguese authorities, on the penalty of being boarded and often of being sunk with their vessel. Claude Markovits (ed.), op.cit., p. 63.

78 Sheikh Zainuddin, Tuhfat, Nainar, p. 56. Some times even the holders of the Cartaz were attacked without any justification. K. S. Mathew, Portuguese... op.cit., p. 208.

79 Qazi Muhammad, op.cit., verse. 521, p. 32.
He also praises the bravery of the Zamorin.\textsuperscript{80} Applauding his love and sympathy for the Muslims, the Qazi writes, "He loves us and loves our religion more than anything else."\textsuperscript{81} Praising him to the skies,\textsuperscript{82} the Qazi admits that the description is only the one thousandth of the real greatness that he deserves.\textsuperscript{83}

Another important work of this period, \textit{Tuhfat ul Mujahidin} is dedicated to the Sultan Ali Adil Shah of Bijapur as he came forward to help the Zamorin in the fight against the Portuguese.\textsuperscript{84} It indicates the Muslims' faith and respect towards their ruler, the Zamorin. Sultan Ali Adil Shah also wrote a letter to the Zamorin requesting him to accelerate the fight against the Portuguese infidels and to save the land of the believers.\textsuperscript{85} It again indicates that the Zamorin is the benefactor and protector of the Muslims and the state as abode of Islam. The Qazi also states that, to the Zamorin, the death of a Muslim is more painful than the death of ten non-Muslims.\textsuperscript{86}

To Sheikh Zainudhin, the Zamorin's rule was a blessing of God to the Muslims. According to him, by the grace of God the Muslims were happy and prosperous under the Zamorin. But the prosperity made them ungrateful. Thus

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{enumerate}
\item \textit{Ibid}, Verse. 15, p. 3.
\item \textit{Ibid}, verse. 17, p. 4.
\item \textit{Ibid}, verses. 510-537, pp. 31-32.
\item \textit{Ibid}, verse. 522, p. 32.
\item Sheikh Zainudhin, \textit{Tuhfat}, Hamza, p. 36.
\item Qazi Muhammad, \textit{op.cit.}, verse 303, p. 19.
\item \textit{Ibid}, verse. 408, p. 25.
\end{enumerate}
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came Allah’s punishment in the form of the Portuguese intruders. The Tuhfat states that Muslims enjoyed considerable freedom under the Zamorins. The Hindus, though very particular of their religious observances, were never intolerant and envious to the Muslims, who were less in number not exceeding one-tenth of the total population.

There existed mutual faith and understanding between the Zamorins and the ulama. The Zamorin even sought their support and co-operation in the administration. Thus the Qazis were entrusted with judicial power on the Muslims. The Zamorin directed that a Muslim criminal should not be arrested or punished without the permission of the ulama. The ulama also prayed for the well being of the Zamorin and appealed to all Muslims to pray for him. It was in the peaceful and the harmonious nature of Malabar that the Portuguese interrupted, which badly compelled the ulama to direct the community to resist them by all means.

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87 Sheikh Zainudhin, Tuhfat, Nainar, p. 60.
88 Ibid, pp. 21-22, 51.
89 Ibid, p. 60.
90 Ibid, p. 52.
91 Qazi Muhammad, op.cit., verses, 523-24, p. 2. It implies to make prayers for Zamorin.
The Makhdums and the Portuguese

The Makhdums of Ponnani had a long tradition of rallying people against the colonial powers. The Makhdum family, which belonged to Yemen, came and settled near Kayalpattanam of Eastern coast. They were a cultured and learned group actively involved in trade. When the trade prospered, a group of them under Sheikh Ahmed came and settled at Cochin. Sheikh Ahmad was a good scholar. Along with trade he took interest in the religious and socio-economic developments of the people, which earned him much reputation in the society. People of Ponnani with great pleasure invited him and helped him to settle down in the town. His son Sheikh Zainudhin Ibrahim was made the Qazi of Ponnani. During that time Abu Yahya Zainudhin bin Sheikh Ali Ibn Sheikh Ahmad popularly known as Sheikh Zainudhin the senior was a student.

Sheikh Zainudhin, the senior

After education at Chaliyam and Calicut, Sheikh Zainudhin went to Egypt for higher studies. In Egypt he had occasions to know more about the world, different languages and cultures. Moreover, he had opportunity to

92 Makhdumum Ponnaniyum, p. 65.
93 Ibid. Sheikh Zainudhin was a theologian, Muhaddis (traditionalist), writer, reformer and above all an ardent fighter against injustice and colonialism. He had his early education at Ponnani, Chaliyam and Calicut. Then he went to Makkah and Egypt for higher studies. After his education, making Ponnani the centre, he started the reform work in the educational and socio-religious life of the people. During his career he produced a good collection of literatures and disciples through which he resisted the colonialists effectively.
contact a galaxy of great scholars.\textsuperscript{94} On his return, he became the spiritual and temporal guide of the people of Ponnani. The whole leadership of the Malabar Muslim community subsequently fell upon his shoulders. \textsuperscript{95} He took interest in the overall development of the community and initiated reform movement among them. He also dedicated himself for the spread of spiritual knowledge by setting up a \textit{Dars} in Ponnani.

In 1510, with the purpose of bringing reforms in the society, Sheikh Zainudhin convened a meeting of the Muslims of the area and started the construction of a Juma \textit{Masjid} at Ponnani. It was a spacious four-storied building with 90 feet length and 60 feet breadth.\textsuperscript{96} The construction of the mosque indicates his interest in uniting the people for a common cause. A full-fledged \textit{Dars} also functioned in the upper stories of the mosque.\textsuperscript{97} He himself became the \textit{Mudarris} (Chief Instructor) of the institution. The institution attracted students from far off places like Indonesia, Malaysia, Ceylon, Arabia, Egypt, Syria, Baghdad and Yaman.\textsuperscript{98} A large number of students flocked to Ponnani, which became the centre of Islamic culture and learning and came to be known as 'the Makkah of Malabar'.\textsuperscript{99} It was at this time that the Portuguese came to Malabar and posed menace to the social,

\textsuperscript{95} \textit{Makhdumum Ponnaniyum}, p. 24.
\textsuperscript{96} A. P. Ibrahim Kunju, \textit{Mappila Muslims of Kerala op.cit.}, p. 213.
\textsuperscript{97} R. E. Miller, \textit{op.cit.}, pp. 260-261.
\textsuperscript{98} Nellikkuth Muhammad Ali Musaliar, \textit{op.cit.}, p. 16.
economic and cultural life of the people in general, and the Mappilas in particular. Shiekh Zainudhin took the threat very serious\(^{100}\) and directed the people to defy them.

Mosques had always been centres of emotional appeal. The Portuguese found the mosques as centres of *ulama* as well as the centres of Mappila resistance. Many references about the resistant meetings held in the mosques of Ponnani, Chaliyam and Calicut can be found in *Tuhfat*.\(^ {101}\) A large number of such references can be found in the literary pieces of Sheikh Zainudhin the senior, Sheikh Zainudhin the junior and Qazi Muhammed. This led to the destruction of many mosques on the West Coast including Ponnani, Pantalayini and Calicut by the Portuguese.\(^ {102}\)

Attracted by the anti-Portuguese activities of Sheikh Zainudhin, the Zamorin went to Ponnani in person and sought the help of Zainudhin against the intruders\(^ {103}\) Shiekh Zainudhin promised him all assistance and made the people assemble in the *Juma Masjid* and impressed upon them the need of fighting the colonialists. Subsequently the disciples of Sheikh Zainudhin participated in many fights undertaken by the Zamorin.

\(^{100}\) Sheikh Zainudhin, *Tahrid*, verse. 30. It says, “We on our weakness and shortage of equipments fought them years, as we could.”


\(^{102}\) Sheikh Zainudhin, *Tuhfat*, Nainar, pp. 69-70 and 78. See also *Tahrid* verse. 10.

Sheikh Zainudhin wrote an inspiring work, *Tahrid Ahlil Iman Ala Jihadi Abadathissulban al-Marghabati fil Jinan al Munquidat min an Neeran* (Inducement to the believers for holy war on worshippers of cross). The work is the first known anti-colonial literature in India. It consists of 135 couplets of poems. Date of its compositions is not definitely known, but it happened sometime in the early decades of the 16th century. The written copies of it were sent to the important Muslim mosques and countries like Egypt, Turkey, Arabia and so on. The first part of it contains the savage cruelties of the Portuguese upon the Muslims and the message to expel the intruders. It is written aiming particularly for the Muslim mass and rulers. It prescribes *jihad* compulsory to all, irrespective of gender, class, health, colour or region. Even for disabled there is no excuse in it. He strongly commands the Muslims to fight against the Portuguese by weapons, wealth and health. He warns the community not to make the Portuguese their leaders. “Come and join the war, so that Allah, and His creations like men, *jinn*, animals and birds would enjoy.”

The reward for the *jihad*, according to him would be either *Shahadath* (martyrdom) or success in both cases victory. He elaborately describes the virtues of a martyr (*Shahid*). He also warns those lags in *jihad* enter the severe punishment of Hell. He makes a picturesque narration of the inhuman

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atrocities of the Portuguese that they perpetrated in the Muslim centres. They burned and destroyed the mosques and Holy Scriptures, demolish the dwellings attacked and molested Muslim ladies and children, killed and enslaved Muslims and they even objected pilgrimage to Makkah.

By making use of his wide contact, Zainudhin also wrote letters to the rulers of various countries seeking help against the Portuguese. Four of these rulers viz, Muhammad Shah, Arshed Beg, Mubarak Shah, and Adil Shah responded positively and sent their forces to Calicut. Shiekh Zainudhin joined them with his own forces and succeeded in defeating the Portuguese. As a token of gratitude the Zamorin offered him all help in the socio-religious activities. With the help of the Zamorin, Zainudhin constructed another mosque at Ponnani. He also continued to send letters and books to Arab countries seeking help on behalf of the Zamorin.

The presence of Makhdums made Ponnani the centre of resistance on the one hand and of the Portuguese atrocities on the other. In 1507, the Portuguese bombarded the city. The ulama rose up and called upon the people

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106 As a clear proof of response, a mosque can be seen constructed at Ponnani known as Misri Masjid (Egyptian Mosque) where the force from Egypt was supposed to have stayed and later a mosque was constructed for their memory, *Makhdumum Ponnaniyum*, p. 46.
107 The rulers from Gujarat, Egypt, Diu and Bijapur.
108 Zamorin also constructed a temple in honour of his success near the mosque constructed by Zainudhin at Ponnani. *Ibid*. As a token of the relationship, still now the principal door of the Ponnani big mosque opens only five times during prayer with the belief that it faces to the door of Bhaghavati temple of Trikkavu. *Makhdumum Ponnaniyum*, p. 40.
for *jihad*.\(^{110}\) "Number of Moors," states Logan, "swore to die as *Shahid* (martyr) to defend the town."\(^{111}\) The people of Ponnani and Valiyankot collected four boats and came up against the invaders. The people of Pantalayini and Kakkad also joined them in three boats. Together they put up a tough battle against the Portuguese\(^{112}\) and drove them back to Cochin.

However the Portuguese continued their attacks and atrocities unabated. But the Muslims were never sluggish and did not slacken their resistance. The resistance added new chapters into the heroic history of Mappila resistance. Here is such an instance. A few Portuguese soldiers kidnapped a young girl from a coastal cottage. Nobody could save her from their hands. The news was reported at the marriage function of Kunhi Marakkar, one of the chief disciples of Sheikh Zainudhin.\(^{113}\) The young bridegroom Kunhi Marakkar, without informing others, for fear that he would be prevented, rushed to the spot in a vessel. After an adventurous fight he rescued the girl and killed many Portuguese. But in the encounter that followed the young hero, Kunhi Marakkar, was cut into pieces. Portions of his body were washed ashore at different places. The Kunhi Marakkar Shahid

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\(^{112}\) Sheikh Zainudhin, *Tuhfat*, Nainar, p. 56.

episode later on acted as a strong catalyst of the jihad movement among the Mappilas.114

Sheikh Zainudhin, the junior

Sheikh Zainudhin, the junior115 was the Qazi and Mudarris of Ponnani. He followed his forefathers in the struggle against the colonialists. He rather aggravated the struggle and prepared a strong group of disciples at Ponnani ready to do anything for the cause of their land. During his time, the name and fame of his Dars reached far and wide and the great scholar of Makkah Ibn Hajarul Haithami visited the institution.116

Sheikh Zainudhin on the basis of his experiences and observations wrote Tuhfat ul Mujahidin Fi Baa'zi Akhbaril Burtughaliyyin117 (Gift to the

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115”He was the grandson of Sheikh Zainudhin the senior, born at Chombala near Badagara. He had his education at Ponnani and Makkah. Then he became Mudarris and Qazi of Ponnani. In Ponnani, he prepared people against the Portuguese through his preachings and writings. He wrote a number of works containing the subjects of theology and many sociological issues like marriage. He died at Chombala and lay buried there in the place popularly known as Kunhippally.

116_Makhdumum Ponnamiyum, p. 79.

117”In some editions it also found as Ahwail Burtughaliyyin instead of Akhbaril Burtughaliyyin. But in the original manuscript it is Akhbaril Burtughaliyyin. It covers a period between 1498-1583. The work is dedicated to sultan Ali Adil Shah of Bijapur as a gift book for his help to Zamorin. The work consists of four chapters. In the first chapter Zainudhin depicts the virtues of jihad. The second chapter is about the advent of Islam in Kerala, the third makes an account about the life and customs of the people of Malabar. The fourth chapter is divided into 14 sections under subtitles and covers the activities of the Portuguese and the resistance presented by the locals.
Holy Warriors in Respect to some Informations of the Portuguese). The work devotes the first chapter to describe the virtues of *jihad*. In the chapter he explains the purpose of his writing as to inspire the Muslims to fight against the Portuguese.\textsuperscript{118} He delineates the condition of the Muslims very deplorable and laments that the Muslims suffer poverty and humiliation, as they had no ‘powerful Muslim ruler to save them.’\textsuperscript{119} The work contains a period between 1498-1583. It pictures the entry of the Portuguese in Malabar and their attempt of colonialism and the resistance presented by the people of the coast.\textsuperscript{120} The work has been written and circulated through mosques to each village of Malabar and some foreign countries.\textsuperscript{121}

The threat of colonialism almost entered into a stage of ceaseless war with the Portuguese. Political and economic stability was disrupted. In this situation the Zamorin dispatched letters to many Muslim Sultans seeking their help and support.\textsuperscript{122} Sheikh Zainudhin by the advice of the Zamorin wrote letters to the Sultans of many dynasties. A few of them like Sultan of Gujarat, Mahmood Shah and Sultan of Bijapur, Adil Shah prepared forces and waited for the reinforcement from Egypt. Qansul Ghouri of Egypt sent a well-equipped force of 1500 naval men under Amir Hussain to join the forces of

\begin{footnotes}
\item[120] Sheikh Zainudhin, *Tuhfät*, Nainar, 4\textsuperscript{th} chapter.
\item[122] *Makhđumum Ponnaniyum*, p. 57.
\end{footnotes}
Gujarat. Thus the combined forces of Bijapur, Gujarat and Egypt attacked the Portuguese at Diu. The Portuguese under Lorenzo were defeated and their ships were captured. Krishna Ayyar states, “unwilling or unable to escape in boats he perished with all his men under the well-directed fire of the Egyptians.”

The Portuguese immediately retaliated. In the battle that followed, the combined forces of the Zamorin and the Muslims Sultans were defeated. The defeat caused great indignity to the ruler of Egypt and he sent another force against the Portuguese. Infighting among the Muslim forces helped the Portuguese to resist the attack. Thereafter external support became a mirage to the Zamorin. Sheikh Zainudhin felt very sad about the turn of events. Describing the situation he wrote, The Muslims of Malabar enjoyed a happy and prosperous life ‘on account of the benevolence of their rulers,’ who had great regard for time-honoured customs, and practices. But the Muslims undervalued the blessings of Allah and transgressed and disobeyed His orders. ‘So Allah set on them the people of Portukal.’

The barbarities of the Portuguese thereafter became unimaginably cruel. They subjected the Muslims to all kinds of cruelties. They treated them

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123 Ibid.
125 Sheikh Zainudhin, Tuhfat, Nainar, p. 58.
126 Ibid, p.60.
127 Ibid.
insolently; employed them to draw water, and spat upon their face and body. They prevented the pilgrimage to Makkah. They plundered their properties; burnt their cities and mosques; seized their ships and the Holy Quran was trampled up on. They forced the Muslims to accept Christianity and to prostrate before the cross. They molested the Muslim women in order to give birth to their children in the Muslim womb. They put hajis to death and publicly reviled the apostles of Allah. They caught the Muslims; enslaved them and sold them into the slave markets. They kept the Muslims in dark, dirty and stinking houses. They kicked them with boots. They were made to labour hard without remuneration. They did not spare the ulama from these torments and subjected them to untold hardships. Thus Shiekh Zainudhin mourns, “How many ulama, sayyids and nobles have been captured and tortured? And how many of them have been converted to Christianity!”

Alike the Makhdums, the family of Kunjali Marakkar’s, the admirals of the Zamorin, also had come from Kayalpattanam and had close association with the Makhdum family of Malabar. Basically, the Marakkars were rice traders. It was from the writings and preachings of the Makhdums, that they drew their inspiration for jihad. References are found in Tuhfat and Fathul Mubin about Marakkars such as Pattu Marakkar, Mammali Marakkar, Faquih

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128 Ibid.
129 Ibid, pp.60-61.
130 Qazi Muhammad, op.cit., verse.177, p. 12.
Ahmad Marakkar, Kunjali Marakkar, Muhammad Ali Marakkar and so on. They whole-heartedly carried out the call for jihad made by the Makhdums. They came to the battlefront against the Portuguese under the influence of Sheikh Zainudhin and Sheikh Abul Wafa. Hence the ulama served as sources of inspiration to the Marakkars in their prolonged struggle against the Portuguese.

The Qazi of Calicut and the Milanese

The rivalry between the Zamorin and the Raja of Cochin reached its pinnacle. The Zamorin could not tolerate the policy of giving protection to the Portuguese by the Raja of Cochin. The Zamorin sent a force against Cochin. The operation was successful. The most important gain from this operation was the capture of two Milanese men, John Maria and Peter Antony, the artillerymen. Influenced by the Zamorin they joined the service of Calicut. The Milanese were very proficient in making guns and ammunitions. Thus, they proved to be a great blessing to the military prowess of Calicut. In other words the missing of the Milanese affected the Portuguese in two ways. Firstly, making use of them, the Zamorin acquired an upper hand in weaponry over the Portuguese. Secondly, it adversely affected the artillery strength of

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134 The whole heroic fights presented by the Kunjali Marakkars are the outcome of the spirit kindled by writings and the mobilization process initiated by Zainudhin Makhdum.
the Portuguese. Varthama states that they had manufactured more than four hundred guns for the Zamorin’s forces.

The Portuguese were now determined to bring the Milanese back to their camp. They sent a priest, Ludovico de Varthama who could speak Arabic well, to the court of Zamorin in the guise of an Egyptian physician. He was warmly received in to the court of Zamorin. During his stay in the court, he intrigued with the Milanese; offered pardon for their offence and guaranteed to reinstate them in their old positions. Thus, in the darkness of the night, they fled to Cannanore. Meanwhile, the Qazi of Calicut came to know of the plot. He instantly deputed two hundred warriors and spoiled the plot. The vigilant squad of the Qazi captured and murdered them on the border of Calicut.

As referred to earlier, the conditions were deteriorating day by day. Albuquerque, the cruelest among the Portuguese Governors, conquered Goa in 1510. The occupation of Goa cut off the Zamorin’s relations with the Muslim rulers of Deccan. The position of the Zamorin and the Muslims became more precarious than ever before. Taking advantage of this situation Albuquerque attacked Calicut and burnt the Juma Masjid built by Naquda Mithqal. He then bombarded the city of Calicut; entered the palace and tried

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136 Ludo Vico De Varthama, quoted in Ibid.
to seize it. At that time, the king was away at Chetwai. But the Nair forces rose to the occasion and dispersed the forces in which nearly 500 Portuguese were killed and many drowned. Albuquerque himself had a narrow escape. While withdrawing to Cochin, they attacked Ponnani and burnt fifty ships and in the encounter seventy Muslims were martyred.

Albuquerque, by all means, was determined to hold the control of Malabar for which he wanted a secure fort at Calicut. For the purpose he pressed the Zamorin to enter into a treaty. Accordingly permission was granted to build a fort at Calicut, which could be garrisoned by the Portuguese soldiers. However, realizing the danger, the Zamorin withdrew the offer. Thereupon Albuquerque entered into an intrigue with the crown prince, to poison the king.

On the successful completion of the conspiracy the new Zamorin made an unholy alliance with Albuquerque. Albuquerque had his own ulterior motives in forging the alliances. He hoped that it would bring peace with the Zamorin; weaken the trade of Cairo and Venice, and secure the exclusion of the Moors from trade and obstruct all their navigation with Makkah. It was clear from his letter to the king of Portugal that he wished 'to destroy

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140 K. V. Krishna Ayyar, *op. cit.*, p. 175.
142 K. M. Panikkar, *Malabar and... op. cit.*, p. 83.
Makkah\textsuperscript{144} and Madinah and "to seize its treasures and the dead body of Mohammad which was to be held in ransom for the liberation of Jerusalem."\textsuperscript{145}

Finally a historic treaty was signed on 24\textsuperscript{th} December by which the Portuguese were allowed to construct a fort on the bank of the Kallayi River, Calicut. Thereafter the Portuguese forbade the Muslims from exporting ginger and pepper and seized their ship, with its contents and crew. Thus the Portuguese at Calicut became a source of great affliction and distress to the Muslims and other subjects.\textsuperscript{146} Again when the Zamorin failed to check the Portuguese, he wrote letters to the Muslim sovereigns seeking their help.\textsuperscript{147}

The Portuguese also made preparations for war and set out from Goa. They fell upon Tikkodi and burnt many houses, shops and the Juma Masjid. Then they attacked Ponnani and burnt many houses and four mosques including the Juma Masjid.\textsuperscript{148} People of the coast approached their spiritual leader Sheikh Abul Wafa Muhammad alias Mamu Koya Shettar\textsuperscript{149} for his blessings and advice to fight with the Portuguese. He blessed them and gave

\textsuperscript{145} Ibid, p. 71.
\textsuperscript{146} Sheikh Zainudhin, \textit{Tuhfat}, Nainar, p. 63.
\textsuperscript{147} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{148} Ibid, p. 78
\textsuperscript{149} Sheikh Abdul Wafa Shamsudheen Muhammad Alias Sheikh Mamu Koya was a Sufi born in a Syrian family at Calicut. He had large number of followers in different places. For details, see Shihabudhin Ahmad Koya Shaliyati, \textit{Al-sheikh Abul Wafa Muhammad Kalikuti} (Ara.), Hajee K. Abdullah Musaliar Indianoor, trans. Mal., Ajmal printers, Chaliyam, 1987.
proper guidance and sent them against the Portuguese. Subsequently thousands of people fought against the Portuguese and captured the Portuguese ships and goods.\textsuperscript{150}

Meanwhile a civil war broke out between the Jews and Muslims at Kodungallur on the murder of a Muslim. To confront the combined forces of Jews and the Portuguese, a huge force of Nairs and Muslims were prepared. The Mappilas from different places like Calicut, Pantalayini, Kakkad, Tikkodi, Chaliyam, Parappanangadi, Tirurangadi, Tanur, Paravanna, Ponnani, and Veliyancode gathered together in the Juma Masjid\textsuperscript{151} of Chaliyam. With the consent of the Zamorin, they fought the combined enemy forces; attacked and burnt their houses and synagogues.\textsuperscript{152} Thrilled by the victory, the Zamorin’s forces reached Calicut with a fleet of hundred ships; attacked and destroyed the Calicut fort. The fort was reduced to a heap of ruins.\textsuperscript{153}

Shiekh Zainudhin notes that after the destruction of the fort, the fury and enmity of the Portuguese against the Zamorin and the Muslims increased. They attacked the city of Ponnani, burnt houses and caused great casualties

\textsuperscript{151} Gathering in the Juma Masjid indicates meeting of people under the ulama, as Chaliyam being one of the oldest centres of Muslim settlements. It also shows that their proper preparations and incitement for jihad.
\textsuperscript{152} Shiekh Zainudhin, \textit{Tuhfat} original text in Arabic MSS got from Chaliyam Library.
\textsuperscript{153} \textit{The Kerala Palama}, pp.170-85. Quoted in K. V. Krishna Ayyar, \textit{op.cit.}, p.188.
and many Muslims suffered martyrdom. In the fights that followed more than 2000 men including Nairs and Muslims, were slain.

Muslims also had confrontation with the Portuguese at various other points. In 1557, Ali Raja of Cannanore set out with a plan to resist the Portuguese. Foreknowing his plan the Portuguese attacked and killed large numbers of people and burnt many houses and mosques at Amine Island, which was under the control of Ali Raja. According to Sheikh Zainudhin, “the inhabitants of these islands were ignorant of the use of weapons, and there was none competent to fight. Notwithstanding, a large number of people fought against the enemy and fell as martyrs. Of these, the Qazi of the place and his wife were worthy of note. The Qazi was an elderly person virtuous and pious. Though the people possessed no arms, they were prepared to give a fight for their faith and die as martyrs. They flung earth and stones at the Portuguese and inflicted blows on them severely with sticks till they were killed.”

In 1528, Da Cunha, the Viceroy thought to have a fort at Ponnani or Chaliyam because of their strategic importance. The Portuguese, by an intrigue with the local chieftains of Tanur and Bettathunad, secured

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154 Sheikh Zainudhin, Tuhfat, Nainar, p. 66.
156 Nainar and others translated it as a pious woman but the correct translation from the original text of the Tuhfat is ‘his wife’.
permission for the erection of a fort at Ponnani. But the ships that carried the building materials from Cochin were destroyed in a storm near Ponnani. All the ships except one along with goods and crew were drowned.\(^{159}\) The people of Ponnani took this catastrophe as the miracle of their saints.

Despite all these reverses, the Portuguese did not give up their attempt to get a hold over Malabar. They conducted prolonged negotiations with the chieftains of Tanur and Chaliyam. Finally through nefarious lobbying the Portuguese managed to secure permission from the Zamorin to construct a fort at Chaliyam, a place of strategic and economic importance. In order to procure building materials for the construction of the fort and a church attached to it, they demolished four mosques including the famous historic Naqda Mithqal of Calicut.\(^{160}\) They even dug out the tombs of the Muslim graveyards.\(^{161}\) Thus by all wretched means they realized their dream of a fort at Chaliyam.

Soon the fort became a challenge both to the rulers and the ruled. The Portuguese caused a lot of hardships to the Zamorin and the traders. They seized every Moorish vessel that came on their way. The trade through sea came to a standstill. The Zamorin became convinced of his mistake and took

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\(^{159}\) Sheikh Zainudhin, *Tuhfat*, Nainar, p. 68.

\(^{160}\) Mosque constructed by *Naqda Mistqal*, one of the historic mosques in Calicut.

\(^{161}\) Sheikh Zainudhin, *Tuhfat*, Nainar, p. 70.
measures for the destruction of the fort, which culminated to the battle of Chaliyam.

**Ulama in the Battle of Chaliyam**

The *ulama* took an active role in the capture of the Chaliyam fort in 1570. Contemporary sources are eloquent of their role in the battle of Chaliyam.\(^{162}\) *Fathul Mubin* of Qazi Muhammad\(^{163}\) gives a vivid description of the prolonged war to seize the fort.\(^{164}\) At some stages the Zamorin was in utter despair as to the development of the war. The *ulama*, realizing the gravity of the situation appeared in person in the warfront. Throughout the siege, Sheikh Abul Wafa Muhammad *alias* Mamu Koya Shettar\(^{165}\) and Abdul Aziz, the *Qazil Quzat* of Calicut\(^{166}\) led the forces in the battlefront. Owing to many reasons the war prolonged and the result became unpredictable. In such a critical situation, the mother of the Zamorin sent an envoy to Sheikh Abul Wafa. He, then, called the Muslim leaders and the military generals to a mosque at Chaliyam and discussed the new tactics to be adopted in the war.

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\(^{162}\) Qazi Muhammad, *op.cit.*, verses 246-251, pp. 16-17.

\(^{163}\) He was born in the Qazi family of Calicut as the son of Qazi Abdul Aziz. He was a prolific writer, scholar, philosopher, poet, thinker, historian and crusader against the colonialists. He studied at Chaliyam and Ponnani under scholars like Sheikh Zainudhin Makhdum. He wrote a large number of works in Arabic and Arabi-Malayalam. *Muhiyidhin Mala* is the classical masterpiece among them.

\(^{164}\) Qazi Muhammad, *op.cit.*, verses 214-475, pp.14-29.

\(^{165}\) Shihabudhin Ahmad Koya Shaliyati, *op.cit.*, pp.3, and 12-13 the reference about the Portuguese in the Arabic version is *Afrang* but it is translated by the author into Malayalam as French by mistake.

\(^{166}\) *Qazi ul Quzat* means chief justice. It is an honorable Post in the Muslim community. Qazi Abdul Aziz was the father of Qazi Muhammad, the author of *Fath ul Mubin*. 
When the new tactics were applied, the Calicut army could make advance in the war. However the war dragged on indefinitely.

Increasing mortality and material losses adversely affected the morale of the forces. The wise mother of the Zamorin also wrote letters to many Muslim leaders seeking their support. Special messengers were sent to Sheikh Abul Wafa beseeching him to offer special prayers. At the request of the Zamorin’s mother, Sheikh Abul Wafa organized a congregation of thousands at Ponnani and offered special prayers for the victory in the war. After the congregation, Sheikh Abul Wafa and his disciples marched on to Chaliyam. Abdul Aziz, the Qazil Quzat of Calicut with a group of ulama including Sidi Ahmad al Khumami, Umar Andabi, Abdul Aziz Makhdumi Ma’ bari, and the general Kunjali Marakkar joined in the fight against the Portuguese. Special vows, entreaties and offerings were made at Makkah and Madinah. The Qazis of Chaliyam and Calicut were specially called for discussion at the Zamorin’s court. Soon the tide of the war turned in favour of the Zamorin. The Zamorin won the war and the Portuguese were uprooted. The Zamorin

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167 Shihabudhin Ahmad Koya Shaliyati, op.cit., p. 27.
168 Qazi Muhammad, op.cit., verse. 244, p. 16.
169 Shihabudhin Ahmad Koya Shaliyati, op.cit., p. 28.
170 Ibid.
171 Ibid. See also Qazi Muhammad, op.cit. Verses 246-252, pp.16-17.
172 Qazi Muhammad, op.cit., verses. 272-273, p. 18.
173 P. K. Muhammad Kunhi, op.cit., p. 78.
174 Shihabudhin Ahmad Koya Shaliyati, op.cit., p. 28.
ordered to demolish the fort; which was razed to the ground leaving not a single stone of the fort.\footnote{175} A living pen portrait of the battle of Chaliyam is available in the resistance literature written by \textit{Qazi} Mohammed entitled \textit{Fathul Mubin Lissamariyyilladi Yuhibbul Muslimeen} (Manifest victory of Zamorin who is loving Muslims). He was born as the son of \textit{Qazi} Abdul Aziz who fought in person against Portuguese in the battle of Chaliyam. It may probably be written around 1585 A.D, which consists of 537 verses. It is written to glorify the brevity and virtues of the ruler, Zamorin to the world. The author pictures him the champion of communal harmony. It also describes various types of atrocities committed by the Portuguese on Muslims and laments about the pathetic condition of the Muslim rulers who were not fighting against the Portuguese oppressors. By the title ‘Manifest Victory’ he imply the success of Zamorin on the Portuguese and the capture of Chaliyam fort.

The \textit{Qazi} Muhammad, an erudite writer, records the description of the battle of Chaliyam, a lesson to the people of the world to come.\footnote{176} He upholds the valour and model of the Zamorin before the rulers of the world and advises to follow him. It also pictures the benevolent activities of the Zamorin, which should be adopted by other rulers.\footnote{177} His presentation of the

\footnote{175} \textit{Qazi} Muhammad, \textit{op.cit.}, verses. 499-503, p. 30-31. \footnote{176} \textit{Ibid}, verses. 12-14, p. 3. \footnote{177} \textit{Ibid}, verses. 34-48, pp. 4-5.
arrival of the Portuguese and their character and activities would ignite a
strong anti-colonial spirit among the readers of all the time.\footnote{Ibid, verses. 70-80, pp. 6-7.}

The seventy years of conflict gave nothing substantial to the
Portuguese. The accursed Portuguese in a fit of anger applied fire and sword
along the Malabar coast. They were like the wounded snakes. They withdrew
to Goa to come again with new schemes to trap the Zamorin. In 1572 the
Portuguese appeared off Calicut. They ravaged the coastal cities from Tikodi
in the north to Ponnani in the south. The ravages shook the fickle minded
Zamorin. He bowed down before the Portuguese and granted them permission
to erect a fort at Ponnani, 'the Makkah of the Malabar.'

The ulama also became vigilant of the menace and continued to call
the people for jihad. They inspired the people through war songs and special
congregations. Thus new groups of Mujahids\footnote{One who engage in jihad.} rose up ready to face the
challenges of the Portuguese. Among them were the Kunjali Marakkars, the
disciple of sheikh Mamukoya and the Makhdums.\footnote{C. N. Ahmad Maulawi and K. K. Muhammad Abdul Kareem, op.cit., p. 161.}

The Kunjalis warned Zamorin against making treaty with the
Portuguese and the construction of a fort at Ponnani. He also sought
permission to erect a fort at the mouth of Kotta River as defense to the
Portuguese fort. Making Puthupattinam as their naval base, the Kunjalis
inflicted crushing defeats upon the Portuguese in the Arabian Sea. Failing to
face the Marakkar menace, the Portuguese tried to woo the Zamorin. Thus
the erection of the Portuguese fort at Ponnani, and the Marakkar fort at
Puthupattinam created great havoc in the Zamorin’s territory. The Portuguese
spread the rumour that the Kunjalis were acting as super kings. The
Zamorin fell in the trap of the rumour, which ultimately led to the eradication
of the Marakkar family. The whole heroic episode of Kunjalis’ fight was
the fulfillment of the dreams of his beloved Sheikhs, Sheikh Abul Wafa and
Sheikh Zainudhin.

The vigilant stand and prompt interference of the ulama contributed a
great moral as well as material strength in checking the expansion of the
Portuguese dominance in Malabar. Though the Portuguese succeeded in
creating a maritime empire in Asia, their endeavours to gain territorial
expansion in India failed except in Goa. The fall of the Portuguese did not
mark the end of anti-colonial struggle of the ulama. The Dutch and the French
followed the Portuguese to Malabar. But they did not seriously succeeded to
have a colonial root in Malabar. They did not acutely affect the life and
activities of the Mappilas. Hence the burden of ulama was ease and they

181 K. V. Krishna Ayyar, op.cit., p.199.
182 Ibid, p. 201.
183 After the surrender, the Portuguese carried Kunjali to Goa and put him to gallows and his
body was quartered and limbs were exhibited on the beaches of Panjim and Bardaz, his
head was salted and sent to Cannanore to be exhibited there as a warning to strike terror
among the Mappilas.
184 Claude Markovits, op.cit., pp.5-6.
turned seriously to the theological side. So, since then the *ulama* kept away from active involvement in the colonial issues till the coming of the British.

In short, the role of the *ulama* in the struggle against the Portuguese constitutes a unique chapter in the history of anti-colonial movement in the country. It was the *ulama* of Malabar who first developed an ideological basis on religious ground to the movement. To them the kingdom ruled by a Hindu Raja was a *Dar ul Islam* and to fight against those who tried to subjugate it was *jihad*. They did not hesitate to fight and die for the Hindu Rajas and never sought to replace them with any others including the Muslim rulers. The *ulama* of Malabar won the support of foreign rulers and succeeded in making their anti-colonial stand an international issue. They were also the first to use literature based on Holy Scriptures in the struggle against colonialism.