

Study on Contribution of Kunjali Marakkars for Muslim Identity Preservation in Kerala

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Abstract – Marakkar family reached Cochin from Konkan for trading. There is no evidence of their genealogy. Tradition reflects that they were the descendants of Arab Muslim merchants, came for trade with Malabar in 7th A.D. in Cochin. They were engaged for importing of rice from Kanara. When Cochin Raja befriended the Portuguese, the trade rights belonging to the local Muslim communities were threatened and their leader Ismail Marakkar had secretly helped the Zamorin, at the time of battle between the Cochin and Calicut, Marakkars ships and warehouses were destroyed. Felt alarmed over the threatening power of Portuguese, they left Cochin and settled down at Ponnani. From 1507 to 1524 Portuguese had attacked Ponnani and destroyed the ships and forces. This paper reflects contribution of Kunjali Marakkars for muslim identity preservation in Kerala.

Key Words – Muslim, Communities, Destroyed, Technological, Commercial

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1. INTRODUCTION:

The advent of Portuguese to Malabar was not only a commercial journey; it was also the beginning of political, religious and naval colonization. They destroyed the culture of free trade and monopolised sea trade. Their main religious and commercial enemies were Muslims. Portuguese people dominated native people by their navigational and technological skills. Their ships were not commercial ships. They were huge warship. They could make better cannons. The German engineers helped them to make cannons. In initial stage of war history, they had an upper hand because of their skills. But it is challenged when Kunjalis coming to the war field. If Kunjalis did not resist them, Kerala would be another Goa and Malayali's would be a hybrid species.

Rivalry between Muslims and Portuguese is not monolithic and universal. Kareemi Muslims and Portuguese had strong enmity. But relationship between Marakkars and Portuguese people had entangled with quarrels and adjustments. Local merchants and Portuguese had good relationships. Sometimes, they helped Portuguese in different ways as spies and renegades. Koyapakki was a good example for it.

When the Portuguese came back to Malabar, the technology of war changed completely. Big war was not familiar to Kerala. Local wars were like a sport. In

marine wars they used only fire torches. After the advent of Portuguese fire torches were replaced with cannons. Portuguese introduced a new method of arranging full time navigator-warriors. Their fire squad was led by Germans. In early period Zamorin's army and native army were defeated because of these technological excellence and war strategies. Later, Zamorin's army achieved these skills.

Nationalist, and Marxian historians never paid much attention to the resistance of Kunjali against Portuguese invasion because these struggle had some aspects which could not have reduced to nationalist paradigm or class struggle, rather than productive force concepts of Marxism. Kunjalis' struggles have commercial, religious and local dimension.

2. ORIGIN OF MARAKKARS FAMILY

Marakkar family reached Cochin from Konkan for trade. There is no clear picture of their genealogy. Tradition says that they were the descendants of Arab Muslim merchants who came for trade with Malabar in 7th A.D. in Cochin. They were engaged in the import of rice from Kanara.

When Cochin Raja befriended the Portuguese, the trade rights belonging to the local Muslim communities were threatened. Their leader Ismail

Marakkar had secretly helped the Zamorin, during the battle between the Cochin and Calicut, Marakkars ships and warehouses were destroyed. Felt alarmed over the threatening power of Portuguese, they left Cochin and settled down at Ponnani. From 1507 to 1524 Portuguese had attacked Ponnani and destroyed the ships and forces. Then they moved to further north and settled southern bank of Agala Puzha River. Due to continuous Portuguese attacks the sea trade and income of Zamorin got decreased. Two merchants from Ponnani who had suffered from Portuguese bombardment at sea came to see Zamorin with their own plans. The delegation consisted of Kunchali, Kutti ali, and Ali Ibrahim. Zamorin appointed them as naval admirals. He gave them the title Kunchali: Marakkar.

2.1 Etymology of the Name - Marakkar

The word 'Marakkar' is an abbreviation of 'margakkaran' (follower of law). From another point of view, the word 'Marakkar' would mean boatman and it has originated from the Arabic root 'Markat' or Tamil root 'Marakkal – rayan'. According to Dr. S.C Hill, it is derived from a Marathi word 'Marakkar' (Demon) used by the people of Konkan coast colloquially for seaman. 'Marakkar' is an honorific plural of the word 'Marakkan' (mukkuvan) 'kunjali' is an honorific or endearing title which means 'dear ali'.

2.2 Kunjali Marakkar -1 (1507- 1531)

Zamorin appointed Kunjali Marakkar as his chief admiral of navy. He offered him swords, ships and services to fight the Portuguese. Kunjali-1 appoints the best sea men to navy. Kuttiali was the captain of Tanur naval barrack. He was efficient and intelligent. Pachachi Marakkar was another captain.

Kuttiali reformed the whole system with strategy and technology. He realized that ships of Calicut were no match to the Portuguese vessel which were fixed and well equipped. The heavy and large Portuguese vessels were slow and took more room for manoeuvre and needed high wind for fast movement. Kuttiali built a large number of fast moving boats called 'paraos' rowed by 30 to 40 rowers and could be easily navigable. Being small and fast, these paraos became a difficult target for enemies. His Menon hillocks kept a watch over the sea and signalled the movements of enemy ships. Portuguese could not make such communication system. Kuttiali resurrected naval force and Portuguese were forced to follow trade convoy system for their merchant trips. Consequently they lost their superiority in Indian Ocean.

In 1523 Captain Kuttiali with eight pepper-loaded ships with an escort of 40 vessels sailed to the red sea before the very eyes of the Portuguese. Kuttiaali was assisted by his brother Junior kuttiali. Meanwhile, the old Zamorin was dead and the new

Zamorin was even more hostile to Portuguese. Even though there was no open war, there was an undeclared war on the sea, viceroy Vasco da Gama (1524) had sent several expeditions to Malabar. He sent martin a fouso De souza to stop kutti ali's naval activities. The conflicts took place at Kapad, kuttiali withdrew his sea men to Panthalayani kollam. De Souza chased them up to Cannanore. Junior kutiali faced the same situation when Portuguese fleet confronted with him in a pitched battle. Pattu Marakkar and Balia Hasan of kannanore were the leaders of the guerrilla team of Calicut. Pattumarakkar, assisted by the king of Porakkad seized and sunk several Portuguese ships. Viceroy of Vasco da Gama went to Cannore and asked the Arakkal king to surrender him. Arakkal king surrendered Balia Hassan. He was imprisoned at St.Angelo fort at Cannore. Portuguese governor Henriques de menezes and lopo vaaz de sampayo tried their best to destroy Malabar sea men. Menezes hanged Balia Hassan. Arakkal king and kolathiri tried too much to save him. Rivalry between Muslims and Portuguese thus hardened.

In 1525, the new Zamorin declared a war with Portuguese and proceeded to attack the Portuguese fort at Calicut Menezes attacked them at Ponnani on 26.2.1525 and destroyed the ships. Kutti ali responded to them by burning all Portuguese ships at Cochin. In June 1525, Menezes attacked Panthalayini Kollam and it's flourishing trade centre. They captured forty vessels and taken them to kannanore. They provoked Zamorin and attacked Portuguese fort at Kozhikode and prevented the supplies from Goa and Cochin. Kutti ali's team bombarded the fort from the sea. Kutti ali resorted to the principle of conciliation of forces, economy of effort, offensive action and flexibility.

In 15th October 1526 governor Menezes came with 20 ships to relieve the garrison. Kuttiali had to lift the siege. Portuguese themselves demolished the fort. New governor lopo vaz sampayo attacked Kutti Ali's fleet and destroyed. Kuttiali escaped the attack. In March 1528 the captain had won a victory against Calicut fleet under Kuttiali. He was released only after he swore in the name of Quran that he would never again fight with the Portuguese.

In September 1528, the Portuguese attacked Zamorin's port and blocked the river- mouth in order to bottle-up several Malabar ships. But Malabar sea men resisted and destroyed several Portuguese ships and killed Portuguese team. Kunjali-I and his team could cut the sea communication between Goa and Cochin. Thus the trade got diminished. Maritime trade of west coast was in the total control of Malabar sea men.

2.3 Kunjali Marakkar – II (1531-1571)

In 1531, Zamorins fleet under Kunjali Marakkar II, son of Kuttiali who had served under Kunjali I as Captain. He was an expert in naval warfare. The Portuguese had stories invading countries like Sri Lanka, Lakshadweep and Ormuz, in Persia. Kunchali-1 attacked Portuguese crew at Sri Lankan shore. Building a naval command in Sri Lanka, Portuguese could block Zamorin's ships travelling towards Red sea. Zamorin and sea men of Kozhikode tried to make a Trans – national alliance against Portuguese. Zamorine tried to seek military assistance from Gujarat Sulthan. But Portuguese captain Manuel de Souze invited sulthan for treaty and killed him.

Egyptian sulthans tried to build an international Muslim alliance against Portuguese. But they became a challenge to Portuguese in that area. In Malabar Egyptian alliance, there were other partners like sulthan of camps and Adil shah's partners and of Konkan and Karnataka. But there was an absence of strong alliance. It was weak. Even though Malabar sea men didn't get any military assistance in proper time. It did not affect their vigour and vibes.

In 1531, the Portuguese captured some ships of Zamorin on the way to Gujarath and took many prisoners including Ali Ibrahim, Maarkkar and kutti Ibrahim. This failure wounded Zamorin the compromised and gave permission to Portuguese to construct a fort at Chaliyam. Chaliyam was in the territory of king of Tanur. It's construction completed in March 1532. Chaliyam fort was in strategic position.

Kunjali -II attacked Portuguese settlements in Coromandal coast and Ceylon. They established a space at kotta and supported. Kunjali-II resorted to the tactics of attacking the enemy in two different directions. This combat continued till Portuguese were forced to face the incoming fleet of Sulaiman pasha.

In 1533, Kunjali II attacked the Portuguese settlement of Naya pattanam on east coast. But unexpectedly a Portuguese fleet under Antony Desilva engaged Kunjali and defeated them. Somehow Kunjali escaped. In 1534, Kunjali prepared another fleet and defeated them. In 1537, Zamorin attacked Portuguese at Kodungallur. Then they marched towards Cochin.

In February 1538 Zamorin and sulthan of Gujarath requested the help of Sulaiman from Turkey. Sulaiman tried to besiege the fort to Diu, and failed. Old Zamorin died and new Zamorin was compelled to make a treaty with Portuguese. Kunjali-II attacked Portuguese ships. In 1533, Kunjali -II attacked the Portuguese settlement at Punnakayal on the Coromandel Coast invited and requested by Viswanath Nayak, the Vijayanagar governor of

Madurai during 1555 – 1559. The Portuguese destroyed so many native ships and killed all crew. Kunjali-II out pitched battles.

In 1588, in an engagement between Portuguese and Kunjali II, native ships were lost. In 1599, Portuguese fleet under Gon alio marmanaque had blocked the Malabar Coast and caused too much damage. Kolathiri declared war with Portuguese and besieged the fort of St. Angelo at Cannore. Kunjalis crew blocked the assistance from Goa. These events made trade in north Malabar impossible. To take revenge Portuguese destroyed properties that came to Calicut.

Political atmosphere of south India encouraged the struggles of Zamorin. The defeat of Vijay Nagar in the battle of Tali kotta in 1565 crippled the Portuguese trade. In 1566, Muslims of Ponnani and Panthalayini Kollam attacked Portuguese rice – laden ships. To retaliate Portuguese had resorted to plundering and destroying the Muslims settlements on Malabar Coast. In 1570, Zamorine built an alliance with Adil Shah of Bijapur, Nizam Shah of Ahammed Nagar to expel Portuguese from Indian Ocean.

They set and signed an agreement. The king of Achen was asked to attack Malacca. Zamorine sent Kutti Pokker with 21 paraos to assist the siege of chaul. A Portuguese squadron was guarding the harbour of chaul. Kutty poker sailed into the harbour in night and landed there. The Malabar fleet fought for days in chaul and faced so many losses, even though they could make much damage to the Portuguese shipping and base. Kutti Poker slipped away from chaul during one night. On the way they engaged with fleet of Menezes with 40 ships. His whole fleet, except 2 ships was destroyed.

2.3.1 Siege of Chaliyam Fort

In July 1571, Kozhikode forces began to siege the Portuguese fortress of Chaliyam. Many local Muslims from the neighboring areas came and gave full support to Zamorine. Pattu Marakkar was the native contingent and they cut all the provisions to the fort besieged; it were forced dogs and animals and the servants and woman came out of the fort and Portuguese captain Decastro were later executed in Goa. The surrender of Chaliyam fort was a great blow to the Portuguese prestige in the east, their grip on Malabar shore and was a victory of the Malabar sea men.

2.4 Kunjali Marakkar – III (1571 – 1595)

Victory over Chaliyan fort made Zamorin happy and he gave permission to pattu Marakkar to build a fort and dockyard at Puduppatanam near Vadakara at the mouth of Aklapuzha River. Within two years he built it. It was called Marakka kotta.

Pattu Marakkar was conferred the title of Kunjali Marakkar-III.

During the period of Kunjali-III war technologies and ammunitions were improved. To build the fort, Egyptian and Turkish architects helped Kunjali-III. Mughal emperor sent his sculptor. After building the fort, Pattu Marakkar engaged with Portuguese several times. Velliyamkallu and Iringal para were good signal centres. Velliyamkallu is called 'Sacrifice rock' because Muslims killed so many Portuguese there. Kunjali-III could not expel Portuguese from Goa. But he could prevent their activities in Malabar Coast. But the Portuguese continued their attacks on Malabar Coast. Kunjali and his fleet kept retaliating.

In 1575 after led by Portuguese Joao Dacosta attacked Malabar Coast with two galleys and 24 other vessels. They captured several Malabar vessels and set the towns of Parapangadi, Kappad and Nileswaram. In 1578 Portuguese sent Rui Goncalo de cammara to negotiate with the Zamorin for permission to build a fort at ponnani. Zamorin denied it. Portuguese bombarded the coast nearby villages. The Portuguese and Kunjali -III engaged. In 1582 – 83, the Portuguese captured 50 rice loaded Calicut ships coming from kanara coast. This led to famine condition. Here Captain Kutti Moosa took complete mastery over the Coromandel Coast. Meanwhile, Kunjali III fought against the Portuguese shipping from Dabul to cope Cameron on the west coast.

Continuous war fare weakened Zamorin. In 1528 Zamorin made peace treaty with Portuguese. He allowed them to build a fort at ponnani. It was a historical blunder and political suicide. Because ponnani's strategic position was very important. Kunjali protested against this decision. This event made a deep wound on Muslim sea men. It was the beginning of strained relation between the Zamorine and Muslim sea men.

Kunjali-III had brilliant war strategies and good leadership qualities. Kutti moosa and kutty pokker were employed in his navy. Kutty poker had the experience of working with kunchali II. He was from ponnani. He was petrolling the sea to save native ship from Portuguese attack. He was appointed to attack Portuguese at Chaul port for Nizam. Kutty moosa's area was eastern coast in Arabian Sea. Portuguese could not win his army. So, they withdrew to eastern coast. He reached there too to chase Portuguese from there.

Kunjali-III had got the assistance of foreign experts to design and construct new ships in European model and gave training to his navy in advanced methods of naval war fare. They began to build new ships, ammunitions and war weapons. German engineers helped them to build new big guns. Kunjali built a new Malabar Coast where native ships can travel without fear of Portuguese ships. The Portuguese

ships could travel only with envoys accompanying them. They did not get any help from foreign rulers like Egyptian king and north Indian sultans. Thus they made a self-reliant self-defence method.

Portuguese king wrote letters to viceroy to make plans to destroy Kunjali III fort, and to divide Zamorine and Kunjali 3. At that time Kutti moosa destroyed several Portuguese vessels. His fleet sailed to Sri Lanka and made an alliance with Pattanam, the king of Jaffna. The King approved a base of operations against the Portuguese. Captain Andre Furtad Mendonca beat Kutty Moosa's fleet in 1859. Kutti Moosa fled with his men.

Zamorine entered into a peace – treaty again. But it did not last long. The Portuguese did not respect terms. In April 1594, near Goa, Malabar sea men and Portuguese fought together. All the Portuguese crew were killed. In August 1594, Andre furtado's crew killed 200 Malabar sea men and large booty was also taken off. In 1594, on his return after a combat with Portuguese at Panthalayini, Kunjali slipped and fell down. His thigh bone was fractured. He couldn't recover his health.

2.5 Kunjali Marakkar - IV

In 1595, Kunjali III died. His nephew was appointed as Admiral of Kozhikode. His real name was Muhammed Kunjali. After taking the position of Kunjali Marakkar, he strengthened the fort. These processes made Portuguese fearful.

The Portuguese planned Machiavellian strategies to win. They arranged some people to spread rumours about Kunjali among people. They imported some priests to spread lies. He had got a local assistant called varakkal Adiyodi. They spreaded so many rumours that Kunjali was going to make a Muslim empire and Kunjali had declared himself as defender of Islam and made Zamorin panic. Kunjali-IV was very popular and as he became known from the Cape of good hope to China. He had captured many Portuguese vessels and he assisted the enemies of the Portuguese like Rani of ullal when she fought against Portuguese. He helped Sulthan of Bijapur during the siege of chaul earlier in 1570.

2.5.1 The Conspiracy

Relation between Zamorine and Kunjali was bad since 1586 and it started getting worse day by day. Sea power of Kunjali was increased. Zamorine began to feel more threatened. The Portuguese used this opportunity and they did their best to widen the gap. He was said to have dared even to cut the tail of zamorin's elephant. Zamorine had secretly sought Portuguese, help in order to teach Kunjali a lesson and tame him. There was a dispute among historians about the reasons of spite between Zamorine and Kunjali IV .MGS

Narayanan, and Prof. OK. Nambiar blamed Kunjali for these events. But in local folklore there was no indication of Kunjali as accused. During the period of Kunjali, Zamorine was young and immature.

2.5.2 The Beginning of siege

In 1597, Portuguese sent Captain Alvaro de Abraham to Calicut to negotiate a treaty of peace. It was agreed that Zamorin by newly land Portuguese should jointly undertake an attack on Marakkur kotta. The new Viceroy Fransisco de Gama was in charge of siege Kunjali fort. He organised public help. He organised two fleets – one for north and other for the south.

A fleet consisting of 4 galleys 35 small vessels, 2 large and 10 ships were under the command of Captain Luis Gama. Zamorin was in dilemma. If he joined with Portuguese power against his admiral, it will be suicide. His Nair army respected Kunjali. So, Zamorin demanded better terms before Captain Luis de Gama was reported to be an increasing demand. Lui's de gama again returned to Malabar in December 1598. The arch bishop of Goa Alexio de Menezes was called at Kottakkal and assisted the plan. The council of captains decided to attack.

The joint operation began on 15.3.1599. The Calicut army attacked Portuguese at sea. Kunjali's ship could not reach near the fort. All provisions to force were blocked. The combined attack was to start on the showing of a fire signals, burning by alliance shortly before dawn. Belchoir Ferreira with 600 Portuguese and 500 Nairs became confused. They moved forward and 28 men were killed by Kunjali's soldiers. Other team attacked and destroyed many go on facing the failure in siege Captain Luis de Gama returned to Cochin in September 1599. Approximately 500 Portuguese men died.

In Goa, people gathered around viceroy's palace to know about their relatives' death. Viceroy called the council and the council decided to continue the naval blockade. Luis de Gama was sent to Ormuz and Andre Furtado Mendoca was in charge of new war.

Some historians believed that the victory over combined army made Kunjali proud. This speculation is quite unreasonable. If Kunjali was egoistic, never would have he tried to make a peace – treaty with Zamorine through Thacholi, Meppayil Kurup. Kunjali expected help from Egyptian camp – Beejapur rulers. Only the queen of Ullal sent 3000 sacks of rice. But Portuguese fleet blocked it. Madhura Naik promised for Kunjalali, a political refuge. So he strengthened the defence.

In 16 December 1559 Zamorin and Furtado held a meeting and made an agreement. Zamorin had agreed to provide a force of 1000 workers for the siege of Kaotkkal fort, 15 elephants and plenty of timber for carpentry workers, an army of carpenters

and 5000 Nairs provided with spades, baskets etc. He also agreed to provide sailors, 30 rafts along with sea men and lascars to keep vigil on the Kota River.

Zamorine allowed the Portuguese erect churches at Calicut. It was decided that after war the ships goods, treasury and artillery were to be divided equally. Kunjali were to be kept under the custody of the Portuguese. Zamorine went away for two months for the mamankam festival. Furtado could not attack. Furtado started the assault with all care and he began by diverting the attention of kunjali in different directions within a short time. The Portuguese disembarked and took over the first bunker. Captain Andre Rodrigue pal hota with 600 men attacked the fort from the sides of river. Captain Belchior Ferrira with his troops attacked the fort from the land area. The besieged suffered a great loss. 10 Portuguese were killed and more than 79 were injured.

Furtado calculated that ensuring winter would force them to return to Goa that enabled Kunjali to recover and regain strength to obstruct the Portuguese Navigation. In March 1600, Zamorine returned from Mamakam festival. Kunjali sent messenger to him with a huge sum of money and requesting for safety. Soon some 250 to 300 Muslims came out from the fortress along with 700 women and children.

2.6 The ambiguity of Zamorin

Portuguese leaders suspected Zamorin that if the final assault was in delay, Zamorin would help Kunjali to escape. Fransisco D'souza with 400 soldiers attacked fort from the eastern side Furtado with 1200 soldiers attacked bulwark from the side of the fort. The Portuguese canons were found in the village of Kottakkal Kunjali himself came forward with additional re-enforcement. A bitter fighting ensued and Portuguese Captains fell. Furtado did not retreat. He led his men for another attack. He climbed the wall of fort and entered the outskirts of the fort and quickly garrison shed it with 300 men and stayed there resisting Kunjali's attempts to dislodge them. Futrado kept up the bombardment for 5 days which destroyed the Kottakkal town.

Zamorin and Furtado held another meeting. Furtado threatened Zamorin that if Kunjalii manages to leave the fortress with his help, Furtado would march to Calicut city and set the city on fire, bloodshed, loot and plunder. The words frightened Zamorin. On 1600 march 10, Furtado entered onto a large barca and began to bombard in the fort. Zamorin realised that it was not possible for him to halt or stop the assault. Kunjalis men was suffering from the shortage of food. Kunjali sent messengers to his master Zamorin begging for pardon and offering to deliver the fortress and

requesting him to assure his life and that of his defenders.

Zamorin sent his terms to Kunjali. They fixed 16th March as the date for surrender ceremony, Kunjali agreed. Their condition was pathetic. They were wounded, burnt, sick and some of them were even followed by the remaining soldiers. Kunjali was dressed in a gown of noble man with gold buttons with a belt and a dagger in a sheath of gold a very thick bangle of gold. He had a black kerchief on his head. He delivered his sword to Zamorin. Zamorin minister took it over. Furtado put his hands on the shoulders of Kunjali and seized him by his hands and pulled him aside. Muslims and Nairs did not expect it. They began to fall upon Portuguese. The Portuguese troops disarmed them. They were arrested. Furtado left the fort with the share of the booty. Fortress was totally demolished. Zamorin handed over to Furtado 40 Muslim followers of Kunjali. Furtado brought Kunjali and his men to Goa. Kunjali was hanged and they cut his body into pieces. Body parts were exhibited on the beaches. Head was slated and sent to Kannur.

2.7 Kottupally mala

A century of confrontation on the Malabar Coast had left reminiscences of these heroic struggles are recited even now among the Mappila rural folk. Some of the festivals and the myths are related to the 16th century struggles. Two such instances are narrated here for an analytical study. Manath parambil Kunhi Marakkar was a martyr who lost his life while he was engaged in saving a girl from the Portuguese.

He saved her, but became martyr in that attempt. Several myths related to this hero are available in folk songs known as Kottupalli Mala. Annual festivals are organised in honour of his memory at Kottupalli near Ponnani. Thousands of rural folks from Mappila attend the festival. His memory is thereby preserved from generation to generation.

The Mamba Makham near Kannur is also associated with the martyrdom of three heroes, Mahim Pokker, Zirajuddin and Abdulla, who lost their lives in an encounter against the Portuguese. The Makham is situated near the place where they attacked the Portuguese. Some of these tombs and centres perpetuate the memory and history of those anti-Portuguese struggles on the Malabar Coast. The Mappilas as a community cherish these reminiscences as a matter of identity of their community. However such tendencies could not be found among other communities of the coast, even if they had participated in these struggles.

A promontory near Vatakara projected in the Arabian Sea known as sacrifice rock, had several stories to tell as it had witnessed several encounters and sacrifices of both the Portuguese and the Mappilas.

The petty traders and merchants of Mappila community peacefully settled in the small town of the coast were compelled to migrate to the hinterlands as peaceful trade of spice was not possible for them due to the Portuguese activities.

2.8 Revenge of cosmic justice

Although all chaos were over, Portuguese authorities faced another challenge that emerged as the cousin of Kunjali-IV. A cousin of Kunjali called Ali Marakkar who was at the age of 13, captured by Furtado in the battle of Cordiva was brought to Goa. He was baptised and was given a Christian name of a Portuguese. When Portuguese executed Kunjali, he was at the age of 16. One night he escaped from Goa and reached Malabar. He re-organised Kunjalis followers and equipped 5 paraos. He attacked and looted Portuguese ships.

He went to North West province of Ceylon and from there to the island of Tanadiva. There he entered the beach of St. Joao. He took revenge on the Franciscan priests for the baptism he had received from them. Then he went to the island of Focodos and took possession of a large number of cattle. Pedro established good contact with Dutch. The Dutch and Ali Marakkar's team looted Portuguese ships. Taking goods, artillery and ammunitions. In 1619 he plundered Portuguese ships in manner in Ceylon. Constaution Desa had sent 2 galliotes with them along with Portuguese vessels under Vitoreo Abreau. Pedro defeated them Pedro attacked Portuguese ships several times.

Muslims were totally alienated from Zamorin. In 1663 the Dutch captured, Portuguese fortress in Kerala, Zamorins could not restore their lost position in trade and war Kunjalai's struggles against Portuguese colonisation, was not only a struggle for freedom of Malabar but it was also a process of decolonisation of Muslims community self. This historical experience of struggles with Portuguese increased social mobility and cultural, capital and social capital of Kerala Muslims. These anticolonial struggles empowered them politically and culturally. Their cultural resistance gave birth to so many texts. Tuhfat al Mujahideen, Fathul Mubeen are the texts on decolonisation. Moreover there were so many folk songs and movements taken place.

The maritime power of Calicut almost came to an end by the dawn of the 17th century. The prolonged and protracted wars against the Portuguese over a century, in fact, weakened the political power as well as the economic stability of this kingdom. The prosperity and surplus enjoyed by it from the maritime trade were lost forever. During the mediaeval era, Calicut, which was a foreign port, lost its prestige and fame due to the arrival of the

Portuguese and their contacts with other trade nations.

These conflicts as traced in the earlier chapters continued over a century, in which the House of Kunjali Marakkars came to be prominent house of admirals in the 16th century. This trading house gradually turned to be the defender of freedom of the Arabian Sea. Its role in offensive and defensive capacity was praiseworthy and it inculcated the spirit of freedom in land and sea. The emerging trend of nationalism particularly in the countries of Western Europe including Portugal was the determining force behind the European expansion. Such a trend was developing gradually among the political fragments of Kerala too. The house of Kunjali had represented this new trend and it was much ahead of its time. The Zamorins and the Calicut kingdom raised an acute defence system against the political and commercial intruders on the western coast and showed the elements of emerging trends of nationalism. Although there were compromises with the Portuguese by the Zamorin as political and military strategy, there were always confrontations against the Portuguese and their allies as well. In fact the spirit of resistance was always kept alive by the house of Kunjalis. The house had sacrificed its men and money for this purpose. Further the leadership on the basis of an anti- Portuguese ideology given by this house to coastal Mappilas was praiseworthy. The Muslim communities were defended against all the exploitations by the Portuguese.

Therefore the House of Kunjalis under the flag of Zamorin came to be the symbol of sea-resistance against the Portuguese. The native encounters both offensive and defensive against the Portuguese had considerable impact on the maritime history of Malabar. These contacts were well exploited by the Kunjalis in designing strategy of warfare, construction of vessels and innovation of new techniques like, surveillance, naval blockade and conveying cargo vessels escorted by arms soldiers. During the Second World War, submarine threats were counteracted by such convoy system. The Malabar sailors under the able leadership of the Kunjalis had such convoy of cargo vessels to the Red sea. They also introduced sector attack by charging from flanks in separate groups as a matter of surprise. The strategies like hit and run instead of direct attack and confrontations were adopted by the Malabar sailors. The principle of flexibility was always maintained to counteract the attack of heavy tonnage of vessels. Such strategies further developed into a policy of using naval forces for maintaining control in the area of interest. The Indian navy in the modern period had adopted several such strategies at the time of exigencies.

The Malabar sailors understood the value of the independence of the Arabian Sea in the Middle East's trade ties. This idea of sea independence was well ahead of its day, and even the great Mughals

were unable to follow such a strategy in their political power campaigns. With the arrival of the Dutch and English over the Malabar Coast, the fall of the House of Kunjalis introduced more facilities. Zamorin's influence was often tied to the sea power of the Kunjalis. Their decline has further led to the decline of the Zamorin kingdom's political and economic power base. The kingdom of Calicut was thus more introduced to the European adventures and builders of the empire in the 17th century. The history of colonisation in Malabar and other areas of South India began with this.

One essential lesson in history is taught in the Kunjali Marakkar saga, and that is the independence of the sea, which essentially preserves the independence of the land. Therefore, this 413th year of Kunjali Marakkar IV's martyrdom has a significant message for this country. "The freedom of sea is the absolute freedom of a nation".

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