CHANGING URBAN DYNAMICS OF A CITY: A CASE STUDY OF SIXTEENTH CENTURY CALICUT

A dissertation submitted

During (2016) to the University of Hyderabad in Partial Fulfilment

of the Award of a Master of Philosophy

in Department of History, School of Social Sciences

BY

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JUNE 2016

DECLARATION

I **Fahad. K** hereby declare that this dissertation entitled **"*Changing Urban Dynamics of a City: A Case Study of Sixteenth Century Calicut*"**, submitted by me under the guidance and supervision of **Prof. Sanjay Subodh,** Department of History, is a bonafide research work, which is also free from plagiarism. I also declare that it has not been submitted previously in part or in full to this University or any other University or Institution for the award of any degree or diploma. I hereby agree that my dissertation can be deposited in Shodganga/INFLIBNET.

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Dedication

To My Parents

And Late Younger Brother Fahis

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Let me frankly admit that this study would never have been possible without the help and support of the people whom I want to acknowledge here. It becomes more pertinent to acknowledge all these people because of the fact that these have been very trying time for me personally. Research is always a painful process. Unless one does not have the support and encouragement of friends and well-wishers it becomes difficult to remain sane.

My deepest gratitude and regards are for my worthy supervisor Prof. Sanjay Subodh. It has been his unstinting support and belief in my ability that I have seen me through these difficult times. His scholarship on medieval Indian urban process, his friendly approach to research and his resourcefulness have been quite surprising given our stereotype of historians. I was very fortunate that I got a lot of time to interact with him face to face all through these two years and his continuous guidance and suggestions aided me to complete this dissertation and make it credible. On the concluding days of my research I also had the good fortune to see him as a new Head of the Department on chair.

I would like to thank the other faculties in the Department for their valuable classes during the course work and the support and encouragement they rendered in the last two years of my research. Prof. Rekha Pande, Prof. Aloka Parasher Sen, Prof. Atluri Murali, Prof. K.P. Rao, Dr. Rajagopal, Dr. M.N. Rajesh, Dr. Eswar Rao, Dr. Rashmi, and Dr. Bhangya Bhukya, with whom I had a wonderful experience during the National Seminar he organised on March 2015 titled 'Revisiting Adivasi Autonomy'. Dr. Anindita Mukhopadhyay with whom I had memorable academic discussion along with tea at her place. Dr. V.J. Varghese the man who has always rendered me immense support and encouragement in the last two years for academic and non-academic matters. For that I will be ever grateful.

I would also like to express my gratitude to Prof. Pius Malekandathil, CHS, JNU, New Delhi, for suggesting me this M.Phil. topic, and also for the various suggestions at different times of my research. I would like to thank him for all the help and support.

Since the research topic was on Calicut, much of the concerned source material had to be collected from a lot of places inside and outside Kerala, at Calicut University's C.H. Muhammed Koya Library and History Department Library, at New Delhi's Nehru Memorial Museum and Library, Zakir Hussain Library - JMI, Central Library – JNU. I thank the staff at all these institutions for sincere help and co-operation. The staff at the Indira Gandhi Memorial Library in HCU was no doubt very helpful in providing and making available any book I wanted. I would also thank the employees and the staff of our department in the HCU for their assistance at different periods of time during my dissertation work. I am especially thankful to Subramanyyam, Shivcharan, Arjun and Ravi from the Department of History.

I have been fortunate enough to have shared these years with most helpful and caring classmates: Mrinalini, Karan Palsaniya, Suresh Singh, Ranjit, Vinieto, Shambavi, Bhargavi and especially Nairita to whom I owe special thanks for the timely help in editing the chapters and valuable comments. Shazia and Anindita, though they were not classmates, rendered all the support and wishes.

A good number of seniors and juniors always been there to help me out: Amritha, Nilam, Nimitha, Jasna, Sujatha, Suchitra, Jiji, Prasantha, Aien, Pooja, Pratima, Srinath, Kishore, Srijan, Atu, Van Lal, Hathika, Afsal, Dhruv, Muthu, Mir Bilal, Thoufeeq, Rayees, Sajad, Jawhar, John, Rizwan, Mir Chaudary, Sasmita, Ziyad, Navneeth, Safeera, Asif, Akhil, Chitran, Hari, Vaibhav, Arun, Sreekala, Shameer, Sabik. I thank them all for their kind help, especially Fayaz and Amjad, whom I considered my brothers, rendered all the support and courage in my good and bad days of research. I have no words to thank them.

I would also like to thank the faculties of the Department of History and Culture, JMI, New Delhi, who moulded me in academics during my MA in 2011-2013. Prof. R.P. Bahuguna, Prof. Inayat Ali Zaidi, Prof. Sunita Zaidi, Prof R. Gopinath, Dr. P.K. Basant, Dr. Ranjeeta Dutta (now in CHS, JNU). I am grateful to you all for the ever time memorable classes.

My friends at JMI and JNU, New Delhi have given many suggestions and assistance. Vikas, Ikram, Amir, Asif, Akil, Asma, Mamta, Areeba, Ajay, Sanjeev, Yogesh, Erfan, Faheem, Parvez, Anas Ali, Said Ali, Jaifer, Aneesh, Muneer deserve my sincere thanks.

My uncles at Delhi have always been stood with me throughout my academics. Haleemka, saleelka, Khaliqka, yonuska, Ajmalka deserves my sincere thanks.

The teachers who taught me in graduation at PSMO College, Tirurangadi, Kerala also deserve my thanks. Dr. Vasu Thilleri, Dr. O.P. Mayankutty, Dr. K.K. Abdul Sathar, Abdul Rasheed Sir, Basheer Sir and especially Dr. P.P. Abdul Razak and Fazal Sir whom helped me to develop my interest in history and the immense support and encouragement rendered by them ever grateful.

The teachers of intermediate class at V.P.K.M.M.H.S.S. Puthur Palikkal. Their classes and advices makes me more enthusiastic towards social sciences. V.P. Abdul Azeez Sir, P.C. Saidalikutty Sir, Leena Mam, Reena Mam, Divya Mam, Deepa Mam, Muhammed Sir, Muhammed Kutty Sir, Kabeer Sir, Ismail Sir. Thank you all for advices and support.

The dear and near, countless friends in HCU and outside the campus not mentioned here by name, thank you one and all.

Many people back at home have also been a source of support for me. These include my parents Ismail and Mumtaz, my sister Fahida, my brother-in-law Sajad, my uncle and aunt Naser and Naseera, cousin sister Nafiya and cousin brother Nasif. I also thank my friends back at home Vahid, Ishaq, Basith, Habeeb, Muhsin, Muzammil, Vineeth for their encouragement all through these trying times.

CONTENTS

Introduction

India has a sea-oriented segment and it represents the long stretch of littoral area which stands remarkably unique and different from its land-locked counterpart in its social, economic and political spheres.[1] During the early medieval and medieval periods, the coastal India as against its other physiographical counterparts began to experience changes, where the frequent movement of commodities, people and ideas from abroad became vital to thriving this process. However, this change cannot be viewed as a singular phenomenon as there existed a reciprocal relationship among the disparate geographical regions. This has also been vital during the medieval period to the extent whereby a major role was played by the ecology and geography of the sea in shaping the ethos and mentality of the people living on its fringes. However, the people, who inhabited the land bordering the rim of the sea, also played an important role in this process by constantly availing the resources from the sea.

The importance of a coastal segment was assessed by the variety of economic activities carried out along the coastline, which has been used to decide the nature of its impact on the social processes as well. Therefore, in the perception of Pius Malekandathil, "during the medieval and early modern period, the coastal India did not mean the mere long stretch of sandy space located on the fringes of sea-space; it meant value-condensed segment in uneven forms scattered along the coastline and extending up to inland spaces where the economic activities of production and exchange, besides social and political processes, were shaped by the circuits in the Indian Ocean".[2] In fact, the type and nature of the economic activities, particularly the production and exchange activities along the Indian Ocean during the medieval period, was extensively linked with other oceanic circuits. This demanded the emergence of numerous types of maritime nodal points and outlets as ports in distinct regions of the Indian Ocean. Consequently, it began to evolve as a principal port with several feeding ports in its vicinity. Actually it was a strategical move of the political elites and rulers to get the

[1]. M.N. Pearson, 'Littoral Society: The Case of the Coast', *The Great Circle*, 9, 1987, pp. 1-12; Ashin Das Gupta, 'The Maritime City', in Indu Banga, ed., *Ports and their Hinterlands in India*, New Delhi, 1992, pp. 359-74; Sinnappah Arasaratnam, *Maritime India in Seventeenth Century*, Delhi, 1994.
[2]. Pius Malekandathil, 'Introduction', *Maritime India: Trade, Religion and Polity in the Indian Ocean*, Delhi, 2010.

wealth from maritime trade concentrated on the pivotal port of each principality that was being politically controlled by its chieftain; this meant to empower the ruler's state-building ventures further. Thus, maritime centres of the medieval and early modern India had been constituted out of a wide variety of activities, such as, the economic linkages with the sea-borne trade, the political processes based on the returns from sea-borne commerce, the cultural and religious processes entering through the channels of the seas, social formation based on maritime circulation processes, etc.

In this backdrop, lying on the Malabar coast of Indian Ocean, was the port town of Calicut that had begun to emerge as a nodal exchange point in the thirteenth century by channelizing its trade linkage with the evolving sea-borne commerce of the period. The emergence of Calicut as the principal port was strengthened by a chain of satellite ports which were attached to the development that took place in international trade routes following the collapse of Baghdad in 1258. Consequently, the al-karimi merchants, based on Cairo, as the key controllers of east-west commerce, emerged on the scene. These merchants and their active involvement in Calicut-bound commercial activities made Calicut as a prominent exchange centre in the Indian Ocean scenario. Coinciding with this development, particularly with a view of obtaining a share from its maritime trade and employing it for state building ventures, the Zamorin had shifted his capital from inland agrarian space to the evolving trade centre of Calicut. This had made Calicut, what K.N. Chaudhuri depicted, "…as one of the important emporia in the east-west axis linking Malacca in the east with Alexandria in the west, one of the important Mediterranean port..."[3]

The focal theme of this dissertation is that the changing urban dynamics of the mercantile town of the sixteenth century Calicut with special focus on the changing nature of socio-economic and political processes of the town within the prescribed time period. This study makes an attempt to examine how the mercantile town was continuously shaped and reshaped, defined and redefined. It also endeavours to understand how the city, its elites and power groups utilized a major share of their resources for countering the overarching the Portuguese forces in sixteenth century. The time span of the themes discussed in this study stretches from mid fifteenth century

[3]. K.N. Chaudhuri, Trade and Civilisation in the Indian Ocean: An Economic History from the Rise of Islam to 1750, Cambridge, 1985, pp. 101-5.

to the end of sixteenth century giving a picture of long-term histories that went into the shaping of the urban centre of Calicut in Indian Ocean segment.

However, the inquest of the theme was evolved out of a variety of factors. This study makes an attempt to discuss the emergence of Calicut in relation to the various merchant groups and their commercial activities in the Indian Ocean, and the changing nature of the urban process of the city in connection with changes in the status groups and power groups of the town over time. The theme also analyses the reshaping of the existing power structure and urban format of the town which necessitated out of the challenge that was thrown by the Portuguese. The changes appeared in urban process in the wake of the Portuguese repercussions on town are analysed in a pyramidal form of urbanisation pattern. In fact, the central purpose of this work is to attempt to see the process and mechanism as developed by the city of Calicut to sustain its urban character in the Indian Ocean region. This was done principally by analysing the socio-economic and political processes of the town and its vicinity, which were merely linked with the orbits of the Indian Ocean.

It seems pertinent here to review some of the works which are related to the subject under study. Though many general works on Portuguese in Goa, Cochin and on administrative and political history of the Portuguese in Asia are available, only very few dealt with the Portuguese in Calicut, the city which had warmly welcomed them into the region.

Some of the general works which give an account on Calicut are: *The Rise of Portuguese Power in India*, 1498-1550 written by R.S. Whiteway, *The Portuguese in India* in 2 volumes of F.C. Danvers, (volume I deals with period from 1481to 1571 and volume II with the period from 1571 to 1894) and C.R. Boxer's *The Portuguese Sea-borne Empire*, 1415-1825. These general accounts are standard works on Portuguese in Asia; however, the developments in Calicut are mentioned only at random, even though the value of these general accounts lie in the fact that they are in a scattered form out of which one could reconstruct a significant portion of the history of Calicut.

The Portuguese phase in Kerala history has been covered by several standard works like *History of Kerala* by K.P Padmanabha Menon, *Medieval Kerala* by P.K.S. Raja, *A Survey of Kerala History* by A. Sreedhara Menon, *The Kunjalis, Admirals of Calicut* by O.K Nambiar, *Mamale de Cananor* by Genevieve Bouchon. The first three works

deal with this phase in a very superficial way without making any critical study of the Portuguese sources; the last two deal mostly with rival figures of the Portuguese and their activities. A highly esteemed work on the Portuguese presence in Malabar was produced by K.M. Panikkar which was first published under the title of *Malabar and Portuguese* and later incorporated in to *A History of Kerala 1498-1801*. Though it's a very good work, it concentrates mostly on the political and administrative aspects of Portuguese in Calicut and ignores the socio-economic aspects of it. Two other very significant works on Portuguese in the Malabar are *Portuguese Trade with India in the Sixteenth Century* by K.S. Mathew and *Twilight of the Pepper Empire* by A.R. Disney. While the first work confines itself to a period from 1500-1530, the second work dwells only on the trade of the early sixteenth century. These two works show very less details on Calicut.

Several works like *The Zamorins of Calicut: From the Earliest Time to AD.* 1806 by K.V. Krishna Ayyar, *The* Legacy *of Kerala* by A. Sreedhara Menon, *Samoothiri Charithrathinte kanapurangal* (malayalam) by N.M. Namboodiri, *Cultural Symbiosis in Kerala* by M.G.S. Narayanan deal with the history of Calicut. The first three authors treat Calicut as a political unit and narrate the political and administrative history of the Zamorins of Calicut. M.G.S. Narayanan dealt mainly with cultural symbiosis among different communities through economic aspects of the city. A notable work on the port city of Calicut has been written by Ashin Das Gupta under the title *Malabar in Asian Trade: 1740-1800*. But it mainly deals with the revival of the city during the Dutch phase.

Jamal Mohammed has studied the history of the Muslims of the Malabar coasts that helps one to understand various activities of the Muslim merchants in the city, though it primarily deals with a period of 1600-1800. The accounts of the Muslims of Calicut during this period are given in the work of Parappil Mammad Koya, *Kozhikkotte Muslingalude Charithram* (The History of the Muslims of Kozhikkode). The author covers almost entire history of the Muslims of the city. But it is written rather in a narrative manner than with a historical perspective.

M.G.S. Narayanan's work, *Calicut: the City of Truth Revisited* gives a good introduction to the urban space of Calicut. Another article, which is useful for doing research on fifteenth century Calicut, is *Multiple Lenses: Differing Perspectives of*

Fifteenth-Century Calicut written by R.M. Eaton. It is mainly written on the base of primary documents related to the city. But it deals with the subject through the eyes of travellers who visited the city during the course of fifteenth century. But this study has very little to do with the economic aspects of the city. Again, Sanjay Subrahmanyam covers rather a long period history of trade in the Indian Ocean through his book *The Political Economy of Commerce: Southern India* 1500-1650. He deals more on the trade of the *Casados* and ignores other mercantile groups and many social and economic changes that were happening in Calicut during this period. A recent article, *From Merchant Capitalists to Corsairs: The Muslim Merchants of Malabar and their Response to Portuguese Maritime Trade Expansion*, 1498-1600 of Pius Malekandathil, (2004-05) describes the resistance offered by Muslim merchants of Calicut to the Portuguese dominance and how the former was represented in Portuguese documents. In this article he has argued that "the traditional Muslim merchants of Kerala, who had gained substantial mercantile wealth, got estranged from the Portuguese and they eventually got themselves transformed into the Portuguese category of 'corsairs' in their attempt to define their role in the Indian ocean commerce against the monopoly claims of Portuguese".[4] This article provides some new insights and it seems to be necessary for the study of Calicut as a city of resistance. However, this brief idea needs further elaboration in order to understand the dynamics of the city in relation to trade and urbanization, and this is exactly what this study endeavours to do.

The theme chosen herein focuses on the employment and utilization of a large variety of sources and through them the new frameworks in the context of sixteenth century Calicut. The main efforts is to corroborate the foreign accounts on sixteenth century Malabar and Calicut with the indigenous sources of the period. It also attempts to make an effort to review the already existing secondary literature on the Indian Ocean in general and on Malabar and Calicut, particularly in view of the fresh frameworks and look for a possible conclusion.

The two important primary works utilized for our purpose are *Travels in Asia and Africa 1325-1354* of Ibn Battuta and *The Book of Duarte Barbosa, an Account of the*

[4]. Pius, Malekandathil, 'From Merchant Capitalists to Corsairs: The Muslim Merchants of Malabar and their Responses to Portuguese Maritime Trade Expansion, 1498-1600', *Portuguese Studies Review*, vol. 12, 1, Winter-Spring, Canada, 2004-5, pp. 75-96.

Countries Boarding on the Indian Ocean and their Inhabitants by Duarte Barbosa. Both the books have been translated into English. Ibn Battuta's work was translated by H.A.R Gibb in 1929 and Mansel Longworth Dames translated the work of Barbosa during 1918-1921. Here solely the English translations are utilized. It gives ample descriptions on fourteenth and fifteenth century of Calicut respectively. It is from Ibn Battuta that the foremost information on Calicut town has turned up and he has also referred the prominence of Arab/'Muslim' merchants in Calicut, while Barbosa and Varthema speak of the people and their activities in the town. Another source that has been used here is the Keralolpatti written by Thunchaththu Ezhuthachan, in Malayalam, in the latter half of the seventeenth century, which was latter translated into English by Herman Gundert in 1843. Here the English translation is used to write this dissertation. The book has devoted its third part to the achievements of the Zamorins that make this work quite substantial also for the previous accounts.

The another set of works which have been utilized as major sources in the third chapter are *The Voyage of Francois Pyrard of Laval to the East Indies, the Maldives, the Moluccas and Brazil* of Pyrard de LavaL, *The Travels of Pietro Della Valle in India* of Pietro Della Valle and *Travels of Ludovico di Varthemain Egypt, Syria, Arabia Desrta and Arabia Felix, in Persia, India and Ethiopia* of Ludovico di Varthema. All these books have been translated into English and here only the translated versions have been made use of. Pyrard de LavaL's account is translated in two volumes by Albert Gray in 2000. The book of Varthema is translated in 1863 by Hakluyt Society, London. The work of Pietro Della Valle was also translated by Hakluyt Society in 1982 but here the translation of Edward Grey, published in 2010 by Cambridge University has been used. These accounts highlighted the coast of Malabar and Calicut in the wake of the Portuguese arrival. Varthema described the early Muslim merchant collaborators to the Portuguese commerce and the royal quarters of the Zamorin, etc. The other two accounts have given a considerable amount of information to the developments in Calicut in the second half of the sixteenth century. It is also important to mention here that the two works produced from Malabar in the latter half of the sixteenth century which have been used as a substantial source in the core chapter belong to the *Tuhfat-ul-Mujahidin* of Shaykh Zaynuddin. The work was originally written in Arabic and later translated into English in 1833 by M.J. Rowlandson. Here only the 1942 version of the translation, done by S. Muhammad Husain Nainar, has been used. The second one was

that of Qazi Muhammed's *Fateh-al-Mubin Lisamiriyya Hide Yuhibb-al- Muslimeen*, which was also written in Arabic and later translated into Malayalam by Mankada Abdul Aziz Moulavi in 1996. Though these accounts were fascinating in shedding light on the Muslims on the Malabar coast, it provides rich information on commercial activities of the Marakkar Muslim merchants and the confiscation and torture that was carried out by the Portuguese against the Muslims, especially the Marakkars.

The other important source that has been utilized for the study is that of *Mamankam Rekhakal*, translated by N.M. Namboothiri in 2005 provides an account on *Mamankam* conducted by zamorin at Thirunavayi on the banks of river Bharatapuzha and the political importance of it. It also contains many data on the second capital of the Zamorin, the Ponnani and its vicinity. *Unnunilisandesam* and *Unniyachicharitam*, translated by M.R. Raghava Varier, contain the references on prosperity of Calicut in fourteenth century. The *Muccunti* mosque inscription is traced from the *Mucchiyante Palli*, Kuttichira, Kozhikkode. The original script of the inscription was in Vatteluttu and 'Arabic' and the language was Malayalam and Arabic.[5] The script was later translated into Malayalam and English by M.G.S. Narayanan which has been utilized here. The inscription shows the importance of 'Muslim' merchants to the town and the Zamorin. Therefore, the theme of the study has been discussed on the basis of the information as contained by these sources and other secondary sources.

One important point which needs to be kept in mind from the very beginning is that this study mainly focuses on the socio-economic and political processes of the medieval town of Calicut, and it is in the third chapter that we finally deal with the main theme of the title. But it should be kept in mind that the preceding chapters while acting as a kind of perspective for the main theme seemed too attractive to not to contain a detailed description. The theme is, without doubt, too fascinating and has a full of potential for further exploration. In the final description it is assumed that the main theme would be fully explored in future research. It seems pertinent here to have a brief overview of the themes discussed in the main chapters.

There are three main chapters in this study. These are structured in a strict thematic sense, especially the last two. The first chapter open with a brief but precise introduction

[5]. M.G.S. Narayanan, trans. & ed., 'The *Muccunti* Mosque Inscription', in Kunhali V, ed., *Calicut in History*, Calicut university, 2004, pp. 19-20.

of the process of urbanisation in pre-modern times. It points out how the emergence of urban centres and urban processes have been variously interpreted in the tradition of history writing over a period of time. The aim of this short introduction is to contextualize the topic in hand. The major theme of the first chapter, however, is a detailed discussion on the theoretical aspects of the study. It examines the major shifts and phase of the historical writing on pre-modern urban processes that went through in west and India as well. This has been done by employing the three themes as windows to enter the debate, the themes being the nature and function of urban centres in shaping the urban processes in the medieval period. The narrative begins with the understanding and interpretation of the medieval western towns in general and the medieval Indian town in particular by the early historians on this theme. The early scholars' approaches of urban processes of in relation with the revival of cities were questioned by the later scholars. The new approaches examined the socio-economic formation and the urban processes of a period that stretched from fifteenth to eighteenth century. The more recent approach put the medieval cities in the frame of cultural formation and depicted that the evolving of urban identity and the cities are but cultural construction. Another theme discussed in this chapter has been the historical writings on medieval Indian urban processes from the earliest to the recent times. The changes in politics, economy and technology have been considered as the main factors of breeding urban centres in medieval India as perpetuated by the early writings on theme. The importance of hinterland in the vicinity of the town to keep up the vibrancy of a town have become a leading subject in many of the later historical writings on this theme. More recently, it was depicted that the meanings of medieval Indian town have been changed over a period of time. In fact, most of the medieval Indian towns underwent a process of radical transformation, whereby the towns that initially emerged for certain reason gained new sort of roles and functions. In the final section there is brief description on urban processes of port-cities of Calicut and Cochin. These port-cities have been compared with the city-states of Venice and Florence. However, these port-cities have been build up in an entirely different scenario, where the socio-economic and political structure, nature of production and exchange happened and the relations of power were totally differ from its European counterpart.

The second chapter shows how the port-city of Calicut was 'constructed' and developed through a diverse mechanism and process. The emergence of the al-karimi

merchants as a principal trading group of Calicut-bound commerce of the Indian Ocean and the capital shifting of the Zamorin from inland to evolving urban centre of Calicut with an eye on gains from its trade has been analysed in this chapter. The turning of the al-karimi merchants as a new urban elite group in the town and the wealth accumulated from trade helped the Zamorin to consolidate his political and commercial positions in Malabar. It also discusses the multiple spatial and constructional processes for the purpose of facilitating and legitimizing the use of urban space of Calicut for serving the multiple political and commercial interest of the Calicut state.

The third chapter deals with the core study of the dissertation. It starts with the changing nature of the urban process of the city of Calicut in the wake of the Portuguese arrival. The chapter focusses mainly on the early activities of the Portuguese on Calicut and replacement of the al-karimi merchants and the emergence of the Marakkar traders in the mercantile vacuum. The Marakkar traders started transhipping goods to the ports of Red sea and resist the Portuguese navigational line along the Indian Ocean. Thus in turn, made a stability in mercantile activities of the town. It also discusses the changes in the power groups and the status group of the town from the al-karimis to the Marakkars and later to the Nairs and Brahmins. The various mechanism developed by the urban elites of Calicut against the Portuguese onslaught in the town is also an important theme that has been explored here. The 'Muslim' merchants of the town who mobilized a large share of their income from various commercial activities got channelized to resist the Portuguese domination has also been analysed in this chapter along with the pyramidal form of urban process which evolved out of the Portuguese dominance in the port city of Calicut.

Finally keeping all the discussion in view we proceed to find any possible conclusion/s or any generalization which the preceding analysis have been able to bring out. Any fresh insights which help us in understanding the theme in holistic and with a much differentiated manner are tried to be pieced together in this final section.

Chapter I

Urban Centres and Urban Processes in Pre-modern India: Some Theories and Perception

The study of emergence of urban centres and the process of urbanisation in pre-modern India is of recent academic interest. This chapter is primarily intended to provide a detailed enumeration of the various theoretical frameworks that have been advanced to explain the emergence of urban centres. Here the particular focus would be on the medieval urban centres. The discussion begins with a background of various theories of urban formation in the European context, especially in the wake of decline of feudalism. From there the discussion proceeds to the various frameworks employed to explain the urban formation in pre- modern India with a special focus on medieval times. Towards the end a section deals with the urban process of the southern tip of the Indian peninsula by taking the case of the port-city of Calicut.

The urban centres are seen to change their meanings over a period of time on the basis of a larger socio-economic process, within which they were moulded and configured. The cities are indicators of economic growth and social change in different historical periods and regional contexts.[1] In that way towns are considered as a microcosms which reflect the larger world.[2] Another way a town or a city can be viewed is as a social form in which the essential properties of larger systems of social relations are grossly concentrated and intensified. [3] The perception shows that the urban centres or towns are reflective of larger socio-economic process in which the medieval cities are something entirely different from those of ancient and the modern period, where entirely a different system of social relations were existed.

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[1]. Stanley K. Schultz, 'An Approach to Theory of Urbanization', in *Studies in Urban History*, ed., J.S. Grewal and Indu Banga, Amritsar, 1979, p. 15.

[2] . Pius Malekandathil, 'Medieval Cities: Theoretical Perceptions and Meanings', in *Cities in Medieval India*, ed., Yogesh Sharma and Pius Malekandathil, Delhi, 2014, p.1.

[3]. Philip Abrams, 'Towns and Economic Growth: Some Theories and Problems', in *Town in Societies: Essays in Economic History* and Historical Sociology, ed., Philip Abrams and E.A. Wrigley, Cambridge, 1978, pp. 9-10.

Historians and sociologists have traced the various nature of urban process in medieval cities. Max Webber argued that Western medieval cities to be centres of production in contrast to the ancient Greek or Roman cities, which were largely the centres of consumption. This medieval cities are considered as very crucial to the development of capitalism in the west. Max weber treated the town as a 'social agency' itself, as he referred to the types of social activities happening in the medieval western towns in which 'producers' and 'traders' are constituting or evading some form of power. The urban dwellers of the medieval west, constituted of the 'producers' and 'traders'. They broke their dependence from the legitimate feudal authorities around them and by usurping power from the former they resorted to 'non-legitimate domination' by imposing themselves illegitimately on artisans and peasants, who in turn were required to rely on them. It was through rational associations and confraternities of burghers that the latter usurped power, and there were also cases when a private group of rich citizens claimed their right to grand citizenship. The atmosphere of autonomy of the city that allowed rational economic action, free conduct of trade, as well as the pursuit of gain, also protected the interests of 'producers' both in the domains of economy and in the exercise of power, which was instrumental in the development of a 'work ethic' in the Western medieval cities.[4]

The significant role played by the medieval towns in the process of transition from feudalism to capitalism has become a major theme of academic debates which had attracted a large number of scholars. The most important early writings on this theme has been graced by scholars such as Henri Pirenne[5] and M.M Postan[6] who mainly dealt with role of towns in the early medieval period. However the writings of Fernand Braudel,[7] Richard Gascon,[8] Jan de Vries[9] and several others are examined the socio-economic formation and the urban process of a period from the fifteenth to the eighteenth centuries. Besides, this kind of periodization can be seen in some other major

[4]. Max Webber, *The city*, tr. and ed., Don Martindale and Gertrud Neuwirth, London, 1966; Max Webber, *Economy and Society*, New York, 1968, pp. 1212-367; Abrams, 'Towns and Economic Growth', pp. 28-30; Pius Malekandathil, 'Medieval Cities', p. 2.
[5]. Henri Pirenne, *Economic and Social History of Medieval Europe*, London, 1936.
[6]. M.M. Postan, *Medieval Economy and Society*, Middlesex, 1975.
[7]. Fernand Braudel, *Capitalism and Material Life*, Glasgow, 1974.
[8]. Richard Gascon, *Grand Commerce et Vie Urbaine Au ive Sicle; Lyon et ses Marchands*, Paris, 1971.
[9]. Jan de Vries, *Europe Urbanization* 1500-1800, London, 1984.

writings such as those by Lewis Mumford,[10] Maurice Dobb,[11] and George Duby[12] which have analysed the nature and role of cities in cutting across the periodization fabric.

In the view of Henri Pirenne, from the eleventh century onwards an increasing revival of cities has been noticed as well as long distance trade, what he calls 'grand trade', in Western Europe which had marked the beginning of changes in social structure and the country started orienting itself towards towns.[13] Maurice Dobb argues that the rise of medieval towns and the growth of markets made a disintegrative impact on feudal structure and prepared for the growth of forces that weakened and supplanted it.[14] But the perception was modified by him later in a debate with Paul Sweezy,[15] who challenged the externality of towns in relation to feudalism. In response Maurice Dobb argued that the rise of medieval towns was a process internal to feudal system and highlighted the incapacity of feudal social relations to contain the process of petty production and exchange that feudalism itself generated and showed this process to be a struggle of different group within the feudal order to dominate small-scale production and to appropriate the profits of trade.[16]

In the perception of several scholars of urban history the medieval western town has a changing political and economic value which in turn affected the process of transition from feudalism. Henri Pirenne analysed two kind of medieval towns (a) Liege type of town and (b) Flemish town. Liege type of town was primarily the seat of bishop or of his court or a political centre, where the significant population units were the ecclesiastical gentry, administrators with a few artisans and servants providing them with finished goods. On the other hand, the oligarchy of rich merchant magnates and financial families or basically an economic unit were the main features of Flemish town. These towns were emerged out of long distance trade and the inhabitants of such cities

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[10]. Lewis Mumford, *The city in History*, Harmondsworth, 1961.
[11]. Maurice Dobb, *Studies in the Development of Capitalism*, New York, 1963.
[12]. George Duby, ed., *Historie de La France Urbanaine*, 5 vols., Paris, 1981.
[13]. Henri Pirenne, *Medieval Cities: Their Origins and Revival of Trade*, tr. Frank D. Halsey, New York, 1956, pp. 81-110.
[14]. Maurice Dobb, *Studies in the Development of Capitalism*, London, 2007, pp. 70-1.
[15]. The whole debate was published under the title 'The Transition from Feudalism to Capitalism' in 1952. Later on other scholars joined in and a new volume with the same title was edited by Rodney Hilton and published again in 1978.
[16] Paul Sweezy, 'A critique', in *The Transition from Feudalism to Capitalism*, Rodney Hilton, ed., Delhi,2006, p. 40; Maurice Dobb, 'A Reply', in *Transition from Feudalism*, Hilton, ed., pp. 59-61.

lived by engaging in trade which ultimately makes a new anti-feudal ruling class within those cities.[17]

In the writings of Fernand Braudel shows there were three basic types of towns in the course of their evolution: (a) open towns which were not differentiated from their hinterland and were at times blending into it, as were seen in ancient Greece and Rome. A sizable amount of power remains with the structure of an agrarian world is also an interesting aspect of the open towns. (b) Closed towns were self-sufficient units and 'closed in on themselves in a very sense'[18] and 'the walls of these marked the boundaries of an individual way of life more than a territory'[19], as we can see in the case of medieval towns. The moment a peasant fleeing from seigniorial servitude crossed the ramparts of the medieval town and entered the walled space of the town, he was relieved of his servitude, became free, and the seigniorial lord could not touch him. A relative appropriation of power by those residing within the town was a case peculiar to the closed towns. (c) Subject towns were subjugated by prince and state. The early modern towns of Florence and Paris were subjugated by the Medicis and Bourbon rulers respectively are the best examples of it. An interesting point made here is that these closed or mercantile towns had pushed the economy of Western Europe to advancement.[20]

Another facet of medieval cities which was attracted by the historians is the process and nature of division of labour. Fernand Braudel identified the medieval town had status quo of merchants, functions of economic, political and religious control and the craft activities. However, to him, the complete span of the profession was seen only in big towns not in small towns, where the manpower was limited.[21] Indeed the labour process of medieval towns was not so complex and powerful as we find in modern industrial cities.[22]

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17. Pirenne, *Medieval Cities*, pp. 55-100, 124-44, 160.
18. Fernand Braudel, *Capitalism and Material Life*, 1400-1800, tr. Miriam Kochan, London, 1973, p. 403.
19. Ibid., p. 404.
20. Ibid., pp. 401-6; Abrams, 'Towns and Economic Growth', pp. 24-5; Pius Malekandathil, 'Medieval Cities', pp. 3-4.
21. Abrams, 'Towns and Economic Growth', p.376.
22. Unlike the medieval cities, the modern towns which rose with industrial capitalism were much planed cities, with a fixed pattern of policing, street plans, earmarked spaces for stores, transport lines, labelled and segregated neighbourhood, configuration of political power, specific rules related to hygienic and health care, etc.

In studying the process of urbanisation, the urban historians and sociologists have argued that the variables of population, social organisation, the physical environment, and technology are the main important factors. In fact, the urban structure is derived from a societal process where the changing social organisation and technological innovations mediate in the urban space in such way that the balance between the population and the environment tend to get changed.[23] According to Stanley K. Schultz, for a better understanding of the process of urbanization, one should analyse the population concentration, rural urban migration patterns, fertility- mortality ratio, the rate of literacy etc., under the section of population. The kind of geographical area chosen by urban dwellers for habitation as well as the physical spacing and distance of communities within the geography should be investigated to get an image of urban environment. The nature of social organization is better understood only when one explores the nature of the status and power groups within the urban communities, besides analysing the percentage of workforce involved in non-agricultural enterprises, the diversity of occupational structure, methods of recruitment for employment, and the nature as well as means of economic exchange. The modes of transportation and the nature of communication lines as well as the informational networks are also to be analysed to get a picture of nature of mediation as done by technology in urban space.[24]

In recent past, some scholarly endeavours made another attempt to look into the medieval cities with a fresh frame of cultural formation and argued that the constitution of urban identity and the cities are a cultural construct. In fact, the urban communities have been examined by the role played by them in the process of cultural formation, their participation in commodity movements, confrontation with alien cultures, the formation of plural societies, exerting dual or multiple loyalties, and exuding multiple affiliations.

In this new academic milieu, the spatial studies got a significant attention from many historians and historical geographers. The writings of Michel Foucault,[25] Henri

[23]. Schultz, 'An Approach to Theory of Urbanization', p. 15.
[24]. Ibid, pp. 14-16.
[25]. Michel Foucault, 'Of Other Spaces', *Diacritics*, Spring 1986, pp. 22-7; Michel Foucault, Gwendolyn Wright, and Paul Rabinow, 'Spatialization of Power: A Discussion of the Work of Michel Foucault', *Skyline*, March 1982, pp. 14-20.

Lefebvre[26], and Edward Soja[27] put forward a concept of 'production of space' in which the spatial process is very much involved in the construction of an urban unit. Historical geographers argue that spatial process happens with a definite purpose and logic. According to them, the 'space', particularly urban space, is intentionally constituted to show the ways in which nuance of power and dominations gets inscribed into urban spaces.[28] In the view of K.R. Cox, 'space' as a fundamental variable influence both society's organizations and operations as well as the behaviours of its individual members.[29] This type of studies trace human thought behind the repeated modification in the landscape. Michel Foucault, who saw the power as being inscribed in space, argued that the power in society could be achieved through an analysis of control over space.[30] Historical geographers and historians have now realized that the spaces are contested over resources which individuals and groups seek to control as demonstrations of their own power. In fact, distinction is probable between private and public spaces, sacred and profane spaces, male and female spaces, commercial and ceremonial spaces, shared and divided spaces, and individual and institutional spaces. [31]

In examining the role played by medieval Indian cities in societal process, Mohammed Habib initiated a new debate with an idea of 'urban revolution' triggered off by the conquest of Mohammed Ghori which was necessitated an immediate labour process in North India. He argued that the low-caste Indian workers who remained outside the walls of towns and in the peripheries for years, now entered the towns along with the forces of Mohammed Ghori, offering their services to the new government in manufacturing sector to produce finished goods and also in the form of a fighting force.

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[26]. Henri Lefebvre, *The production of Space*, tr. Donald Nicholson-Smith, London, 1991.
[27]. Edward W. Soja, *Postmodern Geographies: The Reassertion of Space in Critical Social Theory*, London, 2007.
[28]. Derek Gregory, 'The Production of Space', in *The Dictionary of Human Geography*, ed., R.J. Johnson et al., London, 2000, pp. 644-6; David Harvey, *Spaces of Capital*, London, 2001; David Harvey, *The Urbanisation of Capital: Studies in the History and Theory of Capitalist Urbanization*, Baltimore, 1985; David Harvey, *The Limits to Capitalism*, London, 2007; Pius Malekandathil, 'Medieval Cities', pp. 4-5.
[29]. K.R. Cox, 'American Geography: Social Science Emergent', *Social Science Quarterly*, vol. 57, 1976, pp. 182-207.
[30]. Alan Baker, *Geography and History: Bridging the Divide*, London, 2003, p. 65; Michel Foucault, *Power/knowledge: Selected Interviews and other Writings*, 1972-77, London, 1980, pp. 76-7.
[31]. Pius Malekandathil, 'A City in Space and Metaphor: A study on the Port-City Goa, 1510-1700', *Studies in History*, vol. 25, no. 1, 2009, pp. 13-38; Pius Malekandathil, 'Spatialization and Social Engineering: Role of the Cities of Cochin and Goa in Shaping the Estado da India, 1500-1663', in *O Estado da India e os Desafios Europeus: Actas do XII Seminario Internacional de Historia Indo-Portuguesa*, ed., João Paulo Oliveira e Costa and Vitor Luis Gaspar Rodrigues, Lisboa, 2010, pp.301-328.

The new political scenario carry off all the discrimination which had prevailed on city workers earlier, who in turn sustained it more than 500 years. The religion of Islam had attracted many city workers such as weavers, butchers, elephant-drivers etc., to possess some sort of upward social mobility. The new regime availed the bulk of workforce available in the towns for their military force, workers for *karkhanas*, artisans, personal servants, musicians, dancing girls etc. Habib pictured the Ghorian conquest of India as a revolution for Indian labours in the towns.[32]

Countering the argument made by Mohammed Habib on labour process and emergence of urban centres in medieval India, Irfan Habib argues that the establishment of Delhi Sultanate commenced a new phase of urban growth where there was an increasing number and size of towns, and the growth in craft production and commerce. However, he says that this happened primarily because of the technological diffusion, which in turn affected craft production, manufacturing paper and building, the flow of gold and silver for minting coins to promote trade, and the formation of new ruling class who dwelled in the towns with the cost of rural surplus that they appropriated through the new land revenue system. He, further, argues that the changes took place in these period does not mean the 'liberation' of any segment of the society, rather it was the largescale enslavement of the multitude and the way they put the latter to work at both domestic services and crafts sectors were more vital behind the changes.[33]

The writings of R. Champakalakshmi and B.D Chattobadhyaya[34] have traced the origin of medieval town upto the ninth century onwards. B.D Chattobadhyaya highlighted the emergence of large number of towns in the north-west India and argued that they were the centres of local trade, before it transformed into a full-fledged urban centres under the Gurjara Prathiharas. Most of these towns were the loci of power for the regional rulers. He accounted the number of towns which was appeared during the period between 1000-1336 is of 20 towns in Gujarat, 131 in Rajasthan, 78 in Karnataka, and 70 in Andhra.[35] On the other hand R. Champakalakshmi focuses on south India

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[32]. Mohammed Habib, 'Introduction', in *History of India as Told by its own Historians*, ed., H.M. Elliot and John Dowson, Aligarh, 1952, pp. 57-78.
[33]. Irfan Habib, 'Economic History of the Delhi sultanate: An Essays in Interpretation', *Indian Historical Review*, vol. IV, no.2, 1978, pp.289-98; Irfan Habib, *Medieval India: The Study of Civilization*, New Delhi, 2008, pp. 60-4.
[34]. R. Champakalakshmi, *Trade, Ideology and Urbanization: South India*, 300 BC and 1300 AD, Delhi, 1996; B.D. Chattopadhyaya, *The Making of Early Medieval India*, New Delhi, 1997.
[35]. Chattopadhyaya, *The Making of Early Medieval India*, pp. 132-81.

while examining the revival of long-distance trade and the eventual organization of commerce by various guilds in the territories of the Chola power during the period between ninth and thirteenth centuries, which, in turn, seen the mushrooming of several towns of varied size and nature. She identified a visible distinction in the medieval south Indian towns from those of north Indian variety, such as those mercantile royal and ceremonial-cum- religious towns, also fortified, like the ones from the Vijayanagara kingdom.[36]

Several historians who studied the socio-economic process of medieval India had a perception thata of symbiotic relationship existed between the town and the countryside. Some of the early writings such as those of K.M. Ashraf,[37] H.K. Naqvi,[38] and W.H. Moreland[39] mainly dealt with the features of medieval North Indian towns in regard of economic progress. Later, a more academic attention has been rendered by many scholars on urban centres of different parts of the medieval India, which, in turn, helped the emergence of urban history as an independent branch of historical study in India. The prominent figures in this case are S.C Misra, Satish Chandra, K.S. Mathew, Shireen Moosvi, R.E. Frykenberg, Stephen Blake, Shama Mitra Chenoy, V. K. Thakur, K.K. Trivedi, I.P. Gupta, J.S. Grewal, Indu Banga, Aniruddha Ray, and Sinnappah Arasaratnam.[40]

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[36]. Champakalakshmi, *Trade, Ideology and Urbanization*, pp. 25-72.
[37]. K.M. Ashraf, *Life and Condition of People of Hindustan*, New Delhi, 1970.
[38]. H.K. Naqvi, *Urban Centres and Industries in Upper India, 1556-1803*, Bombay, 1968; H.K. Naqvi, *Urbanisation and Urban Centres under the Great Mughal, 1556-1707: An Essays in Interpretation*, Shimla, 1972.
[39]. W.H. Moreland, *India at the Death of Akbar: An Economic History*, Delhi, 1962; W.H. Moreland, *From Akbar to Aurangzeb: Study in Indian Economic History*, New Delhi, 1979.
[40]. S.C. Misra, 'Some Aspects of the Self-Administering Institutions in Medieval Indian Towns', in *Studies in Urban History*, ed., Indu Banga and J.S. Grewal, pp. 80-90; S.C. Misra, *Muslim Communities in Gujarat*, Bombay, 1964; Shama Mitra Chenoy, *Shajahanbad: A City of Delhi*, 1638-1857, New Delhi, 1998; Shireen Moosvi, *People, Taxation and Trade in Mughal India*, New Delhi, 2008; Shireen Moosvi, *The Economy of Mughal Empire c. 1595: A Statistical Study*, New Delhi, 1987; R.E. Frykenberg, *Delhi Through Ages: Selected Essays in Urban History, Culture and Society*, New Delhi, 1993; Stephen Blake, *Shajahanabad: The Sovereign City of Mughal India*, 1639-1739, New Delhi, 1993; Satish Chandra, *Medieval India: Delhi Sultanate* (1206-1526), New Delhi, 1997; S. Nurul Hassan, *Religion, State and Society in Medieval India*, ed., Satish Chandra, New Delhi, 2005; I.P. Gupta, *Urban Glimpses of Mughal India: Agra the Imperial Capital, 16th and 17th Centuries*, Delhi, 1986; Vijay Kumar Thakur, ed., *Towns in Pre- Modern India*, Patna, 1994; K.S. Mathew and Afzal Ahmad, eds., *Emergence of Cochin in the Pre-Industrial Era: A Study of Portuguese Cochin*, Pondicherry, 1990; K.K. Trivedi, *Agra: Economic and Political Profile of Mughal Subha*, 1580-1707, Pune, 1998; Sinnappah Arasaratnam and Aniruddha Ray, *Masulipatanam and Cambay: A History of Two Port-Towns*, 1500-1800; J. S. Grewal and Indu Banga, ed., *Studies in Urban History*, Amritsar, 1981; Indu Banga, *City in Indian History: Urban Demography, Society and Politics*, Delhi, 1991; Indu Banga, ed., *Ports and their Hinterland in* India, 1700-1950, New Delhi, 1992.

Recently there has been an attempt to look at the medieval towns from a perspective of changing meanings of the towns over a period of time. Pius Malekandathil says that, most of the towns of medieval India underwent a process of radical transformation, as a result of which towns that initially emerged for certain reasons gained new kind of roles and functions. This shift was necessitated by new power and status groups in the city space, who were eager to articulate the meanings of their role and position into the physicality of town and this gradually helped them to assert their power.[41] He offered a case study of changing meanings of three medieval Indian towns: (i) the Agra, a politically charged town, had accumulated lot of economic tuning over time and later grew into one of the most important commercial hubs of north India, (ii) the Banaras, though it emerged primarily as a religious and pilgrimage centre, became a major town of banking and mercantile activities, and (iii) equally Goa which emerged mainly because of trade eventually lost its prime mercantile character because of the excessive intervention and control of the Portuguese rule, which ultimately converted Goa into a dry seat of Portuguese power with no more significant commercial activity.[42] In fact, the causative factors or the emergence and substance of medieval towns tended to vary over time, causing changes in their functional roles.

The kind of urbanism which appeared in India during medieval and early modern period has become a major theme for many scholars. Yogesh Sharma says that the presence of large number of towns with a close proximity to each other, high density of population in each region, and a supportive resource base with a constant agrarian productivity were vital to a thriving urbanism.[43] However, Pius Malekandathil argues that the revival of trade in the tenth and eleventh centuries and the entry of Islam as an urban religion,[44] borrowed from the erstwhile Sassanid Persia, stimulated the process of urbanism in different parts of India, eventually turned into the rise of several towns and quasi-towns. In fact, he argues the urbanism which was prevailed in medieval India is primarily of two kind. (i) The 'commercially charged urbanism', which appeared in

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41. Pius Malekandathil, 'A City in Space and Metaphor', pp. 13-38; Pius Malekandathil, 'Medieval Cities', pp. 7-8.
42. Pius Malekandathil, 'Medieval Cities', pp. 7-8.
43. Yogesh Sharma, 'The City in Medieval India', in *Cities in Medieval India*, ed., Yogesh Sharma and Pius Malekandathil, Delhi, 2014, pp. 29-35.
44. Islam as an ideology introduced certain cultural practices such as those both male and female adherents should cover their entire body with clothes, there suddenly came an enormous demand for various types of cloths and textiles, which in turn intensified weaving activities in an unprecedented way. Pius Malekandathil, 'Medieval Cities', p. 9.

the major manufacturing-cum-exchange centres of India. The earliest towns like Jaunpur, Burhanpur, Multan, Patna, Ahmedabad, Ujjain, Ajmer and Allahabad sprang up along with the major trade routes and are the best examples of 'commercially charged' urban centres and (ii) the 'Politically charged urbanism', where urbanisation grew up around a political seat. Delhi has been the prime example as a politically charged urban centre along with other centres like, Daulatabad, Gulbarga, Gaur, Agra, Lahore, Bijapur and Golconda.[45]

Apart from this there existed a secondary sector of production and urban formations in medieval India. Both the Sufism and Bhakti movements evolved as cultural motors of urbanism. In the smaller towns and *qsbas* the weavers and various other categories of artisans used to link with the Sufi space and platforms of Bhakti. Both movements legitimized the culture of work in order to gain the ideological acceptance from the various artisans group, which in turn accelerated the secondary production and urban formations.[46] Later in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries it has seen that the *Kabirpanthis* and *Dadupanthis* were increasingly evolving as religious movements in the towns, which primarily focused on the social, spiritual and psychological issues of urban dwellers.[47] This is very clear from a network of secondary towns such as those of Jaunpur, Mandu, Burhanpur, Varanasi, Gwalior, Ahmedabad, Ludhiana, Panipat etc. had emerged during this period in connection with an extensive amount of commodity movements and pilgrimage.[48]

Another facet of urban process which commenced in medieval India is largely amalgamated within the political process of establishment of the Mughals Empire and Portuguese power. This amalgamation mobilized a large chunk of resources from the

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[45]. Pius Malekandathil, 'Medieval Cities', pp. 8-9.

[46]. Maksud Ahmad Khan, 'Sufis and their contribution in the Process of Urbanization', in *Sufis and Sufism*, Neeru Mishra, New Delhi, 2004; Pius Malekandathil, 'Medieval Cities', p. 9.

[47]. Irfan Habib, 'The Historical Background of the Popular Monotheistic Movements of the 15th – 17th Centuries', in *Ideas in History*, Bisheshwar Prasd, ed., Bombay, 1969, pp. 6-13; Satish Chandra, *Essays in Medieval Indian History*, Delhi, 2009, pp.295-300; Pius Malekandathil, 'Medieval Cities', pp.9-10. All three of them have discusses the participation of artisans in Bhakti movements and Sufism and the long-term impact which made on socio-economic formations in the evolving towns.

[48]. S.A.A. Rizvi, *A History of Sufism in India*, vol. 1, Delhi, 1978; David N. Lorenzen, 'The Kabir Panth And Social Protest', in *The Sants: Studies in Devotional Traditions of India*, ed., Karine Schomer and W.H. McLeod, Delhi, 1987, pp. 287-303. David N. Lorenzen, 'The Kabir Panth: Heretics to Hindus', in *Religious Change and Cultural Domination*, ed., David N. Lorenzen, Mexico, 1981; Winand M. Callewaret, 'Dadu and Dadu-Panth: The Sources', in *The Sants*, Schomer and McLeod, pp. 33- 72; Shahabuddin Iraqi, *Bhakti Movement in Medieval India*, Delhi, 2009, pp. 56-74; Pius Malekandathil, 'Medieval Cities', pp. 9-10.

hinterland through establishing a chain of towns in the medieval times. It is in this context that Pius Malekandathil[49] labelled the rule of Mughals as a 'Poliscracy', which as a term derived from Greek word 'Polis' (town), indicates the 'rule' of superior authority through the medium of town dwellers, which made the countryside to remain economically and politically subordinate to the town. Emperor Akbar, who among the Mughals, had initiated the 'poliscratic' form of governance with the construction of chain of towns in major resource-yielding locations as pillars of sustaining his evolving empire. Equally, the frequent conquest and shifting of power base of the Mughals from one town to another further intensified the 'poliscratic' policies.[50] Another striking feature which he argues as the formation of several satellite towns and *qasbas* as an intermediate and secondary urban centres between these megacities. Indeed, *qasbas* became a type of feeder towns where the production and exchange activities were concentrated. Thus, most of these towns were the creation of a long hierarchy under the *mansabdari* system as co-shares of power, under the *mansabdars* who resided in the evolving towns, started pumping wealth into it from their *jagirs* in the countryside. In fact, the Mughals were largely dependent on their 'poliscratic' policies of governance. Concomitantly, it was a stimulus in the urban process.[51]

The imperial edifice of the Portuguese too was largely depended upon this type of evolving towns. Unlike the Mughals, the Portuguese introduced an entirely a different kind of mechanism in which they treated cities as economic devices for extracting surplus and making profit from the countryside which they finally carried on to their home to Europe. The Portuguese had established a large number of towns on the stretches of western coast of India like, Quilon, Cochin, Cranganore, Cannanore, Mangalore, Honawar, Barcelor, Goa, Tana, Bassein, Daman and Diu.[52] These towns

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[49]. Pius Malekandathil, 'Medieval Cities', p.10.

[50]. Akbar founded, conquered or modified numerous towns, including imperial capital city of Agra (which became the capital of Mughals during 1565- 71; 1598-1605), Fatehpur Sikri (1571-85), and Lahore (1585-98); Akbar's conquest of Gujarat (1572-3) made him master of port-towns of Surat, Broach, and Cambay; The construction of the town Allahabad in 1583 given him an entry to mobilize resources from the eastern Gangetic valley through fluvial routes of the Ganges and as well as the Yamuna; Jahangir kept Agra as his capital from 1607-1612 and he regularly transfer his power base to Ajmer, Kashmir and Lahore; Shajahan again kept Agra his Capital (1628-39), later in 1639 he shifted the power base to the newly built city of Shajahanbad (Delhi); while Aurangzeb shifted his capital from Shajahanbad to Agra (1669-71) and finally to the city of Aurangabad (1683). S. Nurul Hassan, *Religion, State and Society in Medieval India*, pp. 225-31.

[51]. Pius Malekandathil, 'Medieval Cities', pp. 10-13.

[52]. Pius Malekandathil, *Portuguese Cochin and the Maritime Trade of India*, 1500-1663 (A volume in the South Asian Study Series of Heidelberg University, Germany), New Delhi, 2001, pp. 74-75, 148-50, 177-8; Pius Malekandathil, 'Medieval Cities', p. 13.

were characterized in shape and features to their urban enclaves and functioned to extract maximum amount of resources from hinterland. It is in this sense, the particular form of Portuguese town-based government that was introduced along the west coast of India has been termed by Pius Malekandathil as a 'polisgarchic', which also derived from the word 'polis' (town) and signifies the rule of foreign powers through the medium of town for the purpose of extracting controls over native resources and skills.[53] Initially, the 'polisgarchic' form of governance of the Portuguese had prevailed only in their towns of west coast of India, which in turn helped them to accumulate enormous size of wealth from various urban centres of this stretch. In the later time with the help of ecclesiastical institutions, like the diocese of Mylapore, erected in 1606, and other various religious orders, particularly the Franciscan Capuchins in the towns of Coromandel and the Augustinians in Bengal, they extended the new form of governance into the coast of Coromandel and as well as the Bengal.[54]

Another breed of urbanism happened in the medieval India with the emergence of port-cities of Calicut and Cochin in the extreme south during this period. Scholars compared this process with that of the emergence of city states in Italy. Thus, these small states or quasi states that appeared around the port-cities of Calicut and Cochin and the maritime trade was vital to their political process as it happened in the city states which appeared around the cities in Venice and Florence in Italy, the Hanseatic cities of Bremen, Lubeck, Hamburg, and Danzig in Germany, and the Swahili city states of Mogadishu, Barawa, Pate, Melinde, Mombasa, Pemba, Zanzibar, Kilwa, Sofala, and Inhambane in East Africa.[55] Realising the fact that the returns from mercantile trade is enormously profitable the rulers of both Calicut and Cochin seized a large number of hinterlands in their sphere of influence for mobilizing the merchandise to the evolving maritime trade, which eventually materialised their venture of forming a state. However, the city states of India has had very different characteristics from that of the

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53. Pius Malekandathil, 'Medieval Cities', p. 13.

54. Sanjay Subrahmanyam, *Improvising Empire: Portuguese Trade and Settlements in the Bay of Bengal*, 1500-1800, Delhi, 1990; Sanjay Subrahmanyam, *The Political Economy of Commerce: Southern India*, Cambridge, 1990; S. Jeyaseela Stephen, *The Coromandel Coast and its Hinterland: Economy, Society and Political System*, 1500-1600, Delhi, 1997; Pius Malekandathil, *Maritime India: Trade, Religion and Polity in the Indian Ocean*, Delhi, 2010, pp. 68-71; Pius Malekandathil, *The Mughals, the Portuguese and the Indian Ocean: Changing Imageries of Maritime India*, Delhi, 2012, pp. 185-204; Pius Malekandathil, 'Medieval Cities', p. 14.

55. F.C. Lane, Venice: *A Maritime Republic*, Baltimore, 1973; M.N. Pearson, *Port Cities and Intruders: The Swahili Coast, India and Portugal in Early Modern Era*, Baltimore, 1998; Pius Malekandathil, *The Germans, the Portuguese and India*, Munster, 1999, pp. 3-22; Pius Malekandathil, *Portuguese Cochin and the Maritime Trade of India*; Pius Malekandathil, 'Medieval Cities', p. 15.

Italian and Hanseatic city states. The nature, political structure, process of production and exchange happened in relation with the ruling political power which prevailed in Indian city states and was rather different from its European counterpart. These are the primary themes which would be discussed in more details in following chapters.

Thus, the forgoing discussion shows that the perception of medieval towns and urban process have changed over a period of time. Therefore, this analysis has been understood as a significant tool in throwing the light on the possibility of multiple means to understand the urban process during the medieval period and what constituted a medieval town in the changing socio-political and economic meanings over time.

Chapter II

Coming of a City: Calicut

Fernand Braudel once said that "a town is town where ever it is".[1] The city was a remarkable entity, which served as habitational cum occupational corpus. They increased tension accelerate the rhythm of exchange and ceaselessly stir up men's lives. Cities tend to have certain common characteristics and such characteristics more or less persist from one period to another. The cities are also considered as spatial manifestation of deeper societal process that emerge from multiple level of activities connected with production, exchange and power exercise. Consequently, urban space is often intentionally charged with meaning by the status and power groups for the purpose of facilitating and perpetuating their control and hegemony over others.[2] In fact, colonizing a port has been the most important requirement in this process and was very common in early colonial and colonial port-towns.

The port-city of Calicut which was developed by *Zamorins*, the rulers of Calicut as their power centre in Indian Ocean during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, stands a unique model for urban construction in Indian Ocean. This chapter primarily focusses on the diverse mechanism and process by which the port-city of Calicut was 'constructed' and developed in space. It also discusses, by analysing the multiple spatial process that went into shaping of the city and the images and symbols constructed about the city of Calicut in the minds of people, for the purpose of facilitating and legitimizing the use of its urban space for serving multiple political and commercial interest of the Calicut state.

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1. Fernand Braudel, *Capitalism and Material Life*, 1400-1800, Glasgow, 1974, p. 373.
2. Alan Baker, *Geography and History: Bridging the Divide*, Cambridge, 2003; David Harvey, *Social Justice and the City*, Baltimore, 1973; David Harvey, *Spaces of Capital*, Oxford, 2001; Derek Gregory, 'The Production of Space', in R.J. Johnson et al., eds., *The Dictionary of Human Geography*, Oxford, 2000, pp. 644-6; A. Das Gupta, 'The Maritime City', in *Merchants of Maritime India*, 1500-1800, 1994; M.N. Pearson 'The Port City of Goa: Policy and Practice in the Sixteenth Century', in *Coastal Western India*, New Delhi, 1981; pp. 67-92; Pius Malekandathil, 'City in Space and Metaphor: A Study on the Port-City of Goa, 1510-1700', in *The Mughals, The Portuguese and The Indian Ocean, Changing Imageries of Maritime India*, Delhi, 2013, pp. 58-84.

The city of Calicut[3] was unknown to the history till twelfth century. The earliest reference came from Marco Polo, the Venetian traveller who visited Kerala during 1293-94.[4] He referred to Calicut as the "kingdom of Melibar", and mentioned it after the kingdom of *eli*[5]. His description matched the kingdom of Calicut as no other kingdom of the time befitting that description is known to us. On the basis of Sanskrit Chronogram[6] K.V. Krishna Ayyar argued that the foundation of city took place in AD 1042.[7] While the primary description of the city which came from the Arab traveller Ibn Battuta who made extensive observation during his visit in 1342-47. He described the city of Qaliqut (Calicut), which was one of the chief ports in Malabar and one of the largest harbours in the world. It gathered merchants from all quarters.[8] In fact, by the thirteenth century, Calicut had emerged as a major trade centre in west coast of India, although it was not mentioned by Suleiman who visited Malabar during ninth century.

There were mainly two causes which developed Calicut is an evolving port-town in the Indian Ocean during this period. The foremost was that of the replacement of old power groups of the city with the new along with the ascendancy of Zamorins. Following the collapse of the Kulasekharas of Mahodayapuram, there appeared a wide variety of political structures and power exercising units in various parts of Kerala. All of them had a different organisational form and nomenclatures like svarupams, natuvalis, desavalis, kaimals, karthas, etc., all indicating fragmented nature of central authority.[9] Most of them had an agrarian base. The power relation between them was mostly determined on the basis of their ability in mobilizing wealth from the paddy fields. The Eradis were the hereditary *Naduvazhikal* (governors) of Nediyiruppu Svarupam in the interior Eranad (Malappuram District) who became the Zamorins of Calicut later on, and figured in some Cera inscriptions like the Jewish copper plates.[10]

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3. *Kalikooth* of the Arabs, *Kallikkottai* of the Tamils and *Kozhikode* of the Malayalees.
4. Hermann Gundert, "*Kēraḷōlpatti*", in Scaria Zachariah, ed., *Kēraḷōlpattiyum Maṛṛum*, Kottayam, 1992, p.14.
5. K. A. N. Sastri, *Foreign Notices of South India*, pp.180-82.
6. De-vo-na-ra-ya-na-vyal, cf. K.V Krishna Ayyar, *The Zamorins of Calicut*, University of Calicut, 1999, p. 83.
7. Ibid., p. 83.
8. H. A. R. Gibb, *Travels of Ibn Battuta*, New Delhi, 2011, p. 234.
9. M.G.S. Narayanan, *Foundation of South Indian Society and Culture*, Delhi, 1984, p.22.
10. M.G.S. Narayanan, *Calicut the City of Truth: Revisited*, Calicut University, 2006, p. 60.

The hereditary governor of Eranad, with the new mission assigned to them by last Cera king, wanted to move to the sea coast.[11] Porlatiri (Porakilar Adhikari), the governor of Poland or Porkilanad, was an obstacle in the way for the Eradi, since his territory lay between Eranad and Kozhikode (Calicut). The Calicut Grandhavari described Panniyankara as the headquarters of Polatiri. After the several years of unsuccessful war, says Keralolpatti,[12] the Eradi were able to bribe the Polatiris wife (*Naalakatoottu Amma*), and his secretary (*Menokki*), to get the doors of the fort secretly opened to Eranad warriors. The Porlatiri preferred to escape to the north leaving his territory behind him.[13] Subsequently the Zamorins shifted their power base from inland pocket of Nediyirappu Svarupam to the evolving trade centre of Calicut with an eye to earn profit from the evolving trade in the city.

Another factor which stimulated the development of Calicut is coincided with the development that took place in international trade routes following the collapse of Baghdad. With the Mongol attack on the Baghdad Caliphate in 1258, the international trade emanating from the Persian Gulf and terminating to China got blocked. As result of which the flow of commodities to Quilon located in this trade route had declined. However the Mamluks of Egypt who defeated the Mongols at Ain Jalut in 1260, used this crisis as an opportunity to develop another international trade route keeping Cairo as the base to operate their trade, in which their focal areas of relations were the northern parts of Kerala, including Calicut. The Al-Karimi merchants of Cairo were the carriers of this trade with support of Mamluk rulers. Consequently, the Calicut-oriented commercial operations from the ports of the Red sea got some new stimulation. Gradually the Arab/Al-Karimr merchants of Cairo starts settling down in the city for

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[11]. The governor of Eranad was treated by the Cera rulers in a little difference, as a favourite. He was in the forefront of the fight against the Cola-Pandya forces in the South. It was this Mana Vikrama who led the Cera army to victory. As special marks of his favour, the king granted him a small tract of land on the coast, in addition to his hereditary possessions. Cf. M.G.S. Narayanan, *Calicut the City of Truth, Revisited*, Calicut University, 2006, p. 59.

[12]. The Keralolpatti is an earliest attempt of collecting the floating traditions in Malayalam written sometime in the latter half of the seventeenth century by Thunchaththu Ezhuthachan, translated by Herman Gundert in 1843, second edition, Stolz & Reuther, Basel Mission Press, Mangalore, 1868. The Keralolpatti consists of three parts. Part I describes the reclamation of Kerala by Parasurama, the settlement of the Brahmins and the organisation of their government. Part II gives an account of the Perumals in seven Chapters, ending with the partition of the country by Cheraman Perumal. Part III is mainly devoted to the achievements of the Zamorins in seven chapters, and bears the title of *The Period of the Kings*.

[13]. 'Keralolpatti Granthavari – The Age of Kings: Extract from Keralolpatti Granthavari' in Kunhali V, ed., *Calicut in History*, Calicut university, 2004, pp. 7-11.

the furtherance of their trade, which in turn favoured the rise of Calicut as an important exchange centre in Indian Ocean region.[14]

The Zamorin had captured the port of Calicut from Porlatitri and began the process of making Calicut into a full-fledged city. His entry into the city was made through the establishment of a port in Velapuram and later on he captured both the harbour (thura) and wealth (ara).[15] Afterwards, he built a fort and started living there. Still, it is called *Kotta Paramba*. Another step he had taken was to build a port in *Kallazhi* and later kallai with the help of stone to facilitate trade. The Keralolpatti chronicles has given the references to the new settlements and that markets had developed in the city. The chronicle speaks of Chetti from the eastern shore being engaged in trade with Mecca. His ship was overloaded with rich cargo including a considerable amount of gold. The ship was about to be wrecked in the Kozhikode harbour. He got the ship anchored in this port and paid the respect to chieftain. With the permission of Zamorin the merchant made a granite structure inside the samuthiri kovilakam to keep the gold and wealth on an auspicious time. After sometime he came back and opened the granite structure, took the entire gold and offered half of it to Zamorin out of gratitude. But the Raja refused it and given the permission to conduct trade from this port. The ruler himself helped him to construct a street. Then the masons were called and land was measured with the help of thread, the location was fixed and pole was installed for constructing a nagaram in the sea shore. Construction with stones began in auspicious time, pillars were erected and the market was built. Chetty sat there and after making necessary gifts, started the actual process of trade. His name was Ambaresan. The construction he made inside the palace is still called ambaresan kettu. The place, where the nagaram began to be constructed, is chettitheru.[16]

A similar incident has been referred to the fourteenth century Arab settlements in town. The Keralolpatti narrated the story of two sons being born to an Arab in Maskiyath[17] town. After they had grown up, the father addressed the elder son and

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[14]. Walter J. Fischel, 'The Spice Trade in Mamluk Egypt', *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient*, vol. 1, 1958, p. 165; Ashin Das Gupta, *Malabar in Asian Trade*: 1740-1800, Cambridge, 1967, pp.5-19; Pius Malekandathil, *The Germans, the Portuguese and India*, Munster, 1999, p. 9; Pius Malekandathil, *Maritime India: Trade, Religion and Polity in Indian Ocean*, Delhi, 2010, pp. 84-5.
[15]. 'Keralolpatti Granthavari', in Kunhali V, ed., *Calicut in History*, p.11.
[16]. 'Keralolpatti Granthavari', in Kunhali V, ed., *Calicut in History*, p.11; M.G.S. Narayanan, *Calicut the City of Truth*, p. 65; K.V Krishna Ayyar, *The Zamorins of Calicut*, p. 85.
[17]. Modern country the Muscat.

saying, "After my death you two will fight with each other. The other will kill you. Both of you should not be in same place. You had better go to some land and pass your days. Thus the father sent away the elder son in a ship. He visited several ports and entrusted the kings with vessels filled with gold, pretending that the vessels contained pickles. All the kings, he visited, on discovering what the vessels really contained, concealed the fact and appropriated the gold. But at last the experiment was tried on the Zamorin, and the zamorin at once called him up on and said you mistook one thing for another. This is not pickles but gold."[18] In fact, the traveller was verified by the assurance for the proper conduct of commercial activities in the port and thereupon decided to settle in that country. This is only a story which is circulated in several harbours. This represents the psychology of the merchants which was necessary for the growth of ports.

For the Chinese, the Calicut was a favourite port. They preferred Calicut to sell their wares and obtain cargoes western merchandise. In course of time, they established a settlement surrounded by a wall that was known as Chinakkotta. The city became a commercial centre of trade between the east and west. The ancient records of Kerala and the Portuguese travel records also mention a Chinese fort and street that had existed in the town. Ma Huan, the Chinese traveller who visited Calicut in 1403 C.E., described it is as a great trade emporium frequented by merchants from all quarters. The commander of the Chinese fleet which left from china in C.E. 1408, said he "did on his arrival at Calicut erect a Chinese inscription on it to commemorate his visit".[19] The presence of Gujarati merchants and their street in the town were also prominent by this time. On the side of Valiangadi, one of the royal streets, there existed the Meetta Bazaar and Halwa Bazaar of Gujaratis.[20]

The administrative mechanism designed by the Zamorin, especially the port administration had played a vital role in shaping Calicut into a vibrant city. The character and policy of the Zamorins induced the merchants from various quarters of the world to flock to this port in large numbers. Apart from his four key ministers[21]

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[18]. Herman Gundert, *Keralolpatti*, cf. K.V Krishna Ayyar, *The Zamorins of Calicut*, p. 86; M.G.S. Narayanan, *Kozhikodintekatha*, (Malayalm), Ottapalam, 2001, pp. 28-29.
[19]. K.P. Padmanabha Menon in *The History of Kerala*, vol. I, Madras, 1996, p.232.
[20]. M.G.S. Narayanan, *Kozhikodintekatha*, p. 20.
[21]. The most important among them was Mangattachan of Vattoli Chattudathi idam. The next was the Thinayencheri idayath of Morayoor in Nadiyirippu. Dharmoth Panicker of Thiruvegapura were the Kalari teache. The Fourth one was Varakkal Para nimbi.

Zamorin has appointed another official or governor who bore the name *Thalachennor* (Talixe). He was assigned the duty of the administration of Calicut city. In fact, he was popularly known as *Kozhikode thalachennor*. He was helped by a permanent military group of the Zamorins, the Eranad thirty thousand and Polanad ten thousand. Their Nair militants were called *Lokar*. They not only served but also exerted pressure on Zamorin. The Keralolpatti comments that these groups were the eyes and arms of the ruler. He possessed the right of administering justice, but not to such an extend as to free him from rendering an account thereof to the king.[22]

To control the trade at sea port the Zamorin had a special Muslim officer called the Kozhikode Koya or the Shah Bandar Koya. When a ship reached at port the Koya along with another officer called Farakan would take a list of the goods and fixed its price. They never needed an abacus to calculate. They provided security to large number of foreign traders. The Persian traveller Abdul Rassaq, wrote in 1442: "in the harbour of Calicut….. Security and justice are so firmly established, that the wealthiest merchants bring thither from maritime countries considerable cargoes, which they unload and unhesitatingly send into the markets, without thinking in the meantime of any necessity of checking the accounts of keeping watch over the goods. The officers of the customs house take up on themselves the charge or looking after the merchandise, over which they keep watch day and night. When a sale is effected, they levy a duty on the goods of one-fortieth part; if they are not sold, they make no charge on them whatsoever".[23] Therefore, the account substantiated the role of port officials in arranging favourable condition for trading activities in the Calicut under the Zamorins.

The Zamorin had also maintained a good navy to look after the safe anchoring of ships in the port. K.V. Krishna Ayyar compared this navy with that of the Cinque Ports of medieval England where the coast towns were furnished with ship and other means of transport.[24] The Ships were manned by the Moplahs, and the members of the family of Kunjali Marakkar were the hereditary Grand Admirals of the kingdom. Every port had a Tura Marakkar or chief pilot, who was assigned the duty to anchor the ships safely to

[22]. K.V Krishna Ayyar, *The Zamorins of Calicut*, p. 274; M.G.S. Narayanan, *Kozhikodintekatha*, pp. 39-40.
[23]. R.H. Major, ed., *Indian in the Fifteenth Century*, London, 1857, pp. 13-14.
[24]. K.V Krishna Ayyar, *The Zamorins of Calicut*, p. 269.

the bay.[25] The Persian ambassador to Calicut in 1442 had an opinion about the sailors of Calicut. "The inhabitants of Calicut, are adventurous sailors, and pirates do not dare to attack the vessels of Calicut".[26] This in turn enhanced the trading activities in the Calicut port.

After having a permanent base for the exercise of power at a place, the Zamorin had started extending his power southwards and conquered the neighbouring principalities of Nilambur, Manjeri, Malappuram and Kottakkal.[27] Subsequently, the zamorin succeeded in wresting away the state rights and powers from the local chieftains of these principalities and amalgamated them for the process of making a territorial state centred around Calicut and also made them units of hinterland for the procurement of spices. These territorial amalgamation were strengthened by a cultural process linked with Mamankam,[28] which turned out to be a state building mechanism with zamorin's occupation of Thirunavai from the Valluvanad ruler. The Acquisition of privilege of presiding over the Mamankam or Pan-Kerala festival ensured the Zamorin of a relative pan-Kerala identity.[29] Consequently, among all the maritime state units of Kerala the Calicut had slowly acquired a relatively full-fledged state entity.

All these processes together shaped the Calicut as one of the busiest port and a favourite destination for merchants in Indian Ocean region during fourteenth and fifteenth century. This in fact, formed new status groups in the city, besides the power groups of the Zamorin. The new status groups of the city had encompassed the various merchant bodies of the city with a special focus on Muslim or Arab/Al-Karimi merchants with the help of whom the Zamorin consolidated his political and commercial position in Malabar. It is evident from the various travellers' descriptions on the city who had visited in the city during fourteenth and fifteenth centuries[30] and

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[25]. K.V Krishna Ayyar, *The Zamorins of Calicut*, p. 269; O.K. Nambiar, The Kunjalis: Admirals of Calicut, Bombay, 1963.
[26]. R.H. Major, ed., op. cit., p. 19.
[27]. William Logan, *Malabar Manual*, vol.1, New Delhi, 1989, p. 278.
[28]. About a century after the conquest of Polanad the Zamorin became the Rakshapurashan or the protector of the Mamankam. It was festival held once in twelve years at Tirunavayi on the banks of the Bharatapuzha. The festival conducted by the Rakshapurashan or the protector of the four Kalakams, whose duty was not only to fix the flag-staff and thus inaugurate the festival, but to see that it was celebrated without any hitch and hindrance. K.V Krishna Ayyar, *The Zamorins of Calicut*, p. 89.
[29]. A. Sreedhara Menon, *A Survey of Kerala History*, Kottayam, 1970, pp. 178-9; Pius Malekandathil, *Portuguese Cochin and the Maritime Trade of India: 1500-1663*, (South Asian Studies of Heidelberg University, Germany), Delhi, 2009, pp. 50-1.
[30]. Ibn Battuta (1342-45), Abdur Razzaq (1442), Ma Huan (1451), Athanasius Nikitin (1474).

also from the indigenous texts of the period.[31] Ibn Battuta, described Malabar as "'the land of fulful' (pepper). 'Kalikut' (Calicut), he observed, is one of the chief ports of Mulaybar (Malabar) and one of the largest harbours in the world. It is visited from by men from China, Sumatra, Ceylon, Maldives, Yemen and Fars and in it gather merchants from all quarters… The greater part of the 'Muslim' merchants of this place are so wealthy that one of them the Mithqal who had many ships for his trade with India, China, Yemen and Fars".[32] During his visit at Calicut Ibn Batutta had found thirteen Chinese vessels in the harbour, in one of which he wished to travel to China and actually had managed to load his luggage.[33]

The Persian ambassador Abdur Razzaq, who visited the Zamorin's court and held the view that "Calicut is a perfectly secure harbour which like that of Hormuz, brings together merchants from every city and every country. In it are to be found abundance of precious articles brought thither from maritime countries, and especially from Abyssinia, Zirbad, and Zenguebar: from time to time ships arrive there from the shores of the house of God (Mecca) and other parts of Hedjaz and abide at will, for a shorter or longer space, in this harbour".[34] It contains a considerable number of Mussalmans, who are constant residents here, and have built two mosques, in which they meet every Friday to offer up prayer. They have one Kady (Ghazi) a priest and for the most part they belong to the sect of Schafie.[35]

Ma Huan, the Chinese traveller who visited the Calicut stated that "much pepper is grown in the hills. Coconuts are extensively cultivated, many farmers owning a thousand trees; those owning a plantation of three thousand are looked upon as wealthy proprietors…. Many of the kings subjects are Muhammadans and there are twenty or thirty mosques in the kingdom, to which the people resort every seventh day for worship. On this day, during the morning, the people being at mosque, no business whatever is transacted and in the after part of the day, the service being over, business is resumed. When a Ships arrives from China, the king's overseer and a Chetti goes on board and make an invoice of the goods and a day is settled for valuing goods".[36]

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[31]. *Unnunilisandesam* and *Unniyachicharitam*. B.V. Book depot, Trivandrum, 1922.
[32]. H. A. R. Gibb, op. cit., pp. 234-5.
[33]. Ibid., p.235.
[34]. R.H. Major, ed., op. cit., p. 13.
[35]. K.P. Padmanabha Menon, *The History of Kerala*, vol.1, p. 67.
[36]. George Philips, Ma Huan's Account, a precis, JRAS, 1986, pp. 345-6.

Nicolo Conti, the Italian described the Calicut as a noble emporium for all India, abounding in pepper, lac, and ginger, a larger kind of cinnamon, myrobalans, and zedoary.[37] Athanasius Nikitin, a Russian traveller, visited Calicut and says that, "Calecot (Calicut) is a port of the whole India Sea. The country produces, pepper, ginger, colour plants, muscat, cloves, cinnamon, aromatic roots, adrach and every description of spices and everything is cheap".[38] Further, on, he described Calicut as having "a big bazaar".[39] Indigenous texts of the period support the description of Calicut as big trading centre in the foreign accounts. *Unnunilisandesam*, a poem of the mid-fourteenth century referred to Calicut as a busy centre of trade.[40] *Unniyachichartam*, another poem of a slightly earlier period mentions the place as prosperous centre of Zamorins.[41]

Therefore, all these evidences throw light upon the power, prestige, privilege and security that were provided to the status groups of the town. By so doing the Zamorin had ensured the regular flow of wealth from trade and secured a permanent base for exercising his power and authority. Consequently, Calicut emerged as one of the nodal maritime centres in the Indian Ocean region.

The spatial process and the programme of construction work in the urban unit of Calicut took a decisive turn with the ascendancy of Zamorin. This was very much dependent on the generation of sizeable merchandise from the hinterlands of Nilambur, Manjeri, Malappuram and Kottakkal were added to the existing space of Calicut[42] and from there it intensified the intra-Asian trade which that was being carried out by the Al-Karimi merchants. In fact, it is evident that a considerable share of the trade surplus was transferred for beautifying their habitational faces and also for building magnificent structures in the city space of Calicut to make the power and prestige of the Zamorin's State visible and impressive. While the problem with Calicut was its continuous occupation, building and re-building have destroyed the architectural remains of the city. However, a toponymical analysis may seem helpful to get back adequate amount of information.

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[37]. R.H. Major, ed., op. cit., p. 20.
[38]. Ibid., p. 20.
[39]. Ibid., p.20.
[40]. *Unnunili*, 1: 123, cf., M.R. Raghava Varier, 'Calicut in History: Rise and Growth of the Royal Seat of the Nediyiruppu Swarupam', in *Exploration in South Indian History*, p. 238.
[41]. *Unniyachichartam*, gadhyam, 19. Cf., Ibid., p. 238.
[42]. William Logan, *Malabar Manual*, vol.1, pp. 278-80.

One of the prestigious building of the zamorin was his palace at Calicut which was completely destroyed in 1776 following the attack of Mysore under the Haider. Nevertheless, from the account of Abdur Razaak, Varthema and Laval we can glean out from some idea of its grandeur. Abdur Razaak mentioned that, "the hall in the palace was filled with two or three thousand Hindus; the principal personages among the Mussalmans were also present".[43] Varthema held the view that "the palace of the king is about a mile in circumferences. The walls are very low with very beautiful divisions of wood, with devils carved in relief".[44] Leval described it "as very handsome and well built, all enclosed with good walls and moats with draw-bridge to the gates, and with water all round in the moats. It consists of blocks of house, all detached and well built, of many stories and galleries, with flower-beds and paved with stones, and constructed on all sides steps leading to the bottom. Add to these many springs and fountains, whose water is cold and excellent to drink. In the palace too is a magazine or arsenal, full of arms, powder, and munitions of war. A large number of soldiers day and night guard the gates, which are four in number".[45]

Mananchira, was once the swimming pool of the royal family members. It was known to have been built under the patronage of manavikraman, founder of the Zamorin royal family. *Mutalakulam*, of today was once the royal kitchen. *Kallai*, was once the second largest timber centres of the world it was earlier called *Kallazhi*. The port was made by stones and came to be called Kallai. *Tali*, was the chief temple of Zamorin's territory, the Zamorins developed it as an important educational and cultural centre. The doorframes of the entrance attracted many scholars to the temple. Christened traditionally as the *Chalapuram*, it must have derived its name from the shala or the Vedic study centre, which must have existed there. *Kutiravattam*, was the cavalry camp of the Zamorin. *Kutiravattathunair* was its head. *Palayam*, was the place that was once the military camp of the Zamorin, and located near the old palace. The Eranad thirty thousand and Polanad ten thousand paraded here.[46] The Zamorin had gathered of all these edifices of power to build up his state venture.

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[43]. R.H. Major, ed., op. cit., p. 18.
[44]. H. A. R. Gibb, op. cit., pp. 234-5.
[45]. Edward Grey, ed., *The Travels of Pietro della Valle in India*, Cambridge, 2010, pp. 346-9. (From the Old English Translation of 1664 by G. Havers).
[46]. M.G.S. Narayanan, *Kozhikodintekatha*, pp. 44-6.

The process of spatialization in the city of Calicut received a complex meaning with the establishment of different ecclesiastical institutions especially by the 'Muslim' urban elite of the city. Thus in turn necessitated new definition of authority and control. The creation of Miskal Mosque in mid of fourteenth century and the Jami Masjid in C.E.1480-81[47] helped to get the moral and spiritual power concentrated in the city augmenting the spheres of domination. The thirteenth century inscription found in the *Muccunti* mosque at *Kuttichira* speaks about a certain Arab merchant prince called '*Mucciyan*', who came and settled down here and built a mosque which was endowed also with landed property by the Zamorin.[48] It also registered a permanent grant of property to the mosque as, "this is the order of *Punturakkon*.[49] This is to be executed by the officer in attendance. He ordered that daily expenses of one *Nali* (of rice) shall be granted to the *Mucciyan's* Mosque…. He ordered that from Kunramangalam… Pulikkil… to the mosque… in future also twelve para…"[50] The 'Muslim' merchants who came to Calicut occupied the prime areas of the city lying south to Big Bazaar such as *Kuttichira* and *Idiyangara* where they had erected many mosques,[51] besides their settlements during thirteenth and sixteenth century.

In due course of time, these urban elites of the city had acquired some sort of political power and they became the major devices for creating rules and regulations in the city-space. Ibn Battuta mentioned one chief merchants of Calicut as Ibrahim from Bahrain, with the title of shah Bandar who was the port master or chief of the harbour. He also mentioned the *Quadi*, religious judge, was one Fakhr Al-Din Uthmn.[52] Duarte Barbosa mentioned that apart from the local Muslims, there were foreign Moors as well in the town of Calicut. They sailed everywhere with many goods and had in the town a Moorish governor of their own who ruled and punished them without any interference from the king.[53] This may indicate the existence of a Ghazi who enjoyed a kind of autonomy in the exercise of judicial powers according to the Islamic law. This in turn provided immense opportunities and possibilities to the urban elites to translate their

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47. M.G.S. Narayanan, *Calicut the City of Truth*, pp. 119-21.
48. Ibid., p. 123.
49. This was the Official title of the Zamorin of Calicut.
50. M.G.S. Narayanan, trans., & ed., 'The *Muccunti* Mosque Inscription', in V. Kunhali, ed., *Calicut in History*, pp. 19-20.
51. The Jamayat Palli, the Sheikkinte Palli, the Miskal Palli, and the relatively smaller Muccunti Palli, cf., M.G.S. Narayanan, *Calicut the City of Truth*, p. 117.
52. H. A. R. Gibb, op. cit., pp. 236-7.
53. Henry E.J. Stanle, ed., & trans., *Description of the Coasts of East Africa and Malabar in the Beginning of the Sixteenth Century* by Duarte Barbosa, Cambridge, 2010, p. 147.

desires as well as aspirations into the process of urban legislation. However, the Zamorin's state managed to keep the city-space of Calicut integrally incorporated within the frames and functions of his apparatus of the state through the medium of commercial privileges lavishly bestowed upon the urban elites.

Thus, by the beginning of fifteenth century the Calicut had evolved as one of the prominent transoceanic trading centres in the Indian Ocean region. Off all the India's cities, Calicut had occupied the most prominent place in European consciousness around the turn of sixteenth century. It is the only real non-European city mentioned by Thomas More in his book *Utopia*, published in 1517. Significantly, when the book's protagonist, Raphael Nonsenso, returned to Europe from Utopia ('no place'), it is from Calicut that he embarked aboard a Portuguese vessel. For more and many other Europeans, it was Calicut that linked 'this place'- the actual Europe at the turn of the fifteenth century- with an imaginary, idealized realm situated somewhere 'out there'.[54] However, the wealthy and business minded ruler of the Calicut, the Samudri Raja (Zamorin) who welcomed the merchants and shippers from all over the world and derived the major chunk of revenue of his state from the sale of locally produced pepper, as well as from warehouses and docking fees that was being charged to the international shippers. Consequently, the Calicut had emerged as an independent city-state with India's busiest port in Indian Ocean region during the fifteenth century. It had served as a principal port for the transhipment of goods between the two great segments of Indian Ocean: the western half, extending from Africa to India and the eastern half extending from India to Malaya peninsula.

[54]. Richard M Eaton, *Essays on Islam and Indian History*, New Delhi, 2002, p. 78.

Chapter III

The Portuguese and Calicut

The Zamorins of Calicut had welcomed Vasco da Gama and his men at the mercantile town of Calicut with their own set of concerns. Within a few years, through a chain of actions the Portuguese started making repercussions in Calicut. Eventually, the social groups and mercantile elites made up their mind that they did not want Vasco da Gama and his men to be in Calicut as their competitors. Consequently, the town and its merchant groups turned against the domination of the Portuguese over the mercantile activities of the city. Therefore the central focus of this chapter is going to shed light on to how the mercantile town of Calicut was defined and re-defined in the process of wagging battles of resistance against the Portuguese. It will also be discussed here as to how the 'social capital'[1] as resources that the city of Calicut extracted awfully to maintain its mercantile character and to fight against the domination of the Lusitanian.

The appearance of Vasco da Gama[2] and company at Kappad (Kappakadavu) on Sunday 20th May 1498 with three ships- St. Raphael, St. Gabriel and St. Miguel[3] had been first sighted by the fishermen as something peculiar. These people had reached

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[1]. Social Capital as those inherent in social relations which facilitate collective action. Social Capital resources include trust, norms, and networks of association representing any group which gathers consistently for a common purpose; J.S. Coleman, 'Social Capital in the Creation of Human Capital', *American Journal of Sociology*, 94, 1988, pp. 95-120.

[2]. Gama visited India three times, first as an explorer, then twice as Commander of expeditions, and died at Cochin (24 December 1524), where his body was buried in the Church of St. Francis, Fort Cochin. Later on, the Portuguese shifted his mortal remains to Lisbon.

[3]. On Gama's First Voyage, E.G. Ravenstein gives the name of the third ship as Berrio instead of Miguel or Mingel and adds a fourth ship - a store ship or cargo ship also. His date of arrival is May 20th 1498. E.G. Ravenstein, *The First Voyage of Vasca Da Gama*, Haklyut Society, London, 1898, AES Reprint, New Delhi, 1995, pp. 45-8; William Logan mentions three small vessels called San Raphael which carried Gama, San Gabriel which carried his brother Paulo da Gama, and San Miguel commanded by Coelho sighting the coast of Malabar on 26th August 1498. William Logan, *Malabar Manual*, vol. 1, pp. 294-5; F.C Danvers also agree with this date. F.C Danvers, *The Portuguese in India*, vol. I, New Delhi, 1988, pp. 21-2 ; Krishna Ayyar refers to four ships and gives 20th May 1498 as the date of arrival and 28th May as the date of landing on shore. K.V. Krishna Ayyar, *The Zamorins of Calicut*, Calicut, pp. 123-4; recent historians have a slightly different version of the story: " Sao Gabriel, captained by Vasco da Gama, head of the fleet, Sao Rafael, captained by Paulo da Gama, his brother, Bernio, commanded by Nicolau Coelho, and a fourth supply-vessel which did not go to India. Gama's fleet…. Finally arrived in Calicut, is true destination only on 20th/21st May 1498". Sanjay Subrahmanyam, *Portuguese Empire in Asia*, Oxford, 1993, pp. 56-7.

the coast at an unusual part of the year[4] and possessed strange complexion, costumes and language.[5] It has been variously considered as an important event in the history of trade and also a dramatic starting point for European colonialism in India, nay, in Asia as a whole. This led Sardar K.M. Panikkar to coin the term 'da Gama epoch'[6] and further to label the sixteenth century as Portuguese period in Kerala history.[7] M.N. Pearson observed it is too easy, but quite incorrect, to see the arrival of the Portuguese as the beginning of a new period in the history of the Indian Ocean. He goes on to overemphasize that the Portuguese would be too ambiguous to what he considered to be the main feature of the history of the ocean of the period, that is, an impression of the remarkable continuity of foreign elements engaging in the oceanic trade. The Portuguese, most of the time, managed to fit into the structure of the trade of fifteenth century, at times modifying, but never changing radically its basic nature.[8] In his opinion, the Portuguese contributed to continuity rather than change in the structure of trade. Ashin Das Gupta in support of this view mentioned that the Portuguese, after the first violent overture, settled within the structure and were, in a way, swallowed by it.[9]

In Calicut, da Gama and his men were welcomed very ardently by the Zamorin nearly after a week. The date was May 28th. The Portuguese party seemed to have been a quiet a spectacle, for an anonymous writer reports that an 'unending' number of people congregated to see them go by. Passing a spot where ships and boats were dry-docked, the party eventually disembarked, still surrounded by large crowds of people, including 'women who came out of their houses with their children in their arms'.[10] After the customary greetings the Zamorin and the da Gama proceeded to a chamber to talk about the mission for which he had come. The talk climaxed with new *bona fides* which followed: "As soon as it became known to the King of Portugal that the king of Calicut was one of the mightiest kings of all the Indies and a Christian, he was anxious to

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[4]. Costal trade was seasonal. In case of overseas trade, shipping season were at least broadly demarcated, there existed a season on each of the coasts when shipping almost come to a standstill. In case of Coromandel, this comprised late October to early January. While in Malabar, it existed from early May to late July or early August; Sanjay Subrahmanyam, *The Political economy of Commerce Southern India* 1500-1650, p.48.

[5]. M.G. S. Narayanan, *Calicut the City of Truth, Revisited*, p. 194.

[6]. K.M. Panikkar, *Asia and Western Dominance*, p. 13.

[7]. K.M. Panikkar, *History of Kerala*, pp. 32-4.

[8]. Ashin Das Gupta and M.N. Pearson ed., *India and the Indian Ocean* 1500-1800, Calcutta, 1987, pp. 22-4.

[9]. Ibid, p. 44.

[10]. Sanjay Subrahmanyam, *The Career and Legend of Vasco da Gama*, Cambridge University Press, 2001, p. 133.

establish a treaty of amity and commerce with him, that he might procure spices, which were in great abundance in his country, and to procure which the merchants of many parts of the world trade thither. And His Highness would give a license to send for spices he would send many things from his kingdoms, which were not be had in the domains of His Highness; or it these things were not satisfactory, of which the general would show him some samples, he was willing to send money, both gold and silver, to purchase the spices. And finally, His Highness was requested to refer to the general for further information."[11] This letter detached the uncertainty of the Zamorin, and he granted the permission to da Gama to return to his ships, bring his goods to the shore explicitly, and sell them at the best price he could. This, in turn, made an entry of a new trading group, viz., the Portuguese or Lusitanian into the port town of Calicut. Consequently, it evoked a mighty competition between the new and the old trading communities.

The Portuguese response to the predominance of the 'Muslim' merchants[12] in Malabar ports were slightly different in its nature. The initial few decades of sixteenth century the Portuguese commenced a crusade on *Paradesi* Muslim traders, whom they considered as a staunch commercial enemy who were the backbone of the Red Sea-Venice trade. On the other hand, the Portuguese found the indispensability of Marakkars and the Mapilla merchants for purchasing the spices. By doing so they could have successfully carried out their Lisbon oriented long distance trade. In fact, the Marakkar merchants were the principal suppliers of the food materials in the first two decades of the sixteenth century for the Lusitanian factories and colonies that had

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[11]. K.V. Krishna Ayyar, *The Zamorins of Calicut*, p. 132.

[12]. At the time of the arrival of the Portuguese, the 'Muslim' traders were being monopolised the maritime trade of India. 'Muslim' merchants who engaged in the maritime trade of the Indian Ocean region were a heterogeneous groups. There were mainly three groups: (I) The *Paradesi* (foreign) 'Muslims', out of whom a good many were al-Karimi merchants engaged in spice trade with Egypt. Walter J. Fischel, 'The Spice Trade in Mamluke Egypt', *Journal of Econimic and Social History of the Orient*, p.165. They were controlling the long distance movement of the commodities, which had their termination in the Red Sea/Mediterranean world. (II) The Marakkar Merchants of Kayalpatanam, Kilakarai and Kunimedu controlled the costal trade between Coromandel and Malabar. O. K. Nambiar, *The Kunjalis, Admirals of Calicut*, Delhi, 1963, p.76. In fact, these trading groups were the natives of the coastal region between Kunimedu and Nagapttinam on the Coromandel Coast. Jayaseela Stephen, *The Coromandel Coast and Its Hinterland: Economy, Society and Political System* AD 1600-1800, Manohar, Delhi, 1997, pp. 137-9. They had established themselves along the coast of Malabar on the eve of Portuguese arrival and used to carry textiles as well as rice. The wide family networks and deeply rooted partnerships in the rice belt of the Kavery region enabled the Marakkars to make a regular supply food materials to their customers in Malabar in exchange for spices. Pius Malekandathil, *Portuguese Cochin*, pp. 111-12. (III) The local Mapilla 'Muslims' of Malabar, who seems to have engaged more in peddling trade. Genevieve Bouchon, *Regent of the Sea: Cannanore's Response to Portuguese Expansion*, p.51.

already been established on the coast, apart from the production centres.[13] Thus, the Portuguese had assimilated the Marakkars and Mappila traders as collaborators and partners of the Portuguese commercial system.

The Marakkar merchants started actively cooperating with the Portuguese in procuring Cargo for the Lisbon vessels. On 7 October 1503 Charine Mecar/ Karim Marakkar, a great merchant, who approached Francisco Albuquerque and promised the supply of pepper to the Portuguese vessels without the knowledge of the Zamorin[14] has been considered as a first such initiative in this line. In 1504, Cherina Markkar and Mamale Marakkar supplied 3,000 *bhares* of pepper for 6,000 *cruzados* for the fleet of Lopo Soares.[15] Meanwhile, the Mappila traders who stood commercially at the lowest stratum had also began to come out as suppliers of spices to the Portuguese. These native Mapillas were increasingly looking forward to their newly acquainted commercial partners who would enable them one day to compete with the merchants of Mecca and that way to ensure upward mobility in the economic and social ladder.[16] The regular supply of pepper for the Portuguese in Cochin from the production centres of Edapilly was known to have been made by Ali Apule, Coja Mapilla and Abraham Mapilla.[17] Another trader named Koya Pakki[18] rendered all the support to the Portuguese. Thus, the Portuguese commercial collaboration with the Marakkar and Mapilla traders eventually led to the establishment of a strong Lusitanian mercantile base in Indian Ocean region.

The year 1500 onwards some new developments took place in the relationship between the Portuguese and the mercantile elites of Calicut and the Zamorin. In this, we can see an artificial shortage of cargo was created by the mercantile elites of the city in the 1500. They hid the materials and diverted the Mecca-bound vessels making it impossible for Pedro Alvares Cabral[19] to get merchandise for his Lisbon- bound vessels. This accelerated the tension between the Portuguese and Muslim traders. The

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13. Pius Malekandathil, *Portuguese Cochin and the Maritime Trade of India*, pp. 199-201, 207-208.
14. Pius Malekandathil, *Maritime India*, pp. 128-29.
15 . Ludovico di Varthema, *The travels of Ludvico di Varthema in Egypt, Arabia Deserta and Arabian Felix, in Persia, India and Ethiopia*: 1503-1508, London, p.106.
16. Genevieve Bouchon, *Regent of the Sea: Cannanore's Response to Portuguese Expansion*, p.53.
17. K. S. Mathew, *Portuguese Trade with India in the Sixteenth century*, New Delhi, 1983, p. 102.
18. Henry E.J. Stanley ed., *The Three Voyages of Vasco da Gama and his Viceroyalty from the Lendas da India of Gaspar Correia*, New York, 1869, pp. 358-60; Malekandathil Pius, *Maritime India*, p. 127.
19. Pedro Alvares Cabral set his sail from Lisbon on the 9th of March, 1500. On the way it was driven by a storm to South America. By this accident Cabral became the discoverer of Brazil. On the 13th of September he dropped anchor off Calicut. K.V. Krishna Ayyar, *The Zamorins of Calicut*, p. 137.

Portuguese response to it was a brutal bombardment of the mercantile enclave of Calicut, setting fire to the establishment of commerce[20]. Vasco da Gama in his second visit to Calicut in 1502 also made brutal retaliation by setting ablaze the mercantile town for the ill-treatment that had been meted out to him. Consequently, the years to follow was marked by the intense tension and menacing fighting between the Portuguese and the Zamorin, up to 1513.[21] The continuous confrontation between the Portuguese and the Zamorin necessitated the change in the urban format of Calicut in a way to suit its culture of resistance.

The most important change which evolved out of the Portuguese fight was the sea-shore area which had been increasingly settled by the Mukkuvas and fisherman and poor people. These sea-shore formed as main centres of Lusitanian attacks. Ludovico de Varthema writing in 1507 says that sea-waters used to wash the houses in the city[22]. Almost hundred years later, Pyrard[23] writes that between the town and the sea were the settlement of Mukkuvas and the fisher folk.[24] We do not know when the Mukkuvas began to construct their settlements between sea and the mercantile town. It is evident from the available sources that it must have been an outcome of the process of continuous skirmish between the Zamorin and the Portuguese. In fact, the settlements of fisher folk had become a peripheral part of the mercantile town of Calicut. This, in turn, had converted into a protective shield for the Zamorin. The experiment of Zamorin where the Mukkuvas were acted as a human shield for protecting the town seems to have been worked in the succeeding years and we do not find any other case of Portuguese attack in the town later period.

The power groups and the status groups of the mercantile town of Calicut also changed over a period of time, in the process of re-defining the social content of the town, while responding to the threats and attacks raised by the Portuguese. The principal mercantile group and the power group in the town of Calicut, the al-karimi merchants, had been

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[20]. K.V. Krishna Ayyar, *The Zamorins of Calicut*, pp. 146-7; K.M. Panikkar, *Malabar and The Portuguese*, Bombay, 1929, pp. 41-2.

[21]. On 24th December 1513 the then Portuguese governor Afonso de Albuquerque was signed a treaty with Zamorin which put a ceasefire at least for a while. K.M. Panikkar, *Malabar and The Portuguese*, pp. 85-7.

[22]. John Winter Jones, ed., *The Itinerary of Ludovico di Varthema of Bologna, from 1501 to 1508*, New Delhi,
1997, p. 55.

[23]. Francois Pyrard de Laval, who was a French navigator visited India during 1601-1611.

[24]. Albert Gray, ed., *The Voyage of Francois Pyrard of Laval to the East Indies, the Maldives, the Moluccas and Brazil*, vol. I, New Delhi, 2000, p. 413.

under continuous attack by the Portuguese, because of their role in transhipping the goods to the ports of the Red-Sea and the Mediterranean. The al-karimis rendered financial and personal support for the Zamorin to retain their dominance over the Calicut bound overseas trade and repossess their power in its urban space. However, this status group was eventually shattered and abandoned the city of Calicut in 1513, when the Albuquerque signed treaty with the new Zamorin, who ascended the throne as a Portuguese candidate by getting his uncle the reigning Zamorin poisoned. Subsequently, the majority of the *Paradesi* Muslims including the al-karimis fled out of Calicut to other safer ports of the Indian ocean region like that of Gujarat, Vijayanagara, Hormuz and the Red Sea.[25]

However, this mercantile vacuum was soon filled in by the Marakkar traders. They were from the Marrakkar clan of Cochin who had shifted their residence and loyalty from Cochin to Calicut in 1524[26] and turned out be the key economic actors of the mercantile town. The Marakkar traders eventually created commercial rapport with the Ottoman Turks[27] by sending the cargos regularly from Calicut to ports of Red sea, between 1527 and 1528.[28] This formed the Marakkars as chief power groups in the mercantile town of Calicut, though their principal base was at Ponnani,[29] the second capital of the Zamorin. Their social standing was mainly based on the economic role they used to play. They had, on the one hand, successfully obstructed the Portuguese navigational moves in the Indian Ocean, and, on the other hand, constituted a space for transhipping the cargos to the ports of the Red Sea. The Markkar clan, under the leader

[25]. Genevieve Bouchon, 'Calicut at the Turn of the Sixteenth Century', p. 46.

[26]. It was because of the frequent confiscation of their vessels and cargo by the Portuguese that the leading merchants including Kunjali Marakkar, his brother Ahmad Marakkar, their Uncle Muhammadali Marakkar and their dependents left Cochin by 1524 and settled down in Calicut, from where they decided to organize guerrilla warfare and corsair activities against the Portuguese. Shaykh Zaynuddin, *Tuhfat-ul-Mujahidin*, trans. S, Muhammad Husain Nainar, Madras, 1942, p. 66. Shaykh Zaynuddin, an Arab, who was residing in Malabar gives elaborate details in his work *Tuhfat-ul-Mujahidin* about the ride and torture carried out by the Portuguese against the Muslim, especially the Marakkars; Faria y Souza, *Asia Portuguesa: The History of the Discovery and the Conquest of India by the Portuguese*, trans. John Stevens, vol. I, London, p. 284; A.P. Ibrahim Kunju, *Studies in Medieval Kerala*, Trivandrum, 1975, p.60.

[27]. Shaykh Zaynuddin, *Tuhfat-ul-Mujahidin*, pp. 89-91; R.S. Whiteway, *The Rise of Portuguese Power in India*, New Delhi, 1989, p. 196.

[28]. The Zamorin who expelled the Portuguese from Calicut in 1525 started making the use opportunity created by the Marakkar traders. In which the movements of commodities from Calicut to Red Sea ports of Ottoman Turks had become frequent, particularly during the period between 1526 and 1527. Gasper Correa, *Lendas da India*, tom. II, parte, Lisboa, 1921, pp. 274-5; Pius Malekandathil, *Maritime India*, p. 114.

[29]. A place where river Bharatapuzha merges into the Arabian Sea.

ship of Kunjali,[30] had taken up the task of restructuring the commerce of Calicut, at the time when the Portuguese *casado*[31] traders were fast penetrating into the focal trade centres of the Asian water. The Marakkar merchants had begun to develop corsair activities as an alternative arrangements of trade.[32] In the process of continuous attacks against the Portuguese, Kunjali Marakkar, with the support of his men, began to appropriate more domains of power for himself. A sizable share of their wealth accumulated from the trade was invested in order to up a fortress at Pudupttanam[33] and for acquiring instruments and devices of power exercise. This was followed by his assumption of new power-denoting titles like "'lord of the Arabian Sea', 'King of Moors', 'Prince of Navigation'".[34] The Kunjali even enjoyed the support of the entire Muslims community of Malabar, who 'recognised him almost like their king.'[35] He had in Pudupattanam 'the ambassador of the most powerful Muslim King of India, and even of the great Mughal, and of Mecca, all of them viewed him as the defender of the law of Mohammed.'[36] This had manifested the amount of authority that they had

[30]. Kunjali Marakkar was the navel chieftain of the Zamorin. The Portuguese categorised the Kunjali Marakkar and his men as 'corsairs' in the sense of Sea-pirates. Pius Malekandathil, *Maritime India*, p.141; some historians consider Kunjali and his men as patriots and nationalists. O. K. Nambiar, *The Kunjalis*, pp.14-16. M. N. Pearson pictures them as something between pirate and privateering. M.N. Pearson, *Coastal Western India*, New Delhi, 1981, pp. 25-6; R. S. Whiteway says, "some of the so-called pirate leaders were, however, commanders under the Samuri, carrying guerrilla war". R. S. Whiteway, *The Rise of Portuguese Power in India*, p. 47; W.H. Moreland called them "pirates", who "treated the Portuguese ships precisely as the Portuguese treated theirs" but spoiled them it by saying they were "Arab 'pirates'". W.H. Moreland, *India at the Death Akbar*, London, 1920, pp. 202-10.

[31]. It was Afonso Albuquerque who introduced the policy of mixed marriages. He encouraged the Portuguese *Casados* (married citizen) to take up local trade and small business as a means of livelihood. The profit which they generated out of this trade induced in them a desire to evolve in larger commercial activity. For which an opportunity came to them when the entire eastern space of the Indian Ocean was demarcated for their commerce by Lopo Soares de Albergia in 1515. By the 1520s they had already reached the major urban centres of maritime Asia and started supplying commodities in the Portuguese settlements both for local consumption and for Lisbon-oriented commerce. Subsequently the Portuguese attitude towards the Muslim merchants changed. Pius Malekandathil, 'Portuguese Casados and the Intra-Asian Trade: 1500-1663', *Proceedings of the Indian History Congress*, Millennium Session, Kolkata, 2001, pp.385-7

[32]. Ludovico de Varthema, *The Itinerary of Ludovico de Varthema*, p. 63; K.S. Mathew and Afzal Ahmad, eds., *Emergence of Cochin in the Pre-Industrial Era*, pp. 27-8. The trade organized by Zamorin and his navel chieftain Kunjali was often referred to by the Portuguese as corsair as per the moral and legal perception they had. Pius Malekandathil, *Maritime India*, p.147.

[33]. After the expulsion of the Portuguese from Shaliyat (Modern Chaliyam, the place in the south Malabar denoted by Shaykh Zaynuddin, *Tuhfat-ul-Mujahidin*, p. 97.) in 1571 AD, the Pattu Marakkar obtained leave from the Zamorin to build small fort at Pudupattanam at the mouth of the river Kottapula. Shaykh Zaynuddin, *Tuhfat-ul-Mujahidin*, p. 87.

[34]. F.C Danvers, op. cit., vol. II, p. 112.

[35]. Antonia de Gouveia, *Jornada do Arcebispo*, Coimbra, 1606, p. 94; Pius Malekandathil, *Maritime India*, p. 137.

[36]. Ibid., p.95; Pius Malekandathil, *Maritime India*, p.137.

appropriated. Consequently, Kunjali Marakkar and his men had formed a remarkable urban elite in the mercantile town of Calicut.

However the parallel power centre that Kunjali had set up at Pudupattanam began to affect the mercantile town of Calicut, as well as most of the 'Muslim' traders of Calicut who were supportive of him. Zamorin sensing threat to his sovereignty turned immediately against Kunjali and his men who as a power group in the city had already turned against him. He joined hands with the Portuguese to destroy the power structure of Kunjali and his rebels. In this process, the Marakkars, who, once had been the most powerful status group of the mercantile town from 1520s till 1590s, endured a series of serious attacks and torture. Finally, as a result of the joint operation of the Zamorin and the Portuguese, kunjali was captured and later beheaded in Goa in 1600.[37] Thus, the Marakkars were finally segregated from the mercantile town of Calicut.

However, it was not the mere extermination of a power group from the urban arena, but much worse than it happened; it destroyed the surviving capacity of the 'Muslim' merchants with sufficient capital to conduct trade. The wealth that they had accumulated for more than a century through the trade, that was later translated to set up power centres and devices, got shattered along with the deterioration of their fortress. The end the result was the increasing expulsion of 'Muslim' officers and power holders from offices and the impoverishment of 'Muslims' residents in the mercantile town. Thus, by 1607 we find Nairs, banias and Brahmins occupying the key jobs in the mercantile town of Calicut, which was earlier occupied by Muslims. Banias, the one who acted as a broker for the Dutch and a translator for Pyrard de Laval, began to play key role in the economy of this changed scenario. Most of the offices, which were earlier held by the Muslims in the fifteenth century, had been replaced by non-Muslims in the beginning of the seventeenth century. By 1607, most of the chief offices of Alfandique and of the mercantile town were held not by 'Muslims' but by Nairs and Brahmins, who as Pyrard de Laval mentioned, had their residences in the hinterland part that was situated almost two kilometres away from the mercantile town.[38] Probably

[37]. Albert Gray, ed., *The Voyage of Francois Pyrard of Laval to the East Indies, the Maldives, the Moluccas and Brazil*, vol. I, pp. 351-2; C.R. Boxer, and Frazao de Vasconcelos, *Andre Furtado de Mendonca*, 1558-1610, Lisboa, 1956, pp.21-35; Pius Malekandathil, *Maritime India*, p. 138.
[38]. Albert Gray, ed., *The Voyage of Francois Pyrard of Laval to the East Indies, the Maldives, the Moluccas and Brazil*, vol. I, p.362.

what Pyrard de Laval referred to was actually the Zamorin's attempt to create a new status group for the mercantile town in the new situation.

Another significant change was that of the increasing militarization in the royal quarters of Calicut. The Zamorin had started this by appropriating the European artilleries for Calicut and he also set up an artillery unit in Calicut in1502 with the help of two Milanese artillerists. The royal quarters began to get transformed into a military bastion with the change in the mode of warfare. Earlier, as Ludovico de Varthema, says, even if there were hundreds of soldiers on both the sides, they used to give only two direct blows at the head and one at the legs. When four or six on either side were killed, the Brahmins used to go into the midst of them and made both parties return to their camp.[39] In other words, the conduct of warfare was according to certain moral norms, which both warring parties had to follow. The practice of indiscriminate killing appeared in the town for the first time with the entry of the Portuguese, who brought in the notion that the enemy is somebody who should be wiped out at all costs. The fighting force of the Zamorin had also reshaped over a period of time to stand fit and suitable for challenging the Portuguese forces. Consequently, as Pyrard noticed, they used to practice every day with swords, shields and lances, even though the entire military exercise used to be conducted outside the mercantile city.[40]

Another step was to convert the royal palace into a fortress like-structure with walls and moats. Though the fifteenth century Calicut remained as an unprotected city, by the beginning of the seventeenth century the royal palace was well protected with enclosing walls and moats, with draw-bridges to the gates and water all around in the moats. There was a large number of soldiers who were stationed at the four place gates, who guarded them day and night.[41] However, the impact of the recurring Portuguese attacks on Calicut could be seen in the numerical strength of the army that the Zamorin had raised. In the beginning of the seventeenth century there were about 1, 50,000 Nair men besides his Muslim militia.[42] The increasing militarisation to counter the Portuguese challenges influenced the social process in the royal quarters of the town. This, in turn, paved way for the acceleration of military values and ethos in Calicut. It

[39]. Ludovico de Varthema, *The Itinerary of Ludovico*, p. 61.
[40]. Ibid., p.60.
[41]. Albert Gray, ed., *The Voyage of Francois Pyrard of Laval to the East Indies, the Maldives, the Moluccas and Brazil*, vol. I, p. 409.
[42]. Ibid., p.408.

was visible in texts like the *Vadakkenpattukal* and *Kozhikode Grandhavari*, whose period of composition could be traced back to this period of intense conflicts. Thus, the Nairs, who had earlier apathetic to Sea-related occupations had now become the major officers in the port and the champions for the protection of the mercantile town. Concomitantly, the increasing appointment of Nairs and banias to port-related jobs provided the justification needed for engaging in fights for protecting a mercantile town.

With the intensification of Calicut's trade in the sixteenth century bypassing the Portuguese control system, there was an increasing move for the mercantile city to expand towards the royal quarters. This, in fact, paved the way to occupy the fresh shops and commercial establishment in the distance of two kilometres between the royal quarters and the mercantile town, which earlier had been lying vacant. The mercantile town of Calicut remained as a major venue for voluminous trade for mobilizing the cargo for overseas commercial activities. The market attached to the royal quarters began to acquire significant economic role for the consumer class in the hinterland part of the city. This market had also served as decisive supplier of commodities to the mercantile town. Usually, it used to open at 7'O clock in the morning, when one of king's officers would ring a bell so that the royal servants could purchase the commodities for the royal hose hold.[43] No one was allowed to buy commodities before the king's household was supplied. Then the bell would ring a second time to call the merchants. But before the merchants could enter, the tax farmers used to take their dues out of each item. Which was followed by fixing of price.[44] The market of the royal quarters had various kinds of merchandise brought from the hinterland. It was from this market that the retail traders obtained the commodities in a considerable volume for sale in the bazaars and for storing in the warehouses of mercantile city, from where the bulk overseas trade was carried out.

The evolution of Ponnani as second capital city of the Zamorin had been another major modification in this changed milieu. This capital had initiated a secondary urban process based up on Ponnani. Pyrard of Laval recounted in 1606 that the Zamorin resided sometimes at Calicut and sometimes at Ponnani[45] and he referred to Ponnani as

[43]. Ibid., pp. 411-12.
[44]. Ibid., p. 412.
[45]. Ibid., p. 409.

the ‘war town ‘of Zamorin.[46] K.V. Krishna Iyer calls Ponnani to be the military capital of the Zamorins. It was in Ponnani that the Marakkar ‘Muslim’ Merchants and their dependents settled down in 1524 following their decision to migrate from Cochin and fight against the Portuguese pride. It was probably with their eventual conversion as fighting squad for Zammorin’s navy and army that Ponnani seemed to have got its due importance as the military capital of the Zamorin. Moreover, Ponnani provided an opportunity to access the rich pepper-producing hinterland located along the banks of Bharatapuzha. This bestowed him with the control over the production and distribution processes of spices in the hinterland. Ponnani has been located at the mouth of the Bharatapuzha that the Thrikkavil kovilakam, where the Zamorin used to reside and the Vairanelloor kovilakom where, the Eralpad, the heir- apparent used to live.[47] The frequent visit of the Zamorin, the proximity of rich spice producing hinterland and the commercial and naval operations of the Marakkars had made the Ponnani as a second urban centre apart from the mercantile town of Calicut.

Thus, it shows that the city of Calicut stood entirely different from those of the majority port-cities that took shape under early colonial powers. Calicut evolved as a mercantile town on Sea-side but with a power centre in the vicinity of two kilometres, which was also made to develop into the same urban phenomena. The chunk of wealth accumulated in the mercantile town of Calicut got translated into the power exercise of the Zamorin, which, in fact, demonstrate the weight of power that the royal quarters carried. He had rendered all the backing and privileges to the traders to ensure that the replenishment in accumulation of wealth and subsequent increase of concentration of power stayed in his hand. The countryside also made to participate in this dynamics of the city through the market of royal quarters. In fact, it was this mercantile wealth that primarily sustained the Zamorin during his repeated wars against the Portuguese.

However, the frequent attacks of the Portuguese on the mercantile city of Calicut had the consequence of plundering of wealth and killing of the many merchant elites. This variously redefined the urban format of the mercantile town, which made the Mukkuvas

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[46]. Ibid., p. 413.

[47]. T.V. Abdul Rahman Kutty, Charithramurangunna Ponnani, Thiroorangadi, 2013, p.23; N.M. Namboothiri, Malabar Padanangal: Samoothiri Nadu, Trivandrum, 2008, p. 392; N.M. Namboothiri, ed., Mamankam Rekhakal, Sukhapuram, 2005, pp.25, 27. Though Zamorin had his port, mercantile town and royal quarters in Calicut, the Grandhavaris of Calicut and the Mamankam records refer to Zamorin in their initial pages as “one who resides in the Thrikkavil kovilakam of Ponnani”. N.M. Namboothiri, Mamankam Rekhakal, pp.25-6.

and poor people to settle down near to sea as a human shield to protect the city. A major change was that of the reformation of the power groups and status groups of the mercantile city of Calicut from al-karimis to Marakkars and later to the Nairs and Brahmins. Following the threat from Kunjali, the Zmorin had estranged all the Muslim merchants and officers of the city. In connection to that he initiated a process of selection of his power-shares in the city. Consequently, the Brahmins and Nairs, who had earlier resided in the periphery of the city, now became the chief officers in port and mercantile town. Another development in this milieu was the fact that the urban process of Calicut was reshaped into a pyramidal form in which the mercantile city acted as core, royal quarters as supportive enclave and Ponnani as reinforcing urban enclave supported by rich spice producing hinterland.

CONCLUSION

The early historiography on western medieval town pertained that the decline and revival of long distance trade was the key factor to evolve the urban centres and the urban process during the medieval times. In due course, the changing perception on urban history followed the changing political and economic values of medieval western towns. Accordingly, the variables of population, social organisation, the physical environment and technology have been considered as the main components for breeding the urban process. More recently, it has been viewed that the constitution of urban identity and the cities are basically a cultural construct where the spatial process had a deep involvement in the development of any urban centre and it always happened with definitive purpose and logic. Thus, the urban space was intentionally constituted to show the ways in which the nuances of power and their dominations were inscribed into the urban spaces.

The new political scenario of the twelfth-thirteenth century commenced with a new phase in the growth of urban centres in the medieval India. The medieval Indian towns have been defined as carriers of social revolution with a considerable level of upward social mobility. The urban dwelling new ruling class and the diffusion of technology played a major role in this new phase of urban growth. However, the constant engagement of historians to study the urban process in medieval Indian town widened the arena of urbanism into various aspects. The urban centres are reflective of the larger socio-economic process in which they had been moulded. In fact, the existence of a symbiotic relationship between the town and countryside had become an important factor to the development of a town during the medieval period. The presence of large number of towns with close connection with each other, the population density in each region and supportive resources with constant agrarian productivity were also vital to replenish the urbanism in medieval India. The Sufism and the bhakti movements evolved as cultural motors of urbanism with a secondary sector of production. Thus, the medieval Indian towns had generated two kind of urbanism; the ‘commercially

charged urbanism'[1] which was the outcome of major manufacturing-cum-exchange centres and the 'politically charged urbanism'[2] which grew in the actual power centres.

The establishment of the Mughals and Portuguese powers in the sixteenth century added new meanings into the medieval Indian urbanism. The Mughals had developed 'Poliscratic'[3] forms of governance with the construction of chain of towns in major resource producing areas to keep up their imperial edifice. The Portuguese followed another mechanism of 'Polisgarchic'[4] form to govern their colonies in India, in which they treated the towns in their sphere of influence as economic devices for extracting surplus and making profit from the hinterland which they finally took to Europe.

The port-cities of Calicut and Cochin had also evolved into some sort of urbanism with slightly different form than other medieval Indian towns had followed. The urban process of both these towns were mainly dependant on the bulk of trade carried out from its port and the accumulation of wealth out of it. Consequently, both Calicut and Cochin had enlarged their sphere of influence into large number of hinterlands to mobilize the materials for evolving maritime trade. This ensured the state building venture of both towns. Therefore, the medieval towns were seen as changing their meanings over a period of time with a larger socio-economic process within which they took shape. With regard to the development of Calicut into an urban space in mid-fourteenth century, this study has shown that, the chief of Nediyirippu *Swarupam* had shifted his power centre from the agrarian pocket of Eranadu to the evolving maritime centre of Calicut for the purpose of procuring enough resources from the intense sea-borne commerce of the town. Therefore it became imperative to set up the relevant institutions and instruments to exercise power. The Zamorin had realized that his state building ventures was dependent very much on the wealth accumulated from the Calicut-Red-Sea-Venice trade operations of the al-karimi merchants. Therefore, he had incorporated these merchants into the co-shares of his power with a considerable rights on political and the socio-economic realms of the town. Concomitantly, the considerable amount of the trade surplus as fetched by these merchants transferred into the spatial process and the development programmes in the city space of Calicut for the

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[1]. Pius Malekandathil, 'Medieval Cities: Theoretical Perceptions and Meanings', in *Cities in Medieval India*, ed., Yogesh Sharma and Pius Malekandathil, p. 8.
[2]. Ibid., p. 9.
[3]. Ibid., p. 10.
[4]. Ibid., p. 13.

purpose to facilitate and legitimize the power of the Zamorin's state. However, the mercantile character of Calicut rested chiefly on their ability and manipulating skills to keep a cluster of satellite inland power centres situated around them. These centres worked not merely as supportive political units, but also as feeding economic units, from where they derived their wealth for sustaining power.

With regard to the developments in Calicut in the wake of the Portuguese arrival, this study has shown that the changing nature of the town of Calicut, over a period of time, had sustained its mercantile character as a power edifice. The entry of the Portuguese into the urban space of Calicut as a recent trading group had advanced a new scenario in the town, where the commercially powerful '*Paradesi* Muslims' were mainly hostile to the Portuguese, the Marakkars and Mapilla merchants who were the initial collaborators in their commercial operations. The eventual exodus of the *Paradesi* Muslims from Calicut had enabled the Marakkar traders put their hold on Calicut bound commercial activities. This made the Marakkars as the new champion in transhipping of goods to the ports of the Red-Sea and Mediterranean. Consequently, they became the new urban elites of the Calicut with whom the Zamorin had to share his power.

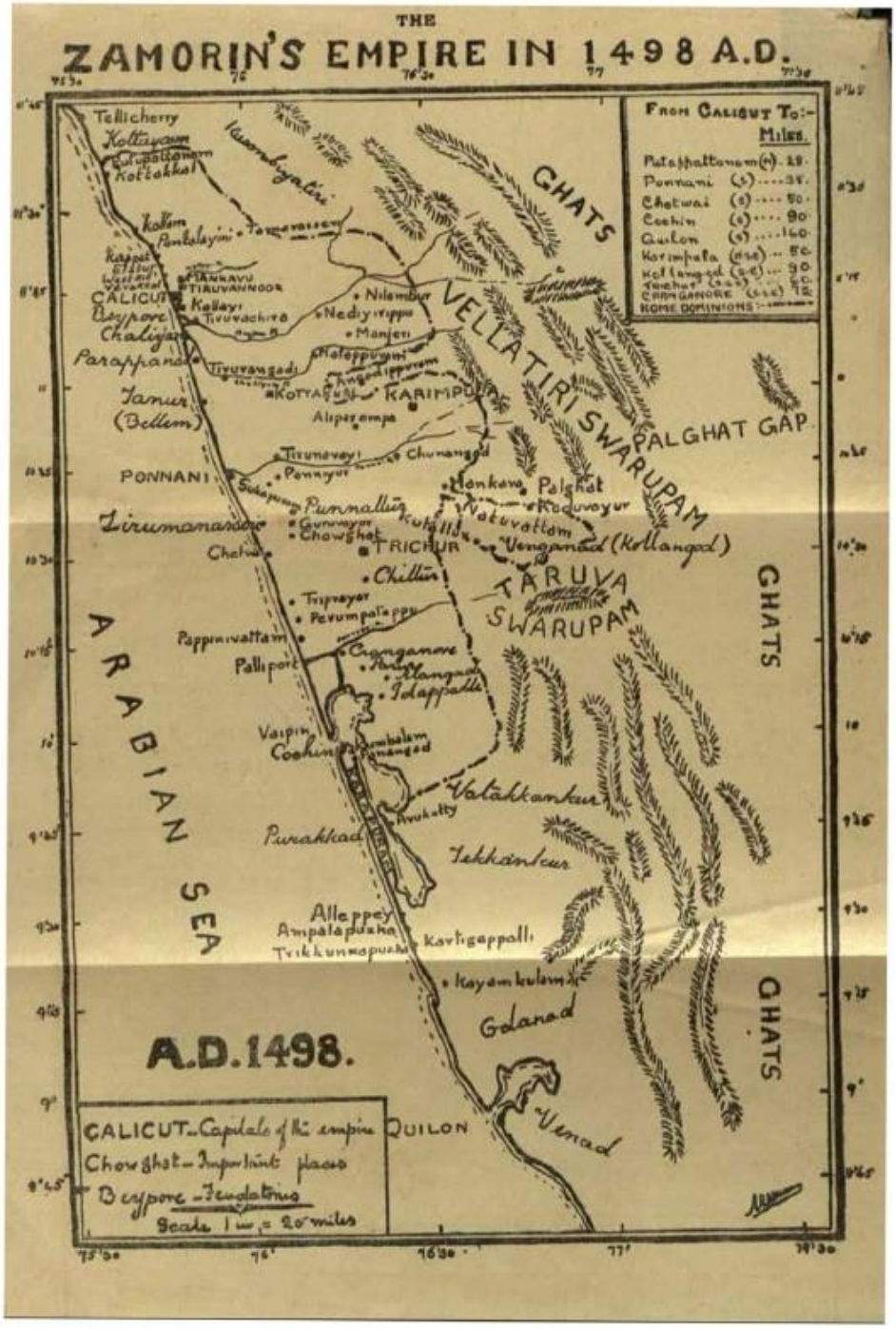
When the Portuguese began to favour the evolving commerce of the Portuguese *casados* by confiscating the cargo of Marakkars, it made them later turn against the Portuguese. The Marakkars under the leadership of Kunjali, retaliated by developing a strategy to attack the Portuguese vessels in order to create a space for dispatching the cargo regularly to the ports of the Red Sea. Thus, the wealth that they had accumulated from their mercantile ventures was eventually transferred into buying weaponry to confront the Portuguese. This eventually led to the establishment of a headquarters at Pudupattanam from where they started operating their diverse mechanisms of power. However, later the Zamorin, who initially was the mentor of Kunjali, smelled the menace which Kunjali would bring into his state edifice. Therefore, the Zamorin joined hands with Portuguese to capture Kunjali, who was later on executed in Goa in 1600. This shattered the power of a good number of 'Muslim' merchants in the town along with the Marakkar merchants.

However, the frequent onslaught of the Portuguese on the mercantile town of Calicut and killing of the merchant elites and shattering their wealth ended up with a series of changes in the format of the port-city. Concomitantly, the fisher folk, the Mukkuvas

and the poor people were made to settle down near the sea side as a protective human shield for the city. Though it seems to have worked as a practical remedy, it also speaks of the type of social engineering that the power groups or the political actors were keeping an eye on the wealth that the city was capable of producing, though it also involved the security of the city and for protecting the social base of the power centre. In the process of long wars of resistance against the Portuguese, the Zamorin knowingly or unknowingly initiated a process of selection, as far his power share in the city was concerned. This changed the status groups and the power groups of the city from al-karimis to the Marakkars and later into the Nairs and Brahmins. With the increasing alienation of the Zamorin from the 'Muslim' merchants and officers following the threat from Kunjali Marakkar and his men, the Brahmins and Nairs, who had earlier lived in the hinterland part of the city, keeping themselves away from the polluting waters of the seas and interaction with sea-going people, now became the major officers in port and the mercantile city interacting with sea-fares. This brought the lords of the countryside to the mercantile city with a right to dictate the norms of the maritime trade. It is also evident that in its wake the mercantile town of Calicut constituted a pyramidal form of urban process where the mercantile city played the role of the core, the royal quarters as supportive enclave and the town of Ponnani as reinforcing urban enclave supported by a rich spice producing hinterland.

On this ground, the city of Calicut stood entirely different from the majority of the port-cities as formulated by the early colonial powers in India. Calicut, which did not experience the tampering of early colonial powers, developed as a mercantile city on the sea-side with a power centre in the vicinity of two kilometres, which was made to evolve as part of the same urban phenomena. The amount of wealth getting accumulated in the mercantile city of Calicut had decided the weight of power that the royal quarters enjoyed. All the commercial establishments were set up by the ruler and the concession that he had rendered to the traders ensured the increasing accumulation of wealth and increasing concentration of power in his hands. In fact, it was this mercantile wealth that had sustained the Zamorin during his recurring war against the Portuguese. The countryside was made to participate in this dynamics of the city through the market of royal quarters, from where the bulk of cargo for the overseas trade had emanated for the prosperous trade of the port town of Calicut.

APPENDIX



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