

# **COCHIN - DUTCH RELATIONS IN XVIII CENTURY**

*Thesis submitted for the Degree of*  
**DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY**  
*of the University of Calicut*

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**DECEMBER 1997**

## CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that this thesis 'COCHIN-DUTCH RELATIONS IN XVIII CENTURY' submitted for the award of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy of the University of Calicut is a bonafide record of research carried out by THOMAS KUTTY KARIAMPALLY under my supervision and guidance. No part of the thesis has been submitted for any degree, diploma, or other title before.

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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I am extremely happy to place on record my deep sense of gratitude to my supervising teacher Dr. A.P. IBRAHIM KUNJU for his incessant encouragement, generous help and assistance in my research work.

I also express my thanks to Dr. K.K.N. Kurup, Professor & Head of the Department of History, University of Calicut for taking great interest in my work. It is my great pleasure to record my thanks to Dr. S.M. Mohammed Koya and Dr. K.J. John for their sincere support in every stage of the work. I owe special thanks to Prof.T.P.Sankaran Kutty Nair of Government College, Thrissur, for his encouragement. I am grateful to Prof. H.K.S. Jacob, University of Groningen, The Netherlands and also to Prof. George D. Winius, Brown University, U.S.A. for their valuable suggestions.

In the course of my research work I have received considerable help from the following institutions for which I am greatly indebted to them.

Tamil Nadu Archives, Madras  
Conemara National Library, Madras  
Kerala State Archives, Trivandrum  
Regional Archives, Ernakulam  
Kerala University Library, Trivandrum  
History Department Library and  
C.H. Mohammed Koya Library, University of Calicut

I express my sincere thanks to Smt. Sugeetha, B. for her encouragement and valuable suggestions.

This work was carried out by the award of a Research Fellowship of Calicut University for which I am thankful to the University authorities.

I am extremely grateful to Mr. Balu, Bina Photostat for typing the thesis with utmost patience.

Calicut University,  
27.12.1997.

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## ABBREVIATIONS

D	-	Dutch
Fgn	-	Foreign
Misc	-	Miscellaneous
R	-	Record

# INTRODUCTION

Thomas Kutty Kariampally “Cochin - dutch relations in XVIII century ” Thesis.  
Department of History , University of Calicut, 1997

## CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION

An account of the political religious and social conditions of Medieval Kerala can be had from Tuhfat-ul-Mujahidin. It is the earliest historical treatise compiled by Shaykh Zayunuddin on medieval Kerala.

There were a number of minor principalities in Kerala. Venad, nucleus of Travancore under Tiruvadikal was a powerful kingdom among them. It was a small state embracing only the present Kanyakumari district and portions of Trivandrum district. According to Van Goens, "Travancore begins with the west of Cape Comorin and ends on the coast about two hours walk or less north of Tengapattanam".<sup>1</sup> This state was divided into five collateral branches (Tayvalis) which together constituted one Svarupam viz., the Trappappur Svarupam. The other four branches were Attingal, Quilon or Desinganad, Peritally and Elledattu Svarupam. The King of Travancore was a Nayar by caste.<sup>2</sup> Internecine wars were a

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<sup>1</sup> Galletti. A, The Dutch in Malabar, p.22.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., p.53.

common feature. As a result anarchy reigned supreme in Venad.<sup>3</sup> Royal power in Travancore was at its lowest ebb.

Kayamkulam also known as Odanad, was one of the eighteen nads into which Venad had originally been divided.<sup>4</sup> It was a large state which ranked as the second in that part of the country. It was surrounded by the principalities of Kottarakkara on the south, Pandalam on the north-east and Purakkad and Tekkumkur on the North.<sup>5</sup> The original capital was at Kantiyur mattam near Mavelikkara. The capital was shifted to Eruva in Kayamkulam in the 15th century. Therefore the kingdom was known as Kayamkulam or Calicoilon in the Dutch records. Further its ruler maintained a big force. The importance of this principality increased after the absorption of the territories of Marta and Bettimeni. The Portuguese and the Dutch had close commercial relation with Kayamkulam. It was annexed to Travancore in 1746 by Martanda Varma.

<sup>3</sup> Elamkulam.P.N, Kunjan Pillai, Studies in Kerala History, p.357.

<sup>4</sup> Raja. P.K.S, Medieval Kerala, p.71.

<sup>5</sup> Sreedhara Menon. A, Kerala District Gazetteers, Trivandrum, p.190.

The Purakkad or Cempakasseri kingdom lay to the north of Kayamkulam. In European accounts it is called 'Porea.' The Kingdom was ruled over by a line of Brahmin rulers, known by the title of 'Devanarayan' who were famous for their patronage of learning and letters. The Cempakasseri Raja had his ancestral home at Kundamalur in Kottayam district. This chief had considerable naval force under him which was commanded by the family of Purakkad Arayan.<sup>6</sup> The rulers were lenient towards the Christian subjects and allowed them to build churches in their domain. They also maintained close relations with the Portuguese and the Dutch. Later with the rise of Travancore under Martanda Varma, the kingdom was annexed to it.

Tekkumkur was another principality which lay between Cali Coilon, Vadakkumkur, the broad river of Carraporam (Vembanad lake) and the hills.<sup>7</sup> It was originally the southern part of the kingdom of Vempolinad, which later split into two, namely Vadakkumkur and Tekkumkur. The residence of its rulers was Nettasseri on the outskirts of Kottayam. Its rulers were subordinate to Cochin and helped

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<sup>6</sup> Panikkar. K.M, History of Kerala, p.25.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid., p.57.

Kayamkulam in its wars against Travancore. In 1749 the kingdom was annexed to Travancore by Martanda Varma.

Vadakkumkur was the northern part of the Vempolinad kingdom. Its capital was the town of Kadutturutti, a few miles to the south-east of Vaikkam. The Portuguese alluded to Vadakkumkur as "the pepper country", as the finest pepper produced further inland had to come to them through this state. Its Rajas were Nayars by caste and were subordinate to the Cochin king but exercised full ruling authority. They possessed an efficient army. The Vadakkumkur Raja helped the Kayamkulam Raja in its wars against Travancore and consequently it was annexed to Travancore by Martanda varma in 1750. The Raja sought refuge in the Zamorin's kingdom, but later he was invited to come back and given a pension.

Karappuram also called 'Moutan' (Muttam) comprised of the present Certtala Taluk. One of the branches of the Cochin royal family (Madattinkil) had its residence here. Karappuram was ruled by 72 Nayar nobles or Madampis, of whom the most important were the Muttedatt and Iledatt Kaymals. Arttunkal, an important centre of jesuit activity in Kerala was situated in the territory of the Muttedatt Kaymal. The

Kerappuram Kaymals were closely allied with the Rajas of Cochin. The Vembanad lake separated it from the upland and the Perumpadappu swarupam. The territory was ceded to Travancore by Cochin in 1762.

Ernakulam and its suburbs were in the possession of five powerful Nayar nobles known as Ancikaymals. The most important of them was Ceranallur Karta. These nobles, frequently changed their allegiance from the Zamorin to the Cochin Raja and vice versa. These Kaymals were very powerful and would have been able to stand against the king if they were united among themselves. Besides, the Ancikaymals there were several other powerful Nayar Chieftains to the north of Ernakulam. Of these the most important were the Paliyatt Accan, Cannaramkota Kaymal, Kodasseri Kaymal, Koratti Kaymal etc. Paliyat Accan was the hereditary prime minister and the commander-in-chief of the Cochin Raja.<sup>9</sup> He was the ruling chief of his own territories round Cennamangalam, seat of his ancestral home. He possessed vast estates throughout the kingdom. He had so much wealth and influence that at times he openly defied the authority of his overlord, the Cochin Raja.

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<sup>9</sup> Raja. P.K.S, opcit, p. 58.

Another small kingdom situated in the Cochin area was Edappalli or Elannallur svarupam. It is known as 'Repolim' in European accounts. The islands of Vaipin and Cochin originally belonged to the Edappalli kingdom. Though the state was small and not particularly rich and powerful it occupied an important place in Malabar. This was because the ruler was a Nambutiri of the highest class who traced his origin to Parasurama himself.<sup>9</sup> The ruler of Edappalli were friendly to the Zamorin and served him as an advance guard against the Raja of Cochin. Edappalli provided for the Zamorin the base of operations against Cochin, and the campaigns always opened with an invasion into the very heart of Cochin from the side of Edappalli.<sup>10</sup> Edappalli continued to enjoy an independent status till the first quarter of the 18th century. In 1820 it was placed by the English under the protection of the Cochin Raja. The Edappalli chief protested against the action. So it was transferred to Travancore in 1825.

Cranganore (or Kodungallur) was a small principality lying to the north of Cochin at the southern end of the

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<sup>9</sup> Ibid., p.70.

<sup>10</sup> Panikkar. K.M, op.cit., p.24.

Chetwai island. This tract of land is supposed to be a grant to the ruling family by Ceraman Perumal. The origin of the Cranganore family is obscure. As the capital of Ceras Cranganore had been the centre of Kerala culture in ancient days. It was also the nerve-centre of foreign trade in the whole of Malabar. The Phoenicians, Egyptians, the Greeks and the Romans had been in contact with this country. Its port-town was known as Muziris of the Romans and Muciri to the Tamils.<sup>11</sup> But this glory had disappeared by the 14th century. The Cranganore chiefs did not enjoy independent status. They owed allegiance throughout either to the Zamorin or to the Raja of Cochin. During the close of the 15th century they actively supported the Zamorins in their wars against Cochin. Their support was invaluable because they controlled the shortest route to Cochin.

Valluvanad was one of the oldest royal houses of Malabar. This dynasty is also known as the Arannot Svarupam.<sup>12</sup> Logan observed that Valluva might be another form of Pallava and that Valluvanad might mean the Pallavan country. The chieftain of this nad, the Arannott Udayavar

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<sup>11</sup> Raja. P.K.S, op.cit, p.65.

<sup>12</sup> Krishna Ayyar. K.V, A History of Kerala, p.168.

is referred to in the Jewish Copper Plate. It will perhaps be correct that in the 7th century this part of Cera kingdom was held by the Pallavas (Valluvar) or distinct from the Keralas.<sup>13</sup> The capital of the kingdom was Valluvanagaram [the present Annadipuram]. At the time the Valluvakonatiri exercised sovereign powers over a considerable portion of south Malabar. Valluvanad comprised practically the whole of the present Perintalmanna and Ottappalam taluks and parts of the Ponnani, Tirur and Eranad Taluks. On the occasion of the so-called partition of Kerala the Valluvanad Raja held a distinguished position in Kerala. Ceraman Perumal gave him the right to conduct the great Mamankam festival and to be its protector.<sup>14</sup> Valluvanad Raja continued to be the protector of Mamankam till he was defeated by the Zamorin. His territories were overrun by the Zamorin bit by bit. At the time of the Mysore invasion, the Valluvanad Raja had under his control only the Attappadi valley and a part of the present Ottapalam taluk. The Raja sought asylum in Travancore during the invasion of Tipu. When Tipu ceded Malabar to the English the valluvanad Raja entered into an

<sup>13</sup> William Logan, Malabar, Vol.I, pp.259-60.

<sup>14</sup> Raja. P.K.S, op.cit, p.65.

agreement with the East India Company and became a pensioner.

The dominions of the Palghat Raja extended over the whole of modern Palghat, Alattur and Chittur taluks. The Palghat Rajas were called the Sekhari varmans. The kingdom was also known as Tarur svarupam. The original seat of the Palghat Rajas was Atavanad in the Ponnani taluk. The Raja of Palghat was in constant dread of the Zamorin's incursions into his dominions. On one occasion the Zamorin sent his own son against Palghat. This enterprising general "drew a wedge right through the centre of Palghat splitting it into two divisions of Tenmalapuram and Vatamalapuram."<sup>15</sup> The war between these two rulers continued till the Palghat Raja sought the help of Haider Ali, the Mysorean commander of Dindigal. This paved the way for the invasion of Haider Ali in 1756. On the cession of Malabar to the East India Company, the Palghat Raja became a pensioner.

The Zamorin or the ruler of the Nediyrrippu Svarupam was the major power in northern Kerala. He possessed the lands between Cochin and Kolattunad. He held his court at

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<sup>15</sup> Krishna Ayyar. K.V, The Zamorins of Calicut, p.133.

Ponnani.<sup>16</sup> The Zamorin was the chief of Eranad. He was also known as 'Punturakkon.' This title made its appearance after Calicut became a 'Puntura' (great port). The Zamorin claimed supremacy in the area lying between the territories of Kolattunad in the North to Tiruvalla in the south. Though originally their supremacy in Kerala was questioned by the Valluvanad Rajah, by about the 14th century the Zamorin became the leading ruler on the west coast. The area south of Quilon was held by the Rajah of Travancore who never acknowledged the sovereignty of the Zamorin. Kolattiri Rajah of Cannanore was also independent, but the area between the kingdoms of Cannanore and Travancore was claimed by the ruler of Calicut.

Zamorin the ruler of Calicut was undoubtedly the richest and most powerful ruler in the whole of Kerala.<sup>17</sup> Owing to his unique position Zamorin became the protector of Mamankam and his influence and sway extended politically from Cannanore to Quilon. Both Indian and foreign records bear ample testimony to the important position occupied by Calicut from the 14th century. Ibn Battuta, Ma Huan and

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<sup>16</sup> Galletti. A. Op.cit, p.66.

<sup>17</sup> Raja. P.K.S, op.cit. p.62.

Abdul Razak disclosed the extensive trade carried on by the city and its consequent wealth. On the eve of the Portuguese arrival the Zamorin's authority extended from Putuppattanam in the North to almost Arukkutti in the South, the southern border of the erstwhile Cochin state.

The Kolattiris were the last and most northerly of the four chief kingdoms of Malabar. Not much is known about the original history of the Kolattiris. The Kolattiris emerged as an important political power after the decline of the second Cera kingdom by the beginning of the 12th century. His territory extended from the Netravati river to Korappuzha in the south, which was the boundary between his and the Zamorin's territories.<sup>18</sup> Marco polo gives the earliest information about Kolattunad. He says, "the kingdom of Eli (Kolattunad) was tributary to nobody..... pepper and ginger grow there and other spices in quantities."<sup>19</sup> As in the case of other Kerala kindoms, this country too was divided among many chieftains. The most important among them were the Ali rajas of Cannanore, Rantutara Accanmar, Kottayam and Kadattanad Rajas. About

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<sup>18</sup> Panikkar. K.M, op.cit., p.22.

<sup>19</sup> Raja. P.K.S, op.cit., p.59.

1680 there occurred a break up in the Kolattiri family. The original Kolattiri kingdom was broken up into five branches, namely the Kolattiri, the Tekkilankur, the Vadakkilankur, the Nalamkur and the Ancamkur. But the executive power was at least in theory in the hands of the Kolattiri.

The Kolattiri possessed the executive charge of only the middle portion of his dominions. The Tekkilankur was in charge of the southern portion with his headquarters at Putuppattonam. The Vadakkilankur possessed authority over the northern territories. The Nalamkur and Ancamkur remained in more or less immediate attention of the Kolattiri.

The Rajas of Kottayam were believed to have come from outside Kerala. Hence they came to be known as the Puranatturajas. Another view connected with them is Kottayam rajas are descendants of the Kongu Cheras who ruled with their capital at Takadur. Though nominally under the sovereignty of the Kolattiri they were independent for all political purpose. Gradually they acquired independent control over the territories lying in the interior of the Tellicherry taluk and also extended up to the borders of Coorg. The family came to have three branches viz.

Eastern, southern and Western. The first two had their seat at Kottayam and the last at Palassi.

The Nileswaram royal house originated from a matrimonial alliance between a princess of the Zamorin's family and a prince of Kolattunad. This event must have taken place in the beginning of the 15th century.<sup>20</sup> The kingdom comprised of the present Hosdurg taluk. Its king belonged to the family of Kolattiris. In the 17th and 18th centuries Nileswaram was attacked by the Bidnur Nayaks who occupied it. Thus Nileswaram came under Bidnur control. Nileswaram came formally under the British after its occupation of South Canara.

In the 16th century the House of Arakkal rose as a political power in Cannanore. The rulers of Cannanore were generally known as the Ali Rajas of Cannanore. They were the only Muslim royal family in Kerala during the close of the fifteenth century. They followed the Marumakkattayam system of inheritance. The senior-most member of the family whether male or female was elevated to the sthanam. The male chief was called the Ali Raja and the female chief the Arakkal Bibi. The family is said to be originally an

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<sup>20</sup> Sreedhara Menon. A, Kerala District Gazetteers, Cannanore, p. 96.

offshoot of the Kolattiri family, a princess from the royal house having married Arayan Kulannara Nayar who embraced Islam and was given the area as her share. In course of time they established their political power in and around Cannanore city. Cannanore had trade contacts with foreign countries. This led to the economic prosperity of Cannanore, with economic prosperity political power of the Ali Rajas also increased. The Ali Rajas also possessed a good fleet and according to one view his very title was a variation of the words Ali Raja i.e, "Lord of the sea." The Portuguese, the Dutch and the English tried to maintain friendly relations with the Ali Rajas because of his high standing in the field of commerce.

No mention of Cochin is found in the earlier notices of Malabar. Neither Pliny nor Ptolemy nor Periplus nor Marco Polo nor Ibn Batuta makes any mention of Cochin though they give accounts of places situated to the north and south of it, such as Cape Comorin, Kallada, Cranganur, Kadalundi, etc.<sup>21</sup> The first mention of Cochin, so far as known at present, is made sixty years after the formation of the harbour, by Ma Huan, a Chinese Mohamedan in his work Ying

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<sup>21</sup> Achuta Menon. C, The Cochin State Manual, pp.2-3.

Yai Sheno-lan, i.e, Description of the coasts of the Ocean.

It was written about 1451. It describes nineteen countries visited by the author including Cochin.<sup>22</sup>

Next mention is by the Italian traveller Nicolo Conti. Nicolo Conti writing in the fifteenth century and Fra Paolino in the seventeenth century say that it was called Kochi after the small river which flowed by that place and connects the backwater and the sea.<sup>23</sup> The word Kochi is popularly supposed to be a corruption of the Sanskrit go-sri, 'prosperous with cows.' This clearly one of those fanciful derivations given by the Aryan colonists of southern India, in their anxiety to give a Sanskrit origin to all Dravidian nomenclature. The first portion of the name is undoubtedly the Malayalam word Koccu, meaning small or young, but what this word qualifies can only be conjectured.<sup>24</sup> Achuta Menon hazards the conjecture that the word is a contraction of Kocci Azhi the small or new harbour, as distinguished from the large or old Cranganore

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<sup>22</sup> Sarkar. H.B, Trade and Commercial Activities of Southern Indian in the Malayo-Indonesian world (up to A.D. 1511). Vol.I, p.36.

<sup>23</sup> Achuta Menon. C, op.cit.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid. p.3.

harbour which was frequented for centuries by merchants from all parts of the world.

The Chinese work called Hsi Yang Chao Kung Tien Lu ["The Record of the Tributary Nations of the West"] was written by Huang Shong t Seng in 1520. It gives an account of twenty three countries including Cochin.<sup>25</sup> Chinese texts of the fifteenth century like those of Fei-Hsin throw some light on the location regarding Cochin. Fei Hsin says that it faces Hsi-lan, i.e, Ceylon while on the land face it abuts on Ku-li or Calicut.<sup>26</sup>

Literary works like Suka Sandesam, Unniyati Caritam and Viscinnabhishekam composed in the fourteenth century throw some welcome light on the early history of Perumpadappu Svarupam. The literary works mentioned above say that the Perumpadappu Svarupam had its headquarters at Mahodayapuram and that a number of Naduvalis in Southern and central Kerala recognised the supremacy of the Perumpadappu Muppu. Further, the Perumpadappu Chief as Koyiladhikarikal exercised jurisdiction over a large number of temples in Kerala irrespective of all considerations of Political

<sup>25</sup> Sarkar. H.B, op.cit. p.36.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid., p.214.

boundaries. A Malayalam lithic record of the fifteenth century A.D, perhaps the earliest dated lithic record mentioning "Perumpadappu Elaya Tavazhi" and "Cochin Era" has been discovered from the Urakam temple near Trichur and it is now one of the exhibits in the Trichur museum<sup>27</sup>

It is stated in the Tripunithura Granthavari that Perumpadappu Nambutiri died without heirs. So his property passed into the hands of his Kahatriya wife and her children. Thus came into existence the Perumpadappu Svarupam.<sup>28</sup> It is so called after the villages of the same name in the Ponnani taluk of the Palghat district which is said to have been the original seat of the family. It was there that the coronation ceremony was performed till the middle of the seventeenth century.<sup>29</sup>

The Dutch Records state that Ceraman Perumal, after dividing his territories, retired for life to the pagoda of Tiruvanjalur.<sup>30</sup> The second of the four kingdoms referred to by Van Rhee de was Cochin. The Raja of Cochin ruled over a large territory lying along the sea between Porca, Tekkumkur

<sup>27</sup> Sreedhara Menon. A, Kerala District Gazetteer, Trichur, p.76.

<sup>28</sup> Krishna Ayyar. K.V, The Eamoyins of Calicut, pp.127-128.

<sup>29</sup> Translation of a Record Grandhavari. (Cochin State). p.5.

<sup>30</sup> Francis Day, Cochin, its past and present. p.45.

and Vadakkumkur, Ancikaymal and the territories of the Zamorin.<sup>31</sup> Many princes and Chieftains recognised his overlordship. They were bound to offer him help in war as well as in Council.<sup>32</sup>

The Zamorin by a series of invasions had reduced the Cochin Raja to the position of a feudatory by the end of the thirteenth century.<sup>33</sup> The Brahmins of Kerala split into two antagonistic divisions known as Panniyur and Covaram the name of two of the original 64 gramams.<sup>34</sup> Panniyur under the Zamorin and the Cokiran under Perumpadappu. This situation continued till about the middle of the eighteenth century when it reached its height, it is possible that the Zamorin of Calicut and the Raja of Cochin took advantage of this division among the Brahmins and made use of it for their own ambitions projects of self aggrandisemont. When the Kurmatsaram ended is not exactly known.

Three circumstances helped the Zamorin in his schemes of aggrandisement. Firstly the Arabs rendered effective aid

<sup>31</sup> Galletti. A, op.cit. p.59.

<sup>32</sup> Poonen, T.I. A Survey of the Rise of the Dutch Power in Malabar [1603-1678] p.37.

<sup>33</sup> Raja. P.K.S. op.cit. p.67.

<sup>34</sup> Achuta Menon. C. op.cit. p.41.

to the Zamorin both in men and money in his Campaigns against the neighbouring Chiefs. Secondly the dissensions in the Cochin royal family also helped the Zamorin as it enabled him always to count confidently upon having allies in the enemy's camp. The third circumstance was the bitter and unrelenting enmity of the Chiefs of Idappally towards Cochin.<sup>35</sup> The tract of land which comprises the present towns of Cochin and Mattancheri and their suburbs belonged originally to Idappally. The cause was that early in the fifteenth century the Raja of Idappally made a present of it to the King of Cochin who happened to be his son.<sup>36</sup> The successors of the Idappally Raja resented this cession of territory, and made repeated attempts without success to regain it. They at last appealed to the Zamorin for help and in all his subsequent wars with Cochin he was able to count upon the faithful and consistent help of an ally whose territory was in the heart of Cochin.<sup>37</sup> Besides these the Chief of Cranganore also helped the Zamorin. Cranganore commanded the shortest route to Cochin. In the fourteenth

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<sup>35</sup> Ibid., p.44.

<sup>36</sup> Dames. M.L. (ed.), The Book of Durate Barbosa, Vol.11, p.94.

<sup>37</sup> Achuta Menon. C. op.cit., p.44.

and fifteenth centuries the Zamorin attacked Cochin many times.

The Perumpadappu Svarupam had its seat at Citrakutam in the Perumpadappu village in Ponnani taluk till the end of the thirteenth century but its chief had a palace of his own at Mahodayapuram. Perhaps it was also at this time that internal strife raised its head among the members of the Perumpadappu Svarupam and the Svarupam split into five Tavalis or branches. It is not known when exactly the Perumpadappu muppil gave up his permanent headquarters at Tiruvancikulam or Mahodayapuram.<sup>38</sup> Formerly succession was regulated by seniority in age among the male members of all the branches. As the Ilaya Tavali rose into power, it managed to gather round it the nobility and the people and all the estates of the realm together resolved that the succession to the Cochin throne should be reserved to the Ilaya Tavali, while the senior in age of all the branches was allowed the dignity of Perumpadappu muppu stanam which exercised jurisdiction over the temples. The other branches came to be treated as mere collaterals from which adoptions were to be made to the Ilaya Tavali whenever necessary.

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<sup>38</sup> Sreebhara Menon, A., Kerala District Gazettes, Trichur, p.132.

After sometime, disputes arose again, the members of various branches insisting that seniority in age alone should regulate succession to the throne. The allied Svarupams probably including the "four pillars of the state," the Chief of the Brahman community, and others assembled and resolved that the succession to the crown should be regulated by election, from among the five branches of the most able and the most wise, and of the one whose horoscope was the best, and that the prince so elected should be crowned as king and govern the country. The reason given for this resolution is that, if seniority alone was to be the criterion of succession it might happen that the senior in age was an incapable man, and the monarchy would suffer at his hands and the country be exposed to danger. The senior in age was however, not to be left out in the cold. For the dignity of Muppu sthanam together with the emoluments and privileges attached to it was to continue as before.<sup>39</sup>

Mahodayapuram continued to be the capital of Perumpadappu Svarupam till the close of the fourteenth century. Later Cochin became the capital city. Two reasons

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<sup>39</sup> Padmanabha Menon. K.P, History of Kerala, Vol.I, p.48.

might have foreced the Perumpadappu muppil to shift his capital to Cochin. By the end of the fourteenth century the Zamorin of Calicut had taken possession of Trikanamatilakam and threatened Tiruvancikulam. The Kokasandesha Kavya composed about 1400 A.D mentions that the Zamorin made Trikanamatilakam the seat of the Eralpad. Probably the advance of the Zamorin influenced the decision of the Perumpadappu muppil to shift his capital to Cochin which was outside the orbit of the Zamorin's conquests. The second reason was the emergence of Cochin as an important port. By 1341 Cranganore harbour became silted up by heavy floods which took place in the Periyar river and it became useless for purposes of trade. The flood burst at the present, Cochin Ali and Cochin was converted into one of the finest ports in India.<sup>40</sup> It is not possible to get a full and connected history of the Perumpadappu Svarupam till 1500 A.D.

The political geography of Kerala briefly outlined above show the total absence of political unity. During this time the Zamorin was the most powerful ruler on the coast. Often the Rajas and chieftains possessed rights and

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<sup>40</sup> Ibid., p.161.

properties in each others territories. In the temples of Cochin and even of Travancore the Zamorin had many rights. The Raja of Kayamkulam had special rights in the temple of Kudalmanikyam in Irinnalakkuda in the territory of the Cochin Raja. Besides this the Nambutiri Brahmins had also extra territorial privileges. They controlled most of the temples with their enormous revenues. The course of history during the two centuries previous to the arrival of the Portuguese was in the direction of an increase of the Zamorin's power and the establishment of a Kerala confederation under his authority. It was the outstanding feature at the time of Portuguese arrival.

#### Previous Studies

Several works have been carried out regarding the Dutch Relations with Kerala. We have stray references about Dutch dealings with Cochin in those works.

The Dutch in Malabar by Galletti. A is an important work. The talented author's attention was drawn to the large volumes of Dutch Documents taken over by the English on their capture of Cochin in 1795, and subsequently transferred to the Madras Record Office. The exhaustive

introduction which he wrote dealt with the establishment of Dutch power in the Malabar coast and capture of Cochin by the Dutch from the Portuguese. The next two sections contain translations of the memoirs of two important Dutch Governors of Cochin, Stein Van Gollenesse and Moons, who were in Cochin in two crucial periods in the history of Kerala.

A Survey of the Rise of the Dutch Power in Kerala (1603-1678) by T.I. Poonon is the most significant book for the present study. This book gives a vivid picture of the rise of the Dutch Power in Kerala. It describes how the Dutch established their authority in Cochin.

The Dutch Power in Kerala by Koshy. M.O, is another work on Indo-Dutch relations. It covers the period between 1729 and 1758. Chapter eleven of the book is about the Dutch impact on Kerala.

A History of Kerala by Padmanabha Menon. K.P. written in the form of Notes on Visscher's letters from Malabar in four volumes is an important work. Jacobus Canter Visscher was the Dutch chaplain at Cochin from 1717-1723. As a contemporary writer his work has a weight of its own,

inspite of its limitations. Kochi Rajya Caritram in Malayalam by Padmanabha Menon himself gives details of the colonial activities of the Dutch. This book was divided into four parts such as History of ancient period, Portuguese period, Dutch period and British period.

The princely states of Travancore and Cochin adopted the same example of British Government in the composition of State Manuals. The Travancore State Manual was composed by Nagam Aiya in three volumes (1906) and the Cochin State Manual (1911) by Achuta Menon.C. In composition theses manuals followed the pattern of Logan's Malabar Manual (1887). By their nature the manuals give only a resume of the information available at the time of their composition.

Malabar Manual by William Logan is another important work. Chapter three of the book presents a picture of the struggle for the pepper and piece goods trade (A.D. 1663-1766) in Malabar and Mysoreans' conquest (A.D. 1766-1792). This information is very useful in order to get the economic history of Malabar during the above period. Chapter four gives description of Chetwai and chapter sixth about Dutch settlements at Cochin.

Cochin, Its past and present by Francis Day gives a vivid picture of Cochin. Chapter second of the book is about the Native state of Cochin.

A History of Kerala by K.M. Panikkar gives an overall picture of Dutch activities in Kerala in the Eighteenth century. He explains the mode of administration of the Dutch and their relations with the Cochin Raja. The portion relating to Dutch activities in Kerala refer to the Hague Transcripts, the Tripunittura Grandhavari and some Malayalam Manuscripts. But the author confesses that owing to the shortness of his stay in Holland he was not able to make full use of the materials available at the Hague. In fact he has ignored even the large mass of Dutch sources available in print.

Mysore-Kerala Relations in the Eighteenth Century by A.P. Ibrahim Kunju is a valuable contribution to the subject. In this book the author has analysed the political relationship of Mysore with the native rulers of Kerala. It is a study on the role of Haider Ali and Tipu Sultan in Malabar politics.

Ashin Das Gupta in his book Malabar in Asian Trade (1740-1880) traces three main trends, the collapse of the independent merchant class of the coast, rise of Travancore under Martanda Varma into a strong economic power and the decline of Dutch in commercial activities.

All these books provide no doubt, a helping hand to the student of Kerala History for a study of the Dutch relations in historical perspective. However no attempt has been made by any scholar to study the role of the Dutch in the state of Cochin relating to the period from 1663-1795. A systematic and objective study from various sources still remains unfulfilled.

#### Indigenous Sources and their importance

We have got references about Dutch contact with Cochin from the following indigeneous sources.

Padappattu or War Song edited by Ulloor S. Parameswara Iyyer is the only contemporary literary Malayalam source which describes the succession dispute in the Cochin and the Dutch attack on the Portuguese fort of Cochin. It deserves special mention because of its historical value. After all the language of this work is 17th Century Malayalam, its

style is like Ezhuthachan's 'Killippattu.' Each padam begins and ends as saying to a bird. This proves that the author of the present study had been influenced by the writings of Ezhuthachan, the father of Malayalam literature. The poem consists of six padams (cantos). The poet gives a vivid picture of the war between the Portuguese and the Dutch. This is the best poetical description in Malayalam of an armed conflict.

When compared to other sources the chronology of the poem is exceptionally accurate. It can be used to confirm the European writings and records which are mostly written in middle Dutch, very difficult to decipher. Another attraction is its non-partisan attitude shown by the author to Portuguese and Dutch activities.

Granthams - Contain Treaties which were entered into between Dutch East India Company, Cochin Raja and other native rulers. It gives a vivid picture of the political and economic situation of the period. It shows the development of Dutch activities with Cochin in different periods.

Translation of a Record Granthavari describes the history of Cochin from early times, the war of succession in the

Cochin royal family, it also describes Portuguese - Dutch conflict for the conquest of Cochin and the relationship between Raja of Cochin, the Zamorin and Raja of Travancore. It gives the political picture of that period.

Album of Dutch Records 1704-1805 A.D

Contain some letters which are written by the Dutch East India Company's authorities in Batavia to Rajas of Cochin. These letters reveal the attitude of the Dutch Company towards Cochin Raja on different occasions. It gives an idea of the economic situation of that period.

Records in Oriental Languages, Cochin State Book II

Contain some letters of Raja of Cochin to Batavia. They reveal the attitude of Cochin Raja towards the Dutch Company on different issues.

Limitations

From the above discussion it is clear that the earlier works do not explain in a detailed manner the Dutch Relations with Cochin (1663-1795). The ignorance of the local Scholars of the Dutch language is a problem. There are voluminous source material in the archives of Holland,

which few Kerala Scholars have tried to make use. The middle Dutch in which these documents are written add to the difficulty. References are also found scattered in several travel accounts of the period. It is a difficult task to bring together all these scattered materials to form a clear picture of Dutch relations with Cochin in the 17th and 18th centuries.

#### Approach and Methodology

The proposed research work is descriptive, analytical and interpretative. It is also intended to give a narrative and descriptive account of social, economic and cultural activities in a historical perspective as reflected in the scattered source material with care and objectivity. This work is an attempt to collect from the dusty records of the dim past, certain authentic facts and combine them into a compact study.

# EUROPEAN CONTACT AND ADVENT OF THE DUTCH

Thomas Kutty Kariampally “Cochin - dutch relations in XVIII century ” Thesis.  
Department of History , University of Calicut, 1997

## CHAPTER II

### EUROPEAN CONTACT AND ADVENT OF THE DUTCH

Most of the European countries were very anxious to trade with the East. They believed that India was a country which provided them a lot of spices needed for their food. So several efforts were made by different states of Europe to find a direct sea-route to India. They knew that the country that discovered first would monopolise and thus would become rich beyond all measures. Thus England, France, Holland, Spain and Portugal became rivals of one another in the field of commerce.

The Phonicians were the first to visit Kerala for trade purposes. This example was followed by the Jews during the reign of Soloman. After the Jews, came the Syrians and the Egyptians. The trade of the Romans with Kerala was on a more extensive scale than that of their predecessors, and was kept for over two centuries.<sup>1</sup> The Greeks of Alexandria, Arabs, Iranians and Chinese all came to Kerala. They were followed by the Portugues, the Dutch, the Danes, French and

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<sup>1</sup> Rama Varma Appan Tampuran (ed.), Cochin, p.16.

finally the English. All came to trade but the English stayed to rule.<sup>2</sup>

Vasco da Gama, Admiral of the Portuguese, King Dom Emmanuel started from Belur near Lisbon on the 25th of March 1497. His fleet consisted of three small vessels called San Raphael (his brother Paulo da Gama's ship; 120 tons), and San Miguel (commanded by Nicholas Coelho, 50 tons). Each ship carried eighty men, officers, seamen and servants.<sup>3</sup> On 20th May 1498 A.D. after a perilous voyage lasting ten month's and two weeks, Vasco da Gama anchored off Kappad, eight miles north of Calicut, Next day he reached Calicut, which was at that time, indeed a city well worth-seeking. Calicut had been carrying an extensive maritime trade with West Asian countries in pepper and other spices.<sup>4</sup>

European historians have given entire credit to Vasco da Gama for having discovered the sea route to India. Indian Historians have also adopted this view uncritically. Indian Historiography has so far failed to correct this European bias. It was Ahmad bin Majid, an Arab pilot and an

<sup>2</sup> Owen C. Kail, The Dutch in India, p.165.

<sup>3</sup> William Logan, Malabar, Vol. I, p.338.

<sup>4</sup> Ibrahim Kunju, A.P., Studies in Medieval Kerala History, pp.16-17.

authority on the science of navigation and an expert pilot on the Indian Ocean who was really responsible for piloting Vasco da Gama's ship across the Indian Ocean from Malindi, on the East coast of Africa, and for bringing it safely and smoothly to Calicut. To ignore this great man is a wrong done to history.<sup>5\*</sup> Had Vasco da Gama not met Ahmed bin majid, the history of Portuguese contact with Kerala would be totally different. The Arabs mastered the art and science of Navigation, astronomy and astrology, possessed exceptional knowledge of oceanic geography, winds and weather, oceanography, navigational aids and instruments and at the same time the art of ship building. The Arabs made several improvements in the compass, the instrument to indicate the direction of sailing which was first invented by the Chinese.

<sup>5</sup> Amba Prasad, 'The Discovery of sea-route to India, Vasco da Gama and Ahmad bin Majid, Proceedings of the 37th session of Indian History Congress.

\* There are specialistic studies made by the French Scholar Gabriel Ferrand 'Shihabal-Din Ahmad B. Majid', in Encyclopaedia of Islam, IV, p.365 (1927, 1st edition), An Indian scholar Sulaiman Nadvi in his Arben Ki Jahazrani (in Urdu) and his writings in Islamic Culture, 15 (1941) and 16 (1942), and a Russian scholar Shumovsky T.A. in Three unknown letters of Ahmad Ibn Majid, the Arab pilot of Vasco da Gama have thrown considerable light on the subject and have established that it was Ibn-Majid who had piloted the ship of Vasco da Gama. Gabriel Ferrand held this view as early as 1922 and established the fact through his articles in Journal of Asiatique (1919) and Annals of Geography (1922).

Vasco da Gama's arrival at Calicut in 1498 was an event of global significance for history. The success of Vasco da Gama and the earlier failure of Columbus, created the maritime empire of Spain and Portugal, pioneering the stage of western colonial domination in world history.<sup>6</sup> Soon after his arrival Gama expressed his desire to the Zamorin. By the time of the Portuguese arrival in India, the trade of Malabar had been entirely in the hands of Muslims, both Arab and native. The foreign trade of the country reached the highest peak of development at the time of their arrival and the Portuguese found that the competition for Kerala trade was very keen.<sup>7</sup> Most of the Portuguese stress the fact that the Zamorin's strength lay in his close association with the Muslim merchants.<sup>8</sup> Kerala at the time of Portuguese arrival presented a very complex political set up. From Nilesvaram to Kanyakumari it was cut into a large number of petty principalities. There were constant struggles among these petty states for political supremacy.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> Prasad, S.N., 'Records on Indo-Portuguese Relations in the National Archives of India', INDICA, Vol. 17, No.2, September 1980.

<sup>7</sup> Ibrahim Kunju, A.P., op.cit., pp.11-12.

<sup>8</sup> Donald F. Lach, India in the Eyes of Europe, p.349.

<sup>9</sup> Ibrahim Kunju, A.P., op. cit., p.15.

Cochin was a very small country and its king was not accepted as a sovereign king before the Portuguese discovered India. Every new king of Calicut used to invade Cochin and occupy large portions of the kingdom. The king of Cochin gave him every year a certain number of elephants but he, like other small kings was not allowed to strike coins, nor roof his palace with tiles.<sup>10</sup> The arrival of the Portuguese expedition aroused at once the jealousy in the Moors or Muhammadans, who had the West Asian trade in their hands and they immediately began to intrigue with the authorities for the destruction of the new comers.<sup>11</sup>

The feudalistic political set-up of Kerala kingdoms and principalities made them weak and dependent on the allegianess of the local Chieftains. These Chieftains not only frequently quarelled among themselves but sometimes even joined the enemy against their own liege lords. The classic example was that of the Cochin Chieftains, many of whom joined the side of the Zamorins, in their wars with the Rajas of Cochin.<sup>12</sup> On 4th November 1498 Vasco da Gama

<sup>10</sup> Dames, M.L. (Tr.) The Book of Durate Barbosa, Vol. II, pp.94-95.

<sup>11</sup> William Logan, op. cit, p.339.

<sup>12</sup> Ibrahim Kunju, A.P., op. cit, p.16.

returned to Europe.<sup>13</sup> As soon Vasco da Gama was back in Lisbon after his first successful contact with India via the Cape route, the King of Portugal, Dom Manuel assumed the new and pompous title of "The lord of the conquest, navigation and commerce of Ethiopia, Arabia, Persia and India".<sup>14</sup> The profits realised on the cargoes taken home in Da Gama's ships were enormous.<sup>15</sup>

After his return the next Portuguese expedition under Alwares Cabral reached Calicut in 1500 A.D. Though they got permission for erecting a fort at Calicut within striking distance from Moorish, he sailed down to Cochin.<sup>16</sup>

The first fleet of Europeans that touched the waters of Cochin was that of Pedro Alvares Cabral on 24 December 1500.<sup>17</sup> It was this expedition which laid the foundation of the Portuguese settlement at Cochin. Cochin was only an insignificant village when Cabral arrived there in 1500

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<sup>13</sup> Padmanabha Menon, K.P., Kochi Rajya Caritram (Mal.), p.126.

<sup>14</sup> De Souza, T.R., 'The Afro-Asian Church in the Portuguese Estado India', Indian Church History Review, vol. XXI, No.2.

<sup>15</sup> William Logan, op. cit, p.345.

<sup>16</sup> Translation of a Record Grandhavari, p.5.

<sup>17</sup> Mathias Mundadan, A., History of Christianity from the beginning upto the middle of the sixteenth century, V. I, p.356.

A.D.<sup>18</sup> Unni Rama Koil I was the ruler of Cochin when Cabral, the Portuguese captain landed at Cochin. Unni Rama Koil who had heard about the quarrel between the Portuguese and the Zamorin immediately granted the Portuguese permission to trade freely at Cochin.<sup>19</sup> The age-old enmity between the Zamorin of Calicut and the Raja of Cochin enabled the Portuguese to get their first firm foothold in India by supporting the latter against the former. It also gave Portuguese a strong position in the Malabar pepper trade.<sup>20</sup>

To Cabral and his men the Raja allocated a large warehouse to store goods. This was the first feitoria (factory, trade centre), the Portuguese established in Cochin. When after about twenty days' stay in Cochin, Cabral weighed anchor on his homeward journey, he left behind thirty Portuguese soldiers under the protection of the Raja in the factory that had been established.

Learning that the Raja of Cochin was at enmity with the Zamorin, Cabral set sail for Cochin, destroying two Calicut ships on the way. The Raja of Cochin, the dynastic enemy of

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<sup>18</sup> Haklyut's Voyages, vol. V, p.392.

<sup>19</sup> Ibrahim Kunju, A.P., op. cit, p.21.

<sup>20</sup> Boxer, C.R., The Portuguese Seaborn Empire 1415-1825, p.50.

the Zamorin, welcomed the Portuguese and entered into a treaty of friendship with them in return for the Portuguese promise to instal him as the overlord of all Malabar including the Zamorin's dominions. They established a factory and took loading for ships.<sup>21</sup> Under the Portuguese Cochin grew into a large and flourishing town and soon became a centre of commercial importance. Before Goa was built, it was looked upon as the official residence of the viceroy of India.<sup>22</sup>

From a local Chief of no importance the Cochin Raja, with the help of the Portuguese, rose to the position of a powerful prince, independent of the Zamorin and a rival to him in the claim of allegiance of the Southern princes.<sup>23</sup> When the Portuguese penetrated into the Indian Ocean in the 15th century and reached the Malabar coast, Cochin then already a place of great strategic and commercial importance, became the first European settlement on Indian soil under Pedro Alwares Cabral.<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> Nambiar, O.K., The Kunjalis, Admirals of Calicut, p.33.

<sup>22</sup> Padmanabha Menon, K.P., History of Kerala, Vol. I, p.167.

<sup>23</sup> Panikkar, K.M., Malabar and the Portuguese, p.205.

<sup>24</sup> Kerala History Association, Cochin Synagogue Quater-Contenary Celebrations Commemoration Volume, p.18.

Cochin a rival port to Calicut, loaded Cabral's fleet with spices on fair terms Cabral signed a treaty with the Raja, and established an agency on shore with a factor and six assistants to provide cargo for the next fleet from Portugal.<sup>25</sup> The factory at Cochin, while the Portuguese promised to free the Raja from the Zamorin's yoke and even to add Calicut to his dominion at some future date.<sup>26</sup> Having left a group of Portuguese to maintain a factory at Cochin Cabral departed from India in January 1501 taking three ambassadors from the Indian states.<sup>27</sup>

Cabral returned to Lisbon with a rich cargo. The Cochin Raja was displeased with Cabral for carrying off the hostages, sent by him. The next Portuguese Navigator who arrived in Cochin was John da Nova, who was despatched from Portugal in March 1501 in command of four vessels.<sup>28</sup> He too had to meet with the hostility of the Zamorin. The importance of Cochin as a centre of international trade can be understood in the light of the contacts established by the Italian and the German merchants in the first quarter of

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<sup>25</sup> Williams Jackson, A.V. (ed.), History of India, vol. VI, p.86.

<sup>26</sup> William Logan, op. cit, p.348.

<sup>27</sup> Livermore, H.V., A New History of Portugal, p.139.

<sup>28</sup> William Logan, op. cit, p.348.

the sixteenth century. Leonardo Nardi, a Florentine merchant came to Cochin in 1501 in the fleet of Joa da Nova.<sup>29</sup> Sernigi was another Florentine merchant who took part in the trade with Cochin in the first decade of the sixteenth century. Giovanni Buonograzia in fact was a Florentine who commanded one of the vessels in the fleet of Vasco da Gama in 1502.<sup>30</sup>

The king of Portugal on learning the treatment which Cabral received from the Zamorin, was extremely indignant and determined to exact further retribution. Vasco da Gama was therefore despatched from Lisbon on 3rd March 1502 in command of an avenging squadron of fifteen vessels, followed a short time subsequently by his cousin Stephen da Gama with five smaller ships.<sup>31</sup> Vasco da Gama arrived a second time at Cochin (7th November 1502 A.D.) after bombarding Calicut and the Arab merchants of Calicut. Both the Cochin Raja and Gama exchanged presents. The Portuguese obtained monopoly of pepper trade of the land.

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<sup>29</sup> Mathew, K.S. & Afzal Ahmad, Emergence of Cochin in the pre-industrial era (A study of Portuguese Cochin), p.IX.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid.

<sup>31</sup> William Logan, op. cit, pp.349-350.

There were a number of small Chieftains in the region viz., those of Mangatt, Paravur, Vadakkumkur, Edappally, Cranganore etc., who were jealous but not in a position to forge a united front against the foreign power.

After regulating the Cannanore factory affairs Da Gama left two hundred men there and sailed for Europe on 28th December 1502. Da Gama's departure was the signal for the outbreak of hostilities between the Rajah of Cochin and the Zamorin, to whom the former was tributary. The latter demanded that the Portuguese factors left at Cochin should be given up to him and the demand was rejected.<sup>32</sup> When Unni Rama Koyil II (1503-1537 A.D.) came to power, the friendship with the Portuguese triumph at Cochin against his forces alarmed the Zamorin of Calicut. In 1503 the Zamorin asked the Cochin Raja to surrender all the Portuguese factors. The refusal of Cochin Raja led to war. The war between Calicut and Cochin began on 1st March 1503.

In 1503 the Portuguese erected a wooden fortress on a spot marked out by the ruler of Cochin - the first of the many they built in India. The fortress was named 'Manuel', after king Manuel I of Portugal, by Raja Trimumpara himself.

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<sup>32</sup> Ibid, p.352.

Around the Palisade, sheds were constructed for the Portuguese personnel to live in.<sup>33</sup> The Cochin Raja got help from the Portuguese factor. The Calicut army consisting of 50,000 men stormed the Edappally ford and entered Cochin territory. He attacked Cochin kingdom both by land and sea. The heir apparent and two princess of Cochin royal family perished in the battle. However Cochin Raja and his Portuguese allies took refuge in the temple of Ilankunnappula (Vaipin). Meanwhile the monsoon set in and the Calicut army departed for Calicut.

In the meantime on Saturday, 2nd September, 1503 there appeared before Cochin Don Francisco de Albuquerque with six sail. He had touched at the Cannanore factory and learning from the Kolattiri the critical position of affairs, had pushed on to Cochin just in time to relieve the small garrison. The Zamorin's forces were disheartened and easily driven back.<sup>34</sup> During the period the Portuguese completed the fort of Cochin and christened it as "fort Manuel".

The restoration of the Cochin king was the Joint

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<sup>33</sup> Mathias Mundadan, A., op. cit, p.357.

<sup>34</sup> William Logan, op. cit, p.353.

achievement of Alfonso de Albuquerque and his cousin.<sup>35</sup> Albuquerque before sailing, was warned of impending dangers and the defence of the Cochin fort was accordingly constructed to Pacheco a valient soldier. He had as garrison of one hundred and firty men including invalids, and two ships which had not been loaded with pepper were also placed at his disposal.<sup>36</sup> Barros speaks of a certain friar named Gastao who wrote an eye witness account of the war between Cochin and Calicut in 1504.<sup>37</sup> In 1504 A.D. Durate Pacheco took charge of the defense of Cochin against the continuing attacks of the Zamorin. Now the Zamorin tried to capture Cochin. But Durate Pacheco and the Cochin Nayers defended the Cochin ford against the overwhelming forces of the Zamorin and his allies.

Local merchants also crowded together to Cochin to take advantage of the new milieu. Mamale Marakkar who was said to be the "richest man in the country" had his establishments in Cochin in the early part of the sixteenth century. As the Portuguese found themselves incapable of

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<sup>35</sup> Genevieve Bouchan, 'Regent of the sea Cannanore's Response to the Portuguese Expansion 1507-1528', p.76.

<sup>36</sup> William Logan, op. cit, p.354.

<sup>37</sup> Mathias Mundadan, A., op. cit, p.375.

conducting trade without the help of the local merchants, the king instructed the officials on the Malabar coast to prefer the local merchants.<sup>38</sup>

There was a certain Mataimapula, a Christian from Edappally, who supplied a large volume of pepper to the factor at Cochin. Ittu Kunju, a Nair merchant from Cranganore provided pepper every year to them at Cochin. Chiefly because of the lack of funds and the position held by the Muslim merchants, the Portuguese were forced finally to depend on them, who had better funds and were favoured by the local rulers themselves. Cherina Marakkar and Mamale Marakkar received an order in 1504 from the Portuguese officials for the supply of 49,89,000 kgs of pepper to the factory at Cochin. The local merchants of Cochin had their factories on the Coromandel coast too and they helped the Portuguese in their attempts to get commodities from Malacca and other parts of the South East African countries before the Portuguese occupation of Malacca. Thus Mamale Marakkar and Cherina Marakkar with their brother, the chief merchants of Cochin were regarded as the agents of the Portuguese in Cochin. Another Muslim merchant of Cochin called Mitos

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<sup>38</sup> Mathew, K.S., Afzal Ahmad, op. cit, p.x.

Marakkar supplied Cinnamon from Ceylon to the Portuguese.<sup>39</sup>

The port of Cochin was described as the best in the world by Alfonso de Albuquerque in 1504 as far as security of the ships was concerned.<sup>40</sup>

*corrected by Hase*  
Alfonso de Albuquerque advocated mixed marriages. He could not forget the importance of Calicut though this was not liked by the king of Cochin who feared the decline of trade at Cochin.<sup>41</sup> The year 1505 was a memorable year in the Portuguese annals, for on 31st October there arrived at Cochin eight vessels, all that remained out of a fleet of twenty two, carrying one thousand five hundred soldiers, with which Dom Francisco de Almeda, the first Portuguese Viceroy of all the Indies, had sailed from Europe.<sup>42</sup>

The firm of Ulrich Fugger in partnership with the other German and Italian merchant financiers, sent three ships in 1505 in the fleet of Francisco de Almeida. The Fuggers invested 4000 Florins in this expedition to Cochin. The participation of the Fuggers became inevitable since they obtained the right over the copper and silver mines in the

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<sup>39</sup> Ibid, p.xi.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid, p.vi.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid, pp.XVI-XVII.

<sup>42</sup> William Logan, op. cit, p.356.

Holy Roman Empire. Copper was the most important item of import into India for the purchase of pepper. It was agreed with the King of Cochin that three fourth of the price of pepper would be paid in cash and one fourth in the form of copper. Copper coins were also minted in Cochin and other places for the transaction. Copper from the mines of Tyrol, Sweden and Denmark was brought to Cochin.<sup>43</sup>

German merchant firms sent their ships along with the Portuguese fleet to Cochin in 1505. Italian and Flemish merchants too took advantage of the opportunity provided.<sup>44</sup> A strong and well-built fortress called Fort Manuel came into existence in Cochin in 1505. The King of Portugal sent a golden crown with Francisco de Almeida for the coronation of the king of Cochin. Thus in 1505 he was crowned by the Portuguese viceroy and he took the oath of fealty to the king of Portugal. This practice of taking oath at the time of accession to the throne by a new king continued throughout the Portuguese period of the history of Cochin.<sup>45</sup>

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<sup>43</sup> Mathew, K.S., Afzal Ahmad, op. cit, p.VIII.

<sup>44</sup> Ibid, p.XVI.

<sup>45</sup> Ibid.

Until 1506 Hindu law, which was rigorously observed for the use of lime and stone in other constructions than temples. Hence the early Portuguese in order to avoid displeasing the Raja built there a house of wood. Finally the viceroy, Francisco de Almeida induced the Raja of Cochin to permit him the use of lime and stone, and on 3rd May 1506 the first stone for the fortress and city was laid by the viceroy with great pomp.<sup>46</sup> Raja Nambiodara (Rama Varma 1505-45), who had succeeded Trimumpara, gave permission to build the fortress with stone as requested by the Viceroy.

The idea of starting a hospital was perhaps conceived by Gasper Perieira, the secretary to viceroy Francisco de Almeida. The letter gave orders on 11 January 1506 for starting of one. It carried the name Santa Cruz de Cochin (Holy Cross hospital of Cochin). It seems that the hospital was soon provided with a physician, a surgeon, a male nurse and attendants. Money for its maintenance came from the fines collected from law breakers and grants from the royal treasury or the trade centre. The patients were looked after fairly well and provided with good food and other necessities. The clergy made regular visits, especially when

<sup>46</sup> Charles G. Herbermann et al. (ed.), The Catholic Encyclopaedia, vol. IV, p.77.

some one was seriously ill. Both Portuguese and Indian Christians were admitted; when anyone died, he or she was buried in the Portuguese cemetery.<sup>47</sup>

The association of Jews with Cochin is attested from the first decade of the 16th century. The German traveller Balthazar Springer who arrived with the fleet of d'Almeida in 1506 noticed their presence in Cochin, and referred to them as "a foreign element among the pagan population of Cochin". The fact that a Portuguese nobleman, Dr. Martin Pinheiro could sell in 1506 Hebrew books which he had brought from Portugal to the Jews of Cochin through the mediation of the wife of Gasper da Gama, a Jewess of Cochin, is a further indication of the existence of a Jewish community at that time.<sup>48</sup>

The first large-sized mustering of Portuguese which went to Asia to remain temporarily was the fleet of Francisco de Almeida. Until then there was no more than a handful of men in two factories - Cochin and Cannanore. Later, little by little more territories were conquered and occupied, these being either directly administered by the

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<sup>47</sup> Mathias Mundadan, A., op. cit, p.369.

<sup>48</sup> Kerala History Association, op. cit, p.18.

Portuguese, or at least under their control surrounded by a small satellite area all these enclosed by strange lands, and all linking seawards for it was through the sea that they were linked to one another.<sup>49</sup>

On 5th November 1509 Alfonso d' Albuquerque succeeded as the Captain General and Governor after Almeida.<sup>50</sup> Alfonso de Albuquerque issued orders for minting coins of gold, silver and copper. About eighty one denominations of gold, silver and copper coins were issued for the public from this mint established in 1510.<sup>51</sup> In 1510 one Arel (Aryan), with his whole family and his subjects numbering over a thousand, become Christians.<sup>52</sup> The church of Cochin was the first the Portuguese built in India.

Unni Rama Koil I died in 1510 A.D. According to the custom of the country Unni Rama Koyil II should have now become a religious recluse and made room for the prince

<sup>49</sup> Maria Augusta Lima Cruz, 'Exiles and renegades in early sixteenth century Portuguese India', The Indian Economic and Social History Review, vol. XXIII, No.3, July-September 1986.

<sup>50</sup> Padmanabha Menon, K.P., Kochi Rajya Caritram, (Mal.), p.186.

<sup>51</sup> Mathew, K.S., 'Trade in the Indian Ocean during the sixteenth century and the Portuguese', Mathew, K.S., (ed.), Studies in Maritime History, p.19.

<sup>52</sup> Mathias Mundadan, A., op. cit, p.359.

belonging to the Mutta Tavali, as he was a partisan of the Zamorin, the succession was overruled by the Portuguese.

In 1510 A.D. September there was a conference in Cochin fort which was attended by Albuquerque and Portuguese officials to discuss the programme of capture of Goa. The officials insisted that Cochin must be the headquarters of Portuguese in India, but the will of Albuquerque prevailed.<sup>53</sup>

*Albuquerque?*  
Albuquerque seized Goa which gave Portugal a navalbase, an emporium famous throughout India, and the nucleus of a colonial empire.<sup>54</sup>

It was in 1511 that Governor Alfonso de Albuquerque set out for Malacca. When he returned to Cochin in the early part of 1512 he found a chest filled with text books which the king of Portugal had sent to him in the fleet of that year. On 1st April 1512 the governor wrote to king Manuel; as "I guessed that your majesty did not send them to rot in the box. I engaged a gentleman married in Cochin to teach boys to read and write. There would be about 100 boys in

<sup>53</sup> Padmanabha Menon, K.P., Kochi Rajya Caritram (Mal.), pp.189-190.

<sup>54</sup> Jayne, K.G., Vasco da Gama and His Successors (1460-1580), pp.103-104.

the school." This is the first school the Portuguese started in the East.<sup>55</sup>

By 1515 itself Cochin was reported to be having a great deal of trade. Even towards the fourth quarter of the sixteenth century white sandal wood and spices of various sorts were taken from Malacca to Cochin as reported by Filippo Sasseti, an agent of the consortium of the German and Italian firms.<sup>56</sup>

A number of cettis were found in conducting trade. Pepper, coconuts, arecanuts, palm sugar and jaggery were some of the items sent from Cochin to Cambay, Dabul, Chaul, Coromandel coast and other trade centres of the Deccan. Ships were repaired and manufactured in Cochin. The King of Cochin often helped the Portuguese to get necessary timber for the building of ships right from the beginning of the Portuguese contact. The timber available in Cochin, especially the teak wood, was reported to be far superior for ship-building. There were a number of Caulkers, guards, workers for making ropes and other necessary items for the building of ships in the dockyard who were employed by the

<sup>55</sup> Mathias Mundadan, op. cit, pp.367-368.

<sup>56</sup> Mathew, K.S., Afazal Ahmad, op. cit, p.VII.

Portuguese.<sup>57</sup> Albuquerque died broken heart at Goa, on 17th December 1515 A.D. Albuquerque's immediate successor was Lopo-Soares (1515-1518).

Lopo Soares was an incompetent man. He was succeeded by De Sequiero (1518-22) and Durate D Menezes (1522-24). Both of them were also incompetent and dishonest. In 1523 the Franciscan friary of Cochin was erected.<sup>58</sup> Minters were regularly sent from Goa to Cochin to issue coins for the purpose of trade and this practice seems to have been in existence prior to 1524.<sup>59</sup> In 1524 the Portuguese Government sent Vasco da Gama again to India as viceroy of their dominions in India. But unfortunately he died at Cochin on 24th December 1524.<sup>60</sup> His body was deposited in the principal chapel of the monastery of S. Antonio,\* after which his, together with all his servants, returned to Portugal in a merchant's ship, where they were received with great

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<sup>57</sup> Ibid.

<sup>58</sup> Mathias Mundadan, op. cit., p.356.

<sup>59</sup> Mathew, K.S., 'Trade in the Indian Ocean during the sixteenth century and the Portuguese', Mathew, K.S. (ed.), Studies in Maritime History, p.19.

<sup>60</sup> Padmanabha Meon, K.P., Kochi Rajya Caritram (Mal.), pp.198-199.

\* Accounts differ as to where the body was buried. Some say it was in the monastery of S. Francisco, others in the cathedral of Cochin and others again in the Franciscan monastery of Cochin.

honour by the King.<sup>61</sup> He was succeeded by Dom Hendrique de Menzes (1524-1526) and Lopo vaz de Sampayo (1526-1529).<sup>62</sup>

Don Henrique de Menezes in conformity with this practice ordered a few minters to be sent to Cochin to strike crusados (gold coins) for the purchase of spices.<sup>63</sup> Francasco Corbinelli, another Floretine who was active in Cochin along with Giovanni da Empoli and Leonardo Nardi died in India before 1526.<sup>64</sup> The king of Portugal, John III issued a charter on March 12, 1527. In view of this, Cochin was brought on par with the Portuguese city of Evora and Goa and was endowed with all sorts of privileges and rights that were enjoyed by the Portuguese cities. He added that Cochin should henceforth be called a city, not a town.<sup>65</sup> Lopo vaz de Sampayo was succeeded by Nuna da Cunha in 1529 as Governor.<sup>66</sup>

With a view to fulfilling their long cherished desire of bringing the Gujarati ports under their control, it was

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<sup>61</sup> Danvers, F.C., The Portuguese in India, vol.I, pp.373-374.

<sup>62</sup> Padmanabha Menon, K.P., Kochi Rajya Caritram, (Mal), p.199.

<sup>63</sup> Mathew, K.S., Afzal Ahmad, op. cit, p.XI.

<sup>64</sup> Ibid, p.IX.

<sup>65</sup> Ibid, p.XVIII.

<sup>66</sup> Padmanabha Menon, K.P., Kocci Rajya Caritram (Mal), p.199.

decided to shift their headquarters from Cochin to Goa, nearer to Gujarat. So in 1530 the principal political establishments of the Portuguese India were transferred from Cochin to Goa.<sup>67</sup> The merchandise coming from the interior places like Erattupetta, Erumeli, the various parts of the kingdom of Vadakkumkur and so on through riverine transport or land were taken easily to the Portuguese weighing place and godown at Cochin. The commodities from Kayamkulam and Quilon were also brought to the port of Cochin. Similarly the goods for exchange brought by the Portuguese whither from India or abroad as well as copper, money and other things were stored in Cochin and were in due time sent to other factories.<sup>68</sup>

When the Portuguese began to prosper in their enterprise and get possession in the country, and so became masters of the sea, Calicut began to decay and to lose both name and traffic. Now at this time Calicut is one of the towns of least account in all Malabar and Cochin to the contrary their king being very rich and richer than the Zamorin. So that now he cares not for him, by means of the

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<sup>67</sup> Mathew, K.S., AfzalAhmad, op. cit, p.XVIII.

<sup>68</sup> Ibid, p.XIX.

favour of the portuguese.<sup>69</sup> The discovery of Cochin enabled the Portuguese to avoid Calicut for trade purposes. "Cochin harbour was far superior to the open roadstead of Calicut and the magnificent inland communication it had with the pepper country were unlike anything obtaining at its rival."<sup>70</sup>

Unni Rama koil II was succeeded by Vira Kerala Varma (1537-1565).<sup>71</sup> In the year 1538, the mortal remains of Dom Vascoda Gama, who died at Cochin, were taken to Lisbon with great pomp and demonstration.<sup>72</sup> It was long before this that the 'Arel of Cochin (the Aryan of Cochin), who was a sort of chief port officer of the Raja, was converted to Christianity together with his whole clan numbering about 1,000 members. No sooner was he baptised than the Portuguese conferred on him the same titles, offices and dignities which he had enjoying before conversion.<sup>73</sup>

The Raja of Cochin was quite unhappy about the conversion of so important an officer; it was quite possible

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<sup>69</sup> Burnell. A.C, (ed.), The Voyage of John Hughen Van Linschoten to the East Indias, Vol.I, .68.

<sup>70</sup> White way, Rise of the portuguese power in India, p.8.

<sup>71</sup> Panikkar. K.M. History of Kerala, pp.182-183.

<sup>72</sup> Danvers. F.C, op.cit., Vol.I,p.437.

<sup>73</sup> Mathias mundadam, op.cit., p.363.

that the Arel would shift his loyalty from the Raja to the Portuguese any time.<sup>74</sup> In January 1540 a treaty was concluded the principal terms which were. no rowing boat in the kingdom of Calicut to have more than five oars aside; no vessel to navigate to or from Calicut without having first obtained a pass from the Captain of Chale. No vessel to trade with Mecca, or in pepper or drugs, without the special permission of the viceroy or Governor of India. The king of Calicut to restore all the Portuguese artillery which might be in his territory, and to return all slaves and fugitives who might have escaped in to his dominions. The King should supply all the pepper in his dominions at the Cochin prices, and should deliver it at a specified place, and sell all the ginger at the rate of ninety-two fanams. The Zamorin to be the friend of the Portuguese and their friends, and to assist the viceroy with men whenever, he might require them. This treaty lasted for thirty years, and proved one of the greatest blessings the Portuguese, experienced in India.<sup>75</sup>

*what?* In 1541 a request was made by the Portuguese authorities but the Raja refused to oblige them, saying that

<sup>74</sup> Ibid., pp.363-364.

<sup>75</sup> Danvers. F.C, op.cit, Vol.I , p.443.

he did not intend to deviate from the policy of his predecessors. But the next year a definite change was noticeable in his attitude obviously under pressure from the new viceroy. Martin Afonso de Sousa. He informed the Raja that Portugal wanted him, at any cost, to desist from seizing the properties of the new converts. The Raja reluctantly bowed to the demand though he tried from time to time find a way of escaping from this arrangement.<sup>76</sup> The conversion of Antonio Real made the Aryans of the neighboring ports of Puracad and Kayamkulam, both relatives of the former, think of accepting Christianity. The Aryan of Calicut even discussed with Albuquerque the prospects of conversion. Silva Rego, the Portuguese historian, feels that the Portuguese being themselves sea-faring people were an attraction for the fisherfolk, the mariners, boatmakers and pilots, who could not restrain their admiration for the former.<sup>77</sup>

In 1541 or 1542, when Este vao da Gama was governor, the hospital was handed over to the Santa casa de

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<sup>76</sup> Mathias Mundadan, op.cit., p.363.

<sup>77</sup> Ibid., p.364.

miserericordia (the House of misericordia), the condition of the hospital improved after that.<sup>78</sup>

The citizens of Cochin in 1542 presented a memorandum to Governor Martin Afonso de Sousa. It was a shame, they said that the Portuguese residents lived in well-built houses with tiled roofs while the house of God still had a thatched roof. In the Indian quarters of the town, while the private houses were all thatched, the places of worship (the temple and the mosques) and the royal palace had tiled roof. The contrast was so striking that the governor gave immediate orders to tile the roof of the church and made all the necessary arrangements for it.<sup>79</sup> The Jesuits established themselves in Cochin in 1548. At first their work was confined to the town<sup>80</sup> The jesuits opened a residence in Cochin in 1549. It was raised to the status of a college in 1560-61.<sup>81</sup>

Dom Garcia de sa, the Portuguese Governor made some appointments for certain posts in the city of Cochin. But

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<sup>78</sup> Ibid., p.370.

<sup>79</sup> Ibid., p.373.

<sup>80</sup> Joseph Thekkedath, History of Christianity in India, Vol.II, from the middle of the sixteenth century to the end of the seventeenth century, (1542-1700). pp.56-57.

<sup>81</sup> Ibid., p.133.

he was told by the municipality that the city had its own privileges to take into such works and so the appointment could not have any effect. The governor having in mind the privileges and rights of the city of Cochin requested the municipality to respect the order if any body came up in view of the appointment. This order was issued by the governor on 4th December 1549.<sup>82</sup>

The problem of butchering cows raised a great controversy as the king of Cochin did not tolerate it and some understanding was already reached in this matter. It was agreed that no cow would be slaughtered in public places. As the number of Portuguese settlers began to swell the need for beef too was more. However, the agreement with the king had to be respected, and so the Portuguese used to butcher cows only in places set apart for the same. The increase in the number of religious persons and priests in the city of Cochin also added to the demand for beef.<sup>83</sup> In 1549 the Portuguese plundered a rich temple at Pallurithi. This naturally strained the relations between the Cochin and the Portuguese.

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<sup>82</sup> Mathew. K.S, Afzal Ahmad, Op.cit., p.XXX.

<sup>83</sup> Ibid., p.XX.

Portuguese officials avoided every opportunity to introduce new taxes with a view to enhancing the income of the city of Cochin inhabited by them. Viceroy Dom Afonso de Naronho issued an order on 2nd January 1551 to collect special tax of one parado each from the Muslim and Canarese merchants interested in conducting trade in the city.<sup>84</sup> In 1557 at the request of Sebastian one of the churches in Cochin called St. Cruz or Santa Cruz (Holy Cross) was raised by the King of Portugal to the dignity of a cathedral and a Dominican elevated to the post of Bishop.<sup>85</sup> Venetian traveller Caesar Frederick who visited India between 1563 and 1581 described Cochin as the chiefest place that the Portugals have in Indies next to Goa.<sup>86</sup> In the meanwhile the union of Portugal with Spain 1580 - 1640 and its echo in Indian waters. What happened in 1580 was that the fate of the portuguese navy was tied up that of the Spanish. When the Spanish ruler prohibited the protestant merchants of Amsterdam and Lisbon for purchasing Asiatic goods at Lisbon the latter naturally turned India not only to punish the

<sup>84</sup> Mathew K.S, 'Taxation in the Coastal Towns of Western India and the Portuguese in the Sixteenth Century'. Proceedings of Second International Symposium on Maritime Studies, 16-20. December, 1991, p.11.

<sup>85</sup> Francis Day, Cochin, its past and its present p.109.

<sup>86</sup> Panikkar. K.M, History of Kerala, pp.181-182.

Spanish King but also to collect the eastern commodities now under the Spanish protection. The capture of India seemed to Holland a continuation of her just revolt against Portugal and Spain. The Dutch also wanted to try their hand and introduce protestantism.<sup>87</sup> The union of the Kingdoms of, Spain and Portugal in 1581 dragging the smaller Kingdom into Spain's wars with England and Holland which badly affected the Portuguese monopoly of trade in India.

It was only after the defeat of the Spanish Armada in 1588 and the Consequent blow to the naval prestige of Spain that the Dutch were emboldened to challenge the portuguese supremacy in the Indian seas.<sup>88</sup> The Dutch had for long looked with jealousy at the monopoly of the East. But the colossal power of Philip II of Spain who had also become the king of Portugal made any direct challenge to his naval power impossible for a long time.<sup>89</sup>

Linschoten published his book in 1592 and communicated valuable information, while on the 17th April 1592 the book seller Cornelis claes of Amsterdam informed the States

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<sup>87</sup> Mathew. K.M, History of Portuguese Navigation in India 1497-1600, p.318.

<sup>88</sup> Panikkar. K.M. History of Kerala, p.185.

<sup>89</sup> Ibid., p.186.

General that he had obtained twenty five charts of the African, Indian and Chinese seas from the scholar Peter Plancius, who in his turn had precured them from the cosmographist Bartolomeo de casso who occupied an official position in Spain, several companies were soon afterwards formed in the Netherlands and several expeditions were sent to the east.<sup>90</sup> In 1592 at a meeting of the leading Dutch merchants held at Amsterdam it was decided to found a compnay for trading with India.<sup>91</sup> Cornelis Houtman's first voyage of 1595 had been literally a pilent for later expeditions.<sup>92</sup>

The Dutch East India Company began to despatch ships to India in 1595 and after many encounters with the Portuguese and their native allies succeeded in establishing themselves in several places in India, in Ceylon and in the Eastern Archipelego within the next quarter of a century.<sup>93</sup> Mathias de Albuquerque, the viceroy, reported to the king of Portugal that Cochin was a very suitable centre for ship

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<sup>90</sup> Galletti-A, op.cit, pp.5-6.

<sup>91</sup> Panikkar. K.M,History of Kerala, p.185.

<sup>92</sup> Charles wilson, The Dutch Republic and the Civilisation of the Seventeenth Century, p.207.

<sup>93</sup> Achuta Menon. C, Cochin State Manual, p.87.

building and so in 1596 the king ordered that at least two large ships might be built in Cochin every year<sup>94</sup>.

Another notable event of the reign of Kesava Rama Varma was the famous "Synod of Diamper" (Udaimperur) in 1599 convened by Alexis de Menezes, the Archbishop of Goa, to extirpate the schism in the Malabar church and establish the supremacy of the Latin rite.

The English East India Company pressed hard after that of Holland and made its first voyage to India in 1600. Although it was the Dutch that were destined to step first into the shoes of the Portuguese, it was the English who first obtained free access to the Portuguese ports and first settled in Cochin.<sup>95</sup> Ruler of Cochin Kesava varma who undertook a pilgrimage to Banaras in his old age died there on 3rd May 1601 A.D. The immediate successor of Kesava Rama Varma was Vira Kerala Varma (1601-1615), who was the patron of many poets as well as scholars.

The Dutch East India Company founded in 1602, was not exclusively based on Amsterdam. It had a federal structure and its 17 Directors represented different towns and

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<sup>94</sup> Mathew. K.S, Afzal Ahmad, op.cit, p.vii.

<sup>95</sup> Achuta Menon. C, op.cit., p.87.

provinces. But the great sales of Asian goods took place in Amsterdam which thus became the major centre of the re-export business the greatest source of the Dutch wealth.<sup>96</sup> The attractions of the Indian trade were even greater for the Dutch. The Dutch East India Company was founded in 1602 by a charter granted by the States General, the national administrative body of the Dutch Republic. The founding of the Company had been preceded by a number of voyages to the East of the so called pre-companies.<sup>97</sup>

Force and diplomacy, rather than law of supply and demand, thus played a crucial role in the Dutch success. This should not be surprising for the VOC was not merely a 'Company' but a chartered trading Company, and one that was closely linked to the Dutch state and its policies. Rather than seeing it as a form of private enterprise pure and simple, we would do well perhaps to see it as a quasi state organisation, which was after all authorised by the state-general of the Netherlands to wage war, conclude treaties, make conquests etc.<sup>98</sup> In 1603 the Dutch first

<sup>96</sup> Kristof Glamann, Dutch-Asiatic Trade, 1620-1740, p.14.

<sup>97</sup> Om Prakash, The Dutch Factories in India 1617-1623, p.1.

<sup>98</sup> Sanjay Subrahmanyam, The Portuguese Empire in Asia 1500-1700- A political and economic history, pp.213-214

arrived at Calicut.<sup>99</sup>

According to an order issued by Governor and Archbishop Alexio de Monozes on 11th August 1607 the married settlers of Cochin were exempted from paying taxes on the commodities brought from south of Cochin at Goa provided they carried with them a certificate issued by the officers of the king of Cochin saying that duties were paid at Cochin.<sup>100</sup>

It was the Dutch lawyer Hugo Grotius, who in 1609 in his famous book *Mare Liberum*, argued for freedom of Navigation. It took more than two centuries for that concept to be accepted by major maritime nations.<sup>101</sup> Vira Kerala Varma the Cochin ruler was succeeded by Ravi Varma 1615-1624 and Vira Kerala varma 1624-1637.<sup>102</sup>

In 1634 the English East India Company made a treaty

<sup>99</sup> Poonon. T.I, Rise of the Dutch power in Malabar 1603-1678, p.15.

<sup>100</sup> Mathew. K.S, "Taxation in the coastal towns of western India and the Portuguese in the sixteenth century," Abstract of the Second International Symposium on Maritime studies, 16-20 December 1991, p.5.

<sup>101</sup> Singh. K.R, 'Some pattern of political and maritime interaction between Indians, Arabs and Europeans in the Arabian sea Region in the first half of the sixteenth century, Mathew. K.S, (ed.), Indian Ocean and cultural interaction 1400-1800, p.190.

<sup>102</sup> Sreedhara Menon.A,(ed.), Kerala District Gazetter, Ernakulam pp.116-125.

with the Portuguese in accordance with which they established a factory at Cochin.<sup>103</sup> A few Englishmen settled at Cochin and pepper was exported direct to England for the first time in 1635. In the meantime the Dutch who were generally successful against the Portuguese both on sea and land, found their position in the northern settlements irksome, owing to the interference of the Mughal Officers, they began therefore cast a longing eye on the Malabar coast, where if they could succeed in establishing themselves they could be territorial moghates as well as traders, immune from the exactions of an overwhelming place in Cochin which hastened as well helped the Dutch in obtaining a footing on the Malabar coast.<sup>104</sup>

Vira Kerala varma was succeeded by Goda Varma (1637-1645). During his reign some princes were adopted from all the surviving collateral branches, Palluriti, Calur and Mutta Tavalis. The Murinnur Tavali get merged in the Ilaya Tavali.<sup>105</sup> Goda Varma was succeeded by Vira Rayira Varma 1645-1646 had a brief and uneventful reign. His death in

<sup>103</sup> Chalakkal. G.P, "Cochin during the Dutch period 1663-1795", (Abstract) Second International Symposium on Maritime Studies, 16-20 December 1991, p.8.

<sup>104</sup> Achutha Menon. C, op.cit, p.87.

<sup>105</sup> Translation of a Record Grandhavari, p.25.

1646 was the signal for the outbreak of a civil war among the Cochin royal family. The Portuguese who were not favourably disposed towards Mutta Tavali prince intervened in the fight and installed Vira Kerala Varma the Palluruti adoptee on the Cochin throne.<sup>106</sup> In 1653 the revolt of the Coonan Cross started.

Unchallenged Roman catholic dominance survived only until 1653 when outraged Syrians took an oath around the stone cross in a churchyard near Cochin to resist European bishops and European control. The links with West Asia were again sought.<sup>107</sup> The Christians gathered at Mattancherry and, tying a rope to the cross, each touched the rope, and hence indirectly the cross, swearing to break free from Portuguese ecclesiastical oppression.<sup>108</sup>

The next ruler of Cochin was Rama Varma 1655-1656. He was adopted from the Calur branch. He died at Trichur.<sup>109</sup> His death was followed by a period of regency by Rani Gangadhara Lakshmi (1656-1658).

<sup>106</sup> Sreedhara Menon.A (ed.), op.cit., p.128.

<sup>107</sup> Robbin Jeffery, The Decline of Nayar Dominance, p.17.

<sup>108</sup> Susan Visvanathan, 'The legends of St. Thomas in Kerala', India International Centre Quarterly Summer-monsoon 1995, p.41.

<sup>109</sup> Translation of a Record Grandhavari, p.26.

The Rani made adoptions from Tanur (Vettam) in 1658. She was the last surviving member of the Ilaya Tavali branch in power in Cochin.<sup>110</sup> Incidentally it may be noted that the only Rani of the Cochin royal family who held the reigns of Government was Rani Gangadhara Lakshmi. One Raghavan Koil (Rama Koil or Ramana Koil) seems to have been her prime minister. Raghava Koil dominated the politics of Cochin till the battle of Mattancheri in 1662.<sup>111</sup>

The history of the Dutch relations with Cochin should be studied in the background of the complicated politics of the country. Certain adoptions made into the ruling family of Cochin gave rise to bitter internecine, struggles and throw the state in to utter confusion.<sup>112</sup> The regency period was followed by the reigns of Rama Varma (1658-1662) the Vettam adoptee. The Dutch appeared on the scene as the rival of the Portuguese in February, 1662. They captured Mattancheri palace and killed the ruler. Rani Gangadhara Lakshmi was taken prisoner by the Dutch. Goda Varma (1662-1663) who ascended the throne was also a Vettam adoptee. The most important event of his reign was the surrender of

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<sup>110</sup> Ibid.

<sup>111</sup> Sreedhara Menon.A (ed.), op.cit., pp.128-129.

<sup>112</sup> Alaxander. P.C, The Dutch in Malabar, p.13.

Cochin fort on 1st January 1663 and the installation of Mutta Tavali branch on the throne of Cochin.<sup>113</sup>

The most important event in the establishment of the Dutch power in Kerala was the capture of Cochin in 1663. The internal dissensions in the Cochin royal family provided an excuse for the Dutch intervention. A prince of the Ilaya Tavali had with the help of the Portuguese usurped the throne from the Mutta Tavali. The prince of the latter branch visited Colombo, at the instigation of the Paliyat Accan, the prime minister of Cochin, and sought Dutch help to regain his lost throne.<sup>114</sup> Chennamangalam was the seat of the Paliyath Accan, the premier nobleman of the Cochin state. It is remarkable as one of the old Jewish settlements. The famous jesuit college of Vaippu cottah was also here. It has disappeared and the jesuit fathers who once ruled there have deserted the place.<sup>115</sup>

The Dutch Admiral Rijkloff van Goens and his army joined by the Raja's forces attacked the Portuguese fort in Cochin.<sup>116</sup> A fierce battle was fought in front of the palace

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<sup>113</sup> Sreedhara Menon. A, (ed.), op.cit., p.129.

<sup>114</sup> Sreedhara Menon.A, Survey of Kerala Mistory, p.247.

<sup>115</sup> Padmanabha Menon. K.P, History of Kerala, Vol.II, p.122.

<sup>116</sup> Translation of a Record Grandhavari, p.7.

in which several Dutch soldiers were killed.<sup>117</sup> The Raja, two princes and most of the ministers of Cochin were killed in the fight. Rani Gangadhara Lakshmi was captured as a prisoner by Henrick van Rheede. But the Portuguese with the assistance of Raja of Purakkad and their friends in the Cochin royal family tried to put up a stiff resistance. But in the meantime the Dutch captured their strongholds in Ernakulam town with the help of Mutta Tavali prince, Vira Kerala Varma, and Paliyatt Accan on 6th January 1663. Cochin fell to the Dutch.

On 7th January 1663 an agreement entered into between the Portuguese and the Dutch on the capitulation of the fort of Cochin.<sup>118</sup> Cochin was then a place of great trade and after Goa the most important city in Portuguese India, being well built, having many public structures, and extending a mile and a half in length and a mile in breadth.<sup>119</sup> An agreement entered into between the Raja of Cochin, the Purakkad Raja and the Dutch on 14th March 1663. This agreement stipulated that, if any enemies against the Raja

<sup>117</sup> Padappattu, p.39

<sup>118</sup> Grantham, 64, Treaty of 7th January, 1663.

<sup>119</sup> White House. T, Some Historical Notices of Cochin on the Malabar Coast, p.11.

? of Cochin and the Raja of Purakkad, the Company shall honestly and faithfully assist the Rajas as far as it lies in the Company's power and also endeavour to drive away the common enemy.<sup>120</sup>

The Dutch installed Vira Kerala Varma the Calur adoptee into the Mutta Tavali as the ruler of Cochin and concluded a formal treaty with him on 20th March 1663.<sup>121</sup> His installation as the ruler of Cochin marked the end of Portuguese domination in Malabar. The Cochin Raja agreed to sell all the cinnammon and pepper in Cochin to the Dutch and the coastal areas in his kingdom were placed under the Dutch protection in accordance with the treaty. The treaty made the Cochin Raja a puppet in Dutch hands as in the Portuguese period. It also inaugurated the new era of Dutch supremacy on the Kerala coast. General Hustaart presented to him a crown which bore the arms of the Dutch East India Company.

In the treaty entered into between His Highness the Raja of Cochin and the Honourable Dutch East India Company, dated 22nd March 1663,<sup>122</sup> had provision for the future

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<sup>120</sup> Grantham 64, Treaty of 14th March 1663.

<sup>121</sup> Ibid. Treaty of 20th March 1663.

<sup>122</sup> Ibid., Treaty of 22nd March 1663.

conduct of the successors in confidence and trust of the Honourable Company for the protection of the Svarupam. With the first four treaties the Dutch firmly established their power in Cochin and the Portuguese were completely driven out.

# DUTCH TRADE AND POLITICAL RELATIONS WITH COCHIN

Thomas Kutty Kariampally “Cochin - dutch relations in XVIII century ” Thesis.  
Department of History , University of Calicut, 1997

### CHAPTER III

## DUTCH TRADE AND POLITICAL RELATIONS WITH COCHIN

The beginning of the 17th century witnessed the establishment of the English and the Dutch East India Companies. Before 1602 the Dutch Voor Compagnieen sent 61 ships to Asia, in 1600 the English East India Company was set up, which sent out its first fleet in 1601, and in 1602 the Voor Compagnieen were united to form VOC, the Dutch East India Company.<sup>1</sup> The amount of trading capital and the number of ships of English Company were much smaller than the enormous Dutch resources. The mode of operation was, however very similar. The pattern of the auctions in London followed that of the auctions in Amsterdam.<sup>2</sup>

Linschoton says that the Indian polity of his day was responsible for the existence and continuance of slavery. In every village or town, he noted that there was a separate King or ruler of the people, each kingdom differed from the other in law, speech and manners. Hence most of them were involved in mutual wars. Prisoners were taken on both

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<sup>1</sup> Niels Steensgaard, The Asian Trade Revolution of the Seventeenth Century, p.169.

<sup>2</sup> Dietmar Rothermund, An Economic History of India, p.12.

sides, and these were kept as slaves and sold like beasts.<sup>3</sup> Nieuhoff first approached the King of Kayamkulam whose courtesy was impressive and encouraging. He entered into an agreement on the lines suggested by the Dutch. Likewise the King of Purakkad against whom the Dutch had serious complaints for giving assistance to the Portuguese during the Dutch siege of Cochin, had also become friendly. However, the suggestion of Nieuhoff to weigh the pepper of Purakkad at cochin was unacceptable to the King but after a bit of temporising he also agreed to meet the demands of the Dutch.<sup>4</sup>

Kerala was the only region where pepper was cultivated until the Dutch period in the seventeenth century.<sup>5</sup> The palace of the Zamorin of Calicut was outside the town, but he had a residence within it which he occupied during the trading season. Here he had his audience halls where he received merchants and foreign emissaries. The Rajah of Cochin had his palace in the port town, which was separate

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<sup>3</sup> Poonen, T.I., Rise of the Dutch Power in Malabar, 1603-1678, p.232.

<sup>4</sup> Churchill, A Collection of Voyages and Travels, Vol. II, p.223.

<sup>5</sup> Joseph, K.V., 'Vicissitudes of Syrian Christians in the Maritime Trade of pre-Modern Kerala', Indian Church History Review, December 1989, Vol. XXIII, Number 2, p.135.

from the European port and town, after its domination by the Portuguese. These ports were thus the administrative and political centres, besides being commercial centres and markets. This Malabar tradition was carried on even in Canara where, in the kingdom of Ikkeri the state had a tight control over the port of Honavar.<sup>6</sup>

Pepper came to Lisbon in bulk, and the Dutch and English merchants purchased it there for distribution to the Chief consuming markets of England, Flanders and Germany. The subjection of Portugal to Spain threatened the continuance of this trade. The Dutch were at war with Spain, the port of Lisbon was closed to their merchants, the price of pepper rose to a very high level and hence decision was taken to send ships to the sources of supply.<sup>7</sup> On the arrival of the Dutch in 1663, they found the Cochin Raja kept a State prisoner by the Portuguese and a Rani (his aunt) governing the kingdom who was devotedly attached to the Portuguese nation.<sup>8</sup> The Portuguese forts of Cochin, Cannanore, Pallipuram and Cranganore came into the

<sup>6</sup> Sinnappah Arasaratnam, Maritime India in the Seventeenth Century, p.13.

<sup>7</sup> Moreland, W.H., India at the death of Akbar an Economic Study, pp.224-225.

<sup>8</sup> Francis, Day, Cochin, Its Past and Present, p.46.

possession of the Dutch by 1663. In the opening years of the 17th century itself the Dutch entered into a treaty with the Zamorin. This treaty stipulated among many other things "a close alliance, eternal and ubreakable for the oppressions of the Portuguese and for driving out all their associates out of all the lands of his majesty and also out of the whole of India".<sup>9</sup>

In the capture of Cochin and the war against the Portuguese the Zamorin helped the Dutch.<sup>10</sup> The Zamorin expected in return to be made the king of Cochin but when the Dutch refused even to give the Vaypin island to him, the Zamorin turned against them. Thereafter the relations between the Dutch and the Zamorin was not cordial.<sup>11</sup> When the Dutch conquered Cochin there were in existence four "Kings" and 46 Chieftains in Kerala. The kings were the Raja of Chirakkal, the Zamorin of Calicut, the Rajahs of Cochin and Travancore.<sup>12</sup> The king of Cochin could not have

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<sup>9</sup> Kareem, C.K., Kerala under Haider Ali and Tipu Sultan, p.280.

<sup>10</sup> Padappattu, p.16.

<sup>11</sup> Galletti, A., The Dutch in Malabar, p.19.

<sup>12</sup> Panikkar, K.M., History of Kerala, p.307.

protected the Dutch against the Zamorin of Calicut if they had not been in a position to defend themselves.<sup>13</sup>

After the Dutch capture of Cochin a treaty was entered into with the Rajah of Cochin which confirmed his position as a Dutch vassal and the Dutch secured total control over the trade and produce of the kingdom.<sup>14</sup> After taking Cochin the Dutch had attempted in the Portuguese manner to monopolise the pepper trade with rulers and by a naval patrol of the coast.<sup>15</sup> In order to get the trade monopoly in Malabar the Dutch adopted different policies in various periods by interfering in politics. The policy of the Dutch East India Company with princely states of Kerala falls distinctly into four periods: (i) from 1664 to 1697 (ii) from 1697 to 1717 and (iii) from 1717 to 1754 and (iv) 1754-95 their declining stage.

### First Phase

During the first phase the Company maintained a considerable military establishment and kept up the pretence of great power. The attempt at that time was to enforce

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<sup>13</sup> Galletti, A., op. cit., p.17.

<sup>14</sup> Grantham No. 64, Treaties.

<sup>15</sup> Simkin, C.G.F., The Traditional Trade of Asia, p.238.

rigorously the pepper contracts with the rulers. The authorities embarked on a forward policy in Cochin and reduced the Rajah of that country to utter dependence. They claimed the right to interfere in every matter concerning the administration of the state and even in the affairs of the Royal family.<sup>16</sup> The spices of Kerala like pepper, ginger, cardamom, cinnamon drew Holland to the coast; of all these, pepper was their Chief attraction. The attempt to monopolise this spice embroiled them into expensive and exhausting wars. It made them to take a tough line towards fellow-trading Companies like those of the Portuguese and the English, involved them in a ruinous war with Martanda Varma and ultimately led to their way out in great disgrace.<sup>17</sup>

Clause 14 of the treaty between the Dutch East India Company and the Raja of Cochin dated 20th March, 1663 stipulated that, "the coinage of money shall be done by the kings own mint situated outside the fort of Cochin, and within the precincts of the royal palace, under the supervision of one or two captains to be appointed by the

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<sup>16</sup> Panikkar, K.M., op. cit, p.277.

<sup>17</sup> Kusuman K.X., A History of Trade and Commerce, p.61.

Dutch. All profits arising from this, after deducting expense are to be enjoyed by the Raja."<sup>18</sup> Under this clause coins seem to have been minted under the supervision of the Dutch commandant, who used to send commissioners to watch the striking, mixing and assaying of fanams and to see that they had their due weight and value.<sup>19</sup> But no specimens of these coins are available and the Census Reporter observes that, "so far as is known, the first coin issued by the state was the Kaliyamani puthan without the Sankh or conch mark, which ceased to be current at least a hundred years ago".<sup>20</sup> Six Cochin cembu cash, a copper coin bearing the stamp of the Dutch East India Company, was equal to one Cochini panam.<sup>21</sup>

The commercial policy of the Dutch differed from that of the Portuguese in many important respects. The circumstances of European trade had so considerably changed in the period between 16th and the 18th centuries that the policy of complete monopoly which the Portuguese followed

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<sup>18</sup> Grantham, Treaty of 20th March, 1663.

<sup>19</sup> Padmanabha Menon, K.P., History of Kerala, Vol. II, pp.413-414.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid, p.414.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid, p.415.

with success had been rendered impossible.<sup>22</sup> A treaty entered into between the Rajah of Cochin and the Dutch dated 25th February 1664 had the clause that, on pepper sold to the Company by merchants five measures per candy shall be given gratis to the Company. The Rajah's share being likewise paid to him, no higher rates shall however be demanded from them. The Rajah shall make such arrangements as will ensure the delivery of all pepper to the Company if that be not done, the concession contained in this clause (in regard to the payment of duty to the Rajah) shall become null and void.<sup>23</sup>

In August 1664 the French "Compagnie des Indes" was formed by Colbert.<sup>24</sup> The Zamorin thought it wise to welcome the English who were the commercial rivals of the Dutch to his kingdom. He allowed them to establish a factory at Calicut in 1664.<sup>25</sup> The Dutch policy in Kerala was governed by the single consideration of maximum pepper trade at minimum expense. The contracts which were negotiated with the princes immediately after the conquest of Cochin, all

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<sup>22</sup> Panikkar, K.M., op. cit, p.299.

<sup>23</sup> Grantham 64, Treaty of 25th February 1664.

<sup>24</sup> William Logan, Malabar, p.388.

<sup>25</sup> Krishna Aiyer, K.V., The Zamorins of Calicut, p.221.

contained a clause that pepper should be sold only to the Dutch Company. Such an agreement was clearly difficult to enforce without political power backed by a considerable army.<sup>26</sup>

Black pepper is the grand article of European commerce with Malabar. Europeans usually purchased about five-eighths of all the pepper that was produced in Malabar and the price they gave was intended to bring the whole trade into the hands of the Company.<sup>27</sup> Nor were their pretention any less in Cranganore whose Chief was declared to be a bondsman of the Company. Even within the range of the Company's guns their claims were not taken seriously. But in the lands of the petty lands round about Cochin, Mangat, Parur and Idappalli they claimed and enforced political control. This policy entailed vast expenditure on military establishment.<sup>28</sup>

Besides Malabar pepper, the Dutch East India Company in the early days purchased on the Coromandel coast slaves who were brought in large numbers from Malabar to the East

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<sup>26</sup> Panikkar, K.M., op. cit, p.277.

<sup>27</sup> Francis Buchanan, A Journey from Madras through the Countries of Mysore. Canara and Malabar, p.530.

<sup>28</sup> Panikkar, K.M., op. cit, p.278.

Coast.<sup>29</sup> The Company's trade could be divided into two, viz; goods collected from Malabar for sale by the Company in the local markets. The stock merchandise for which the Company found a ready market in Kerala were sugar, spices, saltpetre, tin, lead, armozenis, country resin, iron, piece goods of different sorts, cloth, silk-stuff, camphor, vermilion, quick silver, asafactida, etc.<sup>30</sup> Dutch policy upon the coast seemed to incline naturally to compulsion, rather than commerce. They wished to buy goods below the market rate and sell above it. To achieved this aim, they built their own chain of forts and kept as strict a watch at sea as the thrift of the Company would permit. The results were not reassuring.<sup>31</sup>

In the beginning the Dutch and the English were friends and their Chief aim was to drive out the Portuguese. But soon hostilities sprang up between the two on account of the wavering policy of the first two Stuarts and the jealousies caused by commerce. The Dutch forced the English Company to withdraw from the Spice Islands and this deprived them of a

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<sup>29</sup> Poonen, T.I., 'Fresh light on early Dutch contacts with Malabar', Journal of Indian History, Vol. XXX, part II, 1952.

<sup>30</sup> Kusuman. K.K, op.cit., p.62.

<sup>31</sup> Ashin Das Gupta, Malabar in Asian Trade 1740-1800, p.73.

most lucrative trade. This rivalry developed into a fierce struggle in the seventeenth century in the Indian waters.<sup>32</sup> During the eighteenth century, again like the English Company, the Dutch established a system of European officials to supervise the local rulers. These local rulers were forced to contract to supply raw materials and labour at stipulated rates so low as to be virtually a tribute in kind.<sup>33</sup>

The Dutch policy in Kerala was to fight their rivals of other European nations all over the coast.<sup>34</sup> Meanwhile in 1665 war had broken out in Europe between the English and the Dutch.<sup>35</sup> The English consolidated their position still further by the Second Navigation Act, passed by Charles I. This measure combined with other irritants resulted in the Second Dutch war (1664-1667). The Dutch had to yield again and surrender New Amsterdam, subsequently named Newyork (U.S.A) to the English. This rivalry continued even after the peace of 1667.<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>32</sup> Ishwari Prasad, India in the Eighteenth Century, pp.47-48.

<sup>33</sup> Michael. H. Fisher, Indirect rule in India. Residents and the Residency system 1764-1857, p.25.

<sup>34</sup> Panikkar. K.M. op.cit, p.282.

<sup>35</sup> William Logan, op.cit, p.389.

<sup>36</sup> Motilal Bhargave, History of Modern India, p.38.

In April 1666 Admiral Van Goens issued a proclamation to the Malabar Chiefs intimating that the Paliyath Acchan was under the protection of the Dutch East India Company and that the Company would punish any one interfering unlawfully or against mamul with him or his officers or his Nayars.<sup>37</sup> The Dutch policy from the beginning was directed towards a "blockade from the land "by prohibiting the Rajahs from selling pepper" to the English.<sup>38</sup> In 1667 there was a threat of war between the Dutch and the Zamorin. The cause of rivalry was the English and the desire of the Zamorin to intrude into Cochin.<sup>39</sup> In 1669 the Dutch and the French established themselves again in Calicut. The Zamorin was very friendly especially towards the English and helped them to attract to his port much of pepper that was produced in Vadakkumkur and Tekkumkur. This competition rendered the pepper very dear for the Dutch and they attempted to intercept the land route by persuading the Rajah of Cochin to attack the Chiefs through whose territory the trade was carried on.<sup>40</sup> With the Kodungallur bastion in their possession the Zamorin could not easily move to Idappally to

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<sup>37</sup> Achuta Menon. C. The Cochin State Manual, p.97.

<sup>38</sup> Panikkar. K.M, op.cit, pp.282-83.

<sup>39</sup> Poonen, T.I, op.cit, pp.185-86.

cross to Cochin. So he attacked it. After many raids and counter-raids the Dutch at last evacuated and destroyed it in 1669.<sup>41</sup>

Dutch built a fort some three miles away from Tiruvanchikulam and from it as a base began to harass Kodungallur. In 1670 when the Zamorin had come here for the Bharani festival, they made a surprise raid and set fire to the house in which he had taken up his residence. Though the assailants were driven out, in the conflagration the Cheraman sword was destroyed. Eralpad who had gone to Cerpu returned at once, and pursuing the enemy captured their fort which however, he did not destroy.<sup>42</sup> The Dutch called the 17th century their "Golden Century" the two decades from 1650 to 1670 when Jan De Witt was the nations political leader, were a time of unprecedented prosperity Dutch independence was recognised by all nations. The value of the sake of Asian goods in Amsterdam nearly doubled in these two decades from about 9 to 18 million guilders. For the

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<sup>40</sup> Panikkar. K.M, op.cit, p.283.

<sup>41</sup> Krishna Ayyar. K.V, A History of Kerala, p.200.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid.

Dutch in Asia the "Golden Century" was a period of incessant conquest.<sup>43</sup>

The Anglo-Dutch rivalry in the pepper trade continued with the Dutch Company well in the lead. In 1670 the Company's fleet brought home 9.2 million white pepper, the largest amount to reach Europe in the seventeenth century. However side by side with an increased European demand which the Dutch Company could not entirely satisfy went a rise in the English, Danish and French Companies sales in pepper.<sup>44</sup>

Ludolff Colster who become commander in 1671 concentrated his activities in securing the Dutch trade against competitors by imposing more rigid contracts with the Malabar Chiefs.<sup>45</sup> As the price of pepper had risen it was in greater demand among the smugglers, and pepper collected by the Company began to decrease year after year.<sup>46</sup>

With the rise of France under Louis XIV, the Dutch had to face another formidable neighbour. The French King

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<sup>43</sup> Dietmar Rothermund, Asian Trade and European Expansion in the age of Mercantilism, p.29.

<sup>44</sup> Holden Furber, Rival Empires of Trade in the orient, 1600-1800, p.236.

<sup>45</sup> Owen C. Kail, The Dutch in India, p.176.

<sup>46</sup> Galletti, A. op.cit., p.72.

concluded the secret Treaty of Dover with Charles II to isolate the Dutch from the English. In 1672 open war ensued and the Dutch were almost prostrate, when sweeping aggression of Louis XIV drove England and Holland together. William III, husband of Queen Mary, provided the requisite leadership and England was forced to break off French alliance and peace was made with Holland. The French dragged on the war and when peace of Nijmegen was concluded in 1678, the Dutch suffered no territorial loss.<sup>47</sup>

It was only with the arrival of Hendrick Van Rheede as commander of Cochin in 1673 that the Dutch policy towards the local Rajas took definite shape. Van Rheede was interested not only in trade but also in securing effective political power.<sup>48</sup> Van Rheede lost no time to re-occupying Chettvai one of the most fertile parts of Malabar. It commanded one of the two direct routes from Calicut to Cochin. He was also alarmed by the growing influence of the English at Calicut, where they had been allowed to build a factory in 1664.<sup>49</sup> His policy was to bring the local powers

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<sup>47</sup> Motilal Bhargava, op.cit. p.38.

<sup>48</sup> Sreedhara Menon. A, Kerala District Gazetteers, Ernakulam, p.157.

<sup>49</sup> Krishna Aiyer. K.V, A History of Kerala, p.201.

under the effective political control of the Dutch. He held the post of the Governor from 1673 to 1677. He drafted the policy of the Dutch in Kerala in clear terms for the guidance of the future Dutch administrators.

By the proposed treaty between France, England and Portugal in 1673, the three powers were to send a joint navel expedition against the Dutch possessions in Asia, which were to be seized and divided among the allies. Its reflections can be seen on the position of the Dutch in Malabar. It was thus clear that there were strong and recurrent motives for hostility between the two nations closely connected with Asiatic affairs. Even Sir William Temple the negotiator of the Triple Alliance discusses in one of his essays the question whether England would derive greater advantage than France from the ruin of Holland.<sup>50</sup>

According to a treaty entered into on 23rd February 1674 between the Dutch Company on the one hand and Iravi Varma, the second prince of Cochin, Goda Varma, the fourth prince of Cochin and the Paliyath Achan on the other hand it was agreed that no one would thereafter be permitted to be

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<sup>50</sup> Williams Jackson. A.V, (ed.), History of India. Vol. VIII, p.39.

adopted as heir to the Cochin kingdom except from the five lawful tavalis or families of which only two were then in existence, viz., the Mutta Tavali and the Calur Tavali. The signatories also promised help against all enemies and to remain faithful allies for ever. It was also stipulated that the fanams and other coins made by the Rajas mint should be made under the supervision of the Dutch Company. Further no Muslims whom the Company considered injurious to their trade interest were to be permitted to live in the Cochin kingdom and the European priests who had not left the territories were to be expelled forthwith.<sup>51</sup>

In 1674, for some unexplained reasons the manakot Nayar and the Tottasseri Talassannor were for a few years associated with Komi Accan in the administration of the state by the Raja with the approval of the Dutch Governor.<sup>52</sup> The Dutch had not been long in Kerala before they found themselves drawn into the vertex internecine feuds between various branches of the Cochin royal house, and not as mere arbiters, but rather as participants in a series of petty wars which began with a rising of the discontented nobles in

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<sup>51</sup> Sreedhara Menon. A, op.cit. p.157.

<sup>52</sup> Achuta Menon. C, op.cit., p.97.

1674 which continued intermittently throughout the period of his rule.<sup>53</sup>

In December 1674 the Dutch entered into a treaty with local Nayar magnates ensuring their complete subordination to the Dutch. The settlement of 1674 led to serious unrest in the royal family and several princes rose in revolt. The Raja left the palace and retired to the interior for safety. During this period, when Aurangzeb had over-run southern India between 1676-1686, the Dutch factories had been demolished causing a set-back to their commerce. Besides the political upheavals the Dutch met their greatest rival in the English, who though unsuccessful against the Dutch in Indonesia, succeeded remarkably in Southern India.<sup>54</sup>

The Cochin Rajah himself had to leave the capital fearing the troubles of the nobles and the junior princes. The Raja requested for Dutch help. He wrote a letter to the Governor-General at Batavia in March 1677, informing him of the situation in his state. The Raja received the reply on 3th September. The Governor-General was of opinion that the

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<sup>53</sup> George Wood Cook, Kerala, A portrait of the Malabar Coast, p.163.

<sup>54</sup> Motilal Bhargave, op.cit., p.24.

Raja himself should settle the affairs of his state. He advised the Raja to return to his capital and protect the "fair and pride of the Company and the Svaroopam." The Governor General again asserted the mutual confidence between the Company and the Raja and eagerly desired that it should never be strained.<sup>55</sup>

Van Rhee de was succeeded by Jacob Lobo as commander of Cochin. Lobo signed a new treaty with the Raja on 21st May 1678, which stated that the junior princes should not interfere in the state affairs. They were not to go against the orders of the Raja on pain of very severe punishment. They could not enter the Cochin port without the consent of the Raja. The Paliyam Chief was to manage the administration in consultation with the Raja and the commander. If the Paliyam Chief failed to discharge his duties satisfactorily, the Raja could appoint a new Chief with permission of the commander. Certain arrangements were made for the collection of revenue due to the Raja. The Nairs were told that they would be severely punished if they attempted to create trouble in the State. Some regulations were made concerning the protection of the Christian

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<sup>55</sup> Alexander. P.C. The Dutch in Malabar. p.26.

subjects in Cochin. The agreement virtually handed the Cochin State over to the Company. It reduced the position of the Raja to that of a mere dependent of the Company.<sup>56</sup>

Treaty of 2nd September 1679 stated that arrangements made by the senior Rajah of Perumpadappu, the commander, and the loyal Chiefs and vassals of the Rajah in the north and south in front of the Palayannur Bhagavati (family deity) for the benefit of Perumpadappu Svarupam. That in Cochin and other places persons nominated by Paliyath Accan, Talaccennor and Manakkott Accan and Company's captain be appointed Karyakkars with the sanction of His Highness. If any difference or quarrels arose among the officers they will be settled by His Highness the Rajah and the Company's commander.<sup>57</sup> In 1689 Dutch officials at Cochin observed that Surat ships coming to the Zamorin's ports had increased over the last few years from around two to four a year to twelve to fourteen a year. Attempts by the Dutch to control the local trading system, partly by force partly by competition, were unsuccessful.<sup>58</sup>

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<sup>56</sup> Grantham 64, Treaty of 21st May 1678.

<sup>57</sup> Ibid, Treaty of 2nd September 1679.

<sup>58</sup> Sinnappan Arasaratham, op. cit, p.106.

About 1680, the Dutch began to realise the results of the policy in seeking trade at the point of the sword. The expenses of the several garrisons maintained at the various settlements were so large that their trade yielded no profits, and they began to consider the availability of destroying the forts of Cannanore, Cochin, Cranganore and Quilon. But this resolution was not however carried out until some years later viz., 1697.<sup>59</sup> The VOC had nine establishments on the Malabar coast at Quilon, Kayamkulam, Purakkad, Cranganore, Vaypin, Chettuvai, Calicut and Fort Cochin. In addition they had lodges at Tenappattanam and Ponnani. With the exception of the fortresses taken over from the Portuguese the majority of Dutch buildings, warehouses and godowns were dilapidated mud houses with thatched roofs hardly suitable for trade and totally inadequate against attack. In 1697 the Company's policy of economy resulted in most of the forts being reduced both in size and in strength of the garrisons, Cochin having an authorised force of 300 men, Chettuvai 144, Quilon 99, Cranganore 56 and Cannanore 79.<sup>60</sup>

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<sup>59</sup> Nagam Aiya, V., The Travancore State Manual, Vol. I, p.314.

<sup>60</sup> Owen, C. Kail, op. cit., p.181.

During the first part of its existence, the Dutch East India Company like its contemporary English East India Company sought commercial, maritime based profits and not costly involvement in political or administrative affairs inland, perceiving the threat of disorder among the local states. However, the Dutch Company began to intervene during the last quarter of the seventeenth century.<sup>61</sup> At the close of the seventeenth century, the Dutch had no intention of participating in the cloth trade of Malabar.<sup>62</sup>

At a meeting held in Chennamangalam in May 1681 where the late and present Rajas, the Dutch Governor, the Paliyat Accan and several other Chiefs were present. One of the resolutions passed was that the next adoption should be from the Calur family.<sup>63</sup> Treaty made at the end of June 1681 pointed out that Paliyat Accan should be the Sarvadhikaryakkar to administer the State in all its branches. The Talaccennor, Manakkatt Accan, and one of the captains of the Company should jointly see that the accounts of the state being properly maintained by the menons. Paliyat Accan should arrange for due maintenance of all accounts relating

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<sup>61</sup> Michael M. Fisher, op. cit., p.25.

<sup>62</sup> Ashin Das Gupta, op. cit., pp.74-75.

<sup>63</sup> Achuta Menon, C., op. cit., p.98.

to His Highness' palace and report the result to His Highness. If any differences arise amongst the above-mentioned officers, they should be heard and adjusted by the senior Raja and the commandeur.<sup>64</sup>

Finally when the Paliyat Accan died in 1684 leaving a minor son Gulmer Reins, a senior merchant as regent till the boy came of age. With the Chief ministership and the treasury in their hands, Cochin became a proprietary estate of VOC.<sup>65</sup> The treaty entered on the 25th July 1684, between the senior Raja of Perumpadappu and his councillors on the one part and the Commandeur of Malabar and his Councillors on the other part with special reference to the administration of affairs of Perumpadappu Svarupam contains a provision that Hendrick Reans whom His Highness has been pleased to appoint as Sarvadhikaryakkar by means of Titturam should continue to discharge his duties as such. That Paliatt Itti Kannan Accan who holds the appointment of Sarvadhikaryakkar by virtue of a Titturam issued to the

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<sup>64</sup> Grantham 64, Treaty of June 1681.

<sup>65</sup> Owen C. Kail, op. cit., p.178.

family in years gone by, should continue to do his duties jointly with the former Sarvadhi Karyakkar.<sup>66</sup>

The English first settled in Travancore at Anjengo in 1684, when a commercial Resident, whose functions soon after became also political, was appointed.<sup>67</sup> In 1687 Issak Van Deelan was appointed Commander of Cochin. The high-handed interference by the Company in internal matters drove the Raja to desperation and he himself secretly helped the outbreak of troubles in the state. Some loyal Nair Nobles pledged their support for ousting the Dutch from Cochin. The Dutch Governor General at Batavia was constantly informed of the steady deterioration of Dutch influence in Cochin. Events were fast developing in the direction of a reapproachment between the Raja and his nobles against the Dutch. But a dispute of succession arose in Cochin meanwhile and the Raja was again put to necessity of depending on the Dutch.<sup>68</sup>

The glorious Revolution in 1688 resulting in the accession of William III of Holland as King of England

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<sup>66</sup> Grantham 64-65, Treaty of 25th July 1684.

<sup>67</sup> Aitchison, A Collection of Treaties, Engagements and Sanads relating to India and Neighbouring Countries, Vol. X, p.115.

<sup>68</sup> Alexander, P.C., op. cit, p.28.

automatically improved the position of the Dutch.<sup>69</sup> During the war of the League of Augsburg (1688-1697) France was forced to fight against the combined might of Holland, Spain, Sweden and England.<sup>70</sup> The Dutch forced the Raja of Cochin to adopt a Calur prince as his (Goda Varma) successor in 1689. The Leaguers at once rose in arms. They invited the third prince of Vettat to assume the leadership.<sup>71</sup> The decision had the blessings of the Dutch and the Paliyat Accan. The feudatory Chiefs of Cochin like the rulers of Paravur, Mangat, Karappuram, etc. favoured the adoption from vettat and they started a war on this issue in 1691.<sup>72</sup>

According to the Resolution of 1681 some princes and princesses were adopted from Calur family in 1689. By this time however a reaction had set in favour of the Vettat family. The impression seems to have gained ground that the Dutch were indifferent to the interest of Cochin and would never assist her in recovering possession of her lands from the Zamorin, and also that their power was neither so great nor so well established as that of the Portuguese in their

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<sup>69</sup> Motilal Bhargava, op. cit., p.38.

<sup>70</sup> Ibid., pp.38-39.

<sup>71</sup> Krishna Ayer, K.V., The Zamorins of Calicut, p.223.

<sup>72</sup> Sreedhara Menon, A., A Survey of Kerala History, pp.212-213.

time.<sup>73</sup> It was during this period that the English Company has erected the Anjengo fort but no written treaty remains as a record of the fact. Towards the close of the seventeenth century they settled on two points on the Malabar coast, one at Anjengo and the other at Tellichery.<sup>74</sup> So the Dutch had to face the competition created by the English in settling on Malabar coast. They had, in pursuance of their policy of curtailing military expenses, placed the Chettuvai island in the hands of the Zamorin in the year 1691.<sup>75</sup>

Dutch and English writings are in substantial agreement about the difficulties which the Dutch had in carrying on trade in Malabar according to their plan of maintaining a monopoly for themselves and excluding all competitors. Trade in Malabar became unprofitable as it had to meet the cost of garrison, fortifications and unavoidable expenses. The agreement made with princes compelling them to grant commercial monopoly to the Dutch could not be enforced. Dutch insistence on their treaty rights led to many quarrels. Thus, the Zamorin became an enemy of the Company.

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<sup>73</sup> Achuta Menon, C., op. cit, p.98.

<sup>74</sup> William Logan, op. cit, p.390.

<sup>75</sup> Padmanabha Menon, K.P., History of Kerala, Vol. I, p.505.

The trade north of Cochin fell into the hands of Moors and other Europeans. These circumstances of the time did not make the restoration of monopoly by force of arms practicable.<sup>76</sup>

In 1693 Ravi Varma succeeded Vira Kerala Varma. In his short reign of five years he involved the Company in a war with the Zamorin over the possession of Chettuvai, found fault with the young Paliyat Achan's administration and accused Bavan Prabhu of corruption. The council of Indies however decided to adopt a neutral attitude and informed Ravi Varma to settle all these matters with the new Commander of Cochin, Hendrik Zwaarde Croon.<sup>77</sup> Ravi varma's beloved mother had died five months after he came to the throne. The Dutch "Commandeur" at Cochin, Herr Isaac Van Dielen, had passed away the very next day. The Raja's heart was filled with sorrow. He was anxiously awaiting the arrival of the new commandeur". The political situation was giving cause for anxiety. Some of the subordinate officers at the fort were known to have been at logger-heads with the late "commandeur". They had been conspiring with the

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<sup>76</sup> Poonen, T.I., op. cit, pp.208-209.

<sup>77</sup> Owen C. Kail, op. cit, p.179.

Paliyat Achan against the interest of the state and the Company. The Raja's share of the customs revenue was long overdue.<sup>78</sup>

Isaac Van Dialen, the Dutch Commander died on the 25th December 1693 and the Raja was in a helpless position. He wrote a letter on 22nd January 1694 to the Governor General at Batavia acquainting him of the situation in Cochin. He complained of the hostile attitude of the new Paliyat Accan. "Formerly there were loyal and efficient men in the Paliyam family", he wrote, "but now it is managed by minor urchins . . . There were many svaroopis in my state of which the Paliyam is only one. We had done our best to improve the position of the Paliyam family. But now all of them have turned against me because of their youthful recklessness . . . have enemies both inside and outside the fort. Therefore, I am put to very hard difficulties. The Moen in my service are not given correct accounts, and customs and duties are not properly remitted to my government. Bavan is at the root of all these confusions and he is in the pay of my enemy, the Zamorin."<sup>79</sup>

<sup>78</sup> Letters from Cochin Raja to Batavia, Letter 1, Records in Oriental Languages Cochin State Book II, p.ii.

<sup>79</sup> Alexander, P.C., op. cit, pp.29-30.

The Raja earnestly appealed to the Governor General to do all that was necessary to stop these irregularities. The Raja got the reply that the new commander Adrian Van Mattan and the new Commissioner General would set matters right and do their best to improve the position of the Company and the Raja. But the irregularities of Bavan Prabhu only became worse. The Commander was also anxious to keep his friendly relations with the Zamorin.<sup>80</sup> A Dutch letter dated 20th August 1694 from the Governor General of Indian Netherlands to the Raja of Cochin stated. We have duly perceived on the 25th January your Highness letter of 22nd January of this year entrusted to our officers in Cochin, from which we understand with deep regret the demise of their Highness the Rajah and Ranee, at the same time. We are very happy to hear of Your Highness, ascension to the throne of Cochin, and we wish your Highness very blessing from God in your high position as also many years of health and prosperity for the good of your subjects and the satisfaction of your friends and allies, and that you may increase in prosperity day by day.<sup>81</sup>

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<sup>80</sup> Ibid.

<sup>81</sup> A Dutch letter dated 20th August 1694.

The Raja again sent a letter to the Governor General at Batavia in 1696 complaining of the hostile attitude of the Company's agents. The Commissioner of the Company had met the Zamorin at Ponnani and received presents from Him. The Raja also drew the attention of the Governor General to the poor state of the finances of the Svarupam. What enraged the Raja most was the attitude of the Commissioner in courting the friendship of the Zamorin, which would mean the destruction of this Svarupam.<sup>82</sup>

Cochin Raja in a letter dated 1696 to Governor General of Batavia stated: I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter, the contentents of which have been noted. I have thankfully accepted the presents sent through your Commandeur. I am highly pleased with the contents of your letter and the personal messages conveyed through the commandeur. Unfortunately, the Commissary could not conduct the enquiry in regard to the matters here. So far as the conduct of administration in the fort is concerned, it so happen that the Commandeur who is newly appointed and sent out here is unable to do anything for a period of 6 months or a year because he is quite unfamiliar with the manners

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<sup>82</sup> Alexander, P.C., op. cit, p.30.

and customs of the country, the character of persons he has to deal with and the general disposition of affairs in the state or because he is liable to be influenced by the mischievous machinations of some perverted persons.<sup>83</sup>

Another letter dated June 1696 from Cochin Raja to Batavia stated that the sources of the states' revenue during the Portuguese period were (1) "Kammattam" (2) Customs Revenue (3) Raja's private maritime trade (4) Inland customs on pepper (5) "Kalanji" gold; the last one being the tribute (600 gold crusades) that the Portuguese used to pay annually. The state treasury had been completely exhausted during the disastrous civil wars that preceded the arrival of the Dutch and now all collections were in arrears. Even the Company, avowedly the friend of the Raja, was behaving in an unhelpful manner. These days, money, gunshots and gunpowder counted for everything. The Governor General should issue orders that the state should at no time suffer from a dearth of these three essential commodities; bearing in mind that the good or evil that shall befall the Cochin

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<sup>83</sup> Cochin Rajas letter to Governor General of Batavia dated 1696 A.D.

Raja would have corresponding repercussions on the fortunes of the Company in Malabar.<sup>84</sup>

In 1697 Hendrick Zwarder Croon was appointed commander of Cochin. It was Hendrik Zwarade Croon who finally succeeded in making a thorough inspection of the command. He enforced the new policy recommended by Van Rheede. Friendship with the Rajas was its main principle, not threatening with arms. Expenses were to be kept as low as possible and a wise and cautious behaviour was to ensure the maintenance of the pepper monopoly. Zwardecroon's instruction refers to the policy towards the Rajas, the trade policy and legal government.<sup>85</sup>

Opium was formerly one of the Chief articles sold by the Hon'ble Company on the coast here, and great profits could be realised, because it was the custom to exchange opium for pepper. But in the time of commissary Hendrick Zwardecroon it was judged that this was a kind of coercion, contrary to mercantile methods. So the practice was

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<sup>84</sup> Letters from Cochin Rajas to Batavia, Letter II, Records in Oriental Languages Cochin State Book II, pp.II-III.

<sup>85</sup> Jacob, H.K.S., De Nederlander's in Kerala 1663-1701, p.437.

discontinued and it was ordered that pepper should be paid for in cash.<sup>86</sup>

In the 17th century the Company made hardly any profit in Kerala. The pepper monopoly failed. By sea or by land pepper was smuggled from Kerala to the harbours of the Zamorin and via the Ghauts to Tamil Nadu. English and Muslim merchants were avid buyers. Some of the tracks used for smuggling ran through the area north of Cochin; where the Zamorin had considerable influence although Cochin claimed to be in complete control. For the Dutch to stop these practices it was necessary to prevent the Zamorin from influencing the Cochin court and country. This and the fact that the Dutch reinforced the fortresses so that they could stand any attack by Europeans, especially the French or the English, led to a sharp increase in the expenses of the Company.<sup>87</sup>

Though the Company's military establishment cost a great deal, it produced no satisfactory results. The monopoly in pepper trade could not be enforced. The Rajas were openly selling to outsiders, and the Chief of

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<sup>86</sup> Galletti, A., op. cit, pp.71-72.

<sup>87</sup> Jacob, H.K.S., op. cit, p.436.

Kayamkulam, in whose territory, there was a military post of importance, was harbouring captain Kydd and selling pepper to him. The failure of the policy of enforcing by arms the pepper contracts was so clear that in 1697 the Company decided to reduce the garrison and withdraw from a number of outposts it had built.<sup>88</sup>

At the close of the seventeenth and beginning of the eighteenth century, the Dutch had no intention of participating in the cloth trade of Malabar.<sup>89</sup> The prudent Dutch would rather invest their capital abroad where the prospects of economic growth were much greater than in their own small country.<sup>90</sup>

## Second Phase

It is important to trace the development of events that had happened in Europe at this period as the French, Dutch and English were present in Malabar politics. The change in the relations between the mother countries was reflected in their policies towards the native states also. The peace of

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<sup>88</sup> Panikkar, K.M., op. cit, p.278.

<sup>89</sup> Ashin Das Gupta, op. cit, p.74.

<sup>90</sup> Dietmar Rothermund, Asian Trade and European Expansion in the Age of Mercantilism, p.30.

Ryswick concluded in 1697 struck a serious blow to the pride and power of Louis XIV. The Grand monarch had to surrender some of his ill-gotten gains. His country was facing exhaustion. With the beginning of the reign of Charles II of Spain, a bigger conflagration was in the offing in Europe. Louis XIV was anxious to grab most of the Spanish possessions. To further his designs Louis concluded partition treaties, which aggravated the situation all the more; with the death of the Spanish monarch Louis threw the treaties to the winds and proclaimed his grandson, Philip of Anjou, as Philip V of Spain, whilst retaining all rights to succession in France. This threw England, Holland and Austria into a grand alliance which marked the beginning of the War of Spanish Succession (1701-1714).<sup>91</sup>

In the period between 1697 and 1717, the Company's policy was to reduce military establishments, but they were forced to carry on a defensive and later on an offensive war against the king of Calicut.<sup>92</sup> The Company became aware of its mistaken policies and accordingly changed the tactics to meet their pepper requirement. They were forced to follow

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<sup>91</sup> Motilal Bhargava, op. cit, pp.38-39.

<sup>92</sup> Panikkar, K.M., op. cit, p.280.

the market price and compete with other foreigners.<sup>93</sup> The Cochin Raja passed away in 1698 and he was succeeded by prince Rama Varma. A new agreement was entered into between the Raja and Zwadercroon. Some arrangements were made regarding the finances of the state. The Company renewed its pledge to protect the state from all its enemies. The Raja in turn promised to send help to the Company if it was attacked by its enemies. This agreement finally set the seal of servitude on the Cochin principality and made it merely an appendage of the Dutch Company.<sup>94</sup>

In 1698, Zwadercroon in a memorial dated 31st May complained that the Company was so little feared by even the Raja of Kayamkulam that he was openly tradig with the notorious pirate, William Kidd. From the beginning the Dutch made no attempt to insist like the Portuguese that all trade on Indian seas should be carried on only in vessels permitted by them. The sea-borne trade was to be free and the Company gave every facility for navigation.<sup>95</sup>

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<sup>93</sup> Kusuman, K.K., op. cit, p.65.

<sup>94</sup> Alexander, P.C., op. cit, p.300.

<sup>95</sup> Panikkar, K.M., op. cit, p.300.

Treaty of 6th April 1698 between Rama Varma Rajah of Perumpadappu and his Anantaravan Rama Varmah (heir apparent) on the one part and Hendrik Zwardecroon, Commandeur of Jaffna, appointed Commissor General for Malabar, Canara and Vingorla under the orders of the East India Company of the Netherlands, on the other part, stated that as the improvement of the customs collections was hitherto prevented by the ships from Surat and other places, the Company agreed to allow all these ships to export and import all goods from and to Cochin. As the Raja had himself found out the way for fund for strengthening the state, no request for rendering any pecuniary help. The Raja also undertook not to lay any claim to the same. No one except the Company shall sell pepper to these ships and the Company will not withhold the supply of pepper to such ships and this will enhance the customs duties to the Raja. The Raja should make the necessary precautionary arrangements by appointing watchers and guards on the frontiers to prevent the export of any pepper from Cochin from any territory of Perumpadapp Svarupam and to see that all pepper is delivered to the Company from which quantity of pepper the Company will be able to sell pepper to the Jonakas and other merchants. By this arrangement, an increase in the duty on

pepper was expected which the Company undertook to pay to the Raja.<sup>96</sup>

In the meantime the policy of the Company gradually changed. Support of the Raja of Cochin gave way to direct fighting with Calicut. Besides there were those who advocated a less strict maintenance of the pepper monopoly.<sup>97</sup> Though the Company maintained neutrality as far as possible and showed its anxiety to be friendly with the Zamorin, the Raja of Cochin was bent upon getting back Mapranam and Chettuvai. This brought matters to a crisis in 1700. The Company was legally bound by the treaties entered into between the Dutch and the Cochin Raja to support the Raja.<sup>98</sup>

Skirmishes with the Zamorin's Nayars on some pretext or other became more frequent and more serious till at last it became necessary for the Dutch to take some decisive action. Accordingly the Company sent requisitions to the Rajas of Purakkad, Vadakkumkuar and other feudatories of Cochin to send representatives to Cochin to consult and settle amicably the differences between the representatives could

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<sup>96</sup> Grantham 64, Treaty of 6th April 1698.

<sup>97</sup> Jacob, H.K.S., op. cit, p.437.

<sup>98</sup> Raja, P.K.S., Medieval Kerala, p.161.

arrive, the Zamorin had declared war against Cochin and invaded the northern part of the state early in 1701.<sup>99</sup> But the strict naval watch along the coast of South Malabar kept Asian trade away from the port of Cochin. In 1701, Wickelman, the retiring commandeur noted in his memoir that no foreign merchants came to Cochin.<sup>100</sup>

The Dutch were anxious to avoid war, and they invited the Zamorin and his allies to a conference in January 1701. But the king of Calicut knew that it was only a ruse to gain time and he attacked Cochin territory. The Raja of Purakkad was an ally of the Company and therefore the Company interfered in the matter and restored peace between the two. Parur also was on hostile terms with Cochin. The Raja of Parur complained to the Dutch that the Cochin Raja was committing outrages in his territories. The Company felt that the grievances of the Raja of Parur were not legitimate and decided to declare war against him. The Zamorin was canvassing the support of Vadakkumkur by proposing an adoption from the Rajas family.<sup>101</sup>

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<sup>99</sup> Achuta Menon, C., op. cit, p.100.

<sup>100</sup> Ashin Das Gupta, op. cit, p.73.

<sup>101</sup> Alexander, P.C., op. cit, p.32.

In the eighteenth century, the English gradually took the lead over the Dutch as participants in trade both within Asia and between Europe and Asia.<sup>102</sup>

At the beginning of the 18th century i.e., between 1701 and 1710, the political atmosphere of Malabar was filled with chaos and confusion. There were continuous wars between Cochin and Calicut and the Dutch were deeply involved in these wars with the aim to get complete trade monopoly of pepper in Cochin. In 1701, war with the Zamorin commenced, and continued in a desultory manner until 1710, when a truce was concluded, Governor Moens traced all the Dutch troubles in Malabar to the Cochin Raja, whom he asserted, they had to protect against the Zamorin. Four years later another dispute arose respecting a piece of ground at Chettuvai which was claimed by both the Zamorin and the Rajah of Cochin. Whilst the latter prince, made it over to the Dutch the Raja of Ayurur was also a consenting party to this arrangement and they agreed forthwith to commence erecting a fort at the mouth of the river which was declared to be the boundary of the Zamorin's territory.<sup>103</sup>

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<sup>102</sup> Sanjay Subrahmanyam, The Portuguese Empire in Asia 1500-1700, A Political and Economic History, p.215.

<sup>103</sup> Francis Day, op. cit, p.127.

In a letter dated 15th September 1705 from the Governor General of Batavia in reply to a letter from the Raja of Cochin. It read: "The most important enemy of Cochin is the Zamorin and the Dutch officer at Cochin who will speak everything to the Highness. The Company would advocate all just causes."<sup>104</sup>

The conflict between Perumpadappu and Nediyruppu increased day by day. There was no peace among them. In 1705, the Zamorin died. But his successor continued the war against Cochin. In October 1707 Cochin Raja recaptured some portions of his country on the Northern side, which was of the Zamorin. When this news was proclaimed in the fort on October 10th the Dutch commandeur advised the Cochin Raja to protect the place from the Zamorin in future.<sup>105</sup>

Further troubles began especially with the year 1707 when the Company wanted to build a fort at Chettuvai against the wishes of the Zamorin. The main facts in connection with this affair are recorded in a secret resolution (of the 5th March 1717) from which it may be seen that the fort of

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<sup>104</sup> List LXI, III series I, p.2721.

<sup>105</sup> Padmanabha Menon, K.P., Kecci Rajya Caritram (Mal.), p.403.

Chettuvai and the province of Pappinivattam always been in dispute.<sup>106</sup>

In 1707 the Zamorin attacked Kodasseri and Muriyanad. Hitherto the Dutch had not actively interfered in the war even though they were frequently reminded by the Cochin Raja of otheir moral obligation to support him. Now the Dutch commander decided to take stern steps against the growing aggression of the Zamorin. The Zamorin was told that the Cochin Raja and the other victims of his aggression were under the protection of the Company, and as much an attack on them would be tantamount to an attack on the Dutch. The Zamorin expressed his desire to be on friendly terms with Cochin. He also stated that the war against Kodasseri had been provoked by the Kaymal himself and that he had no intention of becoming an enemy of the Company. The Zamorin sent his representatives to Cochin to meet the commandeur. A temporary peace was concluded but it was broken in February 1708. The Company was however anxious to avoid war and further negotiations were started with the Zamorin.<sup>107</sup>

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<sup>106</sup> Galletti, A., op. cit, p.132.

<sup>107</sup> Alexander, P.C., op. cit, pp.31-32.

After a series of correspondence between the Zamorin and the commandeur, peace was concluded.

The Zamorin himself was desirous of peace and on 30th August 1708, he wrote to the Commandeur to fix a date for an interview with him. The Zamorin was informed that an interview could be held only after deciding the point of dispute.<sup>108</sup>

After a series of correspondence between the Zamorin and the commandeur peace was concluded on the 10th of January 1710. According to the terms of the treaty, the Zamorin was to hand over Chettuvai to the Dutch. The Palayanceri Nair and Cranganore Raja who were formerly feudatories of the Zamorin came under the protection of the company. The Raja of Cochin also gained certain territories.<sup>109</sup> A letter dated 1710 by His Highness Rama Varma, the third of the Chaziyur adoptees to ascend the Cochin throne, forms a very important document. As usual it begins with a recapitulation of prior events. In the concluding paragraph the Raja requested the approval of the

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<sup>108</sup> Ibid, p.33.

<sup>109</sup> Ibid.,

Governor General for the adoption of his direct nephew into the ruling family of Perumpadappu Swarupam.<sup>110</sup>

Treaty between the Raja of Cochin and the 72 Matampies of Karappuram dated 6th April 1710 executed in the presence of the Dutch Commandeur agreed that the 72 Chiefs shall hereafter remain as vassals of the senior Raja of Perumpadappu and fight always on his behalf.<sup>111</sup> A letter written at the castle of Batavia (15th August 1710) to the king of Cochin read: "The letter of Your Highness of the 9th May of this year has been received together with the letter of our commandeur and of the council. We have learned from it with satisfaction of the confusion of indebtedness, with which your Highness writes to be affected for the assistance giving to your Highness by the Netherlands East India Company. Never from the time of its coming to the coast of Malabar, has said Company had other intentions than to protect Royal House of most adawil."<sup>112</sup>

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<sup>110</sup> Letters from Cochin Rajas to Batavia, Letter III, Records in Oriental Languages Cochin State Book II, pp. III-IV.

<sup>111</sup> Grantham 64, Treaty of 6th April 1710.

<sup>112</sup> Letter dated 15th August 1710, D. 64, Album of Dutch Records 1704-1805 A.D.

Meanwhile England and Holland withdrew from the long drawn out contest in 1711 and the war came to an end by the Treaty of Utrecht (1713). Although Philip V retained the throne of Spain, the remainder of the Empire was divided amongst various other powers. England and Holland gained valuable possessions in Europe as well as overseas. Colonial and commercial supremacy of England began to be recognised. The dutch began to lose naval superiority and had to surrender most of their carrying trade to the English.<sup>113</sup>

As soon as the Dutch gained possession of Chettuvai they resolved to build a new fort there and gave orders to B. Ketel the commandant of Malabar to finish it as speedily as possible. There were some lands near Cerruvay which were claimed both by the Cochin Raja and the Zamorin. The Raja of Cochin who was anxious to prevent the aggression of the Zamorin handed over his rights over these territories to the Company. In 1711 the peace-loving Zamorin of Calicut passed away and his heir-apparent came to the 'Stanam'. He sent Tamme Panikkar (Dharmoth Panikkar) who owned some territories in the neighbourhood of Chettuvai to prevent the

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<sup>113</sup> Motilal Bhargave, op. cit., p.39.

Dutch from fortifying these places.<sup>114</sup> The Dutch and the Zamorin having once fallen out and the latter having had the worst of it, no efforts on the part of the Cochin Raja were now required to kindle hostilities between them. The loss of Chettuvai, the possession of which enabled him at any moment to turn the flank of Cochin's defence, was bitterly felt by the Zamorin, while to the Dutch it became a matter of importance to strengthen the northernmost point of the island with a view to curb the power and check the future incursions of their dangerous neighbour. They therefore set about the erection of a fort at this point in 1714. This enraged the Zamorin and the English, who had settled at Tellicherry, Calicut and other places and were anxious for the humiliation of their rivals the Dutch, incited him to prevent the erection of the fort.<sup>115</sup>

The Dutch Diary and Hamilton's account state that the Zamorin was helped to some extent by the English. The English factor at Tellicherry, Mr. Adams, had provided the necessary materials for the building of the fortress at Calicut without payment of any duties. Adams tried to

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<sup>114</sup> Alexander, P.C., op. cit, p.34.

<sup>115</sup> Achuta Menon, C., op. cit, p.101.

create a split between the Dutch and the Zamorin after they had concluded the treaty. But the Zamorin was not willing to renew hostilities.<sup>116</sup> The Zamorin wrote to Mr. Adams as follows: "I have given permission to you to build a warehouse at Chettuvai keep a person there buy pepper and trade in the manner you carried on trade there before, in this manner from February 1715 you can live and trade as before."<sup>117</sup>

On 22nd January 1715, the Zamorin captured the fort at Chettuvai which the Dutch Company had built in defiance of *combre-  
diction* his wishes. After two attempts to regain it had failed, the Governor General and council at Batavia sent three thousand European troops to Cochin in 1715-16, the largest military force deployed in India before the rise of the British power. This was not enough. In the next two years the Dutch Company used two thousand more European and twenty thousand mercenaries to force the Zamorin to cede Chettuvai and Pappinivattam and pay an indemnity of eighty five thousand fanams.<sup>118</sup>

<sup>116</sup> Raja. P.K.S, op.cit, p.170.

<sup>117</sup> William Logan, A Collection of Treaties & C, p.3.

<sup>118</sup> Holden Furber, op.cit, p.143.

In 1716 William Bakker Jacobsz was despatched from Batavia as Admiral and commander-in-Chief. Johannes Hertenberg sent to supersede Ketel as commander. They brought with them a huge army of about 30,000 soldiers, consisting of European and Javanese. Bakker Jacobsz arrived in Cochin on the 23rd November 1716. One of his first steps was to inform the different princes and Chieftains of Malabar of his intention to punish the Zamorin. Letters were sent to as many as 42 Chieftains in Malabar.<sup>119</sup> In 1717 Admiral Van Jacobs came out with a large army and joined by the Raja's forces, captured the fort at Pappinivattam. In this engagement, the Zamorin sustained heavy loss. Through the friendly intervention of the company, a treaty was concluded between the Zamorin and the Raja, by which there was to be no more fighting between the Zamorin and the Raja.<sup>120</sup>

The treaty of friendship and alliance entered into between Admiral William Baker Jacobsz, senior officer in malabar, in the name of the Hon'ble Company and the Perumpadappu Svarupam, the friend and ally of the Hon'ble

<sup>119</sup> Alexander. P.C, op.cit, pp.36-37.

<sup>120</sup> A Translation of a Record Grandhavari in the state Archives, p.9.

Company on the one part and Punnathur Svaroopam dated 22nd February 1717 stated that existing enmity and differences having ceased and mutual friendship having been established, it was agreed that Punnathur Raja's Nayars (militia) should co-operate for purposes of fighting against the Zamorin and other enemies with the armies of the Hon'ble Company and the Panickers (military leaders) or commanders of Perumpadappu Svarupam and the Nayars of his friends and allies. It was also agreed that after the conclusion of the treaty Punnathur Svarupam should according to his means, supply provisions and coolies. As a great quantity of peper was grown in the territories of the Punnathur Svarupam it was arranged that all pepper grown there should be transported to Chettuvai and sold to the Company's merchants.<sup>121</sup> On 10 April 1717, the Dutch flag was again hoisted at Chettuvai.<sup>122</sup>

A peace was concluded between the Dutch and the Zamorin in 1717, who was compelled to re-build the walls of the Chettuvai to the Dutch and to divide all his possessions on the island between the Rajah of Cochin and the Dutch.

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<sup>121</sup> Grantham, Treaty dated 22nd February 1717.

<sup>122</sup> Francis Day, op. cit., p.128.

### Third Phase

After 1717, the policy of the Company was one of increasing intervention in the affairs of the smaller princes. The prestige which they had gained by the defeat of the Zamorin was of help in bringing the petty Chiefs under control.<sup>123</sup> The Dutch never aimed at the complete conquest of Kerala. They did not try to reduce the Zamorin of Calicut to the status of a vassal like the King of Cochin. No attempt was made to defeat the Arabs. The Dutch only aimed to maintain balance of power among the rulers of Kerala and gain advantage not politically but commercially by dominating the pepper trade and regulating the price to their advantage.<sup>124</sup>

A noble pagoda of the Punnatoor Nambudiri was pillaged by the Balinese and the other coloured soldiers, "who obtained a quantity of gold and silver articles and precious stones". At this stage the Zamorin became alarmed and sued for peace, and a treaty was concluded with him in February 1718 by which he agreed, among other condition to cede to the Dutch his possessions in the Chettuvai island and the

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<sup>123</sup> Panikkar, K.M., op. cit, p.280.

<sup>124</sup> Koshy, M.O., The Dutch Power in Kerala, p.208.

Cochin state, to return the guns he had taken, to pay a large sum towards the expenses of the war, to give seven percent, on all pepper exported from his country and to live in perpetual friendship with the Raja of Cochin. The ceded territories except those in the Chettuvai island and Mapranam, were made over to Cochin. Mapranam, which was in the country of the Velosnad Nambiyar before, taken by the Zamorin, was now restored to him on the condition of his holding it under the Dutch Company and paying an annual tribute to it.<sup>125</sup>

An agreement entered into between the Raja of Cochin and the Dutch on one side, and the Matampies of Karappuram on the other side with Rajah Rama Varmah the 3rd Raja of Vadakkumkur and the Karutha Thavazhi mootha Raja as mediators dated 1st December 1718 stated that:- The Matampies and the Nayars under them do hereby undertake to be ready to take up arms whenever the Raja or the Company requires them to do so, and shall fight on their behalf when they are so ordered. Those who do not either respond to the call or disregard the same shall be punished. If the defaulter happens to be a Matampi, he shall forthwith be

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<sup>125</sup> Achuta Menon, op. cit, pp.102-103.

deprived of his territory and banished from the country. If he happens to be a Nayar, he shall be killed.<sup>126</sup>

In 1721 the Supreme Council in Batavia came to the very important resolution that the Raja of Cochin was no longer to be supported in his interminable fights with the Zamorin, and the Cochin Council solemnly cautioned to live peacefully with all men, "an advice more easily given than was capable of being carried out".<sup>127</sup> The Dutch at first could not give any help to the local Chieftains as their policy since 1721 was of a strict neutrality.<sup>128</sup> Even after the conclusion of peace with the Zamorin the military charges of the Company grew to such an extent that the Supreme Government at Batavia issued strict injunction [by their secret despatches dated 30th September 1721] not to continue hostilities against the princes on the Coast. They went even to the extent of saying that the Company should not interfere to support the Raja of Cochin if he were attacked by the Zamorin.<sup>129</sup>

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<sup>126</sup> Grantham 64. Treaty dated 1st December 1718, List 72/7.

<sup>127</sup> William Logan, op. cit, p.399.

<sup>128</sup> Kareem, C.K., op. cit, p.281.

<sup>129</sup> Panikkar, K.M., op. cit, p.280.

Rama Varma died in Trichur on 9th October 1722 and was succeeded by his nephew Ravi Varma, "a man of little or no judgement and despised by his predecessor". His whole bearing and conduct be taken his inferiority. Not only do his courtiers and grandees esteem him but lightly, the Company too have little hope of getting any good out of him. No event of great importance took place during his reign.<sup>130</sup>

The Cochin records of the Dutch show that between 1724 and 1742 the English country shipping which visited that part doubled in terms of tonnage, and that number of English country ships and captains increased from seventeen to twenty eight.<sup>131</sup>

A letter written on the 10th of October 1725 to the king of Cochin stated:- "We have received this year together with the Company's papers from Cochin also your Highness' letter from which we came to know your Highness anxiety with regard to an invasion into the lands and the fortress of yememaka. We cannot see that Your Highness can have a justified anxiety for as the king. Zamorin is still living

<sup>130</sup> Achuta Menon, C., op. cit., pp.104-105.

<sup>131</sup> Pameela Nightingale, Trade and Empire in Western India 1784-1806. p.16.

in perfect peace with Your Highness, we are not allowed to have such suspicious about evil intentions. . . . With our friendly wish that your royal person may live a happy life and may govern prosperously for a long time to come."<sup>132</sup>

David Rahabi died in 1726. Ezchiel Rahabi, who had already been associated with the Dutch East India Company along with his father now became the Chief merchant.<sup>133</sup>

Dutch political and economic policy in Kerala was bound in a close alliance with the Cochin Raja and involvement in the latter's rivalry with the Zamorin. The effectiveness of that involvement was diminished by the concern of the Supreme Government in Batavia over the loss of revenue resulted from costly fortifications and political entanglements.<sup>134</sup> In 1729 Martanda Varma ascended the musnad of Travancore.<sup>135</sup> The Raja of Cochin was a tributary of the Dutch but the kingdom of Travancore was independent.<sup>136</sup>

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<sup>132</sup> Letter dated 10th October 1725, D.64, Album of Dutch Records 1704-1805 A.D., Serial No.14.

<sup>133</sup> Ashin Das Gupta, 'The Medieval Merchant' quoted in Asiya Siddiqi (ed.), Trade and Finance in Colonial India 1750-1860, p.110.

<sup>134</sup> Rolland E. Miller, Mappila Muslims of Kerala, p.79.

<sup>135</sup> Aitchison, op. cit.

<sup>136</sup> Pameela Nightingale, op. cit., p.33.

The dutch received aid in their attempts to supplant the Portuguese and establish themselves all along the sea coast between Colachel and Cochin.<sup>137</sup> The Expenses of the Dutch Company increased throughout the eighteenth century. The English began to copy from the wise Dutch their policy of strong arm. At first they failed, but about the middle of the eighteenth century, we find the Dutch neglected and the British and French powers growing.<sup>138</sup>

During this period the Dutch were involved in constant wars in Europe. "All through the eighteenth century the (Dutch) Company's commitments as a sovereign power increased, garrisons became more numerous, the expenses of administration grew. As a result, although its trade continued to prosper the Company's finances became more and more involved. The wars in Europe led to the neglect of its Navy. The Company was dependent of funds from the Government. As the Government was engaged in wars, it could not provide any. The Company could not make any profit as

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<sup>137</sup> Shungoony Menon, P., A History of Travancore, pp.111-112.

<sup>138</sup> Narendra Krishna Sinha and Anil Chandra Banerjee, History of India, p.492.

the Government interfered with the appointments of the Directors and their decisions.<sup>139</sup>

The trade was mostly carried on the exchange system. The Company used to buy these articles and keep them in large stock. There were local merchants in the service of the Company to arrange for the purchase and sale of these articles.<sup>140</sup> Agents for these merchants were scattered in the pepper producing villages, giving advances and collecting pepper from the peasants. These merchants became the major suppliers of pepper to the Dutch, other Europeans and to Asian exporters. They advised the petty princes of the southern pepper lands in denying their contracts with the Dutch, and provided links for them with European and Asian buyers. They organised the smuggling of this pepper past Dutch watch-posts.<sup>141</sup>

A few Syrian Christians from Vadakkumkur and Tekkumkur who managed to supply pepper to the Dutch commandant at Cochin had to discontinue the enterprise when Martanda Varma introduced a state monopoly of the pepper trade in

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<sup>139</sup> Ithihasa Bhushana (ed.), The European Interlude (1498-1857), The study of Indian History and Culture Vol.III, p.93.

<sup>140</sup> Alexander. P.C, op.cit, pp.190-191.

<sup>141</sup> Sinnappah Arasaratnam, op.cit, 105.

Travancore. The only recourse open for the Syrians thereafter was smuggling.<sup>142</sup> Smuggling of pepper could no longer be prevented by a small naval patrol. The Dutch "Chiefs" at Cochin were convinced by the late 1730's that the deployment of more military force on land was absolutely essential. This was all the more necessary because a young and ambitious prince, had come to the throne of Travancore in 1729.<sup>143</sup>

The European Companies from the Dutch period were interested in dealing directly with the princes rather than with individual business men. Taking the hint from the Europeans, the princes adopted a commercial policy the essence of which was to make a state monopoly. Instead of collecting or purchasing pepper and other commodities through a certain network of itinerant traders of the manigramam pattern of the past, the state governments started to collect spices like pepper, areca, Cardamom and ginger through their own vicaripukars at fixed prices.<sup>144</sup>

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<sup>142</sup> Joseph. K.V, op.cit, p.140.

<sup>143</sup> Holden Furber, op.cit, p.143.

<sup>144</sup> Joseph. K.V, op.cit, p.140.

The customs revenues of the port of Cochin were shared between the Dutch and the Cochin Raja. The swindling private trade drastically impoverished the Raja's treasury. This made it impossible for him to balance his budget and meet the expenses of administration and security. The Dutch were forced to pick up the bill for an impoverished Raja.<sup>145</sup> An agreement entered into between the Mootha Thirumulpad of Mangat Patinjattu Koothil Svaroopam and his brother Elaya Thirumulpad adopted heir of Muriyanad Svaroopam in the presence of the Raja of Cochin and the Dutch dated 7th July 1733 stated that unlike the adoption recently made no adoption shall be made in future by the senior or junior Thirumulpad without the consent and approval of the senior Raja of Perumpadappu and the Hon'ble Company. If this article be violated, to the adopter and the adoptee may be deprived of their rights.<sup>146</sup>

The inclusion of the Canarese had been disastrous to the Dutch trade at Cannanore as well as to the English, and on the 15th March the Dutch Chief at Cannanore, under orders from Cochin, took steps to stop the supply of food to the

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<sup>145</sup> Sinnappah Arasaratnam, op.cit, p.105.

<sup>146</sup> Grantham 64, Treaty dated 7th July 1733, List 72/8.

Canarese. On 10th September 1736 the factors received news that the Dutch had come to a disagreement with the Prince Regent of Kolathunad had threatened to refuse further aid against the Canarese. The facts forcibly illustrate the different methods of dealing with the country powers adopted by the Dutch and the English Companies.<sup>147</sup>

Letter written from Batavia on the 5th October 1736 to His Highness the Raja of Cochin stated that "together with the paper of the Noble company at Cochin brought this year, we have also received a letter from Your Highness in which it was most pleasing to us to read that the alliance and harmony which exist between Cochin and the Company vexed and pained many others, but because of this alliance and harmony we have not expected to see Your Highness does not remember any more with great anxiety, Your Highness was as expressed in your Highness letter to us of the 10th October 1726 with regard to an invasion in the lands and the fortress of Enamakkal."<sup>148</sup>

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<sup>147</sup> William Logan, Malabar, p.417.

<sup>148</sup> Letter dated 5th October 1736, D.64, Album of Dutch-Records, 1704-1805.

Ezechiel Rahabi who had already been associated with the Dutch East India Company along with his father now became their Chief merchant. In 1737 the Malabar Council noticed that Ezechiel Rahabi was the only person who brought the commodities sent by Their Excellencies (Batavia). In 1739 Baron Van Imhoff (then Governor of Ceylon) visited Malabar and wrote to Batavia that but for the energy and ability of Rahabi and the friendliness of the King of Cochin, the position of the Malabar Commandant specially in its pepper business would indeed have been desperate.<sup>149</sup> By 1739 the Company realised that with regard to the pepper trade either the market price should be followed, or the contracts be enforced by force. The second alternative was opposed to their general policy which preferred lowest expenses to secure the high profit. At the same time they were reluctant to enter the open market and offer higher prices.<sup>150</sup>

In Travancore Paravur was the centre of coir trade, in which the Company had some interest. They used it chiefly for use in anchors. For fine quality they offered Rs. 12

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<sup>149</sup> Ashin Das Gupta, op.cit, p.104.

<sup>150</sup> Kusuman K.K. op.cit, p.63.

per candy but according the Gollenesse compared Cochin coir, the product of Paravur was inferior because the fibre was very loose and the threads were uneven and the coarse and is mixed with much stubble.<sup>151</sup>

All rulers of India during this period sought help from foreign powers either to carry out their aggressive dealings against their neighbours or to defend their kingdom from them. The Rajas of Kerala are not an exception to this general practice.<sup>152</sup> The original English and Dutch plans for trading with India and the Far East had not contemplated settlements abroad but merely voyages to sell their goods and return with eastern merchandise. But the political situation in India changed the organisation from trading voyages to the local agencies known as factories; these factories developed into forts and eventually expanded into territorial conquest.<sup>153</sup>

The famous battle of Kulaccal was fought on the 31st July 1741 A.D and the Dutch were compelled to abandon the fort and their ships even their dead comrades on the battle

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<sup>151</sup> Ibid. p. 68.

<sup>152</sup> Velu Pillai. T.K, Travancore State Manual, Vol.II, p.433.

<sup>153</sup> George Durbar. History of India from the Earliest times to the present Day, p.215.

field. The Travancore army took 24 prisoners besides 389 muskets, a few pieces of Cannon and large number of swords. In the meantime the Dutch fleet hastened back to Cochin. It was just before this battle that the Maharaja had sent ambassadors to the French at Pondicherry to conclude a treaty of friendship and mutual help.<sup>154</sup>

Historians of Travancore have magnified the battle of Kulaccal into a decisive action in which Travancore inflicted a crushing defeat on the Dutch. But as a military affair, it was nothing spectacular.<sup>155</sup> The Battle of Kulaccal is of great significance for the Dutch and Travancore. It marked the beginning of Dutch decline.

By the treaty of peace and friendship concluded between His Highness, the king of Travancore, Martanda Varma on the one side and, on behalf of the Netherlands East India Company's Governor General Right Worshipful Lord Gustafe William Van Imhoff and the noble Lord Councillars of the Netherlands India, by their commandeur Reinicus Siersma, on the otherside on 22nd May 1743 all hostilities shall first cease on both sides and in future a sincere peace and

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<sup>154</sup> Nagam Aiya. V, op.cit, p.342.

<sup>155</sup> Ibrahim Kunju. A.P, Rise of Travancore, p.53.

friendship shall be maintained between both sides. Another article of the treaty stated that cows, Brahmins and women as also temples shall not be allowed to be molested by the Company servants.<sup>156</sup>

In the ports of Cochin, Madras, Bombay, Surat and Calcutta etc. the flag of France was more often seen in 1743 than in 1713<sup>157</sup> Meanwhile in 1744 war broke out in Europe between England and France. Unfortunately the records are incomplete at this time. But the war had little effects at first on the Company's settlement owing to the great losses at sea, sustained by the French. In March 1746 the factors found there were "no buyers of pepper now but us", and taking advantage of that fact they promptly proceeded to lower the price of the article. The following month they recorded that the French commerce was now carried in Dutch ships.<sup>158</sup>

The Governor-General had written asking for the whole-hearted co-operation of the Raja in the campaign against Travancore. Such co-operation, the latter pointed out, had

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<sup>156</sup> Ibid. Appendix VI, Treaty of Mavelikkara on 22nd May 1743, pp.152-154.

<sup>157</sup> Holden Furber, op.cit, p.135.

<sup>158</sup> William Logan, Malabar, p.431.

always been unstightly given. But the Travancore Raja had lately grown so powerful that the other Malabar Rajas were not in a position to curb him. Only the intervention of the Company backed by a powerful army could save the situation, as was done against the Zamorin in 1717.<sup>159</sup> As far as Cochin was concerned it was true to say that the Company constituted the wealth and strength of the state. The Raja hoped that the long-awaited reinforcements would ere long arrive. The feudatories in central Cochin had become disobedient. Velose Nambiar had effected an adoption from the house of Venkanot Nampidi (Kollengode) who was on the Zamorin's side. It was obligatory to take Cochin Raja's sanction before a feudatory could effect an adoption. The Nambiar had not done so and deserved to be chastised. The arrival of reinforcements would be an opportune movement to punish the Nambiar and his confederates.<sup>160</sup>

However, Travancore was slowly getting the upper hand and by the "SECRET RESOLUTION" of 1747 it was decided that a policy of appeasement should be adopted towards Travancore, and that hereafter the Company was to be under treaty

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<sup>159</sup> Letters from Cochin Rajas to Batavia, Letter IV, Records in Oriental Languages Cochin State Book II, p.IV.

<sup>160</sup> Ibid.

obligations to Travancore alone. From 1747 onwards, the Dutch had adopted a purely mercantile policy.<sup>161</sup>

In 1748, the draft treaty was sanctioned by the Batavian Government, and the Cochin Governor was instructed to get it ratified without delay, but the Cochin Council having made some slight modifications, the Maharaja started fresh objections and the treaty was not adopted before a further reference to Batavia. In 1753 it was finally ratified.<sup>162</sup>

It was the interest of the Dutch to maintain the position they had acquired as arbiters in Malabar politics to prevent any one prince, growing too powerful.<sup>163</sup> Raja Rama Varma died at Kurikad early in 1746, and was succeeded by his brother Vira Kerala Varma, who was according to Van Gollennesse, like his predecessor both in years and in defects. He reigned only for four years and was succeeded in 1750 by his nephew, Rama Varma. The prince before his succession, had given much trouble to his immediate conduct

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<sup>161</sup> Rama Varma Appan Tampuran (ed.), Cochin, p.21.

<sup>162</sup> Shungoony Menon, op.cit, p.419.

<sup>163</sup> Galletti, A, op.cit, p.23.

and the Dutch had once to send a Company of lascars to him.<sup>164</sup>

In October 1750, Martanda Varma sent two ambassadors by name 'Sora Marakhayar' and 'Malu Pillai' to Dupleix probably to secure French help in his war against Tekkumkur and Vadakkumkur. Though the Dutch were negotiating a treaty with Travancore, the king suspected that they were secretly assisting these princes. Therefore he sought the help of the French against them. The French governor promised that "in case the Dutch stirred up enemies against your Raja, I will certainly help him, but can not make war on them, because in Europe my king is at peace with Holland."<sup>165</sup> By the middle of 1751 when Travancore had its hands full with the war in the north, Martanda Varma had sought French help to end the war expeditiously.<sup>166</sup>

To make matters worse, Martanda Varma had by this time taken possession of the rich temple of Tiruvalla which, though situated in Travancore territory, was under the control of the Cochin ruler. The Dutch offered to mediate

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<sup>164</sup> Achuta Menon. C, op.cit, pp.109-110.

<sup>165</sup> Ibrahim Kunju. A.P, op.cit, p.96.

<sup>166</sup> Ibid.

in the conflict between the two Rajas, but Martanda Varma who would not entertain any such offer, marched his army to Karappuram in 1752 and defeated the small Cochin force stationed there. The title of Perumpadappu muppu was revived and Karappuram was ceded to the Calur Tampan who has met all the expenses connected with the expedition. The senior Tampan was given the right to govern the tract as a feudatory of the Raja of Travancore.<sup>167</sup>

The Raja of Cochin knew that Martanda Varma's attention would immediately turn against him. He knew that he could not rely on his promise of friendship. In his letter dated 14th October 1753 to the Dutch Government at Batavia, he had expressed all his fears about the Travancore Raja. The Raja of Cochin refused to recognise the claims of the Tampan<sup>167A</sup> therefore they sought the help of Martanda Varma. The Tampan hoped that they could compel the Cochin Raja to recognise their title through the help of a powerful ally. This was too good an opportunity for the ambitious Martanda varma. The Raja of Cochin was in great difficulties and started negotiations for peace with Martanda Varma. Peace

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<sup>167</sup> Sreedhara Menon. A, op.cit, p.169.

<sup>167A</sup> The Tampan belonged to the Calur branch and they put forth a claim to the title if perumpadpu Muppu.

was concluded at Mavelikkara between Cochin and Travancore by which the former was to hold Cempakasseri and Vadakkumkur and the Raja of Cempakasseri was to be allowed to stay at Trichur without any sort of communication to any one else.<sup>168</sup>

The Cochin Raja promised to hand over all the pepper in his territory to Travancore, taking only 500 candies for his use. Tiruvalla and Harippad Temples were to be under the Cochin Raja as before, but Karappuram would be under Travancore. The thorny question about the claims of the Tampans was postponed to be discussed at Vaikkam three weeks later.<sup>169</sup> Under this treaty signed between Travancore and the Dutch, some agreements were made about the payment due from Karappuram and the Dutch Company to be friendly to Travancore.<sup>170</sup> The Dutch company agreed to give guns in exchange of pepper to Travancore. Thus by this treaty the Dutch Company tried to get economic benefits from Travancore also.

To maintain their supplies of pepper, the Dutch were forced to conclude the humiliating treaty of Mavelikkara

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<sup>168</sup> T.A, Record No.16. Vol.I, Treaty dated 3rd Cingam, 929 M.E.

<sup>169</sup> Alexander. P.C, op.cit, pp.57-58.

<sup>170</sup> T.A.Record No.17, Vol.I.

with Martanda Varma Raja of Travancore in 1753. In return for an annual supply of 12,000 rupees worth of military supplies annually aid him against external attack and renounce their treaties with all other Malabar princes.<sup>171</sup> By the IXth article of the treaty "The Hon'ble Company agreed that it will henceforward recede from all engagements which they have entered into with the remaining kings and Chieftains of Kerala, with whom His Highness wished to wage war. In no way will the Company meddle there with; nor asylum be given them; nor takes sides with his Highness enemies in their enterprises."<sup>172</sup> From this period the prestige of the Dutch rapidly declined, the petty princes discovering how their interests had been sacrificed in the Treaty of 1753.<sup>173</sup>

#### Fourth Phase

In 1756, the Zamorin invaded and occupied Cochin territory and erected fortresses at Alwaye, Varapoly, Manjummal, Kothad and Chathanad and the Raja of Travancore wrested from the state Karappuram, Kurunad, North Kurumala

<sup>171</sup> Holden Furber, op.cit, p.161.

<sup>172</sup> Treaty of Mavelikkara, 15th August 1753, Appendix VII, in Ibrahim Kunju. A.P, op.cit, pp.156-157.

<sup>173</sup> Francis Day, op.cit, p.135.

and Kunnathunad. As the Company had not rendered any assistance in these times of stress and difficulties, attempts were made to negotiate a treaty of alliance with Travancore.<sup>174</sup> The treaty of Mavelikkara ended the Dutch political and commercial pretensions on the Kerala coast. For a paltry gain they sacrificed their former friends and allies.<sup>175</sup> The Cochin Raja had withdrawn his active support to the Dutch forces pitted against Travancore protesting against the desecration of temples and the looting of private houses. The campaign against Travancore had eventually disintegrated and the Dutch had signed a peace treaty with Travancore.<sup>176</sup> In 1757 Cochin's position had become precarious in the extreme. Encroached upon by the Zamorin from the North and Martanda Varma from the south, the state was in imminent danger of annihilation. The letter dated 1757 to Batavia ends in a fervent appeal for help, which needless to add, the Dutch were powerless to give. Travancore had not only annexed the territories under the

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<sup>174</sup> A Translation of a Record Grandhavari in the State Archives, p.15.

<sup>175</sup> Ibrahim Kunju. A.P, 'The Battle of Kulacal and the Debacle of the Dutch on the Malabar coast' Journal of Kerala Studies, Vol.II, part. III, 1975.

<sup>176</sup> Letters from Cochin Rajas to Batavia, Letter V, Records in Oriental languages Cochin State Book II, pp.IV-V.

southern feudatories of Cochin, but also occupied Karappuram, overran Kurunad, Aikkaranad and Kunnathunad and marched up to Tannippuzha. The peace conference held first at Mavelikkara and then at Trippunithura had proved abortive. The Zamorin to the north had occupied, Kodungallur, Parur, Alangad, Trichur. Kattur and other places. Many of the chiefs had openly gone over to his side. Formerly when the Zamorin had made similar encroachments the Company had sent a mighty army and driven him back.<sup>177</sup> Equally strong measures were needed to restore the situation. The Company should remember that Cochin's prosperity or decline would have immediate repercussions on the fortunes of the Company. The Governor-General should also realise that God Almighty and the Hon. Company were the only allies left to the Cochin Raja.<sup>178</sup> In 1758 the Zamorin's men took forcible possession of Chennamangalam. They demolished the Achan's house and utilised the materials for erecting fortresses.<sup>179</sup>

A letter written at Batavia on 20th October 1758 to His Highness the king of Cochin was as follows:- "Besides the

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<sup>177</sup> Ibid.

<sup>178</sup> Ibid.

<sup>179</sup> A Translation of a Record Grandhavari (Cochin State), p.15.

Noble Company's letters and papers we have also received this year Your Highness' letter in expresseing Your Highness renewed and repeated assurance of Your Highness good intentions with regard to the Noble Company, which the Governor-General and the Council of India as your Highness sincerest and most faithful friends."<sup>180</sup>

Barring an invasion from the north or for that matter the South, the survival of the merchants of Cochin came to depend entirely upon the Dutch Company's import of Indonesian commodities. The trade in pepper was lost after a valiant struggle in the forties and the fifties.<sup>181</sup> The Dutch did not collect land-tax and tax from fruit trees. Tax collection first was introduced in 1761. It was to meet the expenses occurred to dispose the Zamorin and treachourous nobles from Cochin.<sup>182</sup> The rapid rise of Travancore to Paravur proved an object lesson to Cochin. She now realised that her weakness was due to the diffusion

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<sup>180</sup> Letter dated 20th October 1758, D.64, Album of Dutch Records 1704-1805, serial No.15.

<sup>181</sup> Ashin Das Gupta, op.cit, p.114.

<sup>182</sup> Kerala History association, Kerala Caritram (Mal.), VolI, p.424.

of power among a number of hereditary Chiefs instead of its being concentrated in the head of the state.<sup>183</sup>

The Zamorin, supported by rebellious Cochin feudatories, had marched almost to the limits of the Cochin part, the Cochin Raja, accompanied by "Commandeur" Wijerman had met the Travancore Raja and negotiated a treaty of Alliance in 1761. With Travancore's help the Zamorin had been driven out of Cochin's territory. Adequate punishments were meted out to the rebellious Chiefs. During the times of Wijerman and his successor Breekpot, friendly relations existed between the Company and the Raja. It continued to be so during the early part of Senff's commandership.<sup>184</sup> Four years later Hyder Ali had overrun Malabar, and Cochin had become feudatory to him as far as her territories north of Nedunkotta were concerned. Meantime the position of Hon. Company had dwindled to a mercantile corporation except for the bits of territory it held in the neighbourhood of Cochin port. These things led to a serious dissension between the

<sup>183</sup> Achuta Menon. C, op.cit, p.118.

<sup>184</sup> Letters from Cochin Rajas to batavia letter VI, Records-In Oriental Languages Cochin State Book II, pp.V-VI.

Cochin Raja and "commandeur" sneff regarding port dues and port jurisdiction.<sup>185</sup>

The real competition between the English and the Dutch began, however only with the arrival of Robert Adams in 1761 as the Chief of the Calicut factory. He was a masterful man and he soon become a great favourite of the Zamorin. He received from the Zamorin the right to establish a trading centre at Chettuvai and in return helped that ruler greatly in the war against the Dutch. As the English kept strictly aloof from political complications their trade prospered while that of the Dutch declined.<sup>186</sup>

On 20-th April 1766 Ezechiel Rahabi received a letter from Issac Surgeon, the principal Jewish merchant at Calicut. It ran as follows. "Last Tuesday the Nabab Haider Ali Khan arrived in Calicut and on Wednesday I had the honour of meeting His Excellency. He used such sweet words towards me that.... the Nabab asked me how many children your Honour had, to which I answered, your Honour had three sons, and the Nabab said he would like to see them. I think your Honour would do well to sell one of your sons, here, at

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<sup>185</sup> Ibid.

<sup>186</sup> Panikkar. K.M, op.cit, pp.283-84.

any rate member of your family and I shall do my best that His Excellency receives them well."<sup>187</sup> It was Governor Senff who made the first move early in 1770. He called upon the merchants of Cochin to take over the whole of the annual Indonesian cargo at one transaction and pay a price fixed before the bombaras arrived. Naturally it was to Ezechiel Rahabi that, in the first instance, the appeal was made, Rahabi refused to depart from the traditional custom of picemeal transactions. Senff pointed out that this was scarcely acting as a businessman. A businessman, Senff said, who wanted to gain something must risk something Ezechiel Rahabi who had been in business for upwards of half a century, remained unconvinced. Following him the other merchants also turned down the new proposal. The Governor refused to admit defeat.<sup>188</sup>

The Governor sent a Company of soldiers to the fort at Kuriapilly belonging to the Rajah of Travancore, and opened hostilities with the men in the fort, and shot the senior officer in the fort. Thereupon a regular fighting ensued. The Company's soldiers, however, soon retreated to the fort

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<sup>187</sup> Asiya Siddiqi (ed.), Trade and Finance in Colonial India 1750-1860, p.123.

<sup>188</sup> Ibid. p.129.

of Cranganore. At this unprovoked attack, especially when the state and the Company were in friendly alliance, the Travancore Raja collected his forces to avenge the wrong. Thinking that it was undesirable that the state and the Company should be at loggerheads, Cochin Raja proceeded to Cochin, interviewed the Governor and wrote a conciliatory letter to the Raja of Travancore, and suggested that both the parties should forget and forgive the past, and must continue as in the past.<sup>189</sup>

When the commandeur reaches Cochin and enquires, he will find how hard Cochin Raja had to work to bring about this reconciliation. As the two states and the Company have been on friendly terms and as the Governor could not listen to Cochin Raja's statements, the Raja of Travancore who knew the facts of the case and Cochin Raja, himself wrote several letters to the Governor and sent them through the Kariakar; but the Governor was inexorable.<sup>190</sup> The Raja of Travancore and Cochin Raja himself therefore addressing a letter to the Dutch commandur so as to acquaint him with the true statement of the case. They therefore requested that Dutch commandeur

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<sup>189</sup> Grantham 64, copy of the Theettoram dated 1770 serial No.2, Vc.13.

<sup>190</sup> Ibid.

will soon come to Cochin, enquire into the truth of the complaints and restore the status quo ante.<sup>191</sup>

In August 1770 Senff put forward the astonishing claim that the spit of land on which Cochin fort and Mattancheri stood was under the sole jurisdiction of the Company, that the revenues arising from them belonged to the Company, and that the Raja had claim only to the palace at Mattancheri. The Raja pointed out that these claims were unjustifiable, that they found no place in the treaties already executed and that if he were to lose jurisdiction over Cochin, there would be no purpose in his continuing to be Cochin Raja. But the "Commandeur" was adamant. The Raja thereupon explained matters at length to four of the councillors and beseeched them to intercede on his behalf. He also suggested a commission to be sent on Batavia to arbitrate over the matter.<sup>192</sup>

But in October 1770 the "Commandeur" forcibly took over the jurisdiction of Mattancheri and not only started collecting the existing dues but also imposed land tax till

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<sup>191</sup> Ibid.

<sup>192</sup> Letters from Cochin Rajas to Batavia, Letter VI, Records in Oriental Languages Cochin State Book II, pp.V-VI.

then unheard of. He was also intriguing with the Zamorin and openly entertaining the Cochin rebels who had gone over the Zamorin's side. He was obviously convinced that the Hon'ble Company had nothing further to gain by continuing to be on friendly terms with Cochin. The Raja however hoped that the Governor General would not forget old promises and desert an old ally. He requested that a responsible person be sent from Batavia to put matters right.<sup>193</sup>

Finally at a conference on 20th November 1770, the Konkani Collega Prabhu was at time the sworn enemy of the Rahabi's the Baniyas Ganesha Chetty and Anta Chetty and the Jewish merchant Daniel Cohen agreed to Senff's terms. Ezechiel Rahabi and his son David Rahabi were invited to attend this conference but did not. The Malabar council described the group of four as our merchants at present.<sup>194</sup>

On the sale of all private merchandise, 1% went to the Governor who also received 5% on that of all coprah, Re.1 for every 1000 coconuts the same on every bale (consisting of 80 pieces) of Colechi cloth, one fanam on every Chatna (16

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<sup>193</sup> Ibid.

<sup>194</sup> Asiya Siddiqi, (ed.), op.cit, p.129.

quarts) of coconut oil, Rs.4 on every lot of nelly (paddy) and Rs.8 on each last of rice.<sup>195</sup>

"All vessels passing along the backwater paid taxes at Cochin, Palliport, Cranganur, Paponetty and Quilon, whilst tolls were exacted on all liquors, metals, food or slaves imported or exported. 12½ percent, on the produce of trees, and 30 percent on that of some of the land, even the fishermen were charged for the right of using nets.<sup>196</sup>

A Dutch letter dated 1st October 1771 to the Raja of Cochin written by P.G. Debrune Secretary by order of Governor General of India stated that it was not proper on Your Highness part to have increased the customs duty. Perhaps Your Highness may not be aware that the merchants especially the Jew Ezechiel, have given us better information about the new Tariff duty.<sup>197</sup> On 11th November 1771 a sensational law suit began at Cochin. The three sons and heirs of Ezechiel Rahabi sued Collaga Prabhu for unlawful possession of one of their warehouses and an undischarged debt over Rs.600. Almost all the top men of

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<sup>195</sup> Padmanabha Menon. K.P, History of Kerala, Vol.I, p.211.

<sup>196</sup> Ibid. p.212.

<sup>197</sup> D.25, A Dutch letter dated 1st October 1771.

the mercantile community of Cochin turned out either to bear witness for the Rahabis or to assist them in other ways. Bhagawan Chetty and Daniel Cohen stood full security for the young Rahabis. Konkani merchants Baba Sarof, Aloe Sarof Bikoe Kienie and Rama Sinaij described the injustice done by Senff to Ezechiel. A Jewish freeman, David Scheffer, represented the Rahabis at court.<sup>198</sup>

Collaga Prabhu pleaded his own cause. His witnesses, as David Scheffer was quick to point out, were drawn from the dregs of Cochin town and many of them finally did not turn up. Scheffer also drew the attention of the court to the fact that things of late had been going very badly for Prabhu and he had in fact been in jail once on account of a debt to Operanda Chetty.<sup>199</sup> Ezechiel Rahabi died in 1771 and by the end of the century the family had gone bankrupt.<sup>200</sup>

The Governor General took head of the Raja's appeal and sent Adrian Van Moens who relieved Sneff early in 1771. Moens withdrew the fantastic claims put forward by his predecessor, but insisted that the Raja should pay Rs.14,

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<sup>198</sup> Asiya Siddiqi, (ed.), op.cit, p.133.

<sup>199</sup> Ibid. p.134.

<sup>200</sup> Ibid. p.113.

054 to the Company to cover the expenses incurred by them during the period of dispute. Though probably unfair, the Raja was willing to do so in annual instalments of Rs.1,000. Meanwhile the Raja hoped that the Company would help him to recover the bit of land between Chetuvai and Ponnani. Chitrakutam, the ancient capital of Cochin state where the Rajas used to be crowned in times of yore, lay on this land. The Travancore Raja had already promised his help. The above letter dated April 1772 ended with a note of warning against the "Konkani" Kaliyan, who was responsible for all that had happened.<sup>201</sup> The court sided with Rahabies and they won their suit on 19th August 1772, nearly a year after it was begun. This must have been a crippling blow for Collaga but within months it was followed by another.<sup>202</sup>

A letter written at Batavia on 18th September 1772 to the King of Cochin states :- The Governor General who wishes your Highness a lasting health and all prosperity has received Your Highness presents with great joy, and he shows his greatfulness by presenting Your Highness with some

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<sup>201</sup> Letters from Cochin Rajas to Batavia, Letter VII, Records in Oriental languages Cochin State Book II, p.VI.

<sup>202</sup> Asiya Siddiqi, op.cit, p.124.

gifts.<sup>203</sup> The Dutch East India Company sued Collaga prabhu for a debt of about Rs.4000 in January 1773. Collaga Prabhu now decided to take a desperate way out. He began a correspondence with the generals of Haidar Ali and as his letters showed, his aim was to humble the king of Cochin and the 'Jewish nation' of that town. The conspiracy was detected in the nick of time. In the end Collaga prabhu, along with his eldest son Chorada prabhu, was exiled to the Cape of Good Hope. Thus the last known man of this great Konkani family, whom Moens had occasion to call 'a restless spirit', was one of the first Indians to settle in South Africa.<sup>204</sup>

The land tax was increased when Haider Ali demanded four lakh rupees as war indemnity in 1773. The Cochin Raja had to give tribute to Mysoreans. So the rate of taxation was raised in 1774 and 1776.<sup>205</sup> A letter written at Batavia on 19th September 1775 to His Highness the king of Cochin stated - The Governor General has heard with not a small displeasure of the doing of the Nabab Haidar Alikhan,

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<sup>203</sup> Letter dated 18th September 1772, D.64 Album of Dutch Records 1704-1805 A.D., serial No.13.

<sup>204</sup> Asiya Siddiqi, op.cit, p.135.

<sup>205</sup> Kerala History Association, op.cit. p.424.

however as he will have understood afterwards from the measures taken by the commandeur Moens which are the intentions of the Company, there will then be no doubt that this Ruler will not disturb the lands of the Company and of your Highness.<sup>206</sup>

Moens also details out the trade and commerce of the Dutch up to the year 1781 in his memorandum<sup>207</sup> Cochin Raja appealed to Travancore for help which was promptly given to him. Moens writes in 1781 "the king of Cochin is only the king of his territory in name and the king of Travancore, king of Cochin."<sup>208</sup> By the middle of the eighteenth century most of the buildings in fort Cochin were in need of extensive repairs.<sup>209</sup>

During the same time that the king of England went to war with Netherlands, it happened that the English with the help of the Zamorin advanced up to Cranganore, with the intention of marching further up till Cochin to besiege the same; at the same time it pleased the Noble Lord Governor

<sup>206</sup> Letter dated 19th September 1775. D.64, Album of Dutch Records 1704-1805 A.D Serial No1.17.

<sup>207</sup> Karim. C.K, op.cit. p.297.

<sup>208</sup> Ibid. p.292.

<sup>209</sup> Owen. C. Kail, op.cit., p.182.

Van Angelbeck to send his troops thither, and I too have not been at default to provide daily 3000 Kulies to fortify the town of Cochin, and I have done what was possible according to my power in order to help to promote the same.<sup>210</sup> In another letter dated March 1784 it is mentioned how the Raja helped Moens to repel an attack on Cranganur by the Zamorin with the help and connivance of the English.<sup>211</sup>

Letter dated 6th October 1784 from the Governor General to the King of Cochin stated :- Sir Moens has brought a letter from Your Highness and he also informed me about the state of the kingdom's affairs, but like the former kings of Cochin have always had confidence in the Holland Company and received from the same your Highness may do the same with good confidence and continue to expect similar favours, though other powers have caused great damage to Your Highness.<sup>212</sup> By the treaty dated 31st October 1785 arrangements were made between the senior Raja of Perumpadappu and John Gerard Van Angelbeck, member of the Dutch East India Council, and Governor of Malabar to

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<sup>210</sup> D. 29, A Dutch letter dated March 1784.

<sup>211</sup> Letters from Cochin Rajas to Batavia, Letter VIII, Records in Oriental Languages, Cochin state Book, II. p.VI.

<sup>212</sup> Letter dated 6th October 1784, D.64, Album of Dutch Records, 1704-1805 A.D, Serial No.5.

regulate the levy of taxes in respect of the nilams, parambas, and saltpans in the state held and enjoyed by the Markkars under Kanappattam, Nerpattam and panayam and the rates of customs duties on goods carried to the fort.<sup>213</sup>

The Cochin Raja on the advice of the 'Commandeur' and the Travancore Raja had agreed to become a fedatory of Haidar Ali and lived on terms of amity with him until his death. He was succeeded by his son Tipu Sultan who assumed the title of "Barcha." When Tipu was at Calicut in 1788, he wrote three letters to the Cochin Raja asking him to turn up for an interview. Not getting a reply he sent forth one through a special messenger. The Raja thereupon deceided, in consultation with the Travancore Raja and the Dutch "Commandeur", to comply with the request and proceeded to Palghat where Tipu was then camping.<sup>214</sup> He interviewed Tipu at Palghat on June 1788 and on return intimated his confederates of the results of the interview. Soon after Tipu marched against Nedumkotta and the Cranganur fort with an army of 60,000 men but finding the fortifications,

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<sup>213</sup> Grantham 64, Treaty dated 31st October 1785, Serial No1.72/13.

<sup>214</sup> Letters from Cochin Rajas to Batavia, Letter IX, Records in Oriental Languages Cochin State Book II, p.VII.

unexpectedly strong retired to Palghat. Reliable information was to hand that he would return to this attack in full strength as soon as the rains had cleared. Unless the Hon. Company sent strong reinforcements and worked in collaboration with the Rajas of Travancore and Cochin, it was likely that the Company would ere long lose all its possessions on the Malabar coast.<sup>215</sup>

In a letter to the Cochin Raja Governor-General stated: I was very sorry to know from it that Your Highness had to suffer great troubles and was placed in a very disagreeable predicament by the power of Nabab Haidar Ali Khan and his son Tipu Sultan in such a manner that for the preservation of your kingdom Your Highness was forced to pay an annual tribute to the said Nabab, as the Governor Van Angel beck has informed me from time to time of the situation of affairs in Malabar; after this the Governor was often advised to support Your Highness by good counsels and action.<sup>216</sup> In a letter to Tipu Sultan the Dutch Hon'ble Company wish that the friendly relations between yourself and the Company may continue for ever. We trust that the

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<sup>215</sup> Ibid.

<sup>216</sup> Letter dated 10th September 1789, D. 64, Album of Dutch Records 1704-1805 A.D., Serial No.19.

Raja of Cochin will himself write to you as to how the Company has always helped him. As you have now kindly promised your help to him and the Company has been the states friend for a very long time, we shall always be ready to render him any help and support.<sup>217</sup>

The next blow to Cochin's prosperity fell from an unexpected quarter. The king of Cochin, long ignored by everyone, took a decisive hand. Rama Varma Saktan Tampuran became the king of Cochin in 1790. In fact he had exercised real power ever since 1769. He had a number of admirable qualities but as Fra Barthalomeo put it he could not bear the idea of being satisfied with the income enjoyed by his predecessors. His attempt in the late sixties to impose new taxes upon the merchants had been foiled by the Dutch.<sup>218</sup> In 1772 Rama Varma agreed not to make any new demands; but shortly after ascending the throne he demanded a contribution of jaggery from the Konkannies who considered this as an innovation, and refused. Rama Varma immediately began to harass them by sending armed Nairs to their houses

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<sup>217</sup> Letter dated 19th November 1789 from the President at Cochin fort to Tipu Sultan.

<sup>218</sup> Asiya Siddiqi (ed.), op. cit, pp.137-138.

and posting soldiers in the part of the city where they lived.<sup>219</sup>

Raja Rama Varma put up a notice declaring that those merchants who sold the produce of the land to foreigners must pay customs to the king, a clear infringement of the agreement of 1772. Individual Konkani merchants were arrested. The whole community sought the permission of the Malabar Council to retire within the walls of the European town. They were sent back with an assurance that they would be fully protected.<sup>220</sup>

Rama Varma having solicited an alliance with the Honourable United English East India Company which the Honourable the Governor in council of Madras has accepted, on condition that the said Raja shall throw off all allegiance to Tipu Sultan, and became tributary to the said Honorable Company. Mr. George Powney, on behalf of the Honorable the Governor in council of Madras, has settled with the above said Raja in a treaty on 6th January 1791 consisting of nine articles.<sup>221</sup> On 12th October 1791 the

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<sup>219</sup> Ibid.

<sup>220</sup> Ibid.

<sup>221</sup> Grantham 64, Treaty dated 6th January 1791, Series No.72/14.

leading merchants of the Konkani communitiy were massacred in the warehouse of a business man called Dewarsa.<sup>222</sup>

In a summary note given by the Dutch in 1793, they narrated the ill treatment they had experienced at the hands of the Zamorin when he made a surprise attack on Chettuvai on 22nd January 1715. The Dutch recaptured the fort only in 1717.<sup>223</sup> Travancore later developed Alleppey as a new Malabar port and obliging the Dutch to exempt royal trade from Cochin's control. The Dutch port then declined so rapidly that in 1793 the VOC gave up all trading on the Malabar coast.<sup>224</sup> On 14th November 1793 the fatal letter had been written from Batavia. The Council of the Indies had decided to abandon all trade at Cochin.<sup>225</sup>

Officials of the Netherlands East India Company at Cochin declared to release and transfer, by virtue of a resolution taken at the council of Malabar on the last June 27th, in the name of the Noble Netherland's East India Company, a garden or better seven and a half gardens on the

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<sup>222</sup> Asiya Siddiqi (ed.), op. cit, pp.137-138.

<sup>223</sup> Kareem, C.K., op. cit, p.280.

<sup>224</sup> Simkin, C.G.F., op. cit, p.280.

<sup>225</sup> Quoted in Asiya Siddiqi (ed.), op. cit, p.140.

island, Bolghatty, so as they have been possessed by the said Netherlands East India Company to and in behalf of His Highness the king of Cochin Rama Varma, and this for the sum of one thousand six hundred sixty-six and two third Surat Rupees, which purchase money the Noble Lord decalred to have received into the Company's treasury. His Lordship renouncing all rights and claims, which the Noble Company has had over these garden upto the present.<sup>226</sup>

A scheme was discussed and settled at Kalikkotta on the 10th September 1794 regarding the redemption of lands from Markkars by John Van Spall, Governor of Malabar on behalf of the Hon'ble Dutch Company, and Maliyakkal Govinda Menon, Valia Sarvadhikarika, Sreelan Pattar Sarvadhikariakar and Karthavu Karika on behalf of the Perumpadappu Swaroopam.<sup>227</sup> Members of the Honourable Council of justice at Cochin confess and declare that the noble Dutch East India Company has sold His Highness the king of Cochin, Perumpadappil Rama Varma, a garden at Kastella and the small island situated near to it on the western side, and the twenty eight paras

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<sup>226</sup> Letter dated 16th December 1793, D. 65, Album of Dutch Records 1704-1805 A.D., Serial No.16.

<sup>227</sup> Grantham 64, Treaty dated 10th September 1794, Series No. 12/15.

of paddy field lying there, so as it has been possessed by the above mentioned Netherland East India Company, and this for the sum of nine thousand Rupees, which sum has been received into the Company's cash.<sup>228</sup>

By the treaty of 19th October 1795, the garrison of Cochin shall be prisoners of war, and the fort shall be delivered upto His Britannic majesty, tomorrow at 12'0 clock noon, at which time the western and Mattancherry gates shall be delivered upto such detachments as major Petrie may order to take possession of them.<sup>229</sup>

New economic ideas began to circulate which suggested that commercial growth was not necessarily dependent on political control, a theory which was borne out by the great increase of trade between Britain and her former American Colonies after they had won their independence.<sup>230</sup> The Dutch popularised farming of certain products in Kerala. They particularly encouraged the cultivation of indigo. The sample of indigo grown in Kerala was sent to Batavia for

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<sup>228</sup> Letter dated 9th June 1795, D.65, Album of Dutch Records 1704-1805, A.D., Serial No.17.

<sup>229</sup> Grantham 64, Treaty dated 19th October 1795.

<sup>230</sup> Pameela Nightingale, op. cit., p.6.

examination.<sup>231</sup> The Dutch did much to improve cultivation and to introduce new products. Both coconut and rice the Company itself cultivated extensively. In the small scattered proportions of the company there were no less than 49,000 fruit-bearing coconut trees. In fact Vaypin was so closely planted that according to Moens its military value became greatly diminished. They introduced better methods of coconut cultivation and improved seeds.<sup>232</sup>

Following their example the entire coast took to coconut cultivation, especially because both coir and coconut oil were in great demand. Rice cultivation also derived much encouragement from the Dutch. But much of the rice that was consumed in Kerala was imported from Canara.<sup>233</sup> The great sales of Asian goods took place in Amsterdam which thus became the major centre of the re-export business.<sup>234</sup>

The Dutch establishment in Kerala was governed by the Commandeur and council of Cochin. In the beginning there were five main outstations, viz., Quilon, Kayamklam,

<sup>231</sup> Koshy, M.O., op. cit, p.211.

<sup>232</sup> Panikkar, K.M., op. cit, p.310.

<sup>233</sup> Ibid.

<sup>234</sup> Kristof Glamman, Dutch Asiatic Trade 1620-1740, p.14.

Purakkad, Cannanore and Cranganore. Tennapattanam was a residency. They were under captains but their military force was reduced to minimum. The council of the commandeur consisted of members of his political department and the chief military officer on the coast. The number varied but up to 1741 it was generally 9. The chief administrator was the second in command was in special charge of the commercial affairs of the Company.<sup>235</sup>

During the Dutch period for the convenience of administration the country was divided into 'pravarthis' chief officials were the following, Sarvadhikaryakar, Karyakar, Menonmar, Kizhikar, mutalpidi, Niyogakkar etc. The right to remove the officers was vested in the Raja and the Company jointly.<sup>236</sup> Each Dutch Governor left a memorial for his successor which detailed the history of his administration likewise a diary was kept in which all important and many unimportant events were registered. There were also the "letter received book" and the "letter despatched book". The "secret resolutions record" the translation book of all letters from the neighbouring Raja,

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<sup>235</sup> Panikkar, K.M., op. cit, p.295.

<sup>236</sup> Kerala History Association, op. cit, p.423.

the judicial and orphanage records, the Trade books and many others.<sup>237</sup>

In short as a result of the Dutch policy Cochin lost its small principalities south of Cochin, and a part of Cochin which was annexed by Travancore. But Cochin attained its present dimensions and continued to exist at all because it was under the protection of the Dutch. A lot of changes occurred in the economy of Cochin in the Dutch period. The raising of the Portuguese blockade and the freedom of commerce permitted by the Dutch led to a revival of the country's trade. Ships from different countries came to Kerala ports and the competition of European nations became an incentive to commerce. The commercial policy of the Dutch differed from that of the Portuguese in many respects. The advantage which the Portuguese had in being the sole European naval power on the Indian waters was denied to the Dutch from the very beginning because the English and the French were established on the coast.

The place of Arab traders and merchants were taken by the Canarese or Konkani brokers, agents and whole-sale merchants who had settled in and around Cochin. When the

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<sup>237</sup> Francis Day, op. cit, p.121.

Portuguese left the Dutch retained their services and assumed special and independent jurisdiction over them since they were not natives of Kerala. Thus we can see the impact of the developments of relations between European countries viz., Portugal, Netherlands, France and Britain in their colonies also.

# DECLINE OF DUTCH INFLUENCE

Thomas Kutty Kariampally “Cochin - dutch relations in XVIII century ” Thesis.  
Department of History , University of Calicut, 1997

## CHAPTER IV DECLINE OF DUTCH INFLUENCE

The basic reason for the decline of the Dutch world trading system in the 1720's and 1730's was the wave of the new style of industrial mercantalism swept practically the entire continent from around 1720.<sup>1</sup> Joannes Hertenberg in his memoir written in 1723 paid no attention to trade, writing at the same time from Cochin, that very observent priest, Canter Visscher, noted the decline in general prosperity. The Portuguese, he said used to leave trade entirely free, subjected to the payment of 10 percent of their king. The effect of the Dutch monopoly of all trade, said Visscher, had been adverse for the local trading communities. It was no less unhappy for the Company itself. Local income could never catch up with local expenditure. The fact came to be generally recognised that Malabar was a financial burden.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Jonathan Israel, Dutch primacy in world Trade, p.383 quoted in Stephen Frederic Dale, Indian merchants and Eurasian Trade-1600-1750, p.132.

<sup>2</sup> Ashin Das Gupta, Malabar in Asian Trade 1740-1800, p.74.

During 1720's and 1730's the capacity of English owned ships touching at Cochin increased from fifteen ships, totalling about 3,000 tons to twenty nine ships, totalling 7,500-9000 tons.<sup>3</sup> The merchants of the Dutch Company were given the liberty to "trade anywhere on English territory."<sup>4</sup> Dutch at Cochin passed orders to all the captains of their vessels "to keep themselves ready for action."<sup>5</sup> The Dutch power in Kerala began to decline with the signing of the treaty of Mavelikkara in 1753. During the period between 1754 to 1795, we can see the rising power of Travancore, invasions of Haidar Ali and Tipu Sultan and the enmity of the English who fought against the Dutch in Europe in the French Revolutionary wars. Besides this the conflict between the French and the English to establish authority in Kerala also led to the gradual decline of Dutch power in Kerala. The Cochin Raja sought help and made several agreements with the Raja of Travancore against his traditional enemy-the Zamorin. This reveals the fact that

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<sup>3</sup> Niels Steensgaard, 'The Indian Ocean Network and the emerging World Economy 1500-1750 in Satish Chandra (ed.), The Indian Ocean, Explorations in History, Commerce and Politics, p.147.

<sup>4</sup> Dutch letter from Cochin dated 29th September 1747.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid, dated 13th November 1747.

the Cochin Raja lost Confidence in the Dutch during the second half of the eighteenth century.

Haidar Ali was planning to come to Kerala in 1754. But this was prevented by the diplomatic step of the Raja of Travancore. In 1754 there was an organised insurrection by the inhabitants of the northern districts of Ambalapuzha, Changanassery, Kottayam and Ettumannor. They were instigated by the the Zamorin and the deposed Rajas of Tekkumkur and Vadakkumkur. Ramayyen advanced to the north to suppress the rebellions, but his attempts did not fully succeed. He requested the Maharaja to go over to these places personally to bring the situation under control. The rebellion subsided on the arrival of the Maharaja. But Martanda Varma took precautionary measures to root out the trouble and sought the help of Haidar Ali of Mysore. Haidar promptly replied that he would send a strong army from Dindigal. But the mere rumour that Haidar was coming to the help of the Travancore Maharaja was sufficient to induce the people to give up their rebellion. The Maharaja, finding that Haidar's help was not necessary, later wrote to him withdrawing his request. The Maharaja was wise in not availing himself of Haidar's promised help. That would have

provided a handle for Haidar to carry out his ambitions design in Malabar. The Maharaja's reply declining his promised help was not pleasing to Haidar Ali. Haidar understood the drift of this reply and thus the first seed of enmity between Travancore and Mysore was sown.<sup>6</sup>

The Dutch were always apprehensive about the political designs of Marthanda Varma. The letter from the Amsterdam council to Batavia dated 13th October 1755, stated "when we reflect on the ambitious designs of this prince and his behaviour from time to time even with regard to the Company, we are more and more strengthened in our belief that not much reliance can be placed upon the Travancore Raja. For this reason we once more recommend to our administrators always to follow carefully the enterprises of the prince, to be on their guard at every turn of events."<sup>7</sup> At this time the Zamorin began a series of attacks on the Dutch territories in Cochin. The Zamorin made a determined bid to regain Chettuvai and Pappinivattam and he started his campaigns in 1755. The Calicut forces attacked Pappinivattam and brought the Velos Nambyar and Palanceri Nayar under the Zamorin's

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<sup>6</sup> Alexander P.C, The Dutch in Malabar, pp.61-62.

<sup>7</sup> Letter dated 13th October 1755 from the Amsterdam Council to Batavia.

sway. The Enamakal fort was also captured from the Dutch. Paravur, Trichur and Mulurkara were also brought under the Zamorins control. The Zamorin had within a short period of nine months practically conquered the mainor portion of Cochin territory. The Dutch efforts to make him withdraw from Chettuvai did not succeed. In the meantime Cranganore also came under the sway of the Zamorin. The power of Calicut was now at its zenith and Dutch prestige at its lowest ebb.<sup>8</sup>

The Dutch authorities expressed their fears about the rise of Martanda Varma in a letter dated 4th October 1756. "With reference to the king of Travancore whose progress we can not be hold with indifferent eyes, we are constantly in fear that if the said king should conquer the king of Cochin, Birkancur and Thekkumkur, he would became a dangerous neighbour to the Company; for this reason it would be so prosperous that the one party could be kept in check by the other, and the king of Travancore thwarted in the execution of his ambitious designs of which he has already given diverse indications and which therefore require every attention."<sup>9</sup> The Dutch earnestly wished that Travancore had

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<sup>8</sup> Sreedhara Menon. A, A Survey of Kerala History, p.215.

<sup>9</sup> Letter dated 4th October 1756.

not become so exceedingly large and Cochin so small so that the latter might balance the former. Martanda Varma had convinced the Dutch that they could no longer play the convenient game of adjusting the balance of power in Malabar to their advantage.<sup>10</sup>

In 1756-57 the Zamorin invaded the Palghat Raja's dominions and annexed a portion of his territory. The raja of palghat in this extremity applied to Haidar Ali, then Faujdar of Dindigal for assistance, and the latter responded by sending a large force under his brother-in-law, Makhdum Ali. But the Zamorin brought him off by undertaking to restore his conquests in Palghat and to pay an indemnity of twelve lakhs of rupees. He did not however pay the indemnity. Then Haider enforce his claim by invading Malabar.<sup>11</sup> At the same time the English were entering into treaties with the native Kings. Later the active interference of English in Cochin became one of the causes for the decline of the Dutch in Cochin.

On 21st April 1757 a treaty of friendship was signed between the English and the Kolattiri. According to this

<sup>10</sup> Alexander. P.C, op.cit. pp.65-66.

<sup>11</sup> Achuta Menon, Cochin State Manual, p.121.

treaty the English undertook to help the Kolattiri in the event of an external invasion as well as internal struggles.<sup>12</sup> Meanwhile Martanda Varma of Travancore had increased the tempo of his aggressive policy against his neighbours, but the panicky appeal of the Cochin Raja for Dutch help had evoked a curt refusal from Commandeur Gollennesse, on the ground that Cochin had deserted him in the hour of need. This had provoked the Raja to address a letter to Batavia accusing their Wordships of having "sacrificed us, old friend and ally besides other Malabar kings, to a mighty prince, and also repudiated all treaties."<sup>13</sup> Martanda Varma died in 1758. He was succeeded by his nephew, Rama Varma.

During 1758-1795 the Zamorin entered the scene with added vigour and he was determined to recapture Chettuvai and pappinivattam and was planning for an attack on Travancore. The Dutch were not in a position to meet the challenge of the Zamorin. He also conquered Cranganore and the power of Calicut was now at its zenith and the Dutch

<sup>12</sup> William Logan, A Collection of Treaties, Engagements and other papers of importance, pt. I LXX.

<sup>13</sup> Letters from Cochin Rajas to Batavia, Letter No.V, pp.IV-V, Records in Oriental Languages Cochin State Book II.

prestige was at its lowest ebb<sup>14</sup>. The main provisions of the treaty between Travancore and Cochin were that Travancore was to come to the help of Cochin to expel the Zamorin and to recapture the conquered territories from Cochin by the latter. For this help the Cochin Raja would have to hand over the places like Paravur, and Alangad.<sup>15</sup>

Soon the Mysore storm broke over the whole of North Kerala. It produced further complications for the Dutch. During the period between the treaty of Mavelikkara and the invasion of Haider the political power of the Dutch practically ceased all over Malabar.<sup>16</sup> The Dutch were unable to preserve their hold over Mapranam, Chettuvai, Alangad and Paravur when Haider Ali reached here. The Palghat Raja had invited Haidar to Malabar to assist him to withstand the successive onslaughts of the Zamorin from the north, who had already conquered Natuvattam. Haidar assisted the Palghat Raja and defeated the Zamorin. The Zamorin promised to hand over the conquered territories to the Palghat Raja and to pay 12 lakhs of ruppees to Haidar to meet the expenses of the expedition.

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<sup>14</sup> Sreedhara Menon. A, op.cit, p.254.

<sup>15</sup> Putheshath Raman Menon (ed.), Saktan Tampuran, (Mal), p.305.

<sup>16</sup> Velayudhan. P.S, (ed.), History on the March, p.206.

Matters stood thus till the Cochin Raja's death which took place in Mattanceri in August 1760. His successor Virakerala Varma readily listened to the proposal for a closer alliance with Travancore which repeatedly made in the previous reign and found no success. Komi Accan the prime minister proceeded to Trivandrum to discuss the terms of a fresh treaty with that state.<sup>17</sup> The discussion was a prolonged one, and it was only by the end of 1761 that the proposals made by the Accan were finally accepted. In this treaty, the terms of the previous one were re-affirmed, and it was further agreed that Travancore should assist Cochin in recovering her possessions as far as Pukkaita in the north and Cittur in the east, and also certain villages in Valluvanad, and that Cochin should cede to Travancore, Paravur and Alangad, and make over half the income of the reconquered territory for defraying the expenses of the army, as long as the campaign lasted. It was also provided that should Travancore succeed in taking from the Zamorin any territories beyond those wrested from Cochin, they should belong exclusively to Travancore.<sup>18</sup> So it was clear

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<sup>17</sup> Achuta Menon, op.cit, p.116.

<sup>18</sup> Record No.18, Treaty between Travancore and Cochin dated 12th Dhanu 937 M.E.

from the terms that, the policy of Travancore was to bring the whole of Malabar under the king of Travancore. The Dutch authorities in Cochin tried every means to prevent this treaty being concluded because they thought that it would be injurious to their interest.

In pursuance of this treaty Travancore and Cochin jointly attacked the Zamorin. Travancore despatched a strong force under the command of Dalava Marthanda pillai and General D'Lannoy towards the end of January 1762, and was joined by the Cochin army at Ernakulam. Early in March the combined army marched in two divisions to attack the Zamorin's forces stationed in Paravur and Alangad, but the latter abandoned their paggers in these districts without striking a blow and retreated to Cranganore and Mapranam. The division under Martanda Pillai fell upon the Zamorin's men in Mapranam and pursued them to Trichur, where they were attacked in the front by the Travancoreans and in the rear by a body of men from Kavalapara and Perattuvithi, the best fighters in Cochin at the time. The Calicut force suffered heavily in the fight at Trichur, and fled precipitately to their fortified stations in Kunnankulam and Celakara. In the meantime, the division under D' Lannoy dislodged the

Zamorin's men from Cranganur and pursued them beyond the Chettuvai river, and marching to Trichur by way of Enamakal, found the place already in the occupation of Martanda Pillai. The combined army then advanced to Celakara and after a severe engagement, drove the Zamorins men beyond the northern frontier of Cochin. From Chelakara they marched to Kunnankulam whereupon the Calicut forces stationed there retreated to Ponnani. D'Lannoy now proposed to carry the war into the enemy's territory, but the Zamorin becoming alarmed for the safety of his country sued for peace. The resistance offered by the Zamorin's forces was unexpectedly slight and the whole campaign lasted only eight months including the interruptions due to the monsoon.<sup>19</sup>

K.P. Padmanabha Menon states that in 1762 the Travancore troops under the command of D'Lannoy formed into three divisions attacked the Zamorin's possessions at Cranganore, Paravur and Varappula simultaneously the Zamorin's forces were driven back from Cochin and the Cochin Raja was re-instated in his original possessions. The Dalawa even contemplated an attack of Calicut, the Zamorin's capital. But the Zamorin sued for peace and ~~Maharaja~~

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<sup>19</sup> Achuta Menon, C., op. cit, p.117.

Maharaja ordered his minister to return.<sup>20</sup> All the conditions of the treaty between the two states were satisfactorily fulfilled by the respective parties in the course of another year, except that the Zamorin still remained in possession of Perumpadappu and other Cochin villages in Vanneri and the Travancore army withdrew from Cochin early in 1764. The Raja of Cochin was so pleased with the conduct and services of Martanda Pillai that he bestowed upon him the village of Puttancira, which with rare patriotism the great minister made over to his country. A treaty of peace was concluded with the Zamorin, by which he agreed to pay a war indemnity to Travancore and to desist from hostilities against Cochin in future.<sup>21</sup> A treaty was concluded in 1765 between Travancore and Calicut in which the Zamorin bound himself not to molest Cochin any more.<sup>22</sup>

D'Lannoy served under Martanda Varma and his successor Rama Varma for over thirtysix years and rendered efficient service in the aggressive wars of his masters. He even employed his son Johannes D'Lannoy, a mere stripling of nineteen, as commander of a battalion who received a fatal

<sup>20</sup> Padmanabha Menon, K.P., History of Kerala, Vol. I, p.508.

<sup>21</sup> Achuta Menon, op. cit, p.117.

<sup>22</sup> Padmanabha Menon, K.P., op. cit, Vol. I, p.508.

wound in a skirmish at Kalakkad and died in 1765.<sup>23</sup> The presence of the Portuguese, the Dutch and the French on the western coast competing for the rich commercial commodities of the area, the unsettled political conditions of the Malabar powers and the relatively small size of the Company's settlements on that coast, all made the Bombay Government more anxious for Haidar's friendship than the Madras Government. However, the policy of the Madras Government was neither one of hostility, nor of cordiality but of disinterestedness in Haidar's affairs. Affairs stood at this stage when new factors brought about the first Mysore war, 1765-1767.<sup>24</sup>

### Haidar Ali's Invasion

At the time of Mysorean invasion there was no central authority in Kerala, and the local rulers were engaged in internal dissensions. Palghat region witnessed the earliest intervention of Mysore in Kerala. Haidar Ali started his career as a soldier. But by dint of his military skill and strategy he quickly rose in the army and became the right

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<sup>23</sup> Nancinad P. Ramachandran, 'The Dutch Expedition against Kulacal', Journal of Kerala Studies, Vol. V, March, 1978.

<sup>24</sup> Sheik Ali, B., British Relations with Haider Ali 1760-1782, p.40.

hand man of Nanjaraj one of the two brothers who controlled the fortunes of Mysore state. Soon he withdrew Nanjaraj and became the sole ruler of the country. Haidar wished to bring under his control the ever quarelling principalities of Canara and Malabar. After subduing the Bidnur kingdom in Canara he turned his attention to Malabar in 1765.

In 1766 Haidar Ali invaded Malabar with 12,000 men. The immediate occasion for his coming was either a plea for help from the Ali Raja of Cannanore or it was his need to establish a safe route to the friendly French port of Mahe. It is clear that he was happy to associate with the Mappilas and the latter in turn received him with a great and hearty welcome, about 8,000 Mappilas joining his armed force as irregulars.<sup>25</sup> The conquest of Malabar was an important achievement of Haidar "as it gave him a long coast and made him a sea power".<sup>26</sup> When Haidar Ali took Calicut in 1766 the representatives of the Dutch Company met him and demanded that Raja of Cochin should be left undisturbed. But Haidar insisted on payment of tribute by the Cochin Raja as a token

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<sup>25</sup> Roland E. Miller, Mappila Muslims of Kerala, p.87.

<sup>26</sup> Sheik Ali, B., op. cit, p.48.

of his allegiance to him. This was the beginning of Cochin becoming tributary to Mysore.

When complications arose between the Dutch and Haidar Ali, Cranganur became a place of great moment. Haidar wished to possess the fort and the territory around, so that he might have an open way for his contemplated invasion of the kingdom of Travancore. Having subdued Malabar, he proceeded southwards and opened negotiations with the Dutch to allow him to pass through their possessions to Travancore. The Dutch found their position on the coast very weak, and proposed to destroy their forts at Chettuvai, Cranganore and Quilon, rather than see them pass into Haidar's hands. In 1767 the Governor of Cochin, C. Breekpot, received strict orders from Batavia to destroy these forts, but he refrained from doing so in the presence of the Mysoreans.<sup>27</sup>

There was no serious disturbances in Malabar till the outbreak of the First Anglo-Mysore War, when under the instigation of the English some of the vanquished chieftains served them with their retinues.<sup>28</sup> But the two Collectors of

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<sup>27</sup> Padmanabha Menon, K.P., op. cit, Vol. I, p.320.

<sup>28</sup> Kareem, C.K., Kerala under Haidar Ali and Tipu Sultan, p.48.

British Malabar whose Gazetteers and manuals supply immense information, tell a different tale of the disturbances that followed the First Anglo-Mysore war. William Logan writes: "A force despatched for invading Travancore had been defeated and this reverse seems to have been signal for another general rising in Malabar."<sup>29</sup> Innes observes, "the defeat of a force sent by Haidar Ali, to bring the Travancore Raja to reason, led to another general outbreak in 1768."<sup>30</sup>

Madanna informed the chiefs that Haidar was going to give up Malabar if only the Chiefs re-imbursed the expenses he had incurred. The Malabar Chiefs paid the price willingly, the purchase as Wilks puts it, "of a dream of independence". Peixote says that from the Zamorin Haidar received 1200,000 rupees and his kingdom was delivered upon the 8th March 1769.<sup>31</sup>

The British historians described the war between the English and Mysore as the first Anglo-Mysore war (1767-69). The war came to an end on 3rd April 1769 by the Victory of

<sup>29</sup> William Logan, Malabar Manual, p.414.

<sup>30</sup> Innes, C.A., Malabar Gazetteer, Vol. I, p.63.

<sup>31</sup> Narendra Krishna Sinha, Haider Ali, pp.154-155.

Haider.<sup>32</sup> By the treaty the Company's trading privileges were confirmed. All the hostilities between the two parties were to be stopped.

In 1769, C.L. Senff became the Dutch Governor of Cochin. In the same year the Dutch left the place 'Patinettarayalam' to Cochin. In his period the conflict between Travancore and the Dutch was stopped by the timely interference of Cochin Raja. So the Governor felt some kind of enmity to the Raja. But the Cochin Raja faced the challenge by requesting the help of Travancore Raja against the Dutch. Skirmishes between the Dutch and Cochin took place at Cochin. While this fight was going on, Travancore Raja sent military forces to the support of Cochin. But by the timely interference of the officers of Dutch government of Batavia, a great assault was avoided.<sup>33</sup>

In 1770 the factors were once more reinstated in full possession of the district of Randutara. And in the following year the Dutch, following their policy of reducing the number of their fortified places, sold Fort St. Angelo at

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<sup>32</sup> William Logan, A Collection of Treaties, Engagements and Other Papers of Importance, CXLIV, pp.121-122.

<sup>33</sup> Document relating to the transfer of Patinettarayalam by the Dutch to the Cochin.

Cannanore to Ali Raja, and about this time or little earlier the equipments of their forts at Chettuvai and Cranganore were materially reduced. Cochin fort too was in a ruinous state and Governor Moens set to work to repair it.<sup>34</sup>

Adrian Moens, a member of the council of the Indies who had been appointed Governor of Cochin in 1771 realised that Dutch prestige and influence in Kerala was on the verge of extinction. They had either to leave Malabar or stand up to Haidar Ali. With the forces at his disposal he was unable to do. Moreover he could expect no assistance from Travancore who had now allied himself with the English at Madras. Moens collected what forces he could and fortified the Hook of Ayakotta. His defence of Ayakotta and their fortress at Cranganore held out long enough to prevent Sirdar Khan reaching Cochin. When a rebellion broke out in Calicut, it forced the Mysore forces to withdraw. Moens now opened negotiations with Haidar Ali but before a settlement could be reached war broke out with the English which prevented the former from taking any further action in Malabar.<sup>35</sup>

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<sup>34</sup> William Logan, Malabar, p.473.

<sup>35</sup> Owen C. Kail, The Dutch in India, pp.189-190.

While the Dutch were thus still further reducing their hold on the country, the English factors were busy, but in another way, in strengthening their position. On 12th March 1772 the factors began to levy a regular land revenue assessment. Gardens lands were taxed at "25 percent of the produce", rice lands belonging to the Honourable Company paid 40 percent of the gross produce, and the factors were at a loss to know what to impose on other lands of that description.<sup>36</sup>

Towards the close of December 1773 a force was despatched under Sayyed Sahib by way of the Tamarasseri pass and another under Srinivasa Rao by way of Coimbatore and Palghat. The Malabar Chieftains were as unprepared as ever for this invasion and they had no alternative for them but fight.<sup>37</sup> In 1773 Haidar Ali strengthened his suzerainty over Cochin. But through Cochin's small territory ran part of the historic Travancore Lines, constructed by the Flemish soldier of fortune, Eustache d' Lannoy, between 1761 and 1776. They had been originally designed to keep the Zamorin of Calicut out of Travancore, but latterly were regarded as

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<sup>36</sup> William, Logan, Malabar, p.473.

<sup>37</sup> Ibrahim Kunju, A.P., Mysore-Kerala Relations in the Eighteenth Century, pp.12-13.

-serving the same valuable function vis-a-vis, Haidar and Tipu. About forty miles in length, the Lines started, on the island of Vypin and then ran eastward into the top of the Anamalai Hills. They consisted of a rampart with sixteen foot ditch and a strong bamboo hedge in front of it. Though opinions about their effectiveness varied they gave some defence to the northern borders of Travancore.<sup>38</sup>

Throughout his relation with Mysore the Cochin Raja was intriguing with the Raja of Travancore and the Dutch against Mysore. A number of letters written by him to the Supreme Council of Batavia requesting for military help to get him relieved from the vassalage of Mysore.<sup>39</sup> A letter dated 18th September 1773 to which the Governor General of East Indies replied on 13th November 1774 makes it clear that the Cochin Raja was conspiring against Mysore even from the early stage of his relation with that state.<sup>40</sup>

Rama Varma died in September 1775 a year before Cochin became tributary to Haidar and was succeeded by his brother

<sup>38</sup> Denys Forrest, Tiger of Mysore - the Life and Death of Tipu Sultan, pp.122-123.

<sup>39</sup> Kareem, C.K., op. cit, p.72.

<sup>40</sup> Letter from Dutch Governor General, to the Raja of Cochin, dated 13th November 1774.

Vira Kerala Varma. The new king succeeded to a heritage of extra ordinary trouble and difficulty, but he had neither the energy nor the decision of character required to deal with it successfully.<sup>41</sup> Apart from the importance of the Chief the study of Haider Ali's relation with the Raja of Cochin would indicate the fundamental basis of his policy towards the rulers and princes of Kerala.<sup>42</sup>

The only instance of a quarrel between the Cochin Raja and Haider Ali occurred in 1776. This happened when the Raja of Cochin supported the Dutch in a dispute over certain lands around the Chettuvai fort and also when he let the tribute fall into default.<sup>43</sup> Consequent upon this, Sardar Khan marched against him and reached Trichur.<sup>44</sup> This insenasate act of the Cochin Raja forced the Mysoreans to make a show of arms against him. But the case was soon amicably settled.<sup>45</sup>

The relations between Haidar and the Dutch had been rather strained since 1776 as the Dutch at Cochin did not

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<sup>41</sup> Achuta Menon, C., op. cit, p.159.

<sup>42</sup> Kareem, C.K., op. cit, p.70.

<sup>43</sup> L. VIII, Dis. No.166.

<sup>44</sup> Francis Buchanon, A Journey from Madras through the countries of Mysore Canara and Malabar, Vol. II, p.361.

<sup>45</sup> LXXI, S.I, No.175.

comply with his demand to pass through their territories into Travancore. The matter was referred by the Dutch at Cochin to the Council at Batavia, and the reply of the latter concerning the demand of Haidar reached the former in the beginning of 1777. The Dutch Governor of Cochin sent this reply to Haidar's camp.<sup>46</sup> Chettuvai was captured, the Dutch garrison there being allowed to retire to Cochin. Sirdar Khan, the Mysorean general however went back on his word and took them prisoners.<sup>47</sup> Since 1777, Cochin had to station a detachment of Nayers; 1,000 strong at Calicut for the uncongenial task of assisting the Mysoreans to put down the disturbances caused by the Zamorin's Nayar's, the cost of the detachment being allowed to be deducted from the tribute.<sup>48</sup>

In 1778 Tipu Sultan proposed an alliance with the Dutch. He also proposed an alliance with Travancore, which the latter rejected on the ground that he was debarred from doing so without the concurrence of the English. He then called upon Travancore to surrender the refugees who had

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<sup>46</sup> Kalikinkar Datta, The Dutch in Bengal and Bihar 1740-1825, p.74.

<sup>47</sup> Owen C. Kail, op. cit, p.189.

<sup>48</sup> Achuta Menon, C., op. cit, p.124.

fled from the north and central Kerala and sought refuge in Travancore. This also the ruler of Travancore refused to do. Tipu Sultan then prepared to invade Travancore. The English informed the Mysorean that an invasion of Travancore would be considered a declaration of war against them.<sup>49</sup> In 1778 the fort at Cochin was strengthened by the Dutch Commandant with seven bastions and ditches with a view to making an attempt for the recovery of the lost territory. But the Dutch could effect nothing.<sup>50</sup>

In November 1778, the Dutch proposed to the Madras government the formation of an alliance against Haidar, whose march had subjected "the territory belonging to the Dutch adjacent to Cochin". The Madras government did not immediately agree to the Dutch proposal and decided to wait till more favourable terms were offered to them. But in view of the extremities of the then situation in the South, the Governor-General proposed, in the course of a few months, a treaty of alliance among the English, the Dutch and the Nawab of the carnatic.<sup>51</sup>

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<sup>49</sup> Owen C. Kail, op. cit, p.190.

<sup>50</sup> Kalikinkar Datta, op. cit, p.74.

<sup>51</sup> Ibid, p.75.

The minister of Cochin Komi Accan died in the year 1779.<sup>52</sup> He was a statesman and always tried to restore the power of the King.<sup>53</sup> For over thirty years he worked and fought for his country, and in the active part he took in divesting the Chiefs of their power he showed his rare patriotism in a conspicuous manner. That he was a remarkable man is shown by the fact, among others, that Nawab Haidar Ali and Governor Moens, differing in everything else, agreed in their estimate of his high qualities.<sup>54</sup>

At the same time the conflicts between the English and the French for achieving political sovereignty were going on. In 1779 the English attacked the French settlement of Mahe through which Haidar had been received his supply of arms and ammunition. The Chiefs of Kottayam and Kadathanad blockaded it by land. Haidar and the Kolathiri, sent 250 sepoy and 1500 Nayers to help of the besieged. Nevertheless on 20th March 1770, Mahe capitulated.<sup>55</sup> James Mill states that the English were supported by all the Nayar soldiers, and the French and Haider were helped by the

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<sup>52</sup> Achuta Menon, C., op. cit, p.125.

<sup>53</sup> Galletti, A., The Dutch in Malabar, p.121.

<sup>54</sup> Achuta Menon, C., op.cit, p.125.

<sup>55</sup> Krishna Ayyar, K.V., A History of Kerala, p.257.

Kolathunad prince alone. In spite of the vigorous attempt of the French they were defeated by the English and Mahe was captured in 1779.<sup>56</sup>

Open hostilities broke out between the English and Haidar Ali in 1780.<sup>57</sup> Due to the American War of Independence, the French and the English started hostilities in India also. Haidar decided to help the French against the English because the English had broken the treaty provisions by evading to help the Mysore ruler against the Marathas. In this war the English conquered Pondicherry from the French and turned towards Mahe. This awakened Haidar against the English because it was through Mahe that he secured arms and ammunition. Further Mahe was within his dominions.<sup>58</sup>

When Sirdar Khan proceeded to besiege Tellicherry in 1780, he wanted Cochin forces to go to his help, but when Cochin objected to it on the ground that, as she had no quarrel with the English, she was reluctant to act offensively against them, Haidar allowed the objection.

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<sup>56</sup> James Mill, History of British India, Vol. III to VI (H.H.Wilson ed.), p.144.

<sup>57</sup> Keith Feiling. Warren Hastings, p.230.

<sup>58</sup> Dodwell, H.H., The Cambridge History of India, Vol. VI, p.282.

Haidar often wrote friendly letters to the Raja and sent him costly presents every year, the first of his presents being a pair of magnificent chargers and an ivory inlaid palanquin. With all this, her subjection to the usurper of Mysore was felt an irksome burden by Cochin, mainly perhaps from a feeling of insecurity engendered by reports of Haidar's acts of relentless cruelty elsewhere.<sup>59</sup> In November 1781 Haidar wrote to the Dutch authorities for the supply of 24 pounders but they were ready to send two 18 pounders with 100 balls but on account of the proximity of the English warships, Haidar must carry them.<sup>60</sup> Haidar Ali died on 7th December 1782 and Tipu was in full March back to secure his father's throne.<sup>61</sup> It can be summed up that the relation of the Raja of Cochin with Haidar Ali was conditioned by fear alone though Haidar Ali was apparently eager to show him good will.<sup>62</sup>

### Tipu Sultan's Invasion

Tipu Sultan who succeeded his father Haidar Ali in 1782

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<sup>59</sup> Achuta Menon. C, op.cit, p.124.

<sup>60</sup> Narendra Krishna Sinha, op.cit, p.161.

<sup>61</sup> William Logan, op.cit, p.495.

<sup>62</sup> Kareem. C.K, op.cit, p.73.

and continued the campaign of Malabar<sup>63</sup> In the same year, when the second Anglo-Mysore War was going on, the Cochin Raja allowed the Raja of Travancore to extend the Travancore Lines up to Pllipport and dig trenches around it, ignoring the protest of the Dutch.<sup>64</sup> It was with his connivance again that the Nedumcottah was strengthened and extended to Cranganore fort by the Raja of Travancore through the territory of Cochin.<sup>65</sup> The relation of Tipu Sultan with the Cochin Kingdom deserves special treatment as it reveals the policy of Mysore rulers towards their dependents. All relevent records of this period undoubtedly show that Tipu was quite friendly to the Raja of Cochin throughout his relation.<sup>66</sup>

When there were disputes between the Zamorin and the Raja of Cochin on Chettuvai, Kawalappara and Kodungallur the English took a decision in favour of the Raja of Cochin. This was done on the basis of the letters sent to him by Tipu Sultan Regarding Paravur and Alannad. Tipu wrote to the Commissioners who referred this to him, that they

<sup>63</sup> Owen C. Kail, op.cit, p.190.

<sup>64</sup> L. LXII, S.I.No.31, p.2760.

<sup>65</sup> Ibid. No.32, p.2762.

<sup>66</sup> Kareem. C.K, op.cit, p.83.

belonged to Cochin. He said these districts did not formerly belong to the Travancore Raja, nor at the commencement of the war, but he had possessed them sometime back by force.<sup>67</sup>

Cochin Raja assured Tipu in a letter that he had expelled from his territory Thacha Gaunda and Somandra Gaunda with their families who escaped to his Kingdom after committing criminal deeds in the Mysore territory.<sup>68</sup> An official procedure adopted by Tipu Sultan in dismissing a petition addressed to him by some merchants residing in the Cochin territory also unfold to us an interesting chapter of Mysorean diplomatic history. When some merchants from Cochin complained to Tipu Sultan in a petition about heavy taxes levied from them by the officers of the Raja, Tipu dismissed the petition with the remark that since the matter represented was under the jurisdiction of the Raja, the petition was forwarded for his information.<sup>69</sup> From this it is clear that Tipu never tried to interfere unnecessarily in the internal affairs of Cochin. Thus it is clear that

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<sup>67</sup> Fgn(MISC) S.No.55, p.153, para 154.

<sup>68</sup> L.XV, 1st series, No.234, p.1098.

<sup>69</sup> Ibid. No.238, p.1128.

cochin had no reason to complain against the treatment of Mysore Government.

When Tipu Sultan arrived in Malabar he required the Cochin Raja to meet him at Palghat.<sup>70</sup> The Raja was received most politely and on his departure loaded with costly presents.<sup>71</sup> In the course of their conversation, Tipu who was intimately acquainted with the affairs of Travancore hinted at his intention of conquering the Kingdom.<sup>72</sup> To avert such an eventuality he required the Raja to use his good offices with Travancore for a judicious compromise.<sup>73</sup>

The relation between Cochin and Mysore was one of friendship till Tipu Sultan wanted the Raja to help him in his designs against Travancore. His intrigues to shake off his vassalage are evident in his hostile activities and unfriendly letters written to the Dutch Governors and the Raja of Travancore.<sup>74</sup> Immediately after returning from Palghat, the whole discussions were communicated to the Dutch and the Raja of Travancore. The Raja received a

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<sup>70</sup> L.LXXI, S.L. No.176.

<sup>71</sup> Putezhath Raman Menon, (ed.), op.cit, p.139.

<sup>72</sup> L. LXXI, S.I. NO.175.

<sup>73</sup> Ibid.

<sup>74</sup> Kareem. C.K, op.cit, p.85.

letter from the Governor General, Dutch East Indies, in which he wrote, ".... in order to avert Palaghatcherry to meet Tipu Sultan, and your Highness has detected at the conference ..... the dangerous undertakings, which the same has in his mind against Travancore of which the Lord Governor too has informed me."<sup>75</sup> The Cochin Raja contained his request to the Dutch for military help to prevent any possible attack from Tipu Sultan.<sup>76</sup>

The Dutch began to lose their naval superiority and had to surrender most of their carrying trade to the English. The Dutch East India Company fell into financial distress in 1783, In 1783, the chief of Chettuvai was peaceably established in his dominion by the Dutch when they retook the place from Tipu.<sup>77</sup> But in the following years orders arrived from Batavia to return this territory to Tipu.<sup>78</sup> Meanwhile Tipu got his terms accepted by the English by the treaty of Mangalore which ended the second Mysore War. The English gave up their claims on Malabar and recognised the rulers of Malabar to be the friends and allies of Tipu.

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<sup>75</sup> L.LXXI, 1st series No.176. The Governor General of Netherland Indies to the Raja of Cochin, 10th September 1789.

<sup>76</sup> L. LXI/A, series 1.

<sup>77</sup> Motilal Bhargave. History of Modern India, p.39.

<sup>78</sup> Francis Day, Cochin, its Past and present, pp.149-155.

Meanwhile the failure of the British to subdue their rebellious American colonies and the ignominy which Treaty of Versailles (1783) meant to a proud nation could not fail to produce deep heart searching about the value of over seas territorial possessions.<sup>79</sup> In a letter written on 6th October 1784 to the King of Cochin read as follows; "Sir Moens has brought a letter from Your Highness and he also informed me about that the state of the Kingdoms affairs, but like the former kings of Cochin have always had confidence in the Holland Company and received from the same many favours, Your Highness may do the same with good confidence and continue to expect similar favours, though other powers have caused great damage to Your Highness."<sup>80</sup>

In the same year a fresh treaty was concluded by the Mysore chief with the Hon'ble East India Company at Mangalore, Travancore was cited as the ally of the company similarly the Beebee of Cannanore and the Rajas and Zamindars of the Malabar coast" were cited as friends and allies of Tipu Sultan. Tipu endeavoured to prevail on the

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<sup>79</sup> Pamela Nightingale, Trade and Empire in Western India 1784-1806.

<sup>80</sup> Letter dated 6th October 1784, D.64, Album of Dutch records 1704-1805 A.D.

Zamorin of Calicut to invade Travancore.<sup>81</sup> But the Zamorin rejected it as stated earlier. Then Tipu turned towards the Raja of Cochin for help against the Raja of Travancore.<sup>82</sup> The Cochin was instigated to reclaim the Cochin territory on which a part of the Travancore Lines were constructed. These places were given to the Raja of Travancore as a reward when he assisted the Raja of Cochin against the Zamorin of Calicut. Now the Raja of Travancore applied for assistance to the Government of Madras against the invasion of Tipu.<sup>83</sup> As the absence of any rules to regulate the dues payable to Cochin Raja the Christian subjects of the Dutch Company residing in His Highness' territory has been a fruitful source of dispute in the past. The Senior Rajah of Perumpadappu and Van Angelbeck in consultation with each other hereby lay down some rules for the levy and collection of dues with the object of avoiding all room for oppression and complaints.<sup>84</sup>

Tipu arrived in Calicut via the Tamarasseri pass in April 1786. The first step he took was to dismiss both

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<sup>81</sup> Edward Thornton, British Empire in India, p.189.

<sup>82</sup> Ibid.

<sup>83</sup> Ibid.

<sup>84</sup> Grantham, 64, Treaty dated 31st October 1785, Serial No.72/13.

Arshad Ali Beg and Mir Ibrahim from their posts and appoint in their places Hussan Ali Khan as military Governor and Sherkhan as Diwan. Meanwhile in 1787 a second embassy headed by muhammad Darveshkan was despatched direct to Paris, where the delegates were received most graciously by Louis XVI and hospitably entertained. Louis was himself however, circumscribed by domestic difficulties, and the calaclysm which shortly afterwards overwhelmed his country was rapidly approaching. He therefore contended himself with profuse promises of future support, and the ambassadors, returned to India discredited to meet the wrath of their master.<sup>85</sup> In April 1788 Tipu came to Malabar with the intention of further consolidating his power. He constructed a new headquarters town at Ferok for the province of Malabar, offices and barracks were transferred to Farukhabad.

A Nittu dated 23rd Kanni 962 M.E. to Sankaranarayan Champakaraman shows making certain arrangements for paying off the amount due to the Dutch Company for the purchase of lands belonging to them north of Kayamkulam.<sup>86</sup> For a hundred

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<sup>85</sup> Bowring. L.B, Haidar Ali and Tipu Sultan, pp.137-138.

<sup>86</sup> Record No.30, Nittu dated 23rd Kanni 962. M.E.

and fifty years the Dutch had been in possession of two forts, Cranganore and Ayacottah, which they took from the Portuguese, who had been masters of them for nearly the same length of time. deemed by Tipu's father of considerable importance, which induced him, previous to his rupture with the English, to seize and garrison it, under pretence that it belonged to his tributary, the Raja of Cochin. However the Dutch contrived to recover it, and of their conduct on this occasion the enraged Nawab made great complaint.

In 1789 Tipu Sultan laid claim to the forts, which claim he was determined to support by arms. In June he advanced towards Cranganore with a formidable force and the avowed intention of recovering it. The Dutch alarmed at these preparations, immediately sold both the forts of Cranganore and Ayacottah to the Raja of Travancore, an ally of the British Government.<sup>87</sup> "... As long as these two places are in the possession of the company, the Nawab will surely attack them and seize them, instead of coming against us. Without Tipu taking measures against us, our ally, the English Company will not move in the matter if these two

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<sup>87</sup> Dhar. G.N, Authentic Memoirs of Tipu Sultan, pp.25-26.

places are in our possession he (Tipu) will not come against them; if he comes (against them) the English will join forces against him on the ground that he has broken the treaty with them. It is on that account that we are writing to the Admiral."<sup>88</sup>

The merchants of Cochin were financially far more involved in the transactions concerning the transfer of Cranganore and Ayacottah from the Dutch to Travancore.<sup>89</sup>

In a letter to the Raja of Cochin, Governor General of Netherland India said, I have learned the unpleasant misfortunes, which Cochin Raja had to undergo and the unfavourable condition wherein Cochin Raja has been put by the predominating power of the Nawab Haidar Ali Khan and his son Tipu Sultan even to such a degree that Cochin Raja was compelled, for the safety of Cochin to appease the named Nawab by an annual tribute.<sup>90</sup> Tipu left his monsoon quarters at Coimbatore in October 1789 and entered Cochin territory on the way, he made the famous Vadakkunathan temple his army

<sup>88</sup> Travancore Raja's Letters to the Dutch Commander dated 25th July 1789, Appendix. C, in Ibrahim Kunju A.P, op.cit, p.82.

<sup>89</sup> Van Lohuizen, The Dutch East India Company and Mysore 1672-1792.

<sup>90</sup> Letter dated 10th September 1789, D.64, Album of Dutch Records 1704-1805 A.D, serial No.20.

quarters. The Travancore Lines was breached and Tipu advanced as far as Alwaye on the bank of the Periyar river. The bursting of monsoon stopped Tipu's immediate progress and also he had to hasten back to Mysore because of the declaration of war by the British. Tipu was not destined to return to Kerala.<sup>91</sup>

Cochin Raja asked help from the Dutch against Tipu. In the year 1789 he communicated the helpless state of Cochin before the power of Tipu Sultan and pleaded "if necessary help is not forthcoming, Tipu Sultan will commit atrocities in all Malabar."<sup>92</sup> Cochin Raja continued in his letter to repeat the demand that "sufficient number of warships, arms and ammunitions, should be despatched to him."<sup>93</sup> The reply received by the Raja for these letters was not encouraging. The Governor-General of Dutch East India regretted in his letter, his inability to send the necessary force.<sup>94</sup> Thus it was clear to the Cochin Raja neither the supreme council at Batavia, nor their Governor in Malabar coast could help him in case he would break up his ties with Tipu Sultan.

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<sup>91</sup> Rama Varma Appan Tampuran (ed.), Cochin, p.23.

<sup>92</sup> L. LXXI. 1st series No.175.

<sup>93</sup> Ibid. No.175.

<sup>94</sup> Ibid, No.176.

As Tipu's threat to southern Malabar grew in mid 1789 Dharma Raja of Travancore made an offer to the Dutch Commander Van Angelbeck, to buy these useful outposts of Cranganore and Ayacottah. The Dutch very short of money, had already been thinking about a sale and the deal was clinched at a price of 3,00,000 Surat silver rupees, to be paid in three instalments.<sup>95</sup> Tipu was enraged. He contended that the Dutch only had Cranganore and Ayacottah on lease from his feudatory, the Raja of Cochin, though somewhat undermined that argument by putting in a bid himself. The Dutch contention of course was that they captured both places direct from the Portuguese in 1662 and, as Van Angelbeck wrote to the Governor of Madras on 9th January 1790, they had never paid a single cash in rent or tribute for them to the Zamorin or Tipu's Amildars at Calicut or to the King of Cochin or to any other person. The Dutch also made the useful point that if Tipu had been seriously worried over the Lines he would surely have worked a reference to them in the Treaty of Mangalore.<sup>96</sup>

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<sup>95</sup> Record No. 20, Ola No.1, Sale deed dated 19th karkadakam 964 M.E. by which the Dutch Company sold Cranganore fort, Munampam and Ayacottah.

<sup>96</sup> Danys Forrest, op.cit, p.123.

It was during this time that thousands of families fled from Malabar and other adjoining territories due to fear of possible attack from the Mysorean army and these fugitives sought asylum in Travancore. They were readily given shelter and protection by the Raja with the connivance of the English who deliberately wanted to pick up trouble with the Sultan. Many of these absconders were from among the warrior classes and were a perpetual danger to the Sultan and his kingdom. They could anytime hoist the standard of rebellion against him under the instigation of the East India Company. The Sultan was alleged to have attacked the Travancore Lines on the ground that the Raja of Travancore had given asylum to the aforesaid absconders from Malabar. Lord Cornwallis used this as an excuse and treated this action of Tipu as an insult to the British power and an unwarranted aggression against one of its allies. This led to the Third Anglo-Mysore war which broke out in May, 1790.<sup>97</sup>

Therefore, side by side with his correspondence with the Dutch, Cochin Raja began overtures with the English through the intermediary of the Raja of Travancore. The

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<sup>97</sup> Kabir Kausar, Secret Correspondence of Tipu Sultan, p.9.

Dutch Governor himself knew the development of this new relation of the Raja with the English when he had received from other sources the copy of a letter sent by the Cochin Raja to the English Governor of Madras. On receipt of this information, Van Angelbeck, the Dutch Governor wrote to the Raja on 24th June 1790 intimating him that he had received a letter from the Governor of Madras in which he wrote that the Raja was willing to break away with Tipu and enter into an alliance with the English.<sup>98</sup> Subsequently the Cochin Raja helped the English in the Third Anglo-Mysore War.

In 1790 Tipu decided, once and for ever, to destroy that "contemptible wall" and brought down his crack troops from Seringapatam and Bangalore. He attacked Cranganore which he captured. Once through the Travancore Lines, he pressed in to Travancore. But while camped on the northern bank of Periyar, waiting for the floods to subside where his army had no shelter, no dry place to parade, and all their ammunition and accountments were damaged by the rain, and their provisions were washed away by the impetuous current of the flooded river he received the news of a large army of

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<sup>98</sup> L. LXII, series 1, No.166, p.2895.

English troops, the Nizam's forces and those of the Marathas under Lord Cornwallis, advancing <sup>of</sup> of Seringapatam his capital.<sup>99</sup>

By the Article 6 of the Treaty of 6th January 1791 it was agreed that Rajah Rama Varmah shall become tributary to the Hon'ble English East India Company, only for those districts and places, which were in the possession of Tipu Sultan, and for which the said Raja paid him tribute, and with which the Hon'ble Dutch Company have no concern.<sup>100</sup> By the Article 8 of the same teaty it was agreed that the Hon'ble English East India Company relying on constancy and firmness of Raja Rama Varma's alliance and vassalage and his continuing faithful to these engagements, it was agreed that no further demands shall be made upon him, and he shall receive that protection which the Hon'ble English East India Company always gave to their faithful tributaries and allies.<sup>101</sup>

Tipu sued for peace and on 18th March 1792, the Treaty of Seringapatam was signed. Thus the Third Anglo-Mysore war

<sup>99</sup> Owen C. Kail, op.cit. p.191.

<sup>100</sup> Crantham 64, Treaty dated 6th January 1791, serial No.72/14.

<sup>101</sup> Ibid.

was brought to an end. As Dodwell said, the war between Tipu and the Raja of Travancore ended in a war between Tipu and the English.<sup>102</sup> By the Treaty of Seringapatam, Tipu was forced to yield to the Allies one half of the dominions which were in his possession at the commencement of the war and to pay three crores and thirty lakhs of rupees. Soon after the departure of Tipu Sultan from Cochin, the Raja openly threw off Cochins allegiance to him and joined the English.<sup>103</sup> By the Treaty of Seringapatam Tipu Sultan lost all his possessions in Malabar. The Cochin Raja was restored and taken under the protection of the English Company and his age old agreements with the Dutch were respected. But as Van Angelbeck pointed out in his Memoir to the Governor General if the English were allowed to thrust their little finger into these regions, they would not rest till they had thrust in their whole arm. It was only a question of time before the Dutch were thrust out of Malabar.<sup>104</sup>

In spite of these developments, Tipu Sultan did not become the enemy of Cochin Raja. Even after his Malabar

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<sup>102</sup> Dodwell H.H, op.cit, p.366.

<sup>103</sup> Achuta Menon. C, op.cit, p.168.

<sup>104</sup> Owen C. Kail, op.cit, pp.191-192.

possessions were ceded to the English after the Treaty of Seringapatam, Tipu Sultan continued to display his countenance and sympathy towards the Raja of Cochin. When dispute arose between the Zamorin and the Raja of Cochin over boundary questions and both parties poured possible evidence in favour of their respective claims, the Malabar Commissioners referred the matter to Tipu Sultan to assess his opinion. Causing surprise to all parties concerned Tipu Sultan asked why do you make Cochin suffer the loss.<sup>105</sup> Tipu was very sad on the loss of his Malabar territory and the behaviour of Cochin Raja who joined with the English to defeat him. Throughout his relation, Tipu maintained the dignity and politeness.<sup>106</sup>

The reports sent by Tipu Sultan and his friendly disposition towards the Raja made the English suspect and even to allege that the Raja was secretly carrying on correspondence with Tipu and the French with a view of ousting the English from Malabar.<sup>107</sup> Not a single untoward incident can be made by the ruler of Mysore in his relations

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<sup>105</sup> Fgn (Misc) S. No. 55, p. 383, para 515.

<sup>106</sup> Kareem. C.K, op.cit. p. 88.

<sup>107</sup> Fgn (Misc) S. No. 55, p. 95.

with the state of Cochin. But the Raja wanted to be free from the vassalage at the earliest opportunity as any other ruler would desire. Therefore his relation was always shady and full of intrigue.<sup>108</sup>

The dispossessed princes, indeed refused to submit, and attacked the Mysoreans whenever opportunity offered. But when at last in 1792, the Mysoreans were compelled to leave Malabar, the English who had assisted the princes, stepped into their place.<sup>109</sup> Many writers, have assumed that the disturbances that took place in Malabar during Mysore rule 1766-92 word popular movements against alien rule. But the fact was that these disturbances were few and far between and seldom widespread. One important cause of these disturbances was the machinations of the English factors at Tellicherry.<sup>110</sup>

Meanwhile the pressure for change in the traditional pattern of East India trade were greatly accelerated by the American war and the domestic troubles in the Netherlands and France immediately preceding the French Revolution. The

<sup>108</sup> Kareem. C.K, op.cit, pp.88-89.

<sup>109</sup> Krishna Ayyar. K.V, op.cit, p.208.

<sup>110</sup> Ibrahim Kunju A.P, op.cit, p.56.

quarrels between the pro-Franc factions of Dutch "patriota" and the supporters of the prince of Orange assured the liquidation of the Dutch East India Company. The European wars beginning in 1792-93 and destined to last with only minor interruptions until 1815 made Dutch power in Asia wholly subservient to the British.<sup>111</sup>

When Van Spall became the commander of Cochin in 1793 all that remained to the Dutch was fort Quilon and a few hectares of land in Quilon. Most of their forts had been sold, their trade had collapsed, Travancore had not honoured its commitments in supplying pepper, their ware houses were empty and in ruin and the harbour once filled with ships of the Dutch company's 22 employees in the fort, including the commander, a Calvinist minister and nine apprentices. At the same time the VOC was on the verge of bankruptcy, at home and the united provinces were in turmoil as the resentment against the hereditary stadtholder steadily grew worse.<sup>112</sup> This quickened the decline of the Dutch.

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<sup>111</sup> Holden Furber, Rival Empires of Trade in the orient 1600-1800, p.183.

<sup>112</sup> Owen C. Kail, op.cit, p.192.

According to the Treaty of 10th September 1794, His Highness Raja of Cochin does not want to expel the Topasses and Marakars from His Highness' territory. His Highness' idea was that the lands purchased or held on simple deeds by the Topasses and Marakakars might continue to be so held and enjoyed by them as per the terms of the treaty. His Highness had therefore decided to treat the lands purchased by the Topasses and Marakkars and enjoyed by them as lands in which the Hon'ble Dutch Company was interested.<sup>113</sup>

Tipu's alliance with the French and their victories in Europe alarmed Rama Varma and the English. So they concluded a treaty in 1795 by which the English agreed to defend Travancore in return for an annual payment, both in peace and war at the expenses of three battalions of sepoys together with a Company of lascars. As the French had by now subjected Holland during the Napoleonic wars. The Dutch forts at Cochin and Kollam, (Called Tangacherry") surrendered to the English.<sup>114</sup>

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<sup>113</sup> Grantham, 64, Treaty dated 10th September 1794, Serial No.12/15.

<sup>114</sup> Krishna Ayyar. K.V, op,cit, p.263.

Meanwhile early in 1795 Holland was conquered by Napoleon and the Stadtholder took refuge in England. To prevent the Dutch possessions falling to the French, he required them to allow British troops to take possession of all the forts in the Dutch colonies. Major Petrie accordingly appeared before Cochin with a considerable force, but the Dutch Governor Van Spall refused to surrender the fort. He had recently laid in provisions for the purpose of withstanding a siege, and made a desperate appeal to the Raja of Cochin for assistance in consideration of their long-standing friendship and the services mutually rendered during a period of 130 years. The Raja not only refused to comply with his request, but did everything in his power to impede the Dutch. Major Petrie, on finding the Dutch not disposed to give up the place, laid regular siege to the fort, when after a very feeble resistance the Dutch surrendered the place and became prisoners of war on 19th October.<sup>115</sup>

Article 8 of the treaty dated 19th October 1795 stated that all the inhabitants, who choose to remain and take the

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<sup>115</sup> Achuta Menon. C, op.cit, p.137.

oath of allegiance to His Britanic Majesty, shall be treated in every respect as British subjects. And Article 18 of the the same Treaty declared that all inhabitants - who shall remain in Cochin, shall be subject to the British Laws.<sup>116</sup>

What smashed Dutch ambitions into Smittheeens was the phenomenal growth of Travancore in so short a time and the increasing competition of the English and the French Companies.<sup>117</sup> Pressed by Martanda Varma in the South and by the Zamorin and the English in the north, the position of the Dutch steadily deteriorated until the final withdrawal from Cannanore in 1790 and Cochin in 1795.<sup>118</sup>

The failure of the Dutch policy should be a warning to other European nations, not to permit either their civil or military officers to enter into commercial speculations.<sup>119</sup> Thus during the period between the Treaty of Mavelikkara and the attack of Haider Ali, the Dutch power in Kerala became only nominal. The Dutch Company by the famous IX Article of the Treaty of Mavelikkara receded from all engagements with the princes whom the Travancore Raja choose to attack and

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<sup>116</sup> Grantham 64, Treaty dated 19th October 1795.

<sup>117</sup> Ibrahim Kunju. A.P, Rise of Travancore, p.6.

<sup>118</sup> Rolland E. Miller, op.cit, p.80.

<sup>119</sup> Francis Day, op.cit, p.175.

agreed to interfere on no account in their disputes not in any respect to raise any objections to the enterprise of the King. Dutch could not oppose the sale of Alangad and Paravur to the Raja of Travancore. Likewise when Haidar attacked Kolattunad, the Dutch were not able to protect Kolattunad. The Raja of Cochin finding no other way joined the side of Travancore. The rise of the port of Allepey meant the decline of Cochin. By the close of the eighteenth century the Dutch concentrated their attention only on trade with a view to make profits out of it. Political affairs were far beyond their control. Following this, conflict between English and Tipu going on for a short period. At last by the treaty of 1792 Tipu ceded all his political power to the English. Cochin became under the control of the British with this ended the Dutch influence in Cochin.

# SOCIETY AND CULTURE

Thomas Kutty Kariampally “Cochin - dutch relations in XVIII century ” Thesis.  
Department of History , University of Calicut, 1997

## CHAPTER V

### SOCIETY AND CULTURE

In Kerala the Dutch met with a peculiar form of the caste system. Most of the Raja's subjects, with whom they were concerned belonged to the Nayars, a caste of warriors. These people lived in communities consisting of their mother, aunts, brothers, sisters and nephews and nieces on the mother's side. Succession to the throne was in the female line.<sup>1</sup> The Royal House of Cochin also counted several branches or tavazhis. In principle the oldest man of all tavazhis taken together was to be the ruler but in practice one of the tavazhis usurped all power, with the support of the Portuguese. A tavazhi could adopt princes. Adoption was thus a means in the struggle for power. The VOC regularly interfered in these adoptions and closely followed struggle for power.<sup>2</sup>

The Cochin Royal family consisted of five branches: (1) Mutta Tavali (2) Elaya Tavali (3) Murinnur Tavali (4) Caliyur Tavali and (5) Pallivirutti Tavali. But in course

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<sup>1</sup> Jacob's H.K.S., De Nederlander's in Kerala 1663-1701, pp.435-436.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

of time the Ilaya Tavali secured prominence with the support of the Portuguese. Later disputes arose regarding succession. The Mutta Tavali prince, who was senior in age than the Ilaya Tavali prince, approached the Dutch for help to get their claim accepted.<sup>3</sup>

After the capture of Cochin by the Dutch in January 1663 Bishop Joseph Sebastiani, the Portuguese clergyman, as well as the Italian Carmelites were ordered by the Dutch to quit this coast.<sup>4</sup> An exception was made in the case of the Franciscans. Five of them were allowed to stay in their friary and the church. The Dutch did this because in Cochin the Catholics were many and they were needed for the maintenance of the town. A wholesale exodus on their part would have caused serious inconvenience to the Dutch. The Franciscans who were allowed to stay had to accept a number of irritating restrictions. They were to hold their church services behind closed doors and processions and ringing of bells were forbidden. There was to be no proselytization on

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<sup>3</sup> Sankaran Kutty Nair, T.P., A Tragic Decade in Kerala History, pp.33-34.

<sup>4</sup> Padmanabha Menon, K.P., History of Kerala, Vol. II, p.485.

their part and also no unauthorized correspondence with outsiders, especially with the authorities in Goa.<sup>5</sup>

The Dutch being Calvinists were the inveterate foes of Roman Catholicism and, therefore, proceeded to destroy all the vestiges of that religion within the fort. Most of the churches, convents and other religious institutions were demolished. The beautiful Santa Cruz Cathedral was converted into a store house and its tower used as a flag staff for the port. The priceless library of the majestic Jesuit college also went up in flames; only the Franciscan church was retained for the religious services of the Dutch.<sup>6</sup> The rest of the Catholics retired to Goa.<sup>7</sup>

The Dutch having defeated the Portuguese took possession of Cochin and refused the Carmelite missionaries permission of exercising their work in Malabar. However after a short lapse of time, the Dutch Government being aware that the presence of the Carmelites in Malabar could produce no harm cancelled the above said prohibition and

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<sup>5</sup> Joseph Thekkedath, History of Christianity in India, Vol. II, p.119.

<sup>6</sup> Chalakal, G.P., 'Cochin during the Dutch period 1663-1795', Second International Symposium on Maritime Studies 16-20, December 1991.

<sup>7</sup> Joseph Thekkedath, op. cit., p.120.

allowed them to dwell in this country as before.<sup>8</sup> The St. Thomas Christians of Kerala received much help and support from the Dutch East India Company. At the time of the Dutch conquest of Cochin there was confusion in the churches of Kerala.<sup>9</sup> When the Dutch were established in Cochin the position of the various Christian sects, appears to have been as follows. The Syrians had at last partially thrown off their allegiance to Rome which had been obtained from them through conviction, bribery, fraud or violence. The Jesuits had removed their ancient Bishopric of Angamale into the Cranganore fort where the head of their sect was Archbishop. But their violence had rendered them abhorred, and their frauds had caused them to be detested; they were now proscribed but obtained an asylum in the Cochin state.<sup>10</sup>

The bare-footed Carmelites had been sent by the propaganda to attempt to stem the rising storm to alter the hatred against priests, to affection for them. And by kindness and conciliation to the wants of all, to endeavour to refasten the links of that Romish chair, that the violence of the Jesuits, had snapped as under. The

<sup>8</sup> William Logan, Malabar, Vol. I, p.247.

<sup>9</sup> Koshy, M.O., The Dutch Power in Kerala, p.213.

<sup>10</sup> Francis Day, Cochin, its past and present, p.239.

Carmelites were commencing to be favourably received when the Dutch arrived; at this period a Carmelite Bishop and in fact, a fugitive from his own new Christians, and lived mostly in the more hilly portions of the country.<sup>11</sup> The crisis arose when the St. Thomas Christians broke off from the yoke of the Roman see. The new power saved the St. Thomas Christians from persecution. Thus the St. Thomas Christians were indebted to the Dutch East India Company because they were shielded from the persecution of the Roman Catholic church.<sup>12</sup>

The Dutch assisted the St. Thomas Christians in the management of their ecclesiastical affairs. They were permitted by the Dutch to renew contacts with Eastern patriarchates who were willing to travel in Dutch ships.<sup>13</sup> In 1698 a political arrangement of some importance to the Syrians was the concord at between the Dutch and the Portuguese, which permitted twelve priests and one Bishop to live in Malabar.<sup>14</sup> The Dutch had jurisdiction over all Christians living in Cochin and half-caste Christians living

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<sup>11</sup> Ibid.

<sup>12</sup> Koshy, M.O., op. cit, p.213.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid.

<sup>14</sup> Leslie Brown, The Indian Christians of St. Thomas, p.113.

near the fort. It is recorded that many Hindus crossed into Dutch Territory and were Baptized in order to enjoy Dutch protection and escape certain duties and taxes for which they would otherwise be liable to the Raja.<sup>15</sup>

The Dutch found in Malabar a numerous Christian community composed of different sections. The Syrian Christians in Dutch times, were spread over the whole land and had large villages for their dwelling. At any rate, it is clear that they possessed a recognised status in Malabar when the Portuguese first came, and their social position was not worse at the time of the arrival of the Dutch.<sup>16</sup> Van Rhee de held that the St. Thomas Christians were not of Malabar descent, but a people plucked from the lands of the Carnatic or Coromandel coast and pushed westwards by their Hindu fellow-country men who bitterly resented their conversion to the Christian faith. Van Rhee de and Moens are definitely of the view that the Malabar Christians are the descendants of refugees from the Coramandel coast. Van Rhee de called the non-Syrian Roman catholics as Inland

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<sup>15</sup> Ibid., p.169.

<sup>16</sup> Poonen, T.I., Rise of the Dutch Power in Malabar 1603-1678, p.260.

Christians and as new Christians by Moens.<sup>17</sup> Syrians possessed a major part in social set-up of Cochin.

In 1751 the Dutch brought in their vessels three Bishops and several other ecclesiastics to Travancore at the request of Mar Thomas V, the then ruling Puthencoor metran. The three Bishops were Mar Basilius, Mar Gregarious and Mar Johannes when they arrived at Basra in Persia the officers of the Dutch East India Company offered them a warm welcome. In due course they were sent to Cochin in one of the Company's ships. On their arrival at Cochin, the Dutch Commander provided them lodges and all other facilities.<sup>18</sup> Mar Thoma V, informed of the arrival of these Bishops, described them as heretics and refused to accept them. Provoked at this the commander of Cochin wanted to force the metran to come to Cochin. On hearing the news Mar Thoma fled. The matter was later settled in the presence of Marthanda Varma in 1753 at Mavelikara. Thus the St. Thomas Christians were able to maintain continuous contacts with

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<sup>17</sup> Ibid., pp.261-270.

<sup>18</sup> Koshy, M.O., op. cit, pp.213-214.

the Patriarch of Antioch only with the arrival of the Dutch in Kerala.<sup>19</sup>

In theory, the Christians of Malabar should have been outside the Hindu caste system, but in practice they were not like their Muslim counterparts, they had been incorporated within the traditional varna or caste hierarchy. They were Christians in faith, but Indians in all else including the conception of their community as a caste.<sup>20</sup> Dutch power was sufficiently established on political grounds they refused permission to the Carmelite missionaries to exercise their nominal functions in Malabar in the same way as they refused permission to the Portuguese priests sometimes before.<sup>21</sup>

The Roman Catholics were numerically superior to the Syrian Christians. Visscher notes that in his time they had two Bishops and one Archbishop. The Archbishop had his residence at "Ambekkatt, a few leagues from Cochin". The Dutch commander used to show great respect to the Bishops

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<sup>19</sup> Ibid., p.214.

<sup>20</sup> Mark Vink, 'The Dutch East India company and the pepper trade between Kerala and Tamilnadu 1663-1795. A Geo-Historical Analysis', Second International Symposium on Maritime Studies, pp.16-20 (December 1991).

<sup>21</sup> Amor, C.M., Church History of Travancore, p.242.

saluting them with a display of firing of cannon, showing to them the same honour as to kings.<sup>22</sup> Visscher's letters contain interesting details about the social conditions of Malabar in the eighteenth century. Moens makes some observations about the history of the Syrian Christians in Malabar. The Syrian Christians in the Dutch period were always engaged in party quarrels and fights.

The Romish church was divided into two: the Portuguese and the Italian Carmelites, who although hostile to one another; both compelled their communicants, to follow the liturgies of Rome, and obey her doctrines without service. There was likewise a subdivision of them, the Romo-Syrians, who differed in some minor points, from the Roman Catholics being permitted to employ the Syriac language in their churches and continue some of the Syriac rites, and their priests were dressed in white, instead of always in black.<sup>23</sup> The little island of Verapoly seven miles north east of Cochin, is the headquarters of the Roman Catholic religion in Trvancore.<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> Alexander, P.C., The Dutch in Malabar, p.136.

<sup>23</sup> Francis Day, op. cit, pp.239-240.

<sup>24</sup> Samuel Mateer, The Land of Charity, p.1.

The Topass Christians were the descendants of Indian mothers and fathers belonging to diverse European nations. The name, says the author of the Cochin State Manual, is a corruption of the Sanskrit word Dvibhashi meaning interpreter. They acted as interpreters between Europeans and Indians. On the capture of Cochin, Van Goens offered to take such of them as were willing into his service; and many of them assented to the proposal. During Portuguese times they were the dwellers of the town of Cochin. All the retail trade and handicrafts were in their hands. They were dressed like the Portuguese and spoke common or low Portuguese.<sup>25</sup>

Though dressed in European style Topass Christians usually went barefooted and wore a white linen cap with a hat above it. They lived by all kinds of trades. There were among them carpenters, brick-layers, blacksmiths, coppersmiths, tailors and shoe-makers. They excelled in making decorations for the Roman churches on feast days, and also for wedding and other special occasions. For some of them, this was a means of livelihood. Many of them also lived by cultivation and some as soldiers. Some of them

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<sup>25</sup> Poonen, T.I., op. cit, p.272.

were the slaves of the Portuguese subsequently emancipated. Others were the children of Portuguese men and native women. They belonged rather to the indigenous than the foreign element.<sup>26</sup>

The coming of the Dutch was welcomed by the Christians of St. Thomas as the end of Portuguese control. The protection for which they had petitioned the King of Portugal through Vasco da Gama had proved to be as oppressive to freedom in spiritual things as the demands and in-justices of the local kings to security in social and economic life.<sup>27</sup> The Inland Christians were native Malabarees of all races converted to the Roman Catholic faith by their priests. They were grouped into seven parish churches placed under the Bishop of Cochin who had his Cathedral in that town. After Cochin was conquered by the Dutch, they became subjects of the Dutch East India Company.<sup>28</sup>

They lived scattered far and wide over the interior of Cochin. Some were fishermen and others soldiers called

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<sup>26</sup> Ibid., pp.272-273.

<sup>27</sup> Leslie Brown, op. cit, p.109.

<sup>28</sup> Poonen, T.I., op. cit, pp.271-272.

lascars who had done much good service to the Dutch Company. They went dressed as lascars of Malabar and practised all the common professions, because of the oppression to which they were subjected by the Hindus among whom they lived; they had requested that they should be allowed to live in the Company's islands and gardens on promise to pay yearly the pattam money. Van Rhee de was for allowing this as the lands were thus likely to be improved, and the town of Cochin would be watched against pirates, rogues and thieves by this advanceguard of armed and warlike people who could be relied on to supply all kinds of food stuffs.<sup>29</sup> They could be used immediately in the service of the Company against any Malabares. They could also be employed if the Dutch were besieged in the town by other Europeans. They were faithful, brave and willing to be treated friendly and politely. When they were in service, they received the Rix dollars and a parah of rice. Otherwise they had to maintain themselves.<sup>30</sup>

Political factors were once more to have an influence on the Christians of St. Thomas and create a changed

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<sup>29</sup> Ibid.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid., p.272.

situation. In 1795 Cochin was taken from the Dutch by the English and in 1800, a British Resident was appointed at the courts of Travancore and Cochin. He exercised a much closer control over the affairs of the states had even been attempted by Portugal or Holland, and the first two Residents, Macaulay and Munro were virtually rulers of the country.<sup>31</sup> Munro was for a time both Resident and Dewan of Travancore and thus responsible for the whole administration of that state as well as for the oversight of Cochin. The first two Residents were also men of strong Christian and Protestant convictions who while being just to the Roman Catholics were anxious to encourage the Jacobites by every means in their power.<sup>32</sup>

Unlike the Portuguese, the Dutch did not organise any missionary activities in the land. Even though they did not help the development of missionary organisations for evangelistic work they did not oppose the propagation of Christianity. They tried their best to offer all help for its spread indirectly. Therefore it may be said that they did not have to leave any mark on the religious institutions

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<sup>31</sup> Leslie Brown, op. cit, p.125.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid.

of Kerala.<sup>33</sup> Tavernier accused the Dutch of lack of missionary interest. To this Quillenburgh replies that the hindrances to the success of evangelical efforts in Malabar were many. It was not only the opposition of the Muhammadans and Roman Catholics that had to be reckoned with, but also the social customs of Malabar.<sup>34</sup> The Syrian Christians like the Nayars were mostly cultivators of the soil and their economic condition was then as now fairly prosperous.<sup>35</sup>

Like the English who performed all their public devotions in the Company's factory house where there was a room set apart on purpose in the manner of a chapel for divine worship, the Dutch also worshipped in their Company house.<sup>36</sup> In the long and chequered history of our country parts of it came under the domination of the Portuguese, the Dutch, the French and finally the whole of it under British rule. The religion of each of these successive foreign powers being Christianity and proselytising and conversion being a concomitant of foreign domination, we have been led

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<sup>33</sup> Koshy, M.O., op. cit, p.214.

<sup>34</sup> Poonen, T.I., op. cit, p.274.

<sup>35</sup> Panikkar, K.M., History of Kerala, p.318.

<sup>36</sup> Poonen, T.I., op. cit, pp.274-275.

to identify Christianity in India as an exotic western product.<sup>37</sup>

The division of the society into Brahmins, Kshatriyas, Vaisyas and Sudras elsewhere in India, cannot easily be traced in the caste divisions of Kerala. The absence of Vaisyas in the Hindu society of Kerala is conspicuous and therefore, Jews, Christians and Muslims occupy this position as they were traders and merchants of the country. In the caste hierarchy Nambudiri Brahmins come first. Next to them the Nairs. The Nambudiries or priests were Malabar Brahmins. Some had no other work but temple service. These were free of all worldly care, being continually engaged in the study of Hindu philosophy, astronomy and Natural sciences. Among them were many who allowed themselves to be employed at the palaces of princes as counsellors and ambassadors.<sup>38</sup>

The pattammars or pattars were also Brahmins but not of Malabar descent. Driven out of the Carnatic, Gingi and Tanjore by Muhammadans, these people settled down, in the south, under the jurisdiction of Travancore, Kayamkulam and

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<sup>37</sup> Pothen, S.G., The Syrian Christians of Kerala, p.4.

<sup>38</sup> Poonen, T.I., op. cit, p.252.

Tekkenkur and in the north under cochin and the Zamorin rulers within and beyond the mountains of Palghat. They were scattered throughout the whole of Malabar and were welcomed everywhere on charitable considerations as also for purposes of divine worship like members of the tribe of Levi among the Jews.<sup>39</sup> The Kshatriyas belonged to the race of Kings although all Kshatriyas were not kings and outside that race also kings were found. They were considered the noblest in birth and ranked next to Brahmins in dignity. The Rajas of Cochin, Cranganore, Bellange, Bettatte and Kolattiri were of that race besides many others. The Nayars who occupied a unique place in Malabar and were the chief military class are described at some length in the encyclopaedic memoir of Van Rhee.<sup>40</sup> According to Baldaeus 'The power of the kings of Malabar is generally esteemed by the number of Nairs under their jurisdiction, Barretto states that the Zamorin could field 1,60,000 men and the Cochin Raja 1,40,000.'<sup>41</sup>

The Nairs were in olden times the militia of the country, and held lands in military tenure, being liable to

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<sup>39</sup> Ibid., p.253.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid., p.250.

<sup>41</sup> Fuller, C.J., The Nayars Today, pp.8-9.

be called out at any time for active service. The Raja of Cochin was the head of this militia, in his own country, and under him were Namboodiri commandants.<sup>42</sup> The Nairs follow the 'Marumakkathayam system' of inheritance (matrilineal system). According to the system the sons and daughters are excluded from inhering the properties of their parents whereas the sons of sisters are the claimants to their uncle's estates. Another peculiarity is that they live in undivided families which were called Taravads. The eldest male member through the maternal line is the manager of all Taravad properties. He is called Karanavan and enjoyed absolute control over the taravad. The other members are maintained by the taravad property and succeed in order of seniority to the karavanship.

The martial spirit was kept up by their frequent wars with one another. They had also their own systems of duels and kudippaka, which was a custom by which the chieftains took revenge for any murder in the family. There were institutions known as kalaris to give training for the people in the art of fencing. The kalari was a gymnasium where practical instruction in fighting was given by an Asan

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<sup>42</sup> Francis Day, op. cit, p.316.

or experienced veteran teacher.<sup>43</sup> The Nair soldiers were directly under their Naduvazhis (local chieftains) whose services were requisitioned by the princes. "The Naduvazhi was the military chief of the district and was bound to attend the Raja on the field or march wherever he was directed with all the fighting men of his district, under the Desavazhis or heads of their respective villages. It was also his duty in times of peace to assemble the Nairs of his district every two or three years in order to exhibit in the presence of the Raja, a mock fight with the Nairs of another district".<sup>44</sup>

Canter Vischer, who was Chaplain at Cochin in the eighteenth century must have been much struck by the expenditure of the Nayar women on their dress, for he wrote "there is not one of any fortune who does own as many as twenty or thirty chests full of robes made of silver and other valuable materials for it would be a disgrace in their case to wear the same dress two or three days in succession".<sup>45</sup>

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<sup>43</sup> Alexander, P.C., op. cit, p.133.

<sup>44</sup> Ibid.

<sup>45</sup> Edgar Thurston, Castes and Tribes of Southern India, Vol. V, p.367.

The events leading to the retreat of the Zamorin from Cochin territory mark the beginning of a new epoch in the history of Kerala. The era of Nair predominance came to an end and the era of modern centralised state began.<sup>46</sup> In 1762 the military power of the Nayars was broken finally in Travancore and Cochin and within a few years it was completely wiped out in north Kerala.<sup>47</sup>

The success achieved by Marthanda Varma in crippling the power of the Nair nobility and consolidating his position in Travancore came almost as a revelation to the Raja of Cochin and his able minister Paliath Achan. It was realised that all the ills of Cochin flowed from the diffusion of power among a number of hereditary chiefs instead of its being centralised in the hand of the ruler.<sup>48</sup> In the treaty of 1761 there was a specific provision to the effect that Travancore would give all assistance to Cochin in putting down the power of the hereditary chiefs and punishing the traitorous ones in particular. Accordingly soon after the expulsion of the Zamorin, all administrative

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<sup>46</sup> Sreedhara Menon, A., Kerala District Gazetteer, Ernakulam, p.177.

<sup>47</sup> Panikkar, K.M., op. cit, p.264.

<sup>48</sup> Sreedhara Menon, A., op. cit, pp.177-178.

powers were taken away from the Nair chiefs and vested in officials appointed by the King. The worst among them were deprived of their wealth and properties and reduced to penury.<sup>49</sup>

As a result of these measures the monopoly power and territorial influence so far enjoyed by the feudal barons was broken and the Raja's power was established on a solid basis. The old Nair nobility which at one time eclipsed royal power now became a thing of the past and on its ruin there arose a new class of Nair officialdom in Cochin.<sup>50</sup> The princess had besides the Nayars, many people under arms called the Chogans.<sup>51</sup> The Chogans, also called Ezhavas, appear to have been one of the aboriginal tribes, and to have derived their designation from the Sanskrit word Savagum (servant) whilst the term 'Ezhavar' is supposed to be from Ezham (Ceylon), from where they were believed to have come. They also manufactured jaggery from toddy, distil arrack, make country vinegar, act as cultivators, and in jungly places, as collectors of wood.<sup>52</sup>

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<sup>49</sup> Grantham, No. 64.

<sup>50</sup> Sreedhara Menon, op. cit, p.178.

<sup>51</sup> Poonen, T.I., op. cit, p.251.

<sup>52</sup> Francis Day, op. cit, p.319.

These people almost generally served in the fencing schools with Nayars as masters. The Dutch employed Ezhavas as soldiers in the Company's service and helped them indirectly in their long struggle for liberation from social disabilities. But they did not champion the cause of the down-trodden people and assert the equality of the poor and lowly.<sup>53</sup> In North Malabar as far as Calicut Ezhavas are known as Thiyyas and in Cochin and Travancore, as Chovans or Ezhavas.<sup>54</sup>

In the year 1792 the year in which British rule commenced a proclamation was issued against dealing in slaves. A person offering a slave for sale was considered to be a thief. Both the dealers and the purchaser were severely dealt with. Fishermen and Mappilas conveying slaves were severely flogged and fined at the rate of ten rupees for each slave. This proclamation was directed against the prevalent practice of robbers carrying off by force the children of most useful inhabitants, the Tiyyas, who were their cultivators.<sup>55</sup> This practice was kept alive by the

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<sup>53</sup> Koshy, M.O., op. cit, p.222.

<sup>54</sup> Anantha Krishna Iyer, L.K., The Cochin Tribes and Castes, Vol.I, p.277.

<sup>55</sup> Ibid., p.94.

facility with which the slaves could be sold on the coast to the agents of the vessels, engaged in the trade, sailing from the French settlement at Mahe and the Dutch settlement at Cochin. These ships in general carried the slaves to the French islands.<sup>56</sup>

Moens observes that there were many foreign heathens in Malabar during the Dutch hegemony. They were divided into four classes, "Pandits, Canarians (Konkanies), Bantias and silver-smiths". There were about 25 Pandits in Malabar according to Moens. They were Tamils or telugu Brahmins proficient in some branch of Sanskrit learning. They were acting as priests to the other three classes.<sup>57</sup> Foreigners belonged to four different races, the Jews, Moors, Canarins and Christians. The Jews had been in the country for a long time and could be traced to the time of the Babylonish Captivity. They lived in whole streets which were like small villages. The houses were of stone; and in several places they had magnificent synagogues. They enjoyed complete freedom of worship under their Hindu kings.

The Jews settled at Cochin after their expulsion from

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<sup>56</sup> Ibid.

<sup>57</sup> Alexander, P.C., op. cit, p.139.

Cranganore by the Portuguese in the sixteenth century and formed a prosperous colony, especially during the period of Dutch supremacy. When Cochin was captured by the Dutch, the Jews came under their protection. The Jews assisted the Dutch when they were carrying on their seige of Cochin. The Jews had always been persecuted by the Portuguese and that was the main reason that induced them to side with the Dutch in their attempts to capture the fort of Cochin. The Jews in Malabar were distinguished into two classes, white and black. The White Jews claim to be the original settlers in Malabar. They were mainly foreign immigrants into Cochin from Europe, Arabia and Persia. The Black Jews were mostly natives or of a mixed Jewish native origin.

About 150 families lived in the Jewish quarters next to the palace of the King of Cochin. At Anji Kaimal (Ernakulam) they possessed a little over 100 houses and two synagogues. At Paravur there were nearly 100 houses and one synagogue; at Chennamangalam there were 50 families and one synagogue. There were 10 families with a synagogue on the island of Territur and 12 families with one synagogue at Mutom.<sup>58</sup> Most of the Jews lived by trade. The majority of

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<sup>58</sup> Ponnen, P.I., op. cit, pp.255-256.

black Jews applied themselves to agriculture and cattle-rearing as also to selling and buying victuals, especially butter and poultry. Being numerically superior to the White Jews, the Black Jews rose on more than one occasion against the former, and used such violence as necessitated the interposition of the ruler of the country for the protection of the White Jews.<sup>59</sup> When Rijkloff Van Goens laid siege to Cochin, the Jews promptly furnished victuals and other assistance to the Dutch Company in the hope of securing civil and religious liberty under the Dutch.

When the Dutch retired after their first attack on Cochin, the Portuguese sacked Jews Town on the plea that the Jews had by stratagem allowed the Dutch to slip unobserved by the Portuguese. Their copy of the Pentateuch was lost on this occasion.<sup>60</sup> The Jews then fled to the highlands and returned only after the Portuguese were finally expelled from Cochin by the Dutch who made the condition of the Jews happier.

Jews leading men were honoured with the title of mudaliar and had an official staff given to him the top of

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<sup>59</sup> Ibid.

<sup>60</sup> Padmanabha Menon, K.P., op. cit., Vol. II, p.519.

which was mounted with gold, the motto of the Dutch East India Company was engraved on it. Three years after the Dutch capture of Cochin, i.e., in 1666, the Jewish synagogue at Cochin was rebuilt (vide inscription at the White Jews synagogue, Cochin). Tourists still visit their synagogue. The community except for stray exception, seems to be declining.<sup>61</sup>

In 1685 an immigration of White Jews took place from Amsterdam, and subsequently from Palestine, Persia, Baghdad, Egypt, England, Poland, Germany especially from Frankfort, and Spain and out of the first batch, four merchants namely Moses Feriera de Silva, Issac Irgus, Isaac Moorkot, Abraham Vost of Sepharadim arrived at Cochin from Amsterdam. The Spanish and Portuguese Jews are called Sepharadim to distinguish from the Azhkanazim, the German and Polish Jews. They visited the Cochin Jews and agreed to live with them.<sup>62</sup> They wrote to Amsterdam about what they saw and heard of the Jews of Malabar, and desired to let them have all the books they required. The congregation of Amsterdam sent the books of Moses, of the Prophets, of the Laws and other books,

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<sup>61</sup> Poonen, T.I., op. cit, p.257.

<sup>62</sup> Anantha Krishna Iyer, L.K., op. cit, Vol. II, p.405.

which proved a great blessing to the Cochin congregation. Henceforth they formed a mutual alliance and frequently corresponded with each other receiving all such books as they wanted and at the same time, sending back all that was desired of them. Thus the customs of the Cochin Jews became those of Sepharadim (Spanish Jews).<sup>63</sup>

A synagague of Black Jews or rather a house used by them for that purpose, is situated in the centre street, passing from the Southern end of the parade ground, but there is nothing in it worthy of note.<sup>64</sup> Around the town of Cochin, Jews have several settlements, the largest the Jews Town, situated a little more than one mile to the south east, contains 419 of this peculiar race.<sup>65</sup> Visscher makes the following observation, about the White and Black Jews in Malabar: "The Black and White Jews inhabit the same District, the latter occupying the banks of the river. The White are much richer and more powerful than the Black who are mostly of the slave race and amount. The number of White Jews who have of late come here from Europe, Baghdad and Cairo is small but there are some also who have been settled

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<sup>63</sup> Ibid.

<sup>64</sup> Francis Day, op. cit, p.203.

<sup>65</sup> Ibid., p.336.

here for many centuries. They try as much as possible to prevent intermarriages with the Black Jews, although these sometimes take place".<sup>66</sup>

The Jews of Cochin are strictly divisible into the White or Jerusalem Jews and Black Jews, and an intermediate class Myukkasim or Brown Jews. The White and the Brown Jews are believed to have their blood unmixed, but at present, the latter as well as the Black Jews are merged physically into one community known as Black Jews.<sup>67</sup> The Black Jews are not connected with the White Jews by intermarriage, nor have they any of the Cochin or Levite families among them. They have none of the Levitical ceremonies in their synagogues. They form a separate community in Cochin. Still they have the Mosaical laws (Torah) and their customs and usages are similar to those of the White Jews with a few exceptions and difference in their prayers and songs. They were a large community at one time, but owing to inter-cine feuds with their White brethren which led to the war already referred to, they were nearly exterminated. There were also

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<sup>66</sup> Alexander, P.C., op. cit, ,p.138.

<sup>67</sup> Anantha Krishna Iyer, L.K., op. cit, Vol. II, pp.405-406.

emigrations. Since the downfall of the Dutch, who treated them well, their number became very much reduced.<sup>68</sup>

The Moors or Muhammadas were also scattered in large numbers like the Jews. Before the advent of the Portuguese, Muslims were a very prosperous community, as they enjoyed the monopoly of foreign trade with the Malabar states, but the Portuguese destroyed this monopoly and crippled their power. They however still continued to enjoy the favour of the Zamorin who depended on the Arab ships in all the schemes of aggrandizement.<sup>69</sup> It was this political influence of the Moors at Calicut which led to estrangement between the Portuguese and the Zamorin and the offer of hospitality by the ruler of Cochin to the Portuguese. Thus their influence on the fortunes of European nations in Malabar was by no means negligible.

The Mohammedan community lost its importance in the politics and trade of Kerala with the fall of the Kunjalis. There were important families here and there, but in the general affairs of the country they ceased to court till invasion of Haidar Ali. A hundred years of warfare with the

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<sup>68</sup> Ibid.

<sup>69</sup> Achuta Menon, C., The Cochin State Manual, p.293.

Portuguese had reduced them to insignificance in Kerala and when the Dutch were installed in Cochin and gained control of the Kerala trade they did not meet with any effective competition from the Mohammedan merchants.<sup>70</sup> The Dutch writers make special mention of the 'Moors' or the Mohammedans in Malabar. The Moors were the chief foes the Portuguese had to encounter in Malabar. The arrival of the Portuguese in Malabar roused the jealousy of the Mohammedans who had the monopoly of trade. The Dutch Company used to enter into an agreement with the Mohammedan chieftain every year for the supply of turmeric.<sup>71</sup> The most powerful of the Moors was the Ali Raja of Cannanore with whom the Dutch had entered into many treaties.<sup>72</sup>

The Mappilas of Cochin are mostly poor and ignorant but unlike their brethren in South Malabar, they are peace-loving and law-abiding. In religion they are very orthodox, and their piety and zeal sometimes border on fanaticism. They do not take advantage of the educational facilities afforded to them by the Darbar, and do not make any serious attempt to raise themselves socially, morally and

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<sup>70</sup> Panikkar, K.M., op. cit, p.319.

<sup>71</sup> Alexander, P.C., op. cit, p.138.

<sup>72</sup> Ibid., p.139.

intellectually. All matrimonial alliances are formed in accordance with the precepts of the Koran. Polygamy prevails among them to a larger extent than any other community in the state. Physically, they are, on the whole, a fine class of people, and are fit for any hard and enduring labour. They are much attached to those who treat them with kindness and consideration and are by far the most serviceable and most reliable in emergencies.<sup>73</sup>

The Dutch had sought the support of the Muslims in overthrowing the Portuguese power on the Kerala coast. The overthrow of the Portuguese however did not benefit the Muslims; it only replaced the new comers for the old. The Dutch did not discriminate against the Muslims on religious grounds as the Portuguese did. But their only aim was to retain monopoly of the spice trade.<sup>74</sup> The eighteenth century witnessed the rise and growth of two eminent rulers of Mysore viz., Haidar Ali and his son Tipu Sultan. Malabar was one of the territories that came under the control of these rulers, where they introduced many sided

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<sup>73</sup> Anantha Krishna Iyer, L.K., op. cit, Vol. II, pp.483-484.

<sup>74</sup> Ibrahim Kunju, A.P., Mappila Muslims of Kerala, pp.65-66.

administrative reforms for effecting changes in the traditional life of the inhabitants.<sup>75</sup>

An important class of foreigners were the Canarins who were described by Van Rhee de as having come from Canara and Goa. But Moens pointed out that they were not called after the Kingdom of Canara. Since they never had any connection with the inhabitants of Canara who were properly called Canarese and not Canarins. According to their own accounts, they came originally from a district of the name of Sastaverdes. Galletti noted that Saraswati was the name of a river in Sanskrit works and that the Canarins were the Konkani Sarasvat Brahmins and Kudumi Chettis still to be found in Cochin and modern Travancore (called also Ikkeris from the Ikkeri or Bednore kingdom).<sup>76</sup> The Konkannies in the Cochin state are nearly twice as numerous as the Namboodiri Brahmins.<sup>77</sup>

There was little difference between the Canarins and the Jews in the matter of trade, dealings and practices.

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<sup>75</sup> Janaki, M., 'Hyder Ali and Tipu Sultan in Malabar', Asghar Ali Engineer (ed.), Kerala Muslims: A Historical Perspective, p.103.

<sup>76</sup> Poonen, T.I., op. cit, pp.258-259.

<sup>77</sup> Francis Day, op. cit, pp.308-309.

Many of them applied themselves also to agriculture in which they were assisted by the low caste Kudumis who cultivated their fields and gardens for them. Some of the Canarins engaged in commerce were prominent whole-sale merchants trading with foreign nations and native traders; others were retailers supplying everything domestic except livestock. Some of them were money-changers.<sup>78</sup> The King of Cochin claimed Canarins as his subjects as they lived in his territory. The Dutch narrative of Moens clearly showed that the author of the Cochin State Manual is not absolutely correct when he says that Canarins were natives of Kanara converted to Christianity by the Portuguese.<sup>79</sup>

About the Canarins Moens makes the following observations: "They get their living chiefly by trade, for most of them are traders. But there are also many who apply themselves to agriculture. Some of the trading Canarins are prominent wholesale traders with foreign nations, others native traders, others are retailers and supply everything domestic except livestock. For this purpose they have their stalls (little shops) underneath the houses in the town

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<sup>78</sup> Poonen, T.I., op. cit, pp.258-259.

<sup>79</sup> Ibid.

which they rent from the residents. For the use of these stalls they have besides the rent to pay certain taxes annually to the poor house. They keep in stock all kinds of fruits, vegetables, flowers, betel, areca, rice, clothes and Chinese goods and articles which they have exchanged with the Macao [Portuguese town in China] traders for other goods or brought from. The Canarins or Konkannies were under the protection of the Dutch and subject to their jurisdiction.<sup>80</sup>

Rama Varma Saktan Tampuran had always been jealous of the jurisdiction exercised by the Dutch over the Konkannies and Latin Christians and on his accession to the throne he tried to set this privilege at naught, taking into confidence his alliance with the English East India Company and the growing weakness of the Dutch.<sup>81</sup> The Banyas were a trading community in Malabar, not so numerous as the Konkannies. They were also under the special jurisdiction of the Company.<sup>82</sup>

To the Dutch goes the abiding honour of having compiled the Hortus Malabaricus, the famous work on Indian Botany,

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<sup>80</sup> Alexander, P.C., op. cit, p.139.

<sup>81</sup> Sankaran Kutty Nair, T.P., op. cit, p.49.

<sup>82</sup> Alexander, P.C., op. cit, p.139.

which deals with the medicinal properties of Indian plants. The work which consists of twelve volumes, with 794 illustrations, was published from Amsterdam between 1678 and 1703. It was compiled under the patronage of the Dutch commander, Van Rheedee. Among the Kerala Scholars who helped in the compilation of this volume, the most notable were the Konkani Brahmins, Ranga Bhatta, Appu Batt and Vinayaka Bhatt and an Ezhava physician by name Itti Achutan. The work initiated by the Portuguese and Dutch scholars in the field of Kerala studies and research was continued by British scholars in later years.<sup>83</sup>

The plants were beautifully sketched by a Carmelite priest Mahews S. Joseph. He had drawn up the plants artistically with scientific accuracy. Owing to the precision of his drawings, there is no difficulty to identify these plants. A description of each plant was written in Malayalam. Emanuel Carneiro, a Resident of Cochin translated it into Portuguese. It was further translated into Latin by Herman Van Douep, the secretary to the Government, so that the Europeans may have access to the

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<sup>83</sup> Sreedhara Menon, A., Cultural Heritage of Kerala, an Introduction, p.170.

work.<sup>84</sup> Hortus Malabaricus is also famous as the first printed work in Malayalam. The efforts in this direction came from the Dutch. The book was printed in Amsterdam. The certificates of Emanuel Carneria (printed as unnumbered page 7 of Vol. I) and Itty Achutan (printed as unnumbered page 9 of Vol. I) are the first examples of Malayalam scripts in print. Besides there is a striking difference between the two certificates in Malayalam scripts.

While Emmanuel Carneiro used Aryanezhuthu, Itty Achuthan wrote in Kolezhuttu. Thus the credit for printing Malayalam first in its history goes to the Dutch East India Company.<sup>85</sup> The eighteenth century witnessed a remarkable revival in Malayalam literature. Education was fairly widespread during the 18th century. Kerala always had an efficient system of village school at which elementary education was imparted to all comers. Kerala was the home of Sanskrit scholarship in the 18th century and the kavyas, dramas and grammatical works in Sanskrit produced at that time in Kerala will bear comparison with the works produced at any time after the golden age of Sanskrit.<sup>86</sup>

<sup>84</sup> Koshy, M.O., op. cit, pp.215-216.

<sup>85</sup> Ibid.

<sup>86</sup> Panikkar. K.M., op.cit, pp.319-320.

The Rev. Philip Baldaeus, the Company's chaplain at Cochin, undertook to learn Malayalam, so that he might later on preach in that language. The Batavia Dag Register of 1665 abounds in references indicative of the religious interest of the Dutch in Malabar.<sup>87</sup> The treaties and letters exchanged between the Dutch East India Company and the rulers of Kerala throw much light upon the Malayalam prose of the time. The extracts from the Perumpadappu Svarupam Grandhavari preserve the style of the Malayalam prose of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.<sup>88</sup>

The contact of Malayalam with European languages through centuries enriched her vocabulary. Many words in Greek, Latin, Syriac, Portuguese, French and Dutch enriched Malayalam vocabulary. The Malayalam word 'kakkus' (toilet) is derived from the Dutch word 'kakhuis'.<sup>89</sup> The Dutch writings abound in reference to the various elements of the population of Malabar, their character, usages and history. The Dutch called the people of Malabar as Malabarees.<sup>90</sup> The Dutch administrators who served in Kerala had left their

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<sup>87</sup> Poonen. T.I., op.cit, p. 275.

<sup>88</sup> Koshy, M.O. op.cit, p. 214.

<sup>89</sup> Ibid.

<sup>90</sup> Poonen.T.I., op.cit, p. 248.

memoirs. The memoirs were written at the direction of the Dutch East India Company to every chief of the settlement to prepare a memorandum on the administration before his retirement from the office. The memories deals in detail with system of Dutch administration on the coast, the relations between the Company and the native rulers and a brief account of the people and the land.<sup>91</sup> They were to serve as guidance for their successors who would be having no knowledge of the country or people or the history of the settlement. The successive Commanders had left such memoirs. Among them, the memoirs of Van Rhee, Gollanesse, Moens Fredrik Cunes and Gasper de Jong deserve special mention. They were ideal examples of clear thinking, dispassionate analysis and terse expression.

The other records under the headings such as Resolutions, Letters from Batavia, Letters to batavia, Translations of letters from native princes, Diaries and manuscript records. They throw floods of light on different aspects of Kerala history. These valuable records fell into the custody of the English East India Company at

<sup>91</sup> Koshy, op.cit, p.219.

the time of the Dutch surrender of Cochin in 1795. They remained therefore sometime. Later they were sent to Calicut. In 1891 they were transferred to Madras. The Madras Records office catalogued them properly and they are available there under the headings the Dutch Records and Press List of Ancient Dutch Records from 1657 to 1825 for ready reference. Some of these records are in brittle condition and a few are illegible now. These records provide source material for the study of the economic history of India especially her overseas commerce.<sup>92</sup> They were an added source material for the political and social conditions of that time.

In the trading season of 1713-1714, the Dutch Company's factors at Cochin imported 375 books chiefly on religious subjects, including ten in French. The great East India Companies were always ready to encourage the scholarly works of their servants and subsidize their publication. Although most of the literary works done by Europeans in the East was written by Chaplains or missionaries.<sup>93</sup> The dutch took keen interest in the local traditions, people and the history of

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<sup>92</sup> Ibid., p. 219-220.

<sup>93</sup> Holden Furber, Rival Empires of Trade in the Orient 1600-1800, p. 323.

Kerala. As historians, the Dutch were far ahead of their predecessors, the Portuguese. The narrations of Linchoten, Neiuhoff, Baldaeus and Staverinus are valuable sources of information for students of Kerala history. The travelogues provide useful information of the early voyages of the Dutch, about the land and its people. These works also describe many events of supreme importance to the Dutch East India Company.<sup>94</sup>

There are entries in the Plakaat Boek showing how fasts and prayers were held at Batavia for the success of the expedition against the Portuguese.<sup>95</sup> Prayers were arranged before the expedition to Malabar in 1662 and thanks-giving was arranged for the capture of Cochin on 31st March, 1st April and of Cannanore on 11th April 1663. The Malabar command catered to the needs of the Christians in general on the coast of Kerala. They formed a church committee consisting of a preacher, two Elders and four Deacons who attended to the spiritual needs of the people of Cochin. But the Company did not show much enthusiasm to propagate Christianity. Their efforts to check the influence of

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<sup>94</sup> Koshy, M.O, op.cit, p. 219.

<sup>95</sup> Poonen. T.I., op.cit, pp.274-275.

Catholic faith in schools and other institutions also did not yield the desired results.<sup>96</sup>

The Dutch were fond of having country houses on some of the picturesque islands in the backwaters. The Governor and many of the upper strata of society had garden houses. The impressive buildings in the Bolghatti island were built by them. The palace was the country house of the Dutch commanders of Kerala. Many improvements and additions were made to them in course of time.<sup>97</sup> In Chennamangalam the Dutch constructed another building for Paliathachan. They also constructed the famous palace known as Kalikotta for Saktan Tampuran (1790-1805) at Trippunithura. The grand massive structure was made in the Dutch architectural style.

At nearby Mattancheri was the cochin raja's palace built by the Portuguese in 1556 as a gift for the ruler. It is popularly referred to as the Dutch palace, though it was never built by the Dutch, but was probably repaired by them after the battle which raged round the place in 1663.

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<sup>96</sup> Koshy.M.O., op.cit, p. 214.

<sup>97</sup> Ibid., p. 217.

Mattancheri was the main settlement of the White Jews of Cochin.<sup>98</sup>

The Dutch palace at Mattancheri is one of the oldest buildings build by the Europeans in India. The interior is decorated with mural paintings. The Portuguese presented it to the then ruler of Cochin, Vira Kerala Varma (1537-1565). After the Dutch conquest of Cochin, the palace was extended east and south. The wooden ceilings were fixed in the coronation hall. The Dutch made seating arrangements in the rooms both on the ground floor and upper floor. The additions of seating arrangement and toilet rooms were the special features of the construction by the Dutch East India Company. Since then the palace was known as the Dutch Palace.<sup>99</sup>

The murals in the palliyara (bod chamber) of the Dutch palace, Mattancherri which cover an area of 300 sq. ft depict the story of the Ramayana from Dasaratha's sacrifice to Rama's return from Lanka. These paintings have been assigned to the 17th century and Dr.Sousings found, in them "traces of the influence of Budhist paintings that links art

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<sup>98</sup> Owen C. Kail. The Dutch in India, p. 182.

<sup>99</sup> Koshy. M.O. op.cit, pp. 216-217.

of Kerala with that of Ajanta and Bagh". Four other chambers in this palace are decorated with murals depicting several deities and scenes from Hindu Mythology.<sup>100</sup>

In 1721 the Dutch built a cemetery in Fort Cochin. After the burial of the only survivor of the Dutch family in the cemetery it was declared a protected monument. The Dutch changed many of the Portuguese names of roads and streets into Dutch. The Dutch named the boat jetty as de Boom part since its entrance was protected by a beam lying in the water. Thus in many instances the Dutch East India Company left their imprints on the soil of Kerala.<sup>101</sup>

The St. Francis Church of Cochin is the oldest European church in India. The exact date of construction of the church is not known, presumably it was build in 1503 by the Franciscan Frairs. Originally it is said to have been built of wood and dedicated to St. Antony. Afterwards the church received its present name the St. Francis Church. During 1510-1663 it was the Portuguese church of the order of St. Francis of Assissi.<sup>102</sup> The Dutch East India Company used the

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<sup>100</sup> Sreedhara Menon, A. Cultural Heritage of Kerala - An Introduction, p. 141

<sup>101</sup> Koshy, M.O, op.cit, p. 218.

<sup>102</sup> Ibid, p.217.

church for reformed service between 1663-1804. Many of the marriages and baptisms of the servants of Dutch East India Company were conducted here. A table fixed over the west door of the church indicated that it was renovated in 1799. The floor of the church was paved with tombstones of the Portuguese and Dutch notables. These carved and inscribed tombstones were taken out in 1887 and fixed on the walls of the church. The church is a living historical monument of Cochin.<sup>103</sup>

Most of the houses of Jews have thick laterite walls, with large windows provided with seats and double shutters of glass and wood, and have upper storeys with tiles roofs. In the houses of the rich the members occupy the second storey which is partitioned into a hall and a number of rooms, one of which is used as the dining room, dormitories. These rooms are neatly furnished with chairs, tables, sofas and other articles of furniture, while the walls are decorated with fine pictures and photographs of members of the family.<sup>104</sup>

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<sup>103</sup> Ibid, pp. 217-218.

<sup>104</sup> Ananta Krishna Iyer, op.cit, Vol. II, p. 406.

The Dutch were not unconcerned about the welfare of the people of Cochin. This is evident from the fact that they maintained a leper asylum at Pallipuram on the Vypeen islands. When the disease began to spread widely in Cochin, the Dutch segregated the lepers outside the town. Annual medical inspection was introduced.<sup>105</sup> A permanent order was issued to make the people appear before the upper surgeon of the Dutch hospital and medical examination was conducted on every one. The town became free of lepers in due course. The leper house was maintained by a fund. It was placed under the charge of special trustees. The predecessor of Moens placed it under the management of the Deacons who managed it efficiently by good and careful supervision.

This contagious disease prevailed here more than in other places of India, both among the natives and strangers, and even Europeans but not the Jews, among whom hardly a case is to be found. This they ascribe to their abstention from pork and the strict observations of the law of purification as laid down in Lev. This wretched disease early finds its way into the bodies of some people here in such a way that at the incipient stage. Special knowledge

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<sup>105</sup> Koshy, M.O., op.cit, p. 212.

and experience are required to detect it, for which reason the households of this town were formerly visited every year by a surgeon.<sup>106</sup> The eradiction of leprosy from the town of Cochin was a praise-worthy contribution of the Dutch East India Company. But the Dutch did not extend this type of health services beyond the confines of Cochin.

The Dutch established an orphanage for the poor children who lost their parents. It was maintained at the expense of the Board of Deacons. Children of Europeans, especially Protestants, were admitted to this institution. Strict instructions were given to the officials of the orphanage to bring up the children in Protestant faith. The Dutch did not admit children of illegimate birth into the orphanage. However, the orphanage was not thrown open to the local children.<sup>107</sup> Medicine especially was taught extensively. For Christians there were special institutions maintained by Carmelite frairs near Cranganore. for a certain number education was given free in Latin and Syriac. The students were taught, beside these languages, theology, mathematics and geography.<sup>108</sup>

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<sup>106</sup> Galletti, A, The Dutch in Malabar, p. 242.

<sup>107</sup> Koshy.M.O., op. cit, p. 213.

<sup>108</sup> Panikkar K.M., op.cit, p. 320.

The services of Eustace Benedict de Lannoy and Duyvenschat to the ruler of Travancore, is an interesting subject of study in Kerala History. These men reorganised the army of Travancore and modelled it on European footing. Its composition was overwhelmingly Nayar, and the Nayar militia was not abolished; but the new army represented a further incursion on the independence of local Nayar leaders.<sup>109</sup> Duyvenschot played a leading role on the side of Travancore in the last stages of the war with Quilon 1739-42. De Lannoy was serviceable to the King of Travancore in the war against the chief of Ambalapuzha. De Lannoy also took a leading part on the side of Travancore in the war against Cochin. The forts of Quilon, Mavelikkara, Chenganacherry, Kottayam, Ettumanoor, Muvattupuzha, Thodupuzha and Minachil were repaired, modified and strengthened under De Lannoy's guidance. A few of the forts designed by him, now in ruins, are found at Kumarakam in Ettumanur, Piravam in Muvattupuzha Karimanur in Thodupuzha and Lalam in Minachil. This popular general was known in Travancore history as 'Valia Kappithan'.<sup>110</sup> In 1777 De Lannoy died while giving finishing touches to the Travancore

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<sup>109</sup> Robin Jeffrey, The Decline of Nayar Dominance, p. 3.

<sup>110</sup> Koshy M.O. op.cit, pp.220-221.

Lines, which checked Hyder Ali and Tipu Sultan. He was buried in the chapel with in the Udayagiri fort.

The period of Dutch occupation in Kerala did not mark by outstanding contributions. They established no schools or collelges and libraries. But the Dutch did not commit atrocities in Kerala like the Portuguese. They were tolerant and strictly kept aloof from forcible conversions. During their period of rule they showed no ambition to 'win land for their God!'

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