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Arrival of Portuguese in India and its Role in Shaping India

A chegada dos Portugueses à Índia e o seu papel na formação da Índia

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RESUMO

Os portugueses foram os primeiros europeus a estabelecer uma colónia na Índia no início do século XVI e foram os últimos a sair em 1961 dos seus enclaves em Goa, Damão e Diu. Embora tenham entregue as rédeas da Índia a outras potências europeias, o impacto da sua chegada e presença na Índia mudou a Índia de muitas maneiras. Este ensaio procura compreender como a chegada dos portugueses transformou a Índia e inaugurou uma nova Era.

Palavras-chave: Império Indiano de Portugal; Colonialismo; Era da Exploração; Goa; Índia Moderna

ABSTRACT

The Portuguese were the first Europeans to establish a colony in India at the very beginning of the 16th century and were the last to leave in 1961 from its enclaves in Goa, Daman and Diu. Though they handed over the reins of India to other European powers the impact of their arrival and presence in India changed India in many ways. This essay attempts to understand how the arrival of the Portuguese changed India and ushered in a new era.

Keywords: Portugal's Indian Empire; Colonialism; Age of Exploration; Goa; Modern India

1. Introduction

Portuguese explorer Vasco da Gama sailed around the Cape of Good Hope and reached India on 27 May 1498. This maiden voyage and discovery of a direct sea route to India completely changed the course of history not only of India but the entire world in many ways. It was not that Vasco da Gama was the first European to visit India but he was the first one who followed a radically different direct sea route to India, which went around the Cape of Good Hope. Earlier in 1487 another Portuguese explorer Pêro da Covilhã came on a mission to Kerala which was via the ancient Red Sea route in an Arab dhow and spent a few months in Cannanore (now Kannur) and Calicut (now Kozhikode). Bartolomeo Dias was the first European navigator to go around the Cape of Good Hope in 1488, thereby effectively establishing the possibility of a direct sea route between Europe and Asia.

Before the advent of the western powers, there was indeed a flourishing trade carried out by Arab, Indian and Chinese merchants. Kerala had trade relations with the mighty Roman Empire. Roman author Pliny described a considerable financial deficit because Rome traded with the East. He records “at the smallest reckoning 100 million sesterces is the sum which every year India, the silk-growing country of northern China, and the Arabian Peninsula take from our Empire. Such is the cost to us of our exquisites and taste for luxuries from our women” (Parker, 2002). India and China was connected to the western world through hazardous land routes passing through harsh deserts, wide rivers, crossing the world’s highest mountain ranges or dependent on the seafaring traders who carried the trade by sea and overland by different modes. They also had to interact and endure different tribes, kingdoms, bandits and robbers as trade passed through all of whom extracted a toll from the traders.

Trade reached Europe on the Kerala-Aden-Cairo-Alexandria-Venice route. Within Europe, Venetian traders monopolized the trade from the Arabs in Alexandria with exorbitant premiums on the prices for the rest of Europe, thereby amassing enormous wealth and power for themselves. The rest of Europe was unable to break the Venetian stranglehold. The scenario changed drastically with the onset of the ‘Age of Exploration’ set in motion by the monarchs of Spain and Portugal.

Religion was also a prime motivating factor driving the quest for a new world order. Portugal, Spain and other parts of Europe had endured centuries of Islamic rule. The overthrow of the Islamic rule by the mid-thirteenth century is attributed to the crusading spirit of the *Reconquista*. The need for religious unity was kept alive as was the memories of the subjugation of Chris-

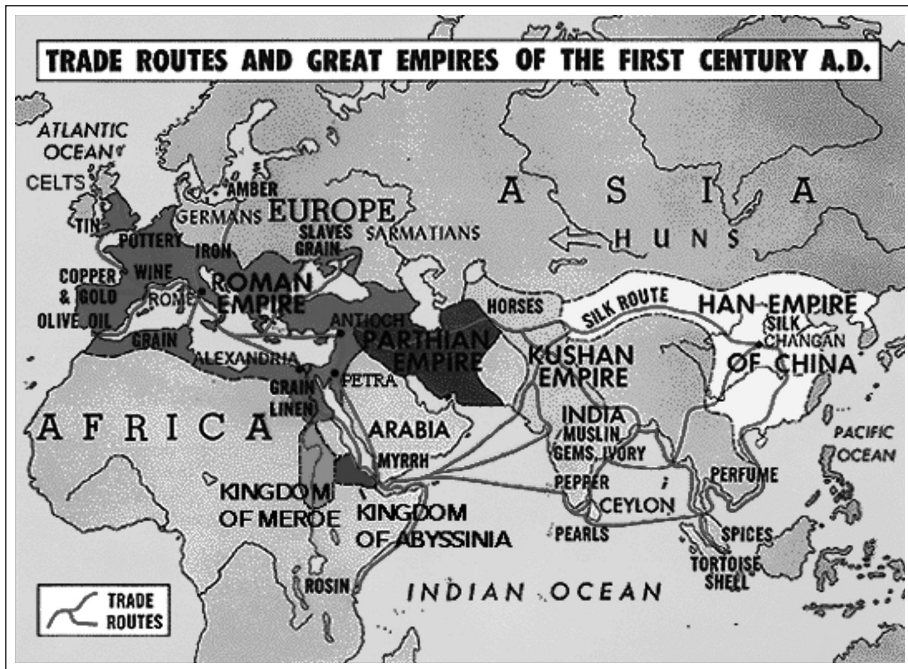


FIGURE 1
Ancient Trade Networks

Pic credits: Beyond Frontiers – Ancient Rome and the Eurasian Trade Networks.

Available at: <<https://brewminate.com/beyond-frontiers-ancient-rome-and-the-eurasian-trade-networks/>>.

tians by the Moors. Religion intoxicates the masses and under exceptional leadership, all elements were choreographed to realise Portugal's extraordinary ambition to spread Christianity with the backing of the Pope. There was also a desire to search for the mythical Christian region of the East. The fable of a prestre (priest) called John who had become an emperor captured popular imagination of Europe especially when a messenger had arrived with a letter addressed to the Pope Alexander III in 1165 CE from the mythical ruler of the East (Pillai, 2013, p. 2)

The European age of exploration was set in motion when Christopher Columbus landed on the coast of America in 1492 while looking for India. Later, Pope Alexander VI granted a Papal Bull bestowing between Spain and Portugal the exclusive rights of sovereignty in the regions of America, Asia and Africa by drawing a line. West of the line was the land allotted to Spain, east was territory for Portugal thus granting access to India and the regions that lay beyond. According to Treaty of Tordesillas signed on 07 June 1494, between

the governments of Spain and Portugal the “New World” was divided their spheres of influence. The agreement also included a prohibition against invading lands ruled by Christian Kings.

2. Portuguese Expedition to India

Portugal outfitted the expedition to India with the best of men, material, guns and know-how available. Vasco da Gama sailed from Lisbon on July 8, 1497. The ships of choice were the Caravel which was highly maneuverable and could sail “into the wind”. The maiden fleet composed of four vessels—two medium-size ones of 120 tons named as “São Gabriel” and “São Rafael”; a 50-ton caravel, named the “Berrio”; and a 200-ton storeship. They landed in Calicut on 20 May 1498 passing around Cape of Good Hope, via Mozambique and Mombasa. Until Mombasa the journey was cautious almost hugging the coast line of Africa as shown in the Map below.

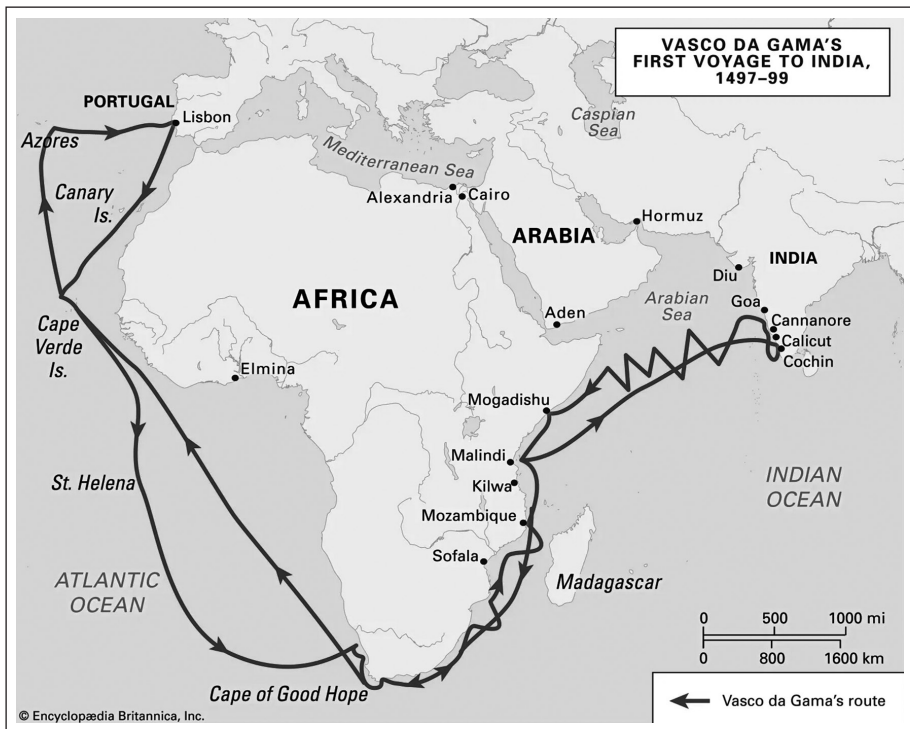


FIGURE 2
Vasco da Gama's maiden route to India and Back

Map Source: Encyclopædia Britannica.

Available at: <<https://www.britannica.com/biography/Vasco-da-Gama>>, accessed on 15 Jan 2022.

From Mombasa the services of a Gujarati pilot named Kanji Malam was requisitioned. Kanji hailed from Kutch in Gujarat (Mehta, 2001) which in those days was a ship building hub. He led the Portuguese directly to Calicut. Vasco da Gama's arrival in Kerala was as a representative of King Manuel I, King of Portugal, bearing the full weight and might of Portugal. The impact of this was dramatically different from that of a traveler or an explorer as rulers on the Indian subcontinent would soon realise. A Journal of the First Voyage of Vasco da Gama in 1497-1499 written by an anonymous co traveler with Vasco da Gama was translated into English by E. G. Ravenstein and is anecdotal being a recording of day-to-day events. These helps describe pivotal events that laid the foundations of European domination in India and later over much of Asia.

3. A glimpse into India's past and its influence

Ancient Indian influences spread as far as modern-day Korea, Japan, China, South East Asia and the central Asian regions. The influence is substantiated by historical and archaeological evidences. While spread to Afghanistan and Central Asia was by the hazardous land routes the spread to South East Asia, China, Japan was by the seaborne trade. The tragic destruction of the Bamiyan Buddha by the Taliban in 2001 is a reminder of the reach of the influences of ancient India in those regions. The Bamiyan Buddha were also great examples of a confluence of Gupta, Sassanian and Hellenistic artistic styles showing how the ancient world influenced each other. Predominantly Indic religions like Hinduism and Buddhism influenced and guided the cultural life of the people in the region. Legend prevailing in Korea even today talks of a Princess from Ayodhya who established a great dynasty (*British Broadcasting Corporation*, 2018). Modern day Vietnam is often referred to as Champa in ancient Indian records. Ben Kiernan in his book *Vietnam: A History from Earliest Times to the Present* reports that "a Brahmin from India became king of Funan and changed all the rules according to the ways of India". The history of Cambodia associated with the notorious Pol Pot regime can trace their connections with ancient India. Even today it is reflected in their cultural practices, temples and monasteries, most notable among them being the ruins of Angkor Wat. Hinduism was the main religion in Indonesia until the advent of Islam in the 14th century. Even today the Garuda mythical bird considered the vehicle of Vishnu is revered in that country despite being as Islamic country. Bali continues to be a predominantly Hindu region. In Thailand Indian influences is evident in the names of the current dynasty which rules Thailand, who carry the name Rama adopted from the name of Lord Rama, an avatar of Vishnu from the epic Ramayana.

Spreading Indian thoughts and religion was a prime factor just as spread of Christianity was for Europeans in the age of exploration. Notable among the ancient Kings is the role of Emperor Ashoka. He ruled from 268 to 232 BC and was the last king of the Mauryan Dynasty that ruled north India after the invasion by Alexander. For his role in the spread of Buddhism he occupies the same position as Constantine -1 who spread Christianity. Ashoka brought in the spirit of pacifism and non-violence after witnessing the carnage of the Battle of Kalinga. Until then Ashoka led a violent life killing all claimants to the throne, and was responsible for the ruthless expansion of the boundaries of his kingdom. After this battle, Ashoka adopted Buddhism and a policy that he called “conquest by dharma” (i.e., by principles of righteous life). This appealed to the Asians who readily adapted Buddhist or Hindu ways of life. In the southern parts of India temple records and carving record long lasting powerful dynasties like Cholas who dominated large parts of South East Asia. The carvings in Tamil Nadu carry accounts of the invasion carried out by Raja Raja Chola to subdue a recalcitrant Srivajiya kingdom that interfered in the trade between Cholas and the Song dynasty in China between 1017 and 1027 CE (Pillay, 2020).

4. Advent of Islam in India

Though Islam was founded in the 7th century the actual advent of Islam into India on a large scale took place only by the 12th century. Islam had by then embedded itself in other parts of Asia and sections of Europe. Powerful kings in North India had been successful in warding off early Islamic incursions. There was a briefly successful attempt in 712 CE by Mohammad Bin Qasim in Sindh which ended by 715 CE. The successors of Bin Qasim remained confined to what is now the south of Pakistan for three centuries. By 1453 even Constantinople ruled by Christian Byzantines had fallen to the Ottomans establishing an Islamic Caliphate. The once-mighty Indian empires that stretched across Asia in reach and influence ceased to exist for reasons that are not clear. By the 12th century, India had become a conglomeration of many smaller kingdoms stripped for unknown reasons of the spirit of enterprise, conquest, evangelism and adventure that spread Indic religions to distant shores. The arrival of Mahmud of Ghazni in 1192, set in motion a series of Islamic dynasties that lasted until the advent of Western colonial powers from the 16th century onwards. In the North, under Islamic rule, it was not just dynasties or temples of ‘non-believers’ that were destroyed. Famed universities like Takshshila and Nalandawhich drew students from far were destroyed by the Islamic invaders in keeping with the demands of the newfound faith and

zealotry. It is a less known fact often omitted as one of the greatest centers of learning in modern day historical literatures. In the early days students from across the globe came to ancient Indian universities to study. Historical records talk of the destruction of the famed library of Alexandria. A similar fate awaited the library in these ancient universities at the hands of Bakhtiyar Khilji a zealous invader who supervised its destruction. Famous travelers of like Megasthenes, Hiuen Tsang and Fa-Hien record the magnificence of these universities and of ancient India. According to some records the university housed thousands of students and had a building that was nine stories high, teaching various subjects ranging from medicine, mathematics, religion, literature, astrology, astronomy, statecraft and much more. Kautilya, also called Vishnugupta or Chanakya, the author of the Sanskrit treatise Arthashastra a multi volume on statecraft, economic policy and military strategy studied and taught at these famed universities. These universities also produced medical treatises known as the Charaka-samhita and Sushruta-samhita, attributed to Charaka, a physician, and Sushruta a surgeon who is also credited to have carried out the first reconstructive surgery.

Southern part of India had yet to see invasions in scale and brutality that the northern part had endured following the advent of Islam in Arabia. Islam however did take roots in Kerala but through the seafaring Arabs. It is believed that the first mosque outside of Arabia was established in Kodungallur in 629 AD. Historical records also show the presence of Malik Deenaar in Kerala and is believed to be a companion of Prophet Mohammad. The south also had seen the arrival of Christian missionaries. It is recorded that St Thomas one of the Apostles of Christ arrived in Kerala around 53 CE. Therefore, the coast of Kerala was used to receiving foreign influences and accepting them without violence. The early records of Vasco da Gama indicate that he mistook the entire region to be ruled by Christian kings or that of the lands ruled by Prestre John referred earlier. Until the arrival of the Portuguese intercultural exchanges were non-aggressive and mutually beneficial interactions that were willingly accepted by the locals truly making the land rich and vibrant.

5. India around the Time of Arrival of Portuguese

Despite its natural defensive boundaries — the mighty Himalayan ranges to the North, bounded by the sea on three sides and a harsh desert on the western boundaries there were numerous invasions into India but none matched what was going to unfold with the arrival of the Portuguese and the advent of European Age of discovery. The world was about to change. It was not the first interaction Indians were going to meet the Europeans in a battlefield. In

326 BCE Alexander led his armies into India that culminated in the Battle of Hydapses between Alexander and Porus in the plains of Punjab. The battle proved costly for both sides. The war-weary Macedonian soldiers prevailed upon Alexander to return. However, this interaction did bear influence on various aspects of early Indian history in a syncretic form or manner contributing to progress in arts, literature, sciences and culture

By the 15th century, India had become a conglomerate cocktail of many kingdoms and fiefdoms. While major portions of North India were under Islamic rulers there were many Hindu rulers as well. The Ahoms ruled over northeastern regions for an unbroken spell of over 600 years until the advent of the British in the 18th century. Another empire under Hindus was the Vijayanagara Empire which flourished alongside the Islamic Bahmani Kingdom in the Deccan Plateau along with other smaller fiefdoms that often-changed hands between Muslims and Hindus

In 1498, the kingdom of Calicut was ruled by a Hindu king called the *Samudripadd* (lord of the sea) or Zamorin in the anglicised version. The Zamorin was by all accounts very wealthy and powerful quite abreast in the foreign affairs of the time on account of his interactions with merchants arriving on his shores frequently from near and afar. He welcomed every opportunity to accommodate other trade partners who could potentially rival the monopoly of the Arabs on the Kerala coast. He understood that better competition entailed better profits and an increase in Zamorin's wealth.

It is a matter of recorded fact that Vasco da Gama's state visit was a failure and the Zamorin believed that Vasco da Gama's boasts of his sovereign as also his state's grandeur was false as the gifts brought by him for the Zamorin were 'twelve pieces of Lambel (a striped cloth), four scarlet hoods, six hats, four strings of coral, a case containing six wash-hand basins, a case of sugar, two cases of oil and two of honey (Thatcher, ed., 1907). On preliminary inspection of the gifts, the inspecting officials informed Vasco da Gama that even "the poorest merchants from Mecca or any other part gave more and that if he wanted to make a present it should be in gold". The first meeting was a diplomatic disaster that helped the Arabs who quickly assessed the impact of the arrival of the Europeans on Kerala's shores as it clearly endangered their monopoly with Venetians of the spice trade with Europe. The Portuguese goods were not sold in the markets of Calicut where trade was in gold and silver in lieu of exotic spices. The Portuguese attributed this to the Arab intrigues and complained to the Zamorin who did nothing about the protest and lamentations of the Portuguese. With the monsoon season-ending, Vasco da Gama requested permission for setting up a trading post before departing Calicut, to

which the Zamorin agreed to if the applicable customs duties were paid. The poor trade, the disinterested behaviour of the Zamorin and the slander the Arabs propagated against the Portuguese sowed the seed of hostility. On 29 August 1498, Vasco da Gama left Cochin and travelled to Cannanore, to meet the Kolathiri Rajah, a rival of the Calicut Zamorin. The Kolathiri Rajah's kingdom was often threatened by the Zamorin and was on the lookout for potential allies. The arrival of Vasco da Gama was God sent and the Kolathiri entered into an informal agreement with the Portuguese and helped them with spices and other exotic goods.

Almost a year later after departing from Kerala Vasco da Gama returned to a hero's welcome back to Lisbon in August 1499. For the Portuguese, the expedition was a grand commercial success despite the foul start with the mighty Zamorin of Calicut. The alliance with the Kolathiri Rajas and his benevolence in sharing the spices along with other barter managed in Cochin was worth 60 times the cost of the expedition. More importantly, it also established the fact that a direct sea route to India existed and now the Portuguese were the unquestioned pioneers and masters of the seas in the age of exploration and demonstrated Portugal's maritime abilities to the rest of the western world.

6. The impact of the discovery of the new trade route

The backing of the Royal Court conveyed an important message that flag and trade were inseparable partners in the quest for national gain. The sovereigns backing compensated for a lot of other deficiencies including a lack of commercial acumen and guile the Arabs had come to develop by their frequent travels to different parts of the world. Furthermore, the design of the ships in use then of the Zamorin and the Arabs were cargo vessels designed to be suited for commerce and armed to ward off only pirates but totally unequipped for combat that the Portuguese fleets brought into play. Added to that was the expertise of the Portuguese to bring about calculated firepower which was unmatched either in the skill of its use or the means and methods by any other competing trader community in those days. The first expedition had been successful in the following ways:

- (a) Accomplished the aim of discovering an alternate route to India
- (b) Challenged the commercial monopoly of the Venetians and Arabs in the European spice market.
- (c) Transformed Portugal from a struggling regional power to global power.

Gaining absolute control of the sea borne trade became a matter of prestige as well as survival. Maritime trade was connected with the destiny of nations. Power was measured in Europe in direct proportion not just in military and commercial terms but also in the extent and exploitation of *Mundus Novus* — the New World. To establish his domination over the new world King of Portugal sent instructions to Viceroy Francisco de Almeida to consolidate their hold over the entire trade (Bailey, 1977, p. 227).

It seems to us nothing would serve us better than to have a fortress at the mouth of the Red Sea or near to it — rather inside it than outside might afford better control — because from there we could see to it that no spices might pass to the land of the sultan of Egypt, and all those in India would lose the false notion that they could trade any more, save through us.

Afonso de Albuquerque thereafter led an assault on Malacca Straits. In South-East Asia the strategic Malacca straits-controlled trade and shipping from India to Indonesia and China. This was captured by the Portuguese in 1511 and retained until 1641 when it was taken by the Dutch. Explaining the reasons Albuquerque said to his men,

The King of Portugal has often commanded me to go to the Straits [of Malacca], because... this was the best place to intercept the trade which the Moslems... carry on in these parts. So it was to do Our Lord's service that we were brought here; by taking Malacca, we would close the Straits so that never again would the Moslems be able to bring their spices by this route... I am very sure that, if this Malacca trade is taken out of their hands, Cairo and Mecca will be completely lost. (Pearson, 2007, p. 56-57)

The Portuguese also established a base at Jaffna in Sri Lanka for trade-in cinnamon. Most Portuguese shipments of pepper and ginger originated from the Malabar Coast of India. For other spices like cloves, nutmeg and mace they created a base at Ternate in Malacca.

The growing influence of the Portuguese altered the status quo traditionally held by Arabs from times immemorial and caused severe consternation to the Sultan of Egypt. According to Nair, the Sultan sent monks from the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem as emissaries to Pope Julius-II with a simple warning “If the Portuguese intrusions in the Indian Ocean did not cease; Qansawh would order the destruction of the Christian holy site under his protection”(Nair, 2013, p. 126). The Portuguese prevailed on the Pope not to fall for such threats as a significant portion of revenues for the Sultan came from

Christian pilgrims. Having failed in this threat, the Egyptians sent a fleet of 13 ships equipped with the best of soldiers and Ottoman artillery in 1507 under the command of the Mamluk Admiral Emir Hussain.

The Portuguese had long heard rumours of an Egyptian attack and huge fleet being prepared to protect the Zamorin and secure their trade own interests. Finally, when they did arrive, the Portuguese under Almeida had managed to defeat them as well as subdue the ally of the Raja of Calicut, the Adil Shahi sultan of Bijapur, from whom they wrested Goa after the battle. Goa thereafter became the headquarters of the Portuguese trading empire in Asia from 1510 and remained the longest lasting enclave.

The endless feuds between Calicut and Cochin were a perennial drain on Portuguese resources and hence he settled upon Goa as the new headquarters. Goa with a natural deep harbour, was suited for defence from the sea. It provided a vantage point over the Gulf of Cambay with the enclaves of Daman and Diu. Most importantly it was distant from both Gujarat as well as the Kerala coast and thus insulated from the local intrigues. The momentous decision came as Albuquerque almost lost his life in Calicut due to a failed attack on behalf of their allies which actually was the folly and ambition of another Portuguese Fernando Coutinho who wanted the honour of subduing the Zamorin to himself.

In all there were about 13 to 14 expeditions by the Portuguese to India between Vasco da Gama's epoch-making docking in Calicut on May 20, 1498. One of them was outfitted and designed as a punitive expedition to Calicut, to avenge the failure of the 2nd Armada and massacre of members of the Portuguese factory in 1500. This was led by Pedro Álvares Cabral credited with the discovery of Brazil was effectively ruthless. This opened the flood gates of permanent hostilities between the Kingdom of Portugal and mighty Zamorin of Calicut almost sounding the death knell for their influence in the region. Sir Thomas Roe was an English Ambassador credited with setting up the first British factory in Surat and also known for a cozy relationship with Jahangir the Mughal Emperor. His advice to the East India Officials recorded in the Rise and Expansion of British Dominions of India states that the

Portuguese, notwithstanding their many rich residences are beggared by keeping of soldiers, and yet their garrisons are but mean. They never could make advantage of Indies since they defended them... Their dead consume all their gain. (Lyall, 1907, p. 26)

7. Influence of the Portuguese on India

During the course of history first the Portuguese and subsequently the others would come to dominate not just the trade but the affairs of the world by sheer military force. According to historical estimates by the US Census Bureau, the population of the world in 1500 was around 500 million of which Western Europe was approximately 57 million and that of Asia stood around 300 million. Despite the wide disparity Europeans dominated all future events in Asia. Trade thereafter was conducted at the terms and prices suited to Portugal initially or the latter-day maritime powers.

In India, it lost its longest-held colony in 1961 when Goa was liberated by Independent India. While it is difficult to segregate the influence of the Portuguese alone the arrival of the Portuguese heralded a start of a cultural process in modern times. The successor powers like the British copied what the Portuguese set in motion like the custom duties, pass system and administration. They can be credited for bringing modern technology like the printing press, armaments, building techniques, and many others including novel cuisine and culture which are enumerated in the succeeding paragraphs.

8. Impact on military culture and modernization

The lessons of the conflict with the Portuguese was not lost on the powerful Zamorin as well as the smaller kings and chieftains who realised that the Portuguese were a superior militarily. Even with the entire Nair army intact, the Kings were defenceless against the naval bombardment from well beyond the shores of his city. There were multiple reasons for Portuguese dominance among European powers at the beginning of the Age of Discovery It was sheer military power exhibited by superior Portuguese naval gunnery, better ship-building and seamanship paired with a new fighting style. The Portuguese brought a ruthless fighting style which was infused by a missionary zeal and hatred of Muslims and the natives. Afonso de Albuquerque reported to his King, *"I tell you, sire, the one thing that's most essential in India: if you want to be loved and feared here, you must take full revenge."* It is true that the Portuguese brought fighting to entirely different levels with records of taking pilgrims ships to the Haj and killing them or sewing animal ears on traitors to the cause (Nair, 2013, p. 140).

Alliances with the "firangees" as the white traders were called became the method of extending one's influence as was exercised by the Raja of Kolathiris. Firangee originated from Arabic *ferenji* and broadly meant any white male who came from a Christian country which in those days was confined to Europe. In Kerala the wrath of the angry Portuguese found its way into the

lexicon and found usage in curses like “May the wrath of the firangee be upon you”.

The full impact of ship-mounted cannons reverberated all across Kerala. The firepower that any of the Portuguese Armadas funded and equipped by the Crown of Portugal was unseen before in India. So intense was the fear of the firepower that they continue in Kerala where until the date “*Veddivazhpadu* or Gunfire offerings” (Nair, 2013, p 141) is a ritual to propitiate and honour the Gods. The first time firepower was used in North India to devastating effect was in the first battle of Panipat in 1526 that again altered the status quo leading to the establishment of Mughal dynasty. Until then the Indian armies were confined to horses and elephants and infantry wielding bows, arrows, shields, maces, spears and swords.

The ruthless style of the Portuguese *fidalgo* was matched in great measure by the fighting skills of the Nair clan who shared a warrior’s code with elements of chivalry. The ability to generate legions of *Chaver* (suicide) squads when needed could not be matched by the Portuguese. They still had not learnt the art of harnessing locals to fight on their behalf like the British did. For the Nairs it was considered an honour to die in battle as the Portuguese discovered to great cost. The local chieftains decided to use the *frangis* to tilt the balance of power. Albuquerque informed the King of Portugal that the alliances with the local Raja combined with infighting between Almeida and himself were serving the Portuguese no more explaining that

I know, why the king of Cochin having 30,000 Nairs and the king of Cannanore having 60,000 do not go to destroy Calicut; because they want to keep up this dispute (between the Calicut Zamorin and the Portuguese) till the end of time. They (Cochin and Cannanore) do not wish to make war but want us to do so. (Nair, 2013, p. 152)

Though they left Kerala their impact was felt in the brief period they were present. They dislodged Arabs from the pre-eminent positions they had come to occupy. It was an earlier belief that the Arabs had the best of ships and firearms but with the defeat of the Egyptian Navy, it had been proven wrong. Local rulers now aspired for the European kind of modern military equipment which made all the difference thus leading to a modernisation of the Indian native state forces. Thus when Marthanda Varma King of Travancore defeated the Dutch in the Battle of Collachel ending their domination in India it was owed to a new culture of soldiering ushered in by interacting with the Portuguese further refined by European mercenaries that came to India from Italy, France and other European nations (Unnithan, 2016).

The Arabs also held a monopoly over the horse trade. The outcome of battles between the Vijaynagar and Bahmani Kingdoms depended on cavalry thus the best quality horses from Arabia and Central Asia vital for the victory. All of this trade was controlled by Arab who displaced the local Kudirai *chettis* or horse merchants. According to Shukla Horse trading became so important that many others were attracted to the trade including a Russian named Nikitin who arrived with a thousand horses but was dismayed to learn that the Bahmani Sultan would not buy the lot despite agreeing on a fair price unless the Russian converted to Islam. (Shukla, 1981, p. 211) The harassment he endured was to ensure monopoly of the Arabs so that no other trader would venture to trade the horse. So much was the demand that advances were paid for entire shipments whether dead or alive. However, from 1498 when Portuguese, appeared on the scene Arabs lost their monopoly after Straits of Hormuz fell to them. The horse trade for the Vijaynagar and other kingdoms was controlled by the Portuguese from Goa. The ability to control trade and bring in good horses put the Portuguese in a better bargaining position than the Arabs whose unethical practices of charging for a dead horses tail the full price drained the kingdoms. It is believed that kings of Vijaynagar helped the establish the Portuguese in Goa by displacing the Adil Shahi ruler and by mid-1500 had a permanent agreement for supply of horses (Anjum, 2012, p. 300).

The Portuguese defensive methods to control trade in distant waters also consisted of the construction of a series of strongly fortified bases interlinked by a fleet of armed ships, so market forces were modified by coercion. The Marathas later adapted this to their style in the hinterland while taking on stronger Mughal forces through a series of fortifications. It was due to impact that a handful of Portuguese had on the entire trade that the Marathas recognized the need for a strong navy. Indian rulers had hitherto fore focused only on land forces. Recognizing their prowess at naval warfare, Rui Leitão Viegas a Portuguese was hired as fleet commander. The Marathas learnt the art of controlling the seas. Kanoji Angre was a feared Maratha Naval Admiral who became adept at attacking British, Dutch and Portuguese ships who collected taxes from ships other than those that were European. He also held crews hostage exchanging them for advantages. The indigenous rulers in northern western India recognized the potential of how having a string navy at sea complimented their power and prestige on land.

They also brought in the 'Cartaz' system which was an instrument to ensure coercion. Under the 'cartaz' system, every ship was required to pay a certain amount to receive a 'cartaz' from the Portuguese. A ship without a cartaz was confiscated and its crew killed or imprisoned. The British copied this and

adapted the same to practices for trade even on land — a permit raj that continued even in Independent India until the liberalisation in 1991.

9. Influence on religion

Amongst the report submitted to the Crown by Vasco da Gama on his return to Portugal was that they saw a primitive form of Christianity practiced among the locals. St Thomas, an apostle of Christ had made his voyage to India and had succeeded in converting influential people reportedly of the Brahmin class to Christianity. What Vasco da Gama saw was a result of separation by over 15 centuries from the mainstream church in Europe. At the time Christianity found its roots in India Europe was under the Romans and Christians were a persecuted minority. It was only three centuries later largely due to the efforts of the mother of Constantine that Christianity took roots in Europe. Later the creation of the Papacy in Rome was unaware of the existence of early day Christians in India and thus the legend of Prester John was born.

Gama recommended that missionaries be sent to India to help bring the practices of the “Hindu Christians” up to date with Roman Catholic orthodoxy. The attempts made by the Portuguese to unite the ancient Christians of Kerala Papal Authority annoyed the Syrian Christians which led to ‘Kunnan Kurissu’ agitation which started on 3 January 1653 in Mattancherry (Times News Network, 2017). All the Saint Thomas Christian community of the Malabar Coast in India declared they would not submit to the Jesuits and Latin Catholic hierarchy, nor accept Portuguese dominance. Until today the Syrian Christians continue to be an influential and wealthy proportion of the Kerala Christian community along with other newer Christian denominations. In 2006 when the Pope Benedict XVI made a statement regarding St Thomas landing in India it differed from the long-held belief of Syro-Malabar Church and was challenged by the community.

Goa was also the headquarters for the Jesuits and it was where the Goan Inquisition (*Inquisição de Goa*) was set up with the objective to enforce Catholic Orthodoxy and allegiance to Rome. It was established in 1560 existing almost continuously until it was finally abolished in 1812. The Inquisitors could order death penalties and burn books written in Sanskrit, Dutch, English, or Konkani, or if they contained Protestant teachings. In addition, those targeted were crypto-Hindus being those who continued to practice Hinduism even after being baptised and converted. Voltaire the famous French thinker says “Goa is sadly famous for its inquisition, equally contrary to humanity and commerce. The Portuguese monks made us believe that the people worshipped the devil, and it is they who have served him”(Charles, (ed.) 2019, p. 3). Inquisitors were

entrusted with the task of destroying paganism (i.e., Hinduism) and introducing the true religion of Christ. King Joao III ordered the Viceroy to forbid Hinduism (“Gentile idolatry”) in all the Portuguese possessions of India, destroy Hindu temples, prohibit the celebration of Hindu feasts, expel all Brahmins and severely punish anyone making a Hindu image (Saraiva, 2001, p.7). There were many benefits extended to the people who converted. Among the earliest converts were the women who married Portuguese men. Unlike the British who fraternised with local women and created a community of Anglo Indians but were ostracised by both sides, the families and converts of the Portuguese became citizens of Portugal. An interesting aspect that continues to date is that converted Hindus retained Konkani and an approximation of their original caste. This converted Brahmins, Kshatriya Vaishya and Shudra kept names that allowed them the same hierarchy in the newfound religions.

Today many practices seen in Goa are a syncretic fusion of the influence of the Portuguese on the locals though the methods and practices at that period were gruesome. Today the Christian population in Goa account for about 25% and is almost entirely Catholic, whose ancestors had converted during Portuguese rule. Following the liberation of Goa those who sought were granted Portuguese citizenship and among famous former Goan’s ranks the current Portugal PM António Costa who attended the Pravasi Bharatiya Divas as a Person of Indian Origin (Costa, 2017).

10. Modern Medicine, Education and Printing Press

In India printing to produce large scale copies of texts had not been discovered. The transcription of texts were on palm leaves, clay tablets, bronze plates or inscriptions on rocks and temples. The printing press which allowed books to be printed in larger numbers was introduced into Goa in 1556. Apparently the first books were meant for use in spread of Christianity and for use in the missionary schools. The first press in India was at the Jesuit Saint Paul’s College in Old Goa. The first book printed in India is the *Compendio Spiritual DaVide Christaa* (Spiritual Compendium of the Christian life) of Gaspar Jorge de Leão Pereira, the Portuguese Archbishop of Goa, followed by the printing of Garcia de Orta’s *Colóquios dos simples e drogas he cousas medicinais da Índia* on 10 April 1563. Garcia de Orta was a medical practitioner who lived in India and was the first European to describe the symptoms of several Asiatic tropical diseases, notably diagnosing cholera and carrying out the first recorded autopsy in India. He is credited with having produced the first scientific catalogues of Medicine plants of India in 1563.

What the arrival of the press did was it helped create a great volume of vernacular literature. The growth of the use of the printing press also led to an upsurge and ease to spread the ideas of patriotism and modern values in India through rise of periodicals and newspapers along with literature. This also spread literacy and helped spread ideas of freedom and create rallies against the colonial powers. Printing made education easily accessible as traditional methods of teaching combined with modern methods created a new breed of literate Indians who ushered in modernity and a scientific temper until then restricted to the west.

11. A uniquely Goan Culture and the city of Mumbai – the commercial capital of India

Goa was taken over in the 1500s and remained under Portugal until its armed repossession in 1961. An unstinted control of nearly 500 years impacted Goa and Goan's in many ways. Goa was shaped by ideas as it was insulated from the rest of India even while under the British. Goa developed a unique blend of Konkani customs indigenous to the region and Catholic traditions spread by Christian missionaries – a unique culture due to the intermingling built upon a foundation of older Konkani society. Indigenous Goan's speak Konkani and the region is a melting pot of customs and traditions. The main railway station of Goa is called Vasco-da-Gama. The basilica is located in Old Goa, the former capital of Portuguese India, and holds the mortal remains of St Francis Xavier which draws millions of visitors from all faiths in India. Goa is a hot tourist destination as well because of the warm nature of the inhabitants combined with the beauty of its beaches and places. The nightlife, as well as the natural beauty, the Goan carnival an annual feature of pageantry since Portuguese times, the rich cuisine – all of it, makes it an international tourist destination.

Mumbai was earlier known as Bombay and until today is the commercial capital of India. The Portuguese obtained Bombay and Bassein under the Treaty of Bassein signed on 23 December 1534 between the Sultan of Gujarat and the Portuguese viceroy. The English and Portuguese contested for hegemony over Bombay, as it was a natural harbour and by the 17th century, the growing Dutch Empire threatened to overwhelm Britain's interests in India. By then Portugal's influence in India had been confined to a few enclaves controlled from Goa and on 11 May 1661 for the marriage of Charles II of England and Catherine of Braganza, daughter of King John IV of Portugal the islands were transferred to the British as Catherine's dowry to Charles. The development of the Suez Canal shot Bombay to the importance and continues to do so today as a vibrant centre of commerce, entertainment and enterprise.

12. Impact on Food habits

The cuisines we see in India area result of lot of colonial influences. While it was the quest for spices brought Portuguese to India there were a lot of changes that the Portuguese brought to the Indian palate. Introduction of potato, tomato, maize, papaya, peanuts, guava, avocado, and chillies among many others is owed to the early Europeans particularly the Portuguese. Today it is almost impossible to imagine Indian cuisine without these vegetables. The Portuguese also brought the cashew nut which is an essential component used in garnishing sweets and desserts or as snacks. The cashew juice is fermented to produce a strong spirit called feni. Portuguese brought along the methods to ferment yeast to make leavened bread. *VadaPav* and *Pao Baji* which is an integral part of Maharashtrian cuisine popular across the country. Indians were mostly rice eaters and the need for bread for Holy Communion created this variety of bread that evolved to take in all kinds of vegetables and meats. Portuguese introduced wine in cooking in India and is also the only one that uses so many types of vinegars (Sangvi, 2012) The world most popular and sought-after mango is the Alphonso mango and the credit for introducing grafting to create the variety and being named after the Viceroy goes to Portuguese (Sejal, 2012). They also added special items like sweet Goan Wine and Tobacco that was introduced to India. Today India is the second largest producer of Tobacco after China providing a livelihood to nearly 36 million Indian (Central Tobacco Research Institute, 2022).

13. End of Portuguese rule in India

With Indian gaining independence from the British in August 1947 followed by handing over of former French settlements between 1949–54, there was a demand for handing over of Goa, Daman, Diu, Dadra and Nagar Haveli all of which were in Portuguese possession. Portugal was ruled by dictator António de Oliveira Salazar who had a very myopic view and in his interview with Foreign Affairs magazine in 1956 said “Goa is the transplantation of the West onto Eastern lands, the expression of Portugal in India and the Goans have no wish to be freed from Portuguese sovereignty.” This view was contrary to the view of the Academic Orlando Ribeiro, who observed “Goa appeared to me as the least Portuguese of all the Portuguese territories I had seen so far” (Menezes, Scroll, 2020). Despite India’s warnings and the widespread protest Salazar took a defiant stand and refused India’s demands for the releasing the holdings. In 1954, Dadra and Nagar Haveli were taken over by India. On December 18, 1961, Indian forces invaded Goa. Portuguese India ceased to exist by the following day with the surrender of the Portuguese forces. The former

Portuguese territories were incorporated into India as the Union Territory of Goa, Daman, and Diu.

Today India and Portugal share warm relations after a period of distrust when ruled by António de Oliveira Salazar who refused to identify India's sovereignty over Goa. It was only in 1974 after the Carnation revolution resulting in the Portuguese transition to democracy that India's sovereignty over Goa was recognised. The first Portuguese Prime Minister to visit India was by Mário Soares in 1974 and since then India – Portugal relations have steadily progressed. Portugal has steadfastly advocated for India in the international forum. Portugal has been consistently supporting India's permanent membership in the United Nations Security Council (UNSC). It actively supported India's application to the Nuclear Suppliers Group. Portugal also helped repatriate without an extradition treaty wanted criminals who had sought refuge in Portugal which showed the path they were willing to walk to protect Indian interests. The idea of the India–EU summit was the brainchild of the current UNSG António Guterres as the Portuguese Prime Minister and the first summit was held in 2000 with the latest edition being held in May 2021 growing in collaboration with each passing year. Since 2015 Portugal has had Mr. António Costa as their PM. He is the first Head of Government in the Western world and has proudly announced that he holds an OCI card. He takes great pride in his Indian roots and that his father Orlando da Costa grew up in Goa. The potential for growth collaboration and cooperation between these two countries bound by a shared history is an example that other former colonies and their colonizers may wish to emulate and learn from.

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