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I. Laying the Foundation

One of the occurrences of the siege was that a large number of Christians came from the port of Goa and its neighbourhood to the foot of the sublime throne, and were rewarded by the bliss of an interview (mulazamat). Apparently they had come at the request of the besieged in order that the latter might make the fort over to them, and so convey themselves to the shore of safety. But when that crew saw the majesty of the imperial power, and had become cognisant of the largeness of the army, and of the extent of the siege train, they represented themselves as ambassadors and performed kornish.¹ They produced many of the rarities of their country, and the appreciative Khedive received each one of them with special favour and made inquiries about the wonders of Portugal and the manners and customs of Europe.²

¹ A form of ceremonial salutation in which the subject places the palm of his right hand against his head and bent his body as well as his head. See, *Anglo-Hindoostanee Handbook; or Stranger's Self-Interpreter and Guide to Colloquial and General Intercourse with the Natives of India* (Calcutta: W. Thacker and Co., St. Andrews Library, 1850), 319.

² Abu'l Fazl, *Akbarnama*, vol. 3, ed. H. Beveridge (Calcutta: Asiatic Society of Bengal, 1906), 37.

1 Introduction

The brief description of the siege of the port of Surat and its aftermath, as noted by the key chronicler of Mughal Emperor Akbar, elucidates on the first encounter between the Mughals and the Portuguese on the western shore of Gujarat in the Indian subcontinent. The passage is written in such a way so as to depict the encounter between a minor potentate and the great Mughal imperial power. This description is reminiscent of the beginning of a rather ambiguous relationship that developed between the two early modern Empires: the Portuguese, who had established their first trading post in the Indian subcontinent in 1502, and the Mughals, who had started consolidating their empire in northern India by the second half of the sixteenth century. The siege of Surat resulted in the establishment of the first diplomatic contact between the Mughals and the Portuguese, who were almost at the brink of a confrontation, had the latter sided with or supported the *mirzas* who were defending Surat against the Mughals. A relationship of “contained conflict”³ beginning in 1573 manifested itself in the religious embassies that resided at the courts of Mughal emperors Akbar and Jahangir. The Mughal or ‘Mogor’ mission headed by the Jesuit missionaries lasted until the suppression of the Society of Jesus in 1773.⁴

In order to make the study of broad categories like the ‘Mughals’ and the ‘Portuguese’ heuristically viable, it is important to define at the outset, the main agencies and the areas of their interaction. The multi-dimensional Mughal-Portuguese relationship had diverse local, regional and global focal points: These were the strategically shifting Mughal court in the Indian subcontinent; the

³ Sanjay Subrahmanyam coined the term as an opposition to the idea of “Age of Partnership” proposed by Holden Furber to signify the period between 1500 and 1750. According to Subrahmanyam the distinguishing feature of this age was “the extent to which the conflict and potential for violence remained bounded.” See, Sanjay Subrahmanyam, *Political Economy of Commerce: Southern India 1500-1650* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 254.

⁴ Gauvin Alexander Bailey, “The Truth Showing Mirror: Jesuit Catechism and the Arts in Mughal India,” in *The Jesuits: Cultures, Sciences, and the Arts, 1540-1773*, ed. John W. O’Malley (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1999), 380.

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Portuguese power centre in Lisbon and post 1580 in Spain;⁵ the local power centre in Goa and the regional points of interaction on the coastal frontiers like Bengal, Gujarat, Diu, Daman and Deccan. Moreover, the interplay of external influences of Safavid Persia, Ottoman Empire and the Central Asian rulers like Uzbeks, on this bilateral relationship shall be analysed. The point of departure for this thesis is the study of Mughal policy making and the political approaches adopted towards the Portuguese at both the levels of the court through the use of religious dialogues and political vocabulary, and at the ports, through trading collaborations and scramble for regions. The thesis aims to connect the strands of court and the maritime frontiers in the study of Mughal-Portuguese interactions. This investigation will further highlight the Mughal ambitions for expansion towards the ports and the maritime frontiers of the Indian subcontinent, in order to broaden the characterization of the Mughal Empire in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries.

The age of exploration, conquest, expansion and the coming of the empires: the sixteenth century has been given numerous appellations in the historiography and in the absence of a better term; these terminologies have been widely accepted, circulated and repeated in different forms. Jonathan Hart used the term 'empire' in his work specifically "to mean those western European nations who, beginning with Portugal, began in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries to expand offshore and later overseas."⁶ The first of 'the empires'-Portuguese expansion and explorations, has received much attention for their path breaking mapping of seas routes and creation of trading outposts across Asia and Africa. These terminologies, however, signify a one-dimensional approach to understanding what we now call 'connected history'. This work tries to complement previous research in the framework of connected history to shed light on the "modes of interaction 'between the local and

⁵ The Spanish Hapsburg monarchy gained control of the Portuguese throne from 1580-1640, during which the latter enjoyed loose political economy.

⁶ Jonathan Hart, *Comparing Empires: European Colonialism from Portuguese Expansion to the Spanish-American War* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), 2.

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regional level on the one hand (what we call micro) and supra-regional level that sometimes be global on the other hand (what we call macro).’’⁷

Seeds of globalization have been traced by many historians in the treaties that claimed to divide the non-European world in the Portuguese and Spanish sphere of influence.⁸ The characterization of East Indian waters as devoid of state authority ultimately lead to the popular elucidation of a ‘sea common to all’ (*res communes omnium*).⁹ The pursuit of freedom of navigation suggested in *Mare Liberum*¹⁰ was followed by legal claims over the high seas by Spain and Portugal in the mid fifteenth century.¹¹ Between 1580 and 1640, Spain and Portugal were ruled by the same Habsburg monarchs as a result of the Union of the Crowns. The Spanish monarch Philip II, however, assured to maintain the administrative and conceptual separateness with regard to the Treaty of Tordesillas.¹² With the expansion of the Portuguese on the economic and trading fronts in Asia, the Christian missionaries’ movement to the places of acquisition also rose to a considerable level. The bull *Romanus Pontifex* (1455) (to be discussed in the next chapter) granted the

⁷ Cited from Caroline Dowki and Phillip Minrad, “Global History, Connected Histories: A Shift of Historiographical Scale?” *Revue d’histoire modern et contemporaine*, 54(2007): 14. Also see, Sanjay Subrahmanyam, “Connected Histories: Notes towards a reconfiguration of early Modern Eurasia,” *Modern Asian Studies* 31 (1997): 745.

⁸ Carla Rahn Phillips, “The Organization of oceanic Empires: The Iberian World in the Habsburg Period,” in *Seascapes: Maritime Histories, Littoral Cultures, and Transoceanic Exchanges*, ed. Jerry H. Bentley, Renate Brindenthal, and Karen Wigen (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2007), 74.

⁹ Benjamin Straumann, *Roman Law in the State of Nature* (United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 28.

¹⁰ Grotius, a Dutch counsel in his famous book *Mare Liberum* proclaimed the freedom of navigation in the seas for trading activities. This was a direct response to the *Mare Clausum* policy of the Portuguese which contended for jurisdiction of a state over a body of water, which cannot be transgressed by other states. For more on this topic see, Hugo Grotius, *The Freedom of the Seas* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1916), vi and on the controversial *Mare clausum* policy see, Serafim de Freitas, *Do justo Império asiático dos Portugueses* (Lisboa: Instituto Nacional de Investigação Científica, 1625). An excellent debate between the *Mare Clausum* and *Mare liberum* can be found in a recent translation of the 1984 edition, Wilhelm G. Grewe, *The Epochs of International law* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2000).

¹¹ *Romanus Pontifex* (1455), *Inter Caetera* (1493), Treaty of Tordesillas and the Treaty of Saragossa defined the legal claims and exclusive authority of Spain and Portugal over the high seas.

¹² Sanjay Subrahmanyam, “Holding the World in Balance: The Connected Histories of the Iberian Overseas Empires, 1500-1640,” *The American Historical Review* 12(2007): 1360. The complexity of Portuguese-Spanish relations, during the Union of Crowns is dealt in Fernando Bouza Álvarez, *Portugal no tempo dos Filipes: Política, cultura, representações* (Lisbon: Edicoes Cosmos, 2000).

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Portuguese a monopoly over spreading Christianity and conducting trade in the overseas territories.

The manifestation of these treaties became visible in the new political and religious formations in the Indian subcontinent. The *Estado da Índia* (State of India) was formed in 1505 to expand in the land where Vasco Da Gama had first set foot, leading the way for other foreign adventurers and traders. The *Estado* developed as a peculiar administrative entity. Since its capture in 1510, Goa had emerged as a political and administrative capital of Portugal's eastern domains and moreover, under the supervision of Portuguese *Padroado*,¹³ it had also become a staging ground and activity base for Christian religious activities, especially of the Jesuits, Franciscans and Dominicans, considered the three great orders of Portugal. The Observant Franciscans had already established their headquarters in 1518 in Goa.¹⁴ In 1534, the city became a bishopric encompassing the area from Cape of Good Hope to China, and in 1557, it assumed the status of a metropolitan archbishopric.¹⁵ The missionaries from the newly found Jesuit Order were sent to serve the Portuguese chaplains and to carry out missionary activities in the areas of Portuguese monopoly. However, King Dom Manuel of Portugal soon understood that it would be difficult to administer the vast stretch of world east of Cape Comorin, from the Bay of Bengal to the South China Sea. The *Estado* of King Dom Manuel, who proclaimed himself the 'King of the Seas,' encountered a high degree of commercial and cultural sophistication in the Indian Ocean and on the coasts of the Indian subcontinent. Hence, his subjects spread through the subcontinent

¹³ Translated as royal patronage, refers to the agreements between the Holy See and the sovereign of Portugal conferring him the right to expand his overseas dominion, while adhering to the propagation of catholic missions in the occupied lands.

¹⁴ This category of the Franciscans was mostly called the Franciscan friars. This is a mendicant order of men, who trace their origin to St. Francis of Assisi. A brief history of the Portuguese Franciscans in Asia can be found in F. F. Lopes, *Os franciscanos no Oriente Português de 1584 a 1590* (Lisboa: CEHU, 1962). For the case of Franciscans in India, see Achilles Meersman, *The Franciscan Minors or Franciscans in India, 1291-1942* (Karachi: Roti Press, 1943).

¹⁵ David M. Kowal, "Innovation and Assimilation: Jesuit Contribution to Architectural Development in Portuguese India," in *The Jesuits: Cultures, Sciences, and the Arts 1540-1773*, ed. John W. O'Malley (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1999), 481.

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forming a network of small coastal settlements. These informal colonies form a part of the so-called 'shadow' or 'improvised empire.'¹⁶

In the sixteenth century, an age when Europe was expanding overseas territories through the seas, we notice that the imperial Mughals of the Indian subcontinent had begun to formulate political strategies and extend networks stretching outside the subcontinent. Subsequently, they entered the maritime forum of these European powers through the occupation and development of ports and power centres in coastal India. In this thesis, I will make an effort to understand the maritime presence of the Mughals who, in the larger historiography, are labelled as land-oriented and indifferent to the matters of the seas. The thesis will further examine dialogues between the Mughal and Portuguese Empires on an equal platform and as contesting power entities, in order to understand the underlying meanings.

Survival of Portuguese in south Asia was dependent upon a successful relationship with the Mughals and was expressed in a range of fields that included commerce, politics, religion, and the arts. The religious relationship between the two was marked by the Jesuits' influence, primarily at the courts of Akbar (r.1556-1605) and his successor, Mirza Nur-ud-din Beig Mohammad Khan Salim, popularly known as Jahangir (r.1605-27). The Mughal-Portuguese encounter can be viewed as an intriguing example of multi-layered intercultural dialogue. The layers of politics, economics and religion were so fluid and intermeshed that it is difficult to dissect them. Earlier research in this area focuses on either politico-economic or religious dimensions, but this study shall look into the grey area of continuity between the two. The relation between the court and the ports is what this work seeks to establish.

¹⁶ Jorge Flores, "Floating Franks: the Portuguese and heir Empire as seen from early modern Asia," in *The Routledge history of Western empires*, eds. Robert Aldrich and Kirsten Mckenzie (Oxford: Routledge, 2014), 33-34.

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1.1 Chapter Overview

This thesis is broadly divided into three parts constituting two chapters each. Part I provides an overview of the general setting and introduction to the theme. The first chapter gives us an insight into key research questions, state-of-the-art, methodology and sources, a note on new terminologies developed in the thesis and its contribution to global history. A complex and a multi-layered project like this necessitates a clear understanding of time and space, thus these questions have been dealt with in much detail and have been placed within the larger historiographical debate. The second chapter primarily based on secondary literature, deals with the comparative analysis of the two political entities (the Mughals and the Portuguese) and their interaction in a global context. It seeks to understand the complex evolution and nature of these two empires. The chapter ends with a note on diplomacy and issues of communication between the two early modern empires. It makes a case for combining the comparative and connected histories.

Parts II and III may collectively be seen as advocating the main idea of the thesis-connecting the 'Court and the Coasts'. Part II comprising of chapters 3 and 4, analyses the diplomatic and religious dialogues of the Mughals and Portuguese in the court during the period 1570-1627. The two chapters aim to understand the complexities of political dialogues specifically on the matters of religion, sea-lanes and pilgrimage of Hajj. The third chapter deals with the contours of formal and informal diplomacy represented in the Mughal-Jesuits dialogues in the Mughal court. It strives to understand the intersections of religion and politics in the Mughal court. Chapter four studies the usage of rhetoric, and the employment of tactful negotiations to win foreign and regional players on their side, which makes these dialogues a unique case in intercultural diplomacy. It places the Mughal-Portuguese relations in the broad framework of the 'Indian Ocean world' and traces the effects of the changing dynamics on their relationship with contemporary Islamic empires.

Part III focuses on Mughal-Portuguese engagements in the western and eastern maritime frontiers of the Indian subcontinent. By integrating Gujarat and

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linking it with the Indo-Gangetic plains and later Bengal, Akbar encompassed the two strategic bays of Indian Ocean: the Arabian Sea and Bay of Bengal. These provided the Mughals as the bases for expanding inland in the proximity of the ports and quelling the foreign powers like Portuguese, the intrusion of which had resulted in jeopardizing the political supremacy and prestige of the Mughals. The effort to quell the Portuguese is reflected in numerous diplomatic overtures and political collaborations and conflicts.

Chapter five with a focus on Gujarat and Konkan in the western frontier, studies the scramble for ports on one hand and collaboration as traders on the other, with a special emphasis on the bullion trade. The sixth chapter with its focus on the eastern frontier of Bengal elaborates on and supports the concept of maritime consciousness of the Mughal Empire with details on Mughal shipping. It further traces the development of religious and political relationship of the two entities within a challenging geographical setting and amongst other regional players. Both the chapters analyse the regions' strategic location and economic viability for the two political powers and the changing characterization of the regions as a result of these shared interests. The relation between apparently 'land Oriented' Mughals and sea based Portuguese Empire has been previously looked upon as an archetype of Indo-European interactions where the Portuguese as the heroes of the seas effortlessly slip into the domains of land based Mughal Empire and in the areas of proximity to it. The power struggle for occupation of coastal zones and ports reflects on the Mughal interest in expanding and carving a niche in the maritime frontier.

1.2 Statement of thesis and the research questions

The thesis does not seek to study the religious discussions in *Ibadat-Khana*¹⁷ (House of worship), but to understand the intents beneath these initiatives from the Mughals. The idea is to associate the Mughal-Portuguese economic and political

¹⁷ The structure was built in the reign of Akbar to hold religious assemblies and theological debates between the priests and representatives of different religions.

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interaction on the ports or trading fronts with the religious developments in the Mughal court. The present stock of historical research on Mughal-Portuguese dialogues has only briefly addressed the political intent of the religious dialogues between Jesuits and the Mughals and the understanding of the political vocabulary used, especially by the Mughals. By highlighting these aspects, this work will provide a valuable contribution to the existing research on Mughal-Portuguese relations. The first set of questions involves deciphering the political links and correspondences between the Mughals and the Portuguese largely under the guise of religion. This work looks for the disguised connections between the Mughal-Jesuit dialogues in the court and Mughal-Portuguese interactions at the trading front. It connects the existing strands to form a comprehensive picture of Mughal and Portuguese relations.

Secondly, it will be analysed how this relationship changed political dynamics in the Indian Ocean arena. The second set of questions address the responsiveness of the Mughals to the Portuguese existence in Hindustan and their consciousness of the happenings in the seas. Placing the seas at the centre of the narrative elucidates the complex Mughal history of the subcontinent and opens new arenas in the study of Mughal political and diplomatic outlook. This project tries to associate Indian sub-continental and regional politics with the ports on the western and eastern coasts in order to have an embracing view of the political equations in not only the Indian subcontinent, but also in Indian Ocean at large. The thesis aims to fill the historiographical gap that resulted from straightjacketing the Mughals as a land-based empire. Contrarily, the layered Mughal-Portuguese interactions in the ports of Gujarat, Konkan, and Bengal, present a case for dynamic political scramble for maritime zones between the so called land-based Mughal Empire, sea-borne Portuguese State and shifting regional alliances.

The analysis of political engagements on the ports illuminates the 'maritime consciousness'¹⁸ of the Mughals engulfed within larger political aims such as secure

¹⁸ I used the phrase in one of my paper presentation, Manya Rathore, "Negotiating the seas: Situating the Portuguese in Mughal foreign politics under Akbar" at VSIG Symposium, *Interkulturelle Diplomatie im historischen Vergleich*, Wien, 20-21 December 2013. Later published in Werner and Crailsheim

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control of the Hajj pilgrimage and negotiations on accessing sea lanes for commercial purposes. The diplomatic agencies from the Mughal power centre regularly corresponded on the matters of securing maritime borders and induced collaboration among other sovereigns of the Muslim world (Ottomans, Persians and Uzbeks) and regional rulers within the subcontinent. Hence, the question of the project would be to analyse Mughal maritime interests and 'maritime consciousness' as seen in the port cities of the Indian subcontinent.

1.3 State-of-the-Art and Theoretical Framework

The compartmentalisation in historical writing on the Mughals and the Portuguese has resulted in a fragmentary account of their relationship. These compartments are sometimes economic, political, and cultural and at a conceptual level, either land centric or maritime. However, a synthesis of these myriad compartments and historical approaches has inspired the writing of this project. This section firstly, provides the reader with a bird's eye view of the historiography of the Portuguese in the early modern Indian subcontinent. However, it must be stated at the outset that the trends mentioned here are only a few, and were selected on the basis of their relevance to the project. These trends lay the foundation for the forthcoming historiography specifically relevant to the Mughals and the Portuguese. The literature review of Mughal-Portuguese relations has been thematically divided here into two parts, with relevance to the court and the coasts. The court-based historiography includes the works on religious dialogues/missions and political dynamics between the two. The coast-based historiography focuses on the literature solely focused on the micro studies of coastal regions in the subcontinent and macro

(eds.), *Audienzen und Allianzen, Interkulturelle Diplomatie in Asien und Europa vom 8. bis zum 18. Jahrhundert*, (Wien: Mandelbaum, 2015), 146-155.

The Mughals can be termed as a 'maritime conscious empire' keeping in view the diplomatic intrigues, political bargains and their efforts to maintain balance of power in the Indian Ocean region. Though the Mughals did not endeavour for any expansionist agendas outside the subcontinent but their orientation towards the seas is reflected in the effort to gain access to the sea lanes for the reasons of prestige and political control. The concept shall be discussed in much detail later in the chapter.

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accounts of Portuguese in the Indian Ocean, with either economic or financial nuances of the Mughal-Portuguese relations.

1.4 Trends in Historiography of Portuguese in India

The narratives of Portuguese historiography under the dictatorship of Antonio Salazar (r. 1926-1975) marked a continuum with the imperialist traditions of history writing eulogising Portuguese accomplishments in overseas territories and colonies. On the other hand, like any other dictatorship, rigorous censorship was implemented. Works such as Cortesão's *History of Portuguese Cartography*,¹⁹ which provided details on cartographic and oceanic links between Lisbon and Goa, complement the picture of 'great Portuguese explorers.' Several copies of the book were freely distributed in the universities and libraries. However, patronage to the historical literature on overseas expansion was also provided by Calouste Gulbekian Foundation in Lisbon. *Documentação Ultramarina Portuguesa* is a useful reserve for Portuguese documents in the archives of Portugal and elsewhere. A counter narrative to Portuguese nationalist historiography was provided by scholars like K. M. Panikkar who, in his extensive work *Asia and Western Dominance*, claimed to focus on 'Asian response' to the West and ended up characterising Asia after 1500 as having entered the 'Vasco da Gama epoch.' His work studies the negative impact of colonialism on a macro scale, implying the dominance in maritime power over the huge Asian land masses.

By the mid-1970s, the historiography on Portuguese India moved from studying the 'impact' of the Portuguese on the local society to understanding the social relations and economic collaborations. The works of M. N. Pearson, especially *Merchants and Rulers of Gujarat*²⁰ and *Coastal Western India*,²¹ and C.R. Boxer's

¹⁹ Armando Cortesão, *History of Portuguese Cartography* (Lisbon: Junta de investigações do Ultramar, 1969).

²⁰ M. N. Pearson, *Merchants and Rulers in Gujarat* (New Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal Publishers Pvt. Ltd., 1976). The chapter three of the book 'The State' is of particular interest to this theme, in which he mainly argues for a passive involvement of the Mughal state in the maritime affairs. Also see, M. N. Pearson, "The *Estado da Índia* and the Hajj," *Indica* 26, nos 1-2 (1989): 103-118 for Portuguese equation in the religious dynamics of the Hajj in the Muslim world of the Indian Ocean.

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Portuguese in India in the Mid-Seventeenth Century provide detailed accounts of this symbiotic relationship. Ashin Dasgupta²² provides a picture of active commercial and entrepreneurial activities in the Indian subcontinent and Om Prakash²³ considers the Portuguese control of the Indian Ocean as marginal. Furthermore, efforts were made towards deconstructing the idea of a monolithic Portuguese enterprise in India and 'Golden Goa.' This resulted in the production of works such as George W. Winius' *Black Legend of Portuguese India*,²⁴ exposing the deep rooted corruption in Portuguese India ranging from bureaucracy to the ranks of soldiers. Moreover, the works of Sanjay Subrahmanyam²⁵ and K. S. Mathew²⁶ provide an outlook on the functioning of private Portuguese traders and their activities in different regions in the Indian subcontinent. Collectively, these works paint a diversified image of the Portuguese enterprise in India as opposed to the monolithic one depicted in traditional historiography.

Another trend in historiography was started by historians from Xavier Centre of Historical Research.²⁷ Their research produced pioneering works under the names of Teotónio R. de Souza²⁸ and Charles Borges,²⁹ and the institute published numerous books and edited volumes dealing with the Portuguese cultural and economic presence in Asia with a special focus on historical development of Goa. T. R. de Souza's *Medieval Goa* is a milestone in the study of internal dynamics of the Portuguese capital as opposed to the macro studies focused on the external

²¹ M. N. Pearson, *Coastal Western India: Studies from the Portuguese Records* (New Delhi: Concept Publishing House, 1981).

²² For a detailed account of private commercial and entrepreneurial enterprises in the Indian subcontinent see, Ashin Dasgupta, *The World of Indian Ocean Merchant* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2001).

²³ Om Prakash, "Restrictive Trading Regimes: VOC and the Asian Spice Trade in the Seventeenth Century," in *Emporia, Commodities and Entrepreneurs in Asian Maritime Trade, c 1400-1750*, eds. Roderich Ptak and Dietmar Rothermund (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 1991), 107.

²⁴ George W. Winius's *Black Legend of Portuguese India: Diogo Do Couto, His Contemporaries, and the Soldado Pratico: a Contribution to the Study of Political Corruption in the Empires of Early Modern Europe* (New Delhi: Concept Publishing House, 1985).

²⁵ See, Sanjay Subrahmanyam, *Political Economy of Commerce*.

²⁶ K. S Mathew, *Portuguese Trade in India in the Sixteenth Century* (Delhi: Manohar, 1983).

²⁷ The centre was established by the Jesuits of Goa in 1977 to promote the historical research on Goan socio-cultural issues.

²⁸ T. R. de Souza, *Medieval Goa: A Socio-Economic History* (Goa: Broadway Book Centre, 2005).

²⁹ Charles J. Borges, *The economics of the Goa Jesuits, 1542-1759: an explanation of their rise and fall* (New Delhi: Concept Publishing House, 1994).

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relations between Lisbon and the western coast of India. However, the works dealing specifically with Mughal and Portuguese relations were still limited.

1.4.1 Historiography on the Court

Much of what was explored stemmed around the analysis of the religious and cultural effects of the Jesuit missions to the Mughal court by pioneering scholars like Henry Hosten,³⁰ belonging to the Society itself. However the non-Jesuit scholars like Edward Maclagan³¹ are still a valuable source of information on the mission history. The mission history mainly focuses on the issues of religious exchange between the Mughals and the Portuguese: dialogues on Christianity and matters of theology centered on the discussion and inter-religious debates in the *Ibadat Khana* (Hall of worship). The beginnings of the Jesuit historiography or rather the need to write about the overseas missions arose from necessity to report to the religious authorities in Lisbon and Rome about their engagements with the native societies. The reports were additionally used for propaganda to attract new recruits. The Jesuit historiography 'proleptically starts in the present in which the Jesuit writers are writing about themselves.' The Jesuit history, as Ines Zupanov proclaims, was 'simultaneously in the making and already in use as a template for action.'³²

The picture of scholarly research on the Jesuit presence in the Mughal court is not complete without brief descriptions of some monumental works. Fernão Guerreiro's *Relacam annual das cousas que fizeram os padres da Companhia de Jesus* based on Jesuit correspondence in the form of annual letters and reports sent from various missionary centres to Europe, is a comprehensive history of the

³⁰ For a brief look at voluminous Hosten collection see, Jose Kalapura, "The Hosten Collection: A Veritable Source for a History of Christianity in India, *Indian Church History Review* 94 (2010): 7-29.

³¹ Edward Maclagan, *The Jesuits and the Great Mogul* (London: Burns Oates and Washbourne Ltd., 1932). This work was received with great anticipation after the publication of his paper in 1896, on the Jesuit missions to the court of Akbar. Till date his work is cited by the scholars of mission history and not without reason, it is the most exhaustive record of the missions to the Mughal court.

³² Ines G. Zupanov, "The Historiography of the Jesuit Missions in India (1500-1800)," in *Jesuit Historiography Online* (2016), accessed 24.01.2017, doi: 10.1163/2468-7723. Zupanov elaborates on various trends in Jesuit historiography ranging from the sixteenth century, the British colonial period, the beginnings of the Indian Jesuit historiography to the contemporary works.

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Portuguese Jesuit overseas activities.³³ Pierre du Jarric (1566-1617) published chapters on the Jesuit missions to Akbar's court and the travels to Tibet in his magnum opus *Histoire*,³⁴ later translated by C.H. Payne in his famous *Akbar and the Jesuits*.³⁵ Moreover, Payne published *Jahangir and the Jesuits*³⁶ directly translated from Guerreiro's *Relacam*. John Correia-Afonso's key works relevant for this project, *Letters to the Mughal Court*³⁷ and *Jesuit Letters and Indian History*,³⁸ could be regarded as a milestone in the historical analysis of the first Jesuit embassy at the Mughal court. The multilingual Jesuit correspondence could be used as a corroborative source for official Mughal chronicles.

In conjunction to the study of religious dialogues at the Mughal court, an area that has grown significantly in the recent decades has focused on the impact that the Jesuit missionaries had on the Mughal emperors and Mughal art. The new line of research, as developed by scholars like Ebba Koch,³⁹ and Gauvin Alexander Bailey,⁴⁰ analyses the underlying links between the imperial vocabulary and the artistic impressions of the Jesuits on the Mughal art. However, the Portuguese relationship with the Mughals was not limited to religious and cultural engagement of the Jesuits.

The recent splurge of works on connected history has also contributed to the research on Mughals and Portuguese. The works of Sanjay Subrahmanyam⁴¹ are path-breaking in this stream and have greatly influenced new research including this

³³ Fernão Guerreiro, Fernão Guerreiro, *Relação Anual Das Coisas Que Fizeram Os Padres Da Companhia de Jesus Nas Suas Missoes*, 3 vols. (Coimbra: Imprensa Da Universidade; Lisbon: Imprensa Nacional, 1930-1942).

³⁴ Pierre du Jarric, *Histoire des choses plus memorables advenues tant ez Indes Orientales, que autres pais de la decouvertes des Portugais*, 3 vols. (Bordeaux: Simon Millanges, 1610-14).

³⁵ Pierre du Jarric, *Akbar and the Jesuits: An Account of the Jesuit Missions to the Court of Akbar*, trans. and ed. C. H. Payne (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1926).

³⁶ Fernão Guerreiro, *Jahangir and the Jesuits. With an Account of the Travels of Benedict Goes and the Mission to Pegu*, trans. and ed. C. H. Payne (London: Routledge & Sons, 1930).

³⁷ John Correia-Afonso, *Letters from the Mughal Court* (Anand: X. Diaz del Rio, 1980).

³⁸ John Correia-Afonso, *Jesuit letters and Indian history* (Bombay: Indian Historical Research Institute, 1955)

³⁹ Ebba Koch, *Mughal Art and Imperial Ideology: Collected Essays* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2001).

⁴⁰ Gauvin Alexander Bailey, "The Indian Conquest of Catholic Art: The Mughals, the Jesuits, and the Imperial Mural Painting," *Art Journal* 57 (1998): 24-30.

⁴¹ Sanjay Subrahmanyam's works are stretched across geographical areas of Europe, Asia, Latin America in the early modern period starting from the fifteenth until the eighteenth century. He started as an economic historian but later branched into political, cultural and intellectual history.

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project. His most famous works⁴² explore the connected histories to historically link the Mughals and the Europeans in the early modern period while giving a voice to the Asian agents in the dual relationship. His other work connects biographies and global history by analysing the case studies of three individuals at the crossroads of political systems and cultures. Furthermore, he analyses the agencies of visual objects and individuals in cross cultural courtly encounters. Jorge Flores is another historian who has immensely contributed to Mughal-Portuguese historical research by translating important political correspondence exchanged between the Portuguese and Mughal power centres.⁴³ He has valuably contributed to the Jesuit histories in Jahangir's court by exploring, translating and analysing the figure and the work of Jesuit Jeronimo Xavier in 1610-11 in the *Treatise of the Court and Household of Jahangir Padshah King of the Mughals*.⁴⁴ His other works have been focused on cultural representations and mutual imaging by the Portuguese and the Mughals.⁴⁵

1.4.2 Historiography of the coast

An image of a Europe, which was fast evolving as a result of progressive mercantile strategies and a contrary image of Asia as a late comer at the periphery of the integrated global economy, seems to have been a granted notion reflected in the writings of many others including Immanuel Wallerstein.⁴⁶ Later writings dwelling upon the earlier works juxtaposed this hypothesis on historical developments in the Indian Ocean. In this context, the western part of India drew attention of the historians arguing for maritime passivity of the Mughal rulers, absent initiative for

⁴² Sanjay Subrahmanyam, *Mughal and the Franks* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2005). The second volume in the series of connected histories is Sanjay Subrahmanyam, *From the Tagus to Ganges* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2005). Some other papers of relevance to the framework of connected histories are, Sanjay Subrahmanyam, "A Matter of Alignment: Mughal Gujarat and the Iberian World in the transition of 1580-1," *Mare Liberum* 9, (1995): 461-79; "Connected Histories: Notes towards a reconfiguration," 735-62.

⁴³ Jorge Flores, António Vasconcelos de Saldanha, *The Firangis in the Mughal Chancellery. Portuguese Copies of Akbar's documents (1572-1604)* (New Delhi: Embassy of Portugal, 2003).

⁴⁴ Jorge Flores, *The Mughal Padshah: a Jesuit treatise on Emperor Jahangir's court and household* (Boston: Brill, 2015).

⁴⁵ Jorge Flores, *Goa and the Great Mughal* (Lisbon: Scale Arts & Heritage, 2011); "Distant Wonders: The strange and the Marvellous between Mughal India and Habsburg Iberia in the Early Seventeenth century," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 49 (2007): 553-581.

⁴⁶ Immanuel Wallerstein, *The Modern World System I* (London: University of California Press, 2011).

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regulating maritime activities, and a lack of patronage to trade. These arguments thrived on the idea that Mughal revenue mainly came from the land⁴⁷ and that the Mughal state adhered largely to the framework of 'agrarian based imperial formation' like the Safavids and the Ottomans.⁴⁸ Moreover, the relationship between maritime consciousness and the court politics is rarely discussed. The main feature of this project will be to associate these geographically connected but theoretically separated features of land and water. The interplay of maritime regions and their communication with the interiors would bring out new features of early modern global politics rarely seen before.

As previously discussed, the maritime history of the Indian Ocean has come a long way since the works of K.M. Pannikar,⁴⁹ who vouched for naval supremacy of India before the sixteenth century. Other nationalist histories showed a central role of the Indians in the Indian Ocean and world maritime history in the ancient era. M.N. Pearson, however, argues for a symbiotic but asymmetric relation between land and sea, with sea having a lesser influence on land rather than the reverse. In relation to the Mughals, Pearson argues that they were mainly a land-based empire with no interests in the issues of the seas. The maritime interests certainly had an influence on the activities of the land and this symbiotic relation is placed in the foreground of the works of many maritime and naval historians. G.A. Ballard is critical of naval histories, completely dissociated from the general history.⁵⁰ He writes in his monumental work, 'sea power, however necessary in any given situation, is not an end to itself but a means to an end.'⁵¹ Astonishingly, efforts in understanding the maritime presence of the Mughals to reach political ends have been merely fragmentary. The connection between ports and the courts is also incidental. Having stated the scales of historiography on the subject, it is important

⁴⁷ See Pearson, *Merchants and Rulers*, 89-91; Ellison Banks Findly, *Nur Jahan, Empress of India* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), 156.

⁴⁸ Cited from Sanjay Subrahmanyam, *The Portuguese Empire in Asia, 1500-1700: A Political and Economic History* (London: Longman, 1993), 11.

⁴⁹ K. M. Panikkar, *Asia and Western Dominance: a survey of the Vasco Da Gama epoch of Asian history, 1498-1945* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1953).

⁵⁰ G. A. Ballard, *Rulers of Indian Ocean*, (London: Duckworth, 1927), v. Also in M. N Pearson, "The Indian Ocean and the Portuguese in the sixteenth century," 106.

⁵¹ Ballard, *Rulers of Indian Ocean*, vi.

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to place project in the global maritime studies and to question its theoretical foundations.

Some scholars of Mughal India have dealt with evolving commercial and financial relations between the Mughal and the Portuguese; however, the relationship is largely placed in the macro economic and financial histories⁵² of the Mughal Empire. Several micro studies dealing with trade dynamics and Indian merchant agencies with specific focus on regions such as the western coast, Coromandel or the Bay of Bengal have also been published.⁵³ Closely related to this genre are the growing number of port histories which specifically analyse the evolution, change and decline of the ports of Indian subcontinent.⁵⁴ However, the connection between ports and the courts is mostly incidental in these studies.

1.5 Situating the project in global maritime framework

Jeremy Black, while attributing the forging of the global maritime network to Europe, proclaims, “what made the Europe distinctive in the world history was its ability to use the oceans in order to create the first trading systems and empires able to span the world.”⁵⁵ The statement draws a correlation between global and maritime. Globalisation traces global connections and since most of these connections were forged through the oceans and seas, they were mainly maritime in nature. Maritime history has provided a methodology for linking the local, regional, international and global. The study of maritime history has transcended the boundaries drawn by Eurocentric approaches to the first, second and third world. It

⁵² Shireen Moosvi, *Economy of the Mughal Empire c.1593: a statistical study* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1987); J. F. Richards, “Mughal State Finance and Premodern World Economy,” *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, 23 (1981): 285-308; Najaf Haider, “Precious Metal Flows and Currency Circulation in the Mughal Empire,” *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 39(1996): 298-364.

⁵³ See Jorge Flores, “The Sea and the World of the Mutassadi: A profile of port officials from Mughal Gujarat (c. 1600-1650),” *Journal of Royal Asiatic Society*, 21 (2011): 55-71; Om Prakash, “The Indian Maritime Merchant, 1500-1800,” *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 47 (2004): 435-457.

⁵⁴ Rubi Maloni, *Surat, port of the Mughal Empire* (Mumbai: Himalaya Publishing House, 2003); Indu Banga ed., *Ports and their hinterlands in India, 1700-1950* (Delhi: Manohar publications, 1992).

⁵⁵ Jeremy Black, *The British Seaborne Empire* (London: Yale University Press, 2004), 1.

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has brought the periphery of world history to the centre of historical research and, that is how is linked to the global history.⁵⁶

However, maritime studies are not devoid of Eurocentrism. In the effort to write anti-Eurocentric global history by connecting different regions of the world with seas and oceans as the main agencies, some studies indulge in what Wallerstein (with regard to capitalism) refers to as 'anti-Eurocentric Eurocentrism'.⁵⁷ Wallerstein used the concept to define the works that focus on the idea that the non-European societies were 'on their way' to modernity, a process which was sterilised by the European interruption. These 'non-Eurocentric' works focus on non-European societies' development parallel to European development and, in turn, impose the former with the ideal standards of development. For example, Admiral Zheng He's expeditions have been considered the stepping stones to modernity just as the Eurocentric works' assume the Discovery of the Americas as the opening to the modern world, with China in these 'centrist' works being the new Europe. An approach away from 'centrism' is needed in order to analyse, write and understand the history as 'entangled' and the geographical spaces as connected.⁵⁸

Keeping with this line of thought, this project treats the Indian subcontinent and its coastal regions as the geographical space where the Mughal-Portuguese history could be stationed and understood. The effort has been made to write a history centred not on an Empire, but on interaction or connectedness. "The contact points between land and seas develop into specific dots which when connected, lead to the development of historically and geographically crucial nexuses."⁵⁹ These specific dots that developed in the Indian subcontinent as a result of the interaction

⁵⁶ Gelina Harlaftis, "Maritime History or the History of Thalassa," in *The New Ways of History: Developments in Historiography*, eds., Harlaftis, et al. (London: I.B Tauris, 2010), 220.

⁵⁷ As it may seem certain revisionist works, in the effort to overcome the Eurocentric bias with respect to the origins of capitalism, tend to straightjacket the non-European regions into the mould of presumed changes in Europe for example, private property in land, growth of long distance trade, free market and drawing parallels to market economy in Europe. See, Immanuel Wallerstein, "Eurocentrism and its Avatars: The Dilemmas of Social Science," keynote address presented at ISA East Asian Regional Colloquium, *The Future of Sociology in East Asia*, Seoul, 22-23 November 1996.

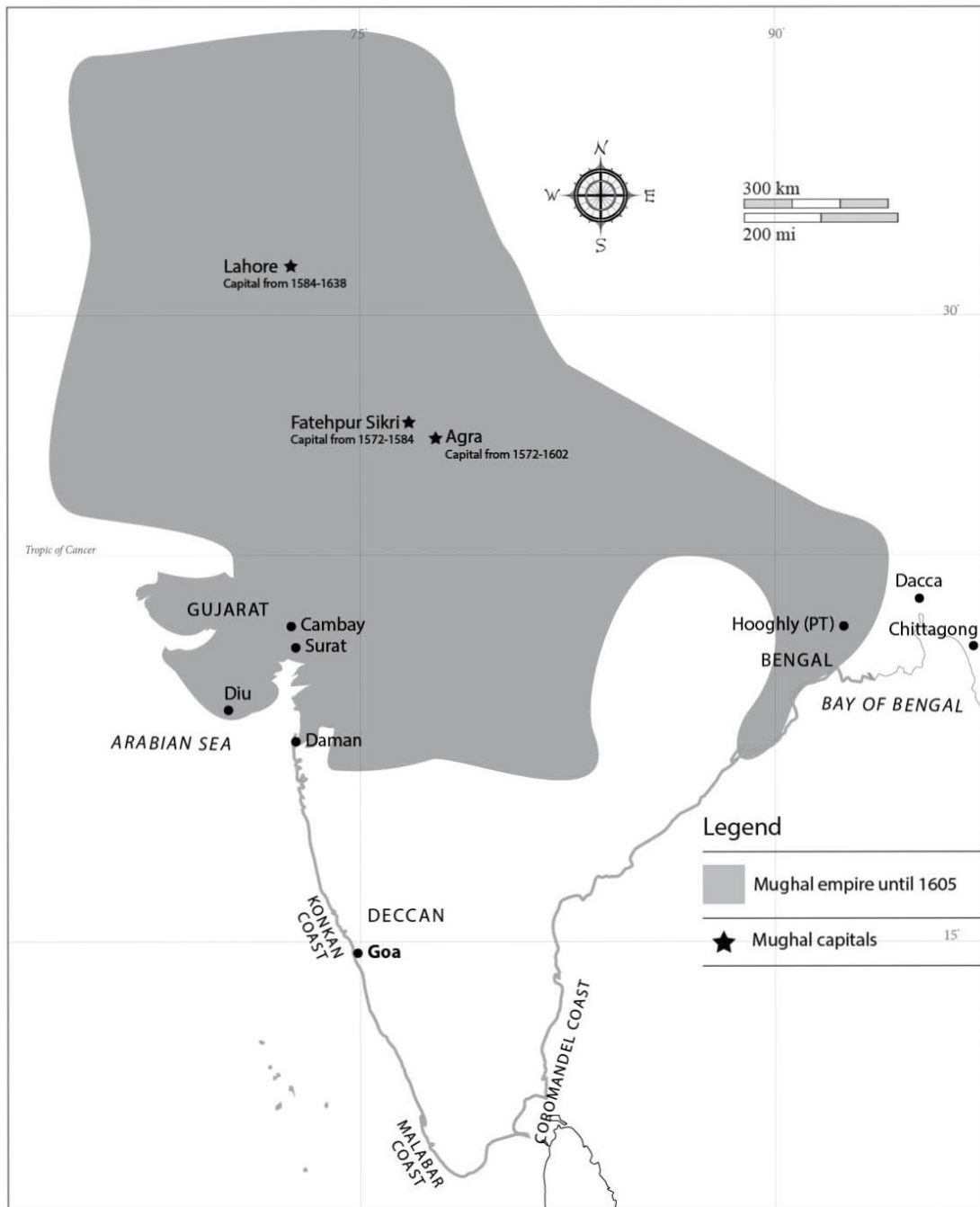
⁵⁸ Sebastian Conrad, *What is Global History* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2016), 164-168.

⁵⁹ Nicola Di Cosmo, "Connecting Maritime and Continental History: The Black Sea Region at the time of Mongol Empire," in *The Sea: Thalassography and Historiography*, ed. Peter N. Miller (Ann Harbour: University of Michigan Press, 2013), 174.

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between the Mughals and the Portuguese hold a great interest in this thesis. The regions of Gujarat, Bengal, Konkan and Deccan witnessed the development of these crucial political and economic nexuses. The development of these regions can be seen as the geographical manifestation of two major European and non-European 'empires.' Even though one can agree that European empires were the major players in transgressing the boundaries of nations and exploring the new domains in Asia, Africa and Americas, this connectedness would not have been possible had there not been a 'hook' in the native societies to connect to. Had this hook, or what I like to refer to them as-'pull forces,' not been present in our case of the Mughal Empire, for example, the 'connectedness,' 'globalisation,' and 'entangling' would have not been possible. In this case, the (pre-existing) Portuguese *Estado da Índia* was drawn to the Mughal court on the initiative of the latter, thus starting the centuries-long relationship based on mutual deference and, at many times containment.

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Map 1: Major frontiers of Mughal-Portuguese interaction.

1.6 'Maritime Consciousness' of the Mughals: Introduction of the Concept

"...para êste nosso mar Oceano do Cabo Bojador e té Índia inclusivé."⁶⁰ (for this is our sea of Cape of Bojador and India.) These words of João de Barros sum up the Portuguese ambitions in the Indian Ocean, as it is generally viewed as the official viewpoint of the Portuguese Crown. The Portuguese thought that there was a juridical vacuum in the Indian Ocean which they could fill.⁶¹ This, however, was at odds with the Papal Bull of 1455 that granted Portugal the exclusive right for navigation on the sea route to India not over the whole of Indian Ocean. This claim and propaganda has been taken rather seriously by the historians of Indian Ocean. K.N. Chaudhuri considers the Indian Ocean before the European advent as a 'no-man's territory' and Steinberg considers the ocean as a non-space immune from state power.⁶²

The thirteenth century witnessed the development of the concept of sovereignty (closer to modern times) coexisting with the laws of customary nature. Hence, it is during this period that we situate the theory that a sovereign's control over his territory is extended to the coastal waters. The contemporary Portuguese conception of adopting a safe harbour in the waters by opting to stay away from the 'land territories' of the rulers in the Indian subcontinent did not chart them as a potential threat in eyes of the Mughals. In a letter written by D. João de Castro to the King Dom João III in 1539, he stresses that the Portuguese must not venture in the land territory of the subcontinent so as to maintain peaceful and cordial relations with the rulers and that the latter must be reassured that the Portuguese are

⁶⁰ João de Barros and Diogo Do Couto, *Da Ásia* (Lisboa: Na Regina OfficinaTypografica, 1777-1788), 268.

⁶¹ M. N Pearson, *Indian Ocean* (London: Routledge, 2003), 122.

⁶² Cited from Sebastian Prange, "The Contested Sea, Regimes of Maritime Violence in the Pre-Modern Indian Ocean", *Journal of Early Modern History* 17 (2013): 10. The author argues that conceptualizing and regulating piracy in the Indian Ocean by Asian rulers provides a stance against the Indian Ocean being a passive maritime setting. He provides diverse case studies from Srivijaya and Chola empires, the ruler of Qays, Rasulid Yemen and the Malabar Coast.

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content with the dominion of the sea and hold no future goals to venture in their lands:

*...em nenhũa maneira os portugueses deviam demtrar hũ so palmo pela tera demtro da India, porque nenhũa outra cousa sosenta a paz e conserva em amizade dos Reis e senhores da India se nã crerẽ e terẽ por muyto averigoado, que somẽte nos contentamos do mar, e que nenhũ preposito nẽ imaginação Reina em nos de lhe cobiçarmos suas teras.*⁶³

Mughals' major maritime interest was located in expanding and controlling the maritime outlets along the littorals of the Mughal Empire. Importantly, these littorals were the ends of the *Uttarapatha* (northern road) and *Aparanta* (western India) high roads⁶⁴ spanning from the imperial capitals of Delhi and Agra. As a consequence, most of the Mughal maritime attention gravitated around the coasts of Gujarat and Bengal.⁶⁵ The interest in the coastal zones was not novel to the Mughals in the Indian Ocean. The Ottomans also focused much of their interest not in controlling the sea routes, but in areas of contact between land and sea. The task of guarding and securing the sea routes was delineated to highly specialised Abyssinian corsairs of Janjira on the west coast. The maritime consciousness of the Mughals, as a concept introduced here, focuses on the active or passive Mughal delineations in response to the coastal and maritime challenges posed by the Portuguese.

This concept recoils us to the theoretical discussion over the freedom of the seas proposed by Grotius as discussed previously. A number of legal theorists in the seventeenth and the eighteenth centuries contended the idea of free seas and their non-jurisdictional nature. Prominently, Seldon opposed the free sea contention by drawing parallels between internal water bodies like lakes and rivers with the neighbouring bodies of seas, and goes on to say, "there is no one who thinks that it is not difficult to occupy the entire ocean. If, however, it might be occupied as a lake

⁶³ Elaine Sanceu ed. *Cartas de D. João de Castro* (Portugal: Agencia Geral do Ultramar, 1954), 29.

⁶⁴ Ancient texts divide the Indian subcontinent into five regions: *Madhyadesh* or Middle country, *Uttarapath* or Northern India, *Pracya* or Eastern India, *Dakshinapth* or southern India and *Aparanta* or western India. Since path literally means road in Sanskrit, *Uttarapatha* can be referred to as northern road.

⁶⁵ J.J.L. Gommans, *Mughal Warfare: Indian Frontiers and the Highroad to Empires* (London: Routledge 2003), 164.

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or a bay... it even might pass into the possession of an occupier.”⁶⁶ By the eighteenth century a Dutch lawyer named Cornelius van Bynkershoek proposed a solution to the problem of maritime control in the assertion that “in general it must be said that, the means of protecting the force of arms ends, for this is, as we have said, the means of protecting possession.” This led to the “three mile rule,” denoting the maximum distance from which a shot fired by cannon could reach the shore.⁶⁷ It mainly signifies that the sea claimed by a particular polity was not guarded by ships or a naval force, but rather by more permanently held fortified dominions on land.

The application of this theory in the early modern Indian subcontinent would lead to the invocation of a new understanding of Mughal consciousness of the seas. The Portuguese contention to monopolise the sea routes and conquer new ports are paralleled by Mughal efforts to maintain and protect their fortifications in the proximity of the seas. Hence, the argument of the absence of navy suggested as the major con of Mughal power and lack of interest in the sea does not remain completely unchallenged, and the last chapter shall deal with Mughal efforts to seal their naval protection. The chapter will explore different strands of power encapsulation and portrayal in the maritime domain and river fronts.

1.7 Methods and Approaches

The ‘first globalisation’ was distinct in the existence of political and cultural pluralism of the Portuguese and Spanish monarchies and subsequent colonial powers’ subjugation of indigenous peoples in different parts of the world while simultaneously the empires of the powerful Turkish Ottoman, India Mughal and Chinese Qing were flourishing. The scholarship on global history has tended to lean towards finding the roots of globalisation in European soil. Some even proclaim that

⁶⁶ Pascal Firges, Tobias Graf, Christian Roth, Gülay Tulasoglu eds., *Well-Connected Domains: Towards an Entangled Ottoman History* (Leiden: Brill, 2004), 56.

⁶⁷ Ibid., 57. For more information on Seldon-Grotius debate see, Ram Prakash Anand, *Origin and Development of the Law of the Sea* (Hague: Martinus Nijhoff Publishers 1983), 105-107.

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the Portuguese 'gave birth to globalisation,'⁶⁸ the modern global consciousness, or the sense of global space as was forged collectively by the Spanish and the Portuguese.⁶⁹ The global approach to history connects different spaces and temporalities, integrating the study of different actors and agencies.

Connected Histories: Recent historiographical debates on global history have led to an upsurge of the 'connected histories' approach in the reading of cross-cultural engagements and dialogues. This approach introduced by Sanjay Subrahmanyam⁷⁰ shuns the divisions created by political boundaries to create a passage for connections, transfers, influences and continuities. Through the application of methods employed by the connected history approach, the project would seek to understand the Mughal-Portuguese connections at two levels: the micro level, which includes the case studies of interaction on the ports and dialogues in the court, and secondly, the supra-regional level to include an analysis of the dynamics of Mughal-Portuguese interaction and the consequences or impact on the Indian Ocean.

Histoire Croisée or the entangled history: A second major methodology that would be instrumental in my research is *Histoire Croisée*. It breaks with a one dimensional approach, which simplifies or homogenises, and looks at the historical event from a multi-dimensional perspective. The entities and objects are not merely posed in relation to each other but seen *through* each other. The use of this method does not stop at the point of contact and intersection, but it further studies the resulting process as is reflected in the term 'history' in *histoire croisée*.⁷¹ The intersecting use or cross reading of regional (Gujarati, Bengali) and foreign (Ottoman, Uzbek, Portuguese, English) histories to trace the development of Mughal-Portuguese relations would open new perspectives in their inter-relationship. The two entities would be seen through the lens of the 'other' and an

⁶⁸ J. Rodrigues and T. C. Devezas, *Pioneers of Globalization: Why the Portuguese Surprised the World* (Vila Nova Famalicão: Centro atlântico, 2007), 8.

⁶⁹ David Inglis, "Mapping the Global Consciousness: Portuguese Imperialism and the Forging of Modern Global Sensibilities," *Globalizations* 8 (2011): 687.

⁷⁰ His most credible work on the theme of connected history is "Connected Histories," 736-737.

⁷¹ Michael Werner and Bénédicte Zimmermann, "Beyond Comparison: Histoire Croisée and the Challenge of reflexivity," *History and Theory* 45 (2006): 38.

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effort will be made to understand the meanings produced as a result of the interconnectedness.

Comparative Analysis: The use of comparative analysis in historical research has been deemed to be guilty of abstraction and reduction. Deborah Cohen has charged the analysis to be caught in a mono or bicausal trap.⁷² The advocates of *Histoire Croisée* have rejected comparative history because it seemingly erects unneeded boundaries. They have further argued for the incompatibility of *Histoire Croisée* and comparative analysis. While the comparative approach separates the units of analysis, the entangled approaches try to find the continuities and connections. Irrespective of these differences, the two approaches can still coexist and benefit from each other. However, it is important to realise that the entangled approaches cannot function without drawing a clear cut comparison between the objects of analysis in the old and the new context.⁷³ For example, in this thesis, it is important to trace the political and religious formations in the Mughal Empire and the Portuguese enterprise in order to better understand the ‘change’ that resulted as a consequence of their ‘connectedness.’ Instead of abandoning the comparative analysis, it can be better integrated in the newly emerging methods of reading the global history. The historical studies can only benefit by travelling the distance between comparison and connections.

In addition to the above mentioned methods, ‘reading against the grain’ can be understood as the method of looking at historical records critically and situating them in the power context in which they were written, while adjacently analysing the power motivations of those who wrote the text. The documents are contextualized in order to probe what they are *not* saying and why. Many of the Mughal documents need to be studied by using this method because in many cases Mughal sources are either silent or brush aside an event for the purpose of political

⁷² Jürgen Kocka and Heinz-Gerhard Haupt, “Comparison and Beyond: Traditions, Scope and Perspectives of Comparative History,” in *Comparative and Transnational history: Central European Approaches and new Perspectives*, eds., Jürgen Kocka and Heinz-Gerhard Haupt (New York: Berghahn books, 2009), 14.

⁷³ Ibid., 20.

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suitability. This kind of method could be used to deduce the layeredness of the text and to find the sub-texts.

1.8 Source Criticism

The history of 'Portuguese impact' on the Indian Ocean world was largely written citing a lack of Asian perspectives on the issue or the native kingdoms' largely indifferent attitude to the breeding of European ports in many regions attributed in general to the lack of native sources. This narrative, however, has elevated the search for alternative sources for writing a balanced history of inter-cultural encounters in the Indian Ocean.

1.8.1 Mughal and Regional sources from the Indian subcontinent

An apparent lack of Mughal detailing of the Portuguese presence in the Indian subcontinent has impaired the studies of these connected empires. To construct a Mughal perspective on this relationship, multiple chronicles, non-official histories, letters and the official correspondence exchanged between the Mughal centre, the Portuguese *Estado* in Goa, the power centres in Lisbon and Spain, the other contemporary Islamic rulers and the regional rulers in the Indian subcontinent have been studied and analysed.

It cannot be denied that the Portuguese detailing in the form of annual reports and letters to Europe, are a rich source of documentation on the Mughals—one that is difficult to parallel. However, it must be considered that the Mughals customarily collected the documentation and letters of historical nature. This was done either to train the reader in *insha* (science of drafting) or partly for historical references.⁷⁴ A collection of letters drafted by Akbar's official chronicler Abu'l Fazl, *Mukatabat-i Allami*,⁷⁵ is an indispensable source for analysing the Mughal-

⁷⁴ M. Athar Ali, "The Use of Sources in Mughal Historiography," *Journal of the Asiatic Society* 5 (1995): 365.

⁷⁵ Abu'l Fazl, *Mukatabat-i-Allami (Insha'i Abu'l Fazl)* Daftar 1, trans. and ed. Mansura Haider (New Delhi: Indian Council of Historical Research, 1998). The letters were originally collected by Abu'l Fazl's nephew and son-in law Abdu's Samad.

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Portuguese relations. It is a great repository of *farmans* (imperial orders), *murasa* (letters addressed to kings) and other forms of royal notifications addressed to contemporary rulers of Iran, *Turan*,⁷⁶ *Kashagr*,⁷⁷ regional Spanish officials, and to the *sharifs* of Mecca. *Akbarnama*,⁷⁸ the official chronicle of Akbar's reign, provides numerous references to the *firangis*⁷⁹ and Akbar's motivations towards the Portuguese. Even though indispensable, Fazl's work on Akbar must be read carefully because numerous times the scholars and historians have accused him of flattery and unquestioned loyalty to the Emperor who he deemed as the 'Perfect Man' or (*Insan-i Kamil*).

A corroborative source to *Akbar Nama*, is a non-official history written by his contemporary Badauni. The intentional omission of data from the *Akbar Nama* could be complemented by Badauni's source, *Muntakhabut-i Allami*. He is critical of Akbar's policies, especially the religious debates and his initiation of *Din-i Ilahi*.⁸⁰ However, he used literary devices to polish his criticism and avoid persecution. In another source, the Memoir of Gulbadan Begum also called *Humayun Nama*,⁸¹ Akbar's aunt throws much light on the Mughal elite travels to Mecca and politics of *cartazes*⁸² with the Portuguese. The version of the episode of Bulsar (to be taken up in chapter 4) mentioned in *Humayun Nama* could be contrasted and verified by reading of the Jesuit source by Monserrate (a Jesuit priest stationed at the Mughal court who closely recorded the happenings). *Dabistan i- Mazaheb*⁸³ gives a vivid

⁷⁶ The region is also called Transoxiana. It vaguely refers to the area between Oxus River and Khotan "on the frontiers of China". Presently, Transoxiana could be referred to as the rectangular area between Oxus and Jaxartes Rivers. For a geographical understanding of the region see, E. Yarshater ed., *The Cambridge History of Iran, Vol.3* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 1130.

⁷⁷ This was one of the most important trading posts on the Silk route situated in present day China.

⁷⁸ Abu'l Fazl, *Akbar Nama*, 3 Vols. trans. Henry Beveridge (1902-39; reprint Delhi: Ess Publications, 1979).

⁷⁹ A term of Arabic-Persian origin denoted to the Catholic and the Portuguese by the Mughals.

⁸⁰ A new syncretic religion, also considered to be a kind of discipleship by some historians, was instituted by Akbar in year 1582. The nature of this 'religion' is a topic of debate among historians.

⁸¹ Gulbadan Begum, *Humayun Nama*, trans. Annette S. Beveridge (London: Royal Asiatic Society, 1902.)

⁸² Passes of control issued by the Portuguese in the Indian Ocean to control the traffic of ships. Detailed information about this licensing system and its consequences for the Mughal-Portuguese relations is provided in the forthcoming chapters.

⁸³ David Shea & Anthony Troyer trans., *Dabestan-i-Mazahab or School of Manners* (Paris: Oriental translation fund of Great Britain and Ireland, 1843).

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description of Akbar's 'religion,' *Din-i-Ilahi. Majilis-i Jahangiri*⁸⁴ provides an illuminating account of Jahangir's night discussions with the Jesuits in the Mughal court and a window into Mughal cosmopolitanism. *Jahangir Nama* or *Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri* also hold valuable information on Jesuit missions in the court and the encounters with the Portuguese in Bengal during Jahangir's reign. It has references to Muqarrab Khan's (the governor of Bihar, Delhi and Gujarat under Jahangir) embassy to Goa. It is important to corroborate the official versions of histories with the regional histories written during the time, such as *Mirat-i Sikandari*⁸⁵ and *Mirat-i Ahmadi*⁸⁶ for Gujarat. K.S. Mathew⁸⁷ has also reproduced and translated some important documents related to the Portuguese engagements in Gujarat. These regional sources are especially relevant for the fifth chapter of this thesis.

1.8.2 From the Portuguese Lens

The Portuguese sources for the study of Indian history are located in the Historical Archives of Goa (HAG) and *Arquivo Nacional da Torre da Tombe* (ANTT) Lisbon, among others. The extensive collection of *Monções do Reino*⁸⁸ is indispensable for the Mughal-Portuguese correspondence. The collection is dated from 1568-1914 in Goa and 1605-1697 in Lisbon (ANTT). Apart from the mission history, the royal decrees of the Habsburg empire with regard to the Mughals and the royal exchanges between the Mughal centre and the Portuguese rulers are well documented in *Collecção de tratados e consertos de pazes que o Estado da Índia*

⁸⁴ Abd-al Sattar ibn-i Qasim, *Majalis-i-Jahangiri*, eds., Arif Nausahi and Mo'een Nizam (Tehran: Miras-e Maktub, 2006). For an evaluation of its contents see, Corinne Lefevre, "The Majalis-i-Jahangiri (1608-11): Dialogue and Asiatic Otherness at the Mughal Court," *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 55 (2012): 255-286.

⁸⁵ Sikandar ibn Muhammad Manjhu, *Mirat-i-Sikandari: a history of Gujarat*, eds. S. C Mishra and M. L Rahman (Baroda: Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda, 1961).

⁸⁶ Ali Muhammad Khan, *Mirat-i-Ahmadi*, trans. K. F. Lokhandwala (Baroda: Oriental Institute, 1965). *Mirat-i-Ahmadi* has been borrowed largely from *Mirat-i-Sikandari*. It largely gives an account of provincial Muhammadan kings of Gujarat to the Mughals' history in the province.

⁸⁷ K. S Mathew, *Portuguese and the Sultanate of Gujarat, 1500-1573* (Goa: Mittal Publications, 1986).

⁸⁸ This collection could be found in both HAG and ANTT. It contains letters, reports and instructions received at Goa from Lisbon, Spain and Portugal in the period of monsoon (June-September). The collection from 1605-1616 has been printed in the 5 volume, *Documentos Remettidos da Índia ou Livros das Monções* (Lisboa: Typographia da Academia Real das Sciencias, 1880-1982).

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*Portuguesa fez com os reis e senhores quem teve relações nas partes da Asia e Africa Oriental desde o principio da conquista até ao fim de seculoXVIII.*⁸⁹

The *Armário Jesuítico* collection in ANTT illuminates on the Jesuit missions to the Mughal court and is an important source used in the thesis for the writing of Jesuit perspectives in the Mughal court and towards the emperors. António Silva Rego's work *Documentação para a Historia das Missões do Padroado Portugues do Oriente*⁹⁰ remains a reliable reservoir of missionary work in primarily India, as well as from the Persian Gulf to Moluccas. However, in this source criticism, it must be considered that the Jesuits or the other missionaries were addressing the Superior Orders in Rome, as well as other places in Europe; hence, they were expected to be of 'a required value and inclinations.'⁹¹ Silva Rego considers the Jesuit letters to be guilty of omission, not commission, due to the exclusion of events incapable of elevating their arguments.⁹² In numerous instances polishing, propaganda and over-estimation were also used as tools to paint a glorious picture of the missions. With all their shortcomings and dangers, the Jesuit letters and correspondences are indispensable for the study of this theme as the eyewitness and first-hand account of the time. In the case of the region of Bengal, Augustinian missions gain prominence and provide a valuable source of information on the developments in the area. These mission correspondences, written in Spanish, Italian and Latin (apart from Portuguese), have been reproduced and translated to Portuguese or English in numerous journals of Asiatic Society of Bengal or in the printed collections and unpublished works of H. Hosten.⁹³

⁸⁹ Julio Firmino Judice Biker, *Collecção de tratados e consertos de pazes que o Estado da Índia Portuguesa fez com os reis e senhores quem teve relações nas partes da Asia e Africa Oriental desde o principio da conquista até ao fim de seculoXVIII* (Lisboa: Imprensa Nacional, 1881).

⁹⁰ António Da Silva Rego's work, *Documentação para a Historia das Missões do Padroado Portugues do Oriente* (Lisboa: Agência Geral das Colónias, 1947-58).

⁹¹ Correia-Afonso, *Jesuit letters*, 5-7.

⁹² *Ibid.*, 95.

⁹³ His historical output is contained in *The Collected works of the Rev. H. Hosten. S.J* and his unpublished works are preserved at the archives of Vidyajyoti College of Theology, New Delhi.

1.9 The Setting in Time and Space

1.9.1 Understanding the early modern in the connected history

How does the present scholar solve the problem of time in the connected histories wherein one argues that each region follows its own trajectories and has its own time-line and passage to modernity? The period of the thesis dates from 1570-1627, a period significantly seen as a time of momentous changes in the world forum with the discoveries, explorations and voyages in Asia, Africa and other parts of the world. The present Indian historiography has since long questioned and rejected James Mill's political periodisation of Indian history into Hindu, Muslim and British that denoted the Ancient, Medieval and Modern periods respectively.⁹⁴ However, the most debatable area of periodisation has been the 'Medieval' with scholars trying to push it back and forth in time. The period under consideration in the thesis has been seen in the traditional historiography as 'late medieval,' late precolonial or just primarily Mughal and ignoring the vast stretches of terrain governed by the powerful dynasties in the Southern Indian peninsula. In addition, the attempts at defining a relatively newer term, 'early modern' (starting in the sixteenth century), for the Asian-specifically in the Indian context, started only about fifty years back. This thesis has variedly used the term but the author is aware that the application of the concept on Asia has been criticised for its Eurocentric implications. However, it is necessary to work with categorisation, despite the difficulties. At best, a conscious effort has been made to understand the meaning of the term with its inherent shortcomings.

Sanjay Subrahmanyam tries to delink the notion of modernity from a European trajectory and argues for a global shift with multiple roots in different regions depending on which society is being considered. He further goes on to apply the term 'early modern' to the regions of Eurasia and Africa dating from the middle of the fourteenth century to the middle of the eighteenth century and with relatively

⁹⁴ James Mill, *The History of British India*, 3 vols. (London: Baldwin, Cradock and Joy, 1817).

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more emphasis on the period after 1450.⁹⁵ However, even this criterion for defining broad Eurasian and African regions ushering together in the early modern age seems ambitious. An approach similar to Subrahmanyam's in anti-Eurocentrism but nonetheless conceptually different, was proposed by Goldstone almost two decades back. He critiques the studies that tend to bracket together vast and diverse geographical regions as early modern calling them 'hopelessly Eurocentric.' He proposes to move away from studying global history in the conventional Weberian way of studying Europe first and then comparing other regions to it.⁹⁶

J.F. Richards sees the period as 'an attempt to capture the reality of rapid, massive change in the way humans organised themselves and interacted with other human beings and with the natural world.'⁹⁷ The Indian subcontinent from the 1500s was indelibly linked to the global sea passages and became an important player in world trade. In terms of scale, efficiency and wealth, the Mughal Empire stood at par with the Ottomans, Safavids and any other contemporary European Empire. There was also a dense circulation of ideas, people and commodities. Hence, the dynamic yet centralised state power combined with Mughals' political unification, according to Richards, is a defining characteristic of early modern (not Mughal) India.⁹⁸

Rather than a bridge or merely an 'age of transition'⁹⁹ between the medieval and modern, early modern was a period with distinct characteristics and the development of new dynamics and connections on a macro scale. The two connected empires in our case study could be well looked at from this perspective in terms of increased communication, mobility and exchange on cultural, political, technological and economic levels. Even though the author wishes to evade broad generalisations in history, we could apply 'early modern' to the societies abiding to the yardsticks of increased connectivity and breakthrough advanced economic,

⁹⁵ Sanjay Subrahmanyam, "Connected Histories," 736-737.

⁹⁶ Jack Goldstone, "The Problem of Early Modern World," *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 41 (1998): 277.

⁹⁷ John F. Richards, "Early Modern India and World History," *Journal of World History* 8 (1997): 197.

⁹⁸ Richards, "Early Modern India," 206-7.

⁹⁹ Goldstone, "The Problem of Early Modern World," 253.

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cultural and political alignments; in other words, moving towards the building of a global network.

1.9.2 Defining space in early modern Mughal-Portuguese relations

This work cannot be easily straightjacketed into the confines of maritime, political, or diplomatic history. It encompasses the two continents of Asia and Europe, as well as parts of the Indian Ocean network. The Indian Ocean is engulfed with almost continuous landmass comprised of the East African coast, the Arabian Peninsula, the South Asian continental plate and the South-east Asian archipelagos, hence the name ‘embayed Ocean’ or a ‘land-locked sea.’¹⁰⁰ The interface of land and sea is a major theme in the study of Indian Ocean dynamics. Spain and Portugal ‘divided the world’ with a longitudinal boundary and the Indian subcontinent fell in the Portuguese area of influence. This division of the world, which was only partly recognised by the European empires, did not mean much to their Asian counterparts. In this context, it makes sense when Norton warns the historians of anachronistically imposing the nation-state spatial imaginaries onto the early modern conception of geographical space. Space as a ‘loci of power’ could be seen as propaganda employed by imperial authorities. There is a need for early modern authorities to reassess the conceptualisation of space in terms of allegiance, connections and synthesis rather than strict borders.¹⁰¹ In agreement with this argument, I would try to locate the ‘envisioned or rhetorical spaces’ *vis-à-vis* the shared spaces developed by the interaction or conflict between the Mughals and the Portuguese.

¹⁰⁰ Sebastian Prange, “Scholars and the Sea: A Historiography of the Indian Ocean,” *History Compass* 6 (2008): 1382-1383.

¹⁰¹ Paul Stocked ed., *The Uses of Space in early Modern History* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015), 12.

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1.9.2.1 Drawing the Mughal frontier Membrane¹⁰²

The terms border and frontier are repeatedly seen as overlapping and, at times, synonymous to each other. It is important, however, to understand the reason for the usage of the term 'frontier' for defining and drawing the Mughal domains. The word 'border' is usually referred to as the line or margin defining the outer edge of something and in our case, a political dominion. And 'frontier' is derived from the Latin word *frons* (forehead), which generally means to face something or, in this case, an area or political entity.¹⁰³ Concerning the relation with neighbouring kingdoms and existing European presence in the sixteenth century, the Mughals can be called to have instated a 'frontier membrane.' The permeability of this membrane varies on different sides, for example, permeability for trade and cultural exchange is different from permeability for foreign armies.¹⁰⁴ Even though the Mughal frontiers seemed permeable to a certain degree with large numbers of Europeans settling in or in the proximity of the Mughal domain, the Mughals maintained caution to the growth of the new settlements in the 'areas of interest.'

The frontiers of the Mughal Empire were, hence, never a defined line but a zone (*marz* in Persian). 'Frontier,' according to sinologist Owen Lattimore, is an area inviting entrance. The increase in pressure exerted by the central forces on these frontier regions accelerated the tendency to break away from the current central authority and initiate a centre of their own. This "paradox of centripetal policies having centrifugal effects" can be seen in the world history and in the case of Mughal frontier expansion.¹⁰⁵ Imperial Mughal ideology, as reflected in the miniatures and panegyrics, seemed to be one without defined borders or limits and instead, one

¹⁰² The concept was used by Richard Slatta to define frontiers separating the European and indigenous cultures. Both sides of the membrane are influenced but the dominant pressure being from the European side.

¹⁰³ Sébastien Gadat and Robert Jeansoulin, "Borders, frontiers and limits: Some computational concepts beyond words," *European Journal of Geography, Epistémologie, Histoire de la Géographie, Didactique*, document 125 (2000), accessed 26 June, 2016, doi: 10.4000/cybergeo.4349.

¹⁰⁴ Thomas Hall, "Borderlands, Borders and Global Frontiers," *New Dictionary of the History of Ideas*. (2005) accessed June 30, 2016, <http://www.encyclopedia.com/history/dictionaries-thesauruses-pictures-and-press-releases/borders-borderlands-and-frontiers-global>.

¹⁰⁵ J.J.L. Gommans, *Mughal Warfare: Indian Frontiers and the Highroad to Empires* (London: Routledge 2003), 16.

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with 'lines fanning out from the imperial centre in all directions towards an endless horizon.' The claim to universal sovereignty by the Mughal emperors is reflected in the assumption of titles, such as Jahangir (world conqueror), Shah Jahan and Shah Alam (King of the world). The 'regional' conquests in Assam directed towards conquering China and the expedition in Balkh targeted mainly at Turan fall in line with Mughal global ambition, regional quests being only the first step to larger occupations. It is for this reason that the Mughal maps and cartography do not mark any definite border of the Mughal dominion.¹⁰⁶

1.10 Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework that guides the writing of this thesis has been influenced greatly from reading of connected history, numerous works on Indian Ocean studies and network histories. The thesis makes a comparative analysis of the Portuguese enterprise and the Mughal Empire within the global history approach, i.e. an effort has been made to locate them in systemic contexts to which they both relate but progress or respond differently.¹⁰⁷ The thesis emphasises the role of understanding the culture's language and systems of representations, rather than the straight reading of official chronicles and correspondence.¹⁰⁸ The effort has been made to understand the rhetorical voices and read the narratives against the grain. The thesis shall try to understand relationships between different causalities operating on a large scale. In the specific context of our topic, the different factors that pushed the Islamic empires Ottomans, Safavids, Uzbeks and Mughals in a collaborative and competitive relationship *vis-a-vis* the Portuguese is a point of enquiry. There is a necessity to understand this complex relationship as a product of overlapping structures with entangled political, economic and religious factors induced at times by the Portuguese and at other times, the internal dynamics.

¹⁰⁶ Gommans, *Mughal Warfare*, 21.

¹⁰⁷ Sebastian Conrad, *What is Global History?* (Oxford: Princeton University, 2015), 44.

¹⁰⁸ "Making History: The Changing face of the profession in Britain," accessed, August 2, 2017, http://www.history.ac.uk/makinghistory/themes/cultural_turn.html.

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Furthermore, the analysis of factors that affected the springing up of different networks shall be made: Firstly, the religious network of the missionaries in the Mughal court and Mughal territories and secondly, the *Estado da Índia's* political and trading outposts and networks in the subcontinent. The interconnections of the two above mentioned networks and their further connections to the Portuguese crown in Portugal and Spain shall be made. The European trading activities as a major fuelling force behind the missionary activities hardly needs a reiteration. The intimate connection of the trading activities with missionary trends has been justified in the missionary and political literature as a noble act of 'saving souls.' The liaison between trade and the missionaries has mostly been conjugated in phrases like 'flag follows the cross' in the context of Africa and Asia, and later, the missionaries' penetration in the areas integrated into the colonial dominion.¹⁰⁹ The reciprocity of this relation is strikingly evident in the Portuguese colonial enterprise's concord with the Jesuits and other missionaries in the Indian subcontinent.

¹⁰⁹ Chima Jacob Korieh, G. Ugo Nwokeji eds., *Religion, History, and Politics in Nigeria: Essays in Honor of Ogbu U. Kalu*, (Lanham: University Press of America, 2005), 217.

2 Reading the Empires in a Comparative Framework: the Portuguese and the Mughals

The last chapter dealt with the research framework of the project and the present chapter seeks to develop a comparative framework of the two early modern states and their nature as they existed in the sixteenth century. A comparative perspective to determine patterns, similarities and differences within a global context has been termed as the first precondition for the study of global history by Eric Vanhaute.¹¹⁰ In order to legitimately carry out a comparative analysis of these premodern States, the questions of legitimacy of rule and sovereignty, nature of State and perspectives on religion have been addressed. The dichotomies defining the core nature of these entities, maritime (Portuguese) versus continental (Mughal) and a trading empire¹¹¹ versus insatiable Leviathan,¹¹² have broadened our discussion about their relationship. It is henceforth important to understand the core nature of these powers in order to assess the possibility of the establishment of 'a State within State' as happened with the gradual establishment of *Estado da Índia* in the Mughal domains. What differed in the working mechanisms of these powers? An analysis shall be made of the source of their legitimacy, effectively working out the nature of these empires/States and reaching towards a conscious understanding of the 'Other.'

¹¹⁰ Eric Vanhaute, "Who is Afraid of Global History?," in *Global history* ed. Peer Vries. Issue of Österreichische Zeitschrift für Geschichtswissenschaften (Vienna: StudienVerlag, 2009), 24.

¹¹¹ As suggested in works like M.D.D. Newitt ed., *The First Portuguese Colonial Empire* (U. K: University of Exeter Press, 1986).

¹¹² Tapan Raychaudhuri and Irfan Habib ed., *The Cambridge Economic History of India, c. 1200-1750*, Vol.1 (London: Cambridge University Press, 1982) uses the term to denote Mughal Empire's unlimited appetite for resources.

2.1 The Portuguese 'Sea borne Empire'

2.1.1 Laying the foundations of a maritime enterprise

The Iberian expansion of the sixteenth century finds its origin in the late medieval aspirations of the Spanish and Portuguese monarchies and their quest for exploration of unknown territories and people. In the terminology of Jean Frederic Schaub, there were two contradictory tendencies that emerged in the late middle ages and early modern period of the Iberian Peninsula: a centripetal tendency towards a pan-Iberian union made possible by dynastic marriages and joint military expeditions and centrifugal tendencies found in the show of resistance to the union.¹¹³ A series of border settlements, acquisition of new territories and increased maritime expertise in the fourteenth century laid the foundation for the creation of a maritime enterprise in the fifteenth century rather than a sudden heroic rise and the invention of Infante Dom Henrique, better known as Prince Henry the Navigator.¹¹⁴

The formation of the Portuguese Empire and its dynamic relationship with the Spanish Hapsburg Empire defined the course of their overseas history. However, this section takes a brief look at the proto history of the Portuguese maritime enterprise. The reign of Dinis of Portugal (1279-1325) witnessed the laying of groundwork for the Portuguese maritime empire. After the resolution of border disputes with Castille and pacification of internal rebellions, the ruler initiated policies that proved extremely crucial for the development of the Portuguese as a maritime force. He initiated the development of shipbuilding activities by decreeing a vast forest of pine trees in Leiria to augment raw material. The trade was promoted within major European trading posts and special privileges and concessions were granted to merchants to proliferate trade. Genoese maritime and technical expertise was employed to work to construct vessels which sailed to

¹¹³ Kevin Joseph Sheehan, "Iberian Asia: The Strategies of Spanish and Portuguese Empire Building, 1540-1700," (PhD Diss. University of California, 2008), 25.

¹¹⁴ Numerous eulogising accounts have been written around the figure of Dom Henrique and his historic explorations and sponsored voyages to the Azores and the West African coast. See, C. Raymond Beazley, *Prince Henry the Navigator, the Hero of Portugal and of Modern Discovery, 1394-1460 A.D.: With an Account of Geographical Progress throughout the Middle Ages as the Preparation for His Work* (London: G. P Putnam's Sons, 1897).

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Canaries on voyages of discovery funded by the Crown.¹¹⁵ The Crown initiated highly sophisticated maritime insurance upon the merchants indulged in Flanders trade. The initial voyages were collaboration between the Crown and the foreign merchants' communities from Genoa, the Florentines, the Flemings, German Fuggers and the French. The Ligurians acted as *feitores* or factors and creditors in the formation of *Casa de Guiné e Mina* and in the sixteenth century, this body was renamed as Casa da Índia.¹¹⁶ Similarly, the missionaries that accompanied the voyagers on their long journeys to Asia were mainly *not* of Portuguese origin. Hence, a cosmopolitan element forged the making and survival of the Portuguese overseas enterprise.

2.1.2 Layers of Portuguese Authority

What did the 'Portuguese seaborne empire' really control? It was unclear, even to the contemporaries, what really constituted the formal Portuguese empire due to the existence of multiple types of authority.¹¹⁷ The formal Portuguese empire functioned at multiple levels and established multi-layered authority on sea and land through secular and religious forces. This tree of authority is important to understand the functioning of the various branches of the empire.

Sovereignty over the Seas was gained through the mechanisms of treaties and diplomatic power play. The treaty of Tordesillas (1494) was established to settle the territorial disputes between the expanding empires of Spain and Portugal and as a result, the world was divided following a longitudinal boundary that was more or less abstract. Territorial claims were mainly based on cartography. It was only after the 'discovery' of the new lands that Spain and Portugal realised what they actually possessed.¹¹⁸ The treaty demarcated an imaginary line 370 leagues¹¹⁹ west of the

¹¹⁵ Sheehan, "The Strategies," 27-28.

¹¹⁶ Bailey Wallys Diffie and George D. Winius, *Foundations of the Portuguese Empire, 1415-1580* (University of Minnesota Press: Minneapolis, 1977), 210-211.

¹¹⁷ Maylin Newitt, "Formal and Informal Empire in the History of Portuguese Expansion," *Portuguese Studies* 17 (2001): 1.

¹¹⁸ Jeppe Strandsbjerg, "Cartopolitics, Geopolitics and Boundaries in the Arctic," in *Critical Border Studies: Broadening and Deepening the 'Lines in the Sand' Agenda*, eds., Noel Parker, Nick Vaughan Williams (London: Routledge, 2016): 102.

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Cape Verde Islands extending from the North to the South Pole. Portugal gained jurisdiction of the territories 180 degrees west of the line; while the Spanish controlled the eastern half.¹²⁰ In the words of Brotton, the treaty was “one of the earliest and most hubristic acts of European global imperial geography.”¹²¹

Monopoly over trade in certain commodities was not tied to sovereignty over a specific area. The royal licenses were bestowed to undertake the monopoly voyages, or *viagens dos lugares*, under which the Portuguese crown sold the rights to operate trading privileges on a given route usually for one round voyage. The buyer of the voyage would then partly reserve freight of the ship to himself and lease the rest of the space to other merchants. There were additional profits when the ship carried a royal monopoly over certain products.¹²²

The direct royal authority was put into effect by the Portuguese hierarchy of officials in the newly annexed areas or those governed by *Estado da Índia*. Lastly, the religious authority was conferred by the church through the mechanism of *Padroado Real*, whereby the Crown got religious jurisdiction in the conquered territories.¹²³ The missionary orders in Asia were obliged to work within the framework of the *Padroado* and secular authority of *Estado da Índia*. The word ‘missionary enterprise’ refers to the interwoven religious, legal and mercantile elements of power.¹²⁴ This feature of the Portuguese enterprise in the Indian subcontinent defined its relationship with the indigenous Mughal Empire.

¹¹⁹ This was a change from the original agreement of 100 leagues, which later proved fruitful for the Portuguese since now the northeast coast of Brazil fell in their jurisdiction.

¹²⁰ Penny M. Sonnenburg, Melvin Eugene Page eds., *Colonialism: An International, Social, Cultural, and Political Encyclopedia*, Volume 1 (California: ABC-CLIO, 2006), 586.

¹²¹ Cited from Georg Wiessala, *European Studies in Asia: Countours of a Discipline* (Oxin: Routledge, 2014), 43.

¹²² M.D.D Newitt, *The First Portuguese Colonial Empire* (Exeter: University of Exeter Press, 1986), 6.

¹²³ Newitt, “Formal and Informal,” 2.

¹²⁴ Georg Wiessala, *European Studies*, 44.

2.1.3 Religion in the Overseas Portuguese Enterprise

2.1.3.1 The Portuguese Missionaries and non-Portuguese Christians in India

The predecessors of the Portuguese brand of Christianity in India were the St. Thomas or the Syrian Christians of Malabar. However, they differed to a great extent in their adaptability to the social environment compared to the Portuguese. The origin of St. Thomas or the Syrian Christians is widely debated by historians. Some argue that this brand of Christianity was established by St. Thomas, one of the twelve Apostles of Jesus. Another set of historians argue the arrival of Christianity was the result of missionary activities belonging to the Syrian and the Persian churches in South India. Their existence has been traced back to before the sixth century AD. They sustained the Chaldean liturgy and Syrian language and maintained fraternal ties to the Babylonian (Baghdad) Patriarch.¹²⁵ Their adaptability and even resemblance to the Hindu customs, rites and rituals helped the Syrian Christians to become an unhinged part of the local society. However, the Synod of Diamper convened by Aleixo De Menezes, the first Archbishop of Goa, forced them to unite with the Roman Catholic Church and give up their 'heathen practices.'¹²⁶ Hence, inculcating the indigenous brand of Christianity under Catholicism was a major goal of the Portuguese missionaries that accompanied the *Estado*. In addition, the conversion of Indian monarchs lay at the forefront of the missionary agendas.

2.1.3.2 Jesuits as global diplomats

The superimposition and, later accumulation of the Syrian Christians was brought about by methods employed by the European missionaries. At the forefront of this trend were the Jesuits. They worked towards 'the greater glory of God' (*Ad Majorem Dei glorium*) by adoption of various techniques absent in Christianity. They

¹²⁵ *The New Encyclopedia Britannica* (NEB) Vol.3 (Chicago: Encyclopedia Britannica Inc., 1997): 281. For a detailed account of Syrian Christians see, A. Mundadan, *History of Christianity in India* Vol.1 (Bangalore: Theological Publications in India, 1982) 21; L.W Brown, *The Indian Christians of St. Thomas* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1956), 16.

¹²⁶ For the detailed decrees of Synod of Diamper see, Jonas Thaliath, *Synod Of Diamper*, Issues 148-153 (Lincoln: Pont. Institutum Orientalium Studiorum, 1958).

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adopted a position close to the modern concept of cultural relativism, one that was absent in the approaches of the contemporary missionaries.¹²⁷ Another ideal, *tantum quantum* meaning *in so far as to attain the goal* in Jesuit jargon, was impressed upon all members of the Society created by Ignatius Loyola. Francis Xavier was the emissary of Jesuit ideas in the East. The Jesuits, also known as Paulistas in Asia after their headquarters of St. Paul in Old Goa, thrived in Asia for around two centuries before their suppression under the Portuguese (1759) and Spanish (1767) Empires.¹²⁸ The series of suppression of Jesuit missions was a cumulative result of years of Jesuits' assumption of power and autonomy from the respective monarchs and strong alliances with the papacy.

Accommodation and adaptation could be termed as the two main instruments of Jesuit success in India, Japan, and China and to some extent in South-east Asia. The Spanish missionaries of the Four Orders were more intimate with the secular powers in Manila, whereas the Jesuits under *Padroado Real* were more independent. Mostly, they associated themselves with the trading arm of the Portuguese Empire. However, in some cases, they evangelised independently or reached far ahead of the scope of the trading units, as in the case of inland China.¹²⁹

The beginnings of globalisation traced in the 'discovery of the New World' leading to European colonial expansion coincides with the establishment of the Society of Jesus and its global spread. The Jesuits, unlike other Catholic orders, came out of monastic seclusion and placed themselves in direct contact with laypeople and, henceforth, various political courts throughout the world. The Jesuits visited with their political flags the courts of India, China, Japan, Moluccas-famously known as Spice Islands and Malacca on the western coast of the Malay peninsula, Indonesia and the Philippines in the east to name a few.¹³⁰ Goa administered the Portuguese

¹²⁷ Peter Duignan, "Early Jesuit Missionaries: A Suggestion for Further Study," *American Anthropologist*, 60 (1958): 725.

¹²⁸ Teotónio R. de Souza, S.J., Gonçalo Martins, "A Jesuit Procurator, Businessman and Diplomat in the *Estado da Índia*," *Mare Liberum* 5 (1993): 119.

¹²⁹ Josiane Cauquelin, Paul Lim, Birgit Mayer-Koenig, *Asian Values: encounter with Diversity* (London: Routledge, 2014), 175.

¹³⁰ For a general view on Jesuit missions in Asia see Gauvin Alexander Bailey, *Art on Jesuit missions in Asia and Latin America, 1542-1773* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1999); Teotónio R. de Souza

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commercial enclaves of northern India, Cathay, Mysore, the Mughal Empire and Persia.

The cosmopolitan nature of the Jesuit groups working in Asia was an important aspect of their global appeal. The founders of the Society did not recognise the national origin of their members once they entered the Order. However, the Portuguese sovereigns remained suspicious of the foreign born fathers' role in areas where Portuguese held the patronage (*Padroado*) rights. In the event of a lack of Portuguese recruits, foreign missionaries mainly from Spain, Italy and Germany were selected to work in the territories of Portuguese *Padroado*.¹³¹ In the sixteenth century, about one-half of Jesuits working in the east were of Portuguese origin. The number of Jesuits of Spanish nationality, which constituted 20 percent in the sixteenth century, hardly find their mention in the seventeenth century mainly due to their preoccupation with the American missions and the rupture between the Portuguese nation and the Spanish Hapsburg. Around one-third of Jesuits in the east were non-Portuguese, with the Italians making the highest numbers after the Spanish.¹³² The Italian and German missionaries were licensed to travel to the east since these nations did not pose any threat to the Portuguese possessions in the east. The missionaries representing the Portuguese empire in Asia were, hence part of a larger political decision-making between Portugal and Rome.

2.1.4 An Empire or a Network: Understanding the nature

The so called *Estado da Índia*, or State of India, was a title attributed to the conglomeration of all Portuguese possessions in Asia ruled by a governor or a viceroy. However, it can be argued that it was no more than fortified trading posts ranging from the east African coast to the Arabian peninsula and Bay of Bengal and extending towards the Near east, Southeast Asia to the Pacific Ocean. Most of these

and C. J. Borges (eds.), *Jesuits in India: In historical perspective* (Goa: Xavier Centre of Historical Research, 1992); Ines G. Zupanov, *Missionary Tropics: The Catholic Frontier in India, 16-17th centuries* (Michigan: University of Michigan Press, 2005); Dauril Alden, *The making of an Enterprise: the Society of Jesus in Portugal, Its Empire and Beyond, 1540-1750* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1996).

¹³¹ Dauril Alden, *The making of an Enterprise*, 267.

¹³² Donald F. Lach, Edwin J. Van Kley, *Asia in the Making of Europe*. vol. 3, *A Century of Advance Book 1* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998), 145

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settlements survived due to the support or tolerance of local authorities and communities. In the legal debate around the concept of *Mare Liberum* put forward by Hugo Grotius, the Portuguese responded by emphasising the importance of the 'empire' it was upholding in Asia. However, the self-perception of the Portuguese power centre does not disregard the fact that the Portuguese were quick to wane away under the pressures of the Dutch and English in Asia.¹³³ 'The Empire' as term for Portuguese overseas possessions seems questionable even after its use for over the centuries in the absence of a suitable term.

The different strands of Portuguese political authority, however, existed largely on a theoretical level. In actuality, the Portuguese were one of many mercantile and diplomatic agents that existed in the Indian subcontinent. The Portuguese claimed the east as a theoretical right under the Treaty of Tordesillas but, in practice, most dialogues with the Eastern courts and polities rested on diplomatic concepts of friendship (*amizade*) and indirect submission (*vassalagem*).¹³⁴ C.R. Boxer in his monumental work termed the early modern Portuguese empire as a 'seaborne empire' due to its maritime prominence resulting from monopolies established over regions, commodities and sea routes. Although we refer to the early modern Portuguese State as an 'empire,' it is questionable to what extent the features of this empire were reflected on the Asian ground, especially in the Indian subcontinent. George D. Winius¹³⁵ in his latest work provided fresh approaches to the term empire by analysing the Portuguese maritime territory as a fragmented affair instead of a united one, calling it "a patchwork of arrangements held together by native weakness or inertia and the only real navy in Asia."¹³⁶ However, the aspect of native inertia to developments in the subcontinent is hugely contested by scholars working on local responses to the Portuguese.¹³⁷ F.C. Lane's contribution to the analysis of the nature of the Portuguese presence in the Indian Ocean was the

¹³³ Christian Hausser and Horst Pietschmann, "Empire: The Concept and its problems in the historiography on the Iberian empires in the Early Modern Age," *Culture & History Digital Journal* 3 (2014), accessed 25.01.2017, doi: 10.3989/chdj.2014.002.

¹³⁴ Zoltán Biedermann, "Portuguese Diplomacy in Asia in the Sixteenth Century: A Preliminary Overview," *Itinerario* 29 (2005): 13.

¹³⁵ George D. Winius, *Studies on Portuguese Asia, 1495-1689* (Aldeshot: Ashgate, 2001).

¹³⁶ *Ibid.*, x.

¹³⁷ M. N Pearson, *Merchants and Rulers of Gujarat*; Sanjay Subrahmanyam, "Connected Histories."

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theory that violence was the major Portuguese export (except money) to the east. Portugal attempted to control the Cape route through violence with the intention to increase the protection costs of its competitors. Neil Steensgard called the Portuguese *Estado da Índia* a redistributive enterprise basing mainly on F.C Lane's protection-cost theory. According to Steensgard, the Portuguese sold protection at sea to local Asian merchants. They gave up the pepper monopoly in Euro-Asian trade only to extract money on custom duties from the local monarchs and merchants traversing the sea routes.¹³⁸

The recent work of Amélia Polónia furthers the research on informal, trans-border and cross border networks. She focuses on self-organised informal, networks and the cooperation between individuals and the State as the decisive means of empire building. The new scholarship further understands the European overseas ventures in terms of negotiations, patronage and social networks.¹³⁹ Some even call the early modern European empires 'negotiated empires'.¹⁴⁰ Whether it was an example of a negotiated empire or a complex network of blockades, fortresses and trading units, its relationship with Asian empires was nothing short of multi-layered and undefined.

2.2 The Mughal Empire

2.2.1 At the Mughal Door: The origins and the neighbours¹⁴¹

Concomitant to the challenging geography of the Indian subcontinent was its protective character. Engulfed by the Arabian Sea to the west and southwest and

¹³⁸ Jan Glete, *Warfare at Sea, 1500-1650* (London: Routledge, 2000), 84-85. Also see, Neils Steensgard, *Asian Trade Revolution of the Seventeenth Century: The East India Companies and the Decline of Caravan Trade* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1973).

¹³⁹ Amélia Polónia, "Self-Organised Networks in the Global Age: The Jesuits in Japan," *The bulletin of the Institute for World Affairs and Cultures* 28 (2013): 134-135.

¹⁴⁰ Cited from José Damião Rodrigues, "Patterns of Settlements and Religious Imperial Agents in the Portuguese Empire," in *Religion and Politics in a Global Society: Comparative Perspectives from the Portuguese Speaking World*, eds., P. C Manuel, A. J Lyon and Clyde Wilcox (Plymouth: Lexington World, 2012), 16.

¹⁴¹ Following passages are a part of my article, Manya Rathore, "Indien vor den Grossmoguln: Politische Zersplitterung und kulturelle Gemeinsamkeiten," Edition: *Akbar und die großmoguln indien in der frühen neuzeit*, *Verein für Geschichte und Sozialkunde* 43, no.3 (2013): 8-13.

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Bay of Bengal to the east and southeast, perplexing Burmese jungles to the east and by successive ranges of Himalayas, Karakoram and Hindu Kush, to the north and the northwest, the natural frontiers bordering the subcontinent were not always a protective valve from the outside world. The Indian subcontinent received a high amount of immigration from Persia and Central Asian invasions from the northwest frontier regions. These brought in new players to the seat of power in the north India. The Mughals as the successors of the Delhi Sultanate in northern India fanned out in all directions, extending until the Deccan. The already existing regional and foreign powers surrounded the Mughals and their relationship can, at best, be called dynamic and layered. The internal river system consisting of the Ganges, the Brahmaputra, Narmada, and Tungabhadra provided optimal conditions for the growth of various empires, kingdoms and regional powers on their coasts. This further complicated the existing network of power relations in the subcontinent.¹⁴²

India before the Mughals was a kaleidoscope of various political, social and cultural currents running from one end of the subcontinent to the other. Starting in the early eleventh century, the Indian subcontinent witnessed its first major Muslim invasion from the rulers of present day Afghanistan. Their successors initiated the establishment of the first long term Muslim dynastic rule in India, collectively known as the Delhi Sultanate. The late fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries in North India witnessed a gradual phasing out of the Delhi Sultanate with the coming of the last two dynasties: the Sayyids (1414-51) and the Lodis (1451-1526). And the south of the subcontinent saw the flowering of two competing dynasties: the Hindu, Vijayanagara Empire (1336-1565) and the Muslim Deccan Sultanates (1527-1686). The latter comprised of the Golkonda, Ahmadnagar, Bijapur, Berar and Bidar dynasties, which had gained independence from the Bahmani Sultanate.¹⁴³

It was within this larger politico-geographical setup that the Mughals established and expanded their dominion in the Indian subcontinent. In addition to

¹⁴² Robert D. Kaplan, *South Asia's Geography of Conflict* (Washington D.C.: Center for a New American Security, 2010), 5.

¹⁴³ Rathore, "Indien vor den Grossmoguln," 8-13. For a broad survey of pre Mughal India see, Satish Chandra, *Medieval India: From Sultanat to the Mughals* (New Delhi: Har Anand Publications, 2005); Catherine B. Asher, Cynthia Talbot, *India Before Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006).

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the regional powers bordering the Mughal State, there were the Portuguese centres on the coasts of the subcontinent. Goa was always a contested territory between the Hindu Vijayanagara Empire and Muslim States of Deccan¹⁴⁴. In 1510, the Portuguese, with the help of the Vijayanagara Empire, finally defeated the Muslim sultans of Bijapur and acquired Goa. The Portuguese later acquired several territories from the Sultans of Gujarat: Daman (ceded: 1539), Salsette, Bombay, Baçaim (1534), and Diu (ceded: 1535). The Portuguese became dominant in the politics of the Indian Ocean and were the first European power to witness the coming of the Mughals.¹⁴⁵

¹⁴⁴ Donald F. Lach, Edwin J. Van Kley, *Asia in the Making of Europe, A Century of Discovery*, Vol.I, Book 1 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994), 381.

¹⁴⁵ Lach, *Asia in the Making*, Vol. I, Book 2 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008), 380.

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Map 2: Indian subcontinent before the Mughals.

2.2.2 Tracing Mughal Legitimacy and Authority

The Portuguese empire sought its 'legitimacy to rule' from aforementioned political agreements. However, the Mughals functioned in a different cultural and political setup of Central Asian lineage, and Stephen F. Dale noticed the tendency to root the source of legitimacy of the Mughals in the Timurid legacy. Babur wrote his Baburnama suggesting an inclination for the Timurid side without completely negating the Chingizid blood. He considered *Tura i-Chingizi* (Law of Chingiz Khan) an important element in his heritage and that before him, the Timurid rulers did not claim a title higher than *Mirza*.¹⁴⁶ Timur and his successors had engaged with the Alid-messianic myth and, in turn, appropriated the symbol of Jesus. It proclaimed Alanquva, the mother of all early line of Mongol sovereigns, who had miraculously given birth to them without a father. Abu'l Fazl traced Akbar's lineage to Alanquva, whose divinity legitimized Chengiz Khan and Timur. In *Akbarnama*, Akbar's miraculous lineage is celebrated by drawing connections to Jesus and Alanquva as Mary. This had strong links to Akbar's interest in Jesus in the presence of other Indic and Islamic symbolisms more relevant to the Indian context. Akbar was celebrated as a sovereign like Timur and a messiah like Jesus, born as a Lord of Conjunction.¹⁴⁷

The divine means of legitimacy was, however, not enough to rule the empire. The length and breadth of the Mughal Empire needed to be brought under a standardised system of revenue administration. The perfection of State mechanisms in the Indian subcontinent led to the introduction of certain reforms, practices and rituals peculiar to the rule of Akbar. These reforms are also seen by the modern historians as a means of legitimacy. Muzaffar Alam prefers to view the Mughal State as a process rather than a structure perfected at a certain time. This process integrated local customs and traditions over time. In addition, the Mughal system was not uniform throughout the empire. The *zabt* (measurement of land and conversion of revenue demand in cash) system did not extend beyond core

¹⁴⁶ Dale traced the diverse Timurid heritage of the Mughals, Uzbeks and the Safavids in Stephen F. Dale, "The Legacy of Timurids," in *The Legacy of the Timurids* eds., David Morgan and Francis Robinson (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1994).

¹⁴⁷ Afzar Moin, "Akbar's "Jesus" and Marlowe's "Tamburlaine": Strange Parallels of Early Modern Sacredness," *Fragments* 3 (2013-14): 5-7, accessed 04.01.2017.

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provinces and was adjusted to regional variations.¹⁴⁸ Similar was the case for law making. Farhat Hasan¹⁴⁹ argues the filtering down of sovereignty to the local level led to the integration of local service gentry and merchants into the system of rule. He emphasised the flexibility of *Shariat* in the context of its ability to incorporate local norms and values which made it an important source of legitimation at the local level as well. This represents an inclusive image of the Mughal Empire in the period under consideration.

2.2.3 The Mughal State Leviathan: The nature of State

The study of the nature of State is central to the understanding of political and social theory and it is a widely contested and debated compartment of history. In modern western political thought, the idea of the State is often linked to the notion of an impersonal and privileged legal or constitutional order with the capability of administering and controlling a given territory. Abu'l Fazl, the official chronicler of Emperor Akbar's reign, considered royalty as 'the light emanating from God and a ray from the Sun, the illuminator of the universe, the argument of the book of perfection and the receptacle of all the virtues.'¹⁵⁰ The basis of political authority for him was the social contract between the subjects and the ruler by virtue of which the latter was responsible to the former and, in turn, earns the legitimacy to rule.

The scholarship has a divided opinion on the nature of the Mughal State. Some scholars belonging to the Marxist framework, "wished first to describe the Mughal polity before classifying it."¹⁵¹ Irfan Habib describes the Mughal polity as an essentially centralised and exploitative system mainly dwelling on the land revenue system that engulfed large amount of surplus.¹⁵² Athar Ali also viewed the Mughal

¹⁴⁸ Muzaffar Alam, "State Building under the Mughals: Religion, Politics and Culture," *Cahiers d'Asie centrale* 3 (1997), 105.

¹⁴⁹ Farhat Hasan, *State and Locality in Mughal India: Power Relations in Western India, c. 1572-1730* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004).

¹⁵⁰ Abu'l Fazl, *Ain-i-Akbari*, trans. H. Blochmann, vol. 1 (Calcutta: Asiatic Society of Bengal, 1868), 3.

¹⁵¹ Athar Ali, "The Mughal Polity: A Critique of Revisionist Approaches," *Modern Asian Studies* 27 (1993): 702.

¹⁵² Irfan Habib, *The Agrarian System of Mughal India, 1556-1707* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1999).

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Empire as a 'centralised polity, geared to systemisation and the creation of an all imperial bureaucracy.'¹⁵³ In addition to giving an elaborate description of Mughal systems of *mansab*¹⁵⁴ and *jagir*,¹⁵⁵ he pointed towards Akbar's efforts in building composite nobility by integrating diverse elements other than the existing ones, who owed their allegiance to the sovereign. He calls the Mughal Empire a "quasi-modern" polity.¹⁵⁶ Stephen Blake proceeded further towards the extreme centralisation of authority. He theorises an ideal model of 'Patrimonial-Bureaucratic Empire,' which does not indicate the working of an actual State. He drew much from the Patrimonial model of Max Weber wherein the ruler governs on the basis of personal, traditional authority modelled after a patriarchal family. The depiction of Akbar in *Ain-i Akbari* as a divine patriarch, the household as the central element in the government, and some members of the army and the nobility owing their allegiance to the emperor (the person, not the office) makes Blake suggest that Akbar's Empire was a patrimonial-bureaucratic one.¹⁵⁷ Present scholarly interest in Akbar's efforts to form a closed circle of intellectuals for a dialogue in the *Ibadat-Khana* can also be viewed as a part of this model.

The Mughal State has largely been treated as an Indian phenomenon in the larger Indo centric historiography. It is mainly seen as a Leviathan feeding on large agrarian surplus and extractive machinery,¹⁵⁸ seeking glory on the land and uninterested in maritime affairs.¹⁵⁹ The global and cosmopolitan nature of the empire needs to be reassessed and evaluated. The Mughal Empire attracted a vast number of scholars, missionaries and diplomats from Central Asia and especially Iran. The nobility was vastly multi-ethnic consisting of racial groups such as Iranis, Turanis, Rajputs, Indian muslims (mostly Shaikhzadas) and Afghans and, at a later date, many Europeans also became part of the court. Therefore, it would be a

¹⁵³ Athar Ali, "The Mughal polity," 710.

¹⁵⁴ The *mansab* refers to the rank or position of an official in the Mughal administrative structure. It determined the salary and troops to be maintained by the official.

¹⁵⁵ *Jagir* refers to the revenue assignments which were given in lieu of the pay.

¹⁵⁶ Athar Ali, "Towards an Interpretation of the Mughal Empire," *The Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland* 1 (1978): 38-49.

¹⁵⁷ Stephen P. Blake, "The Patrimonial-Bureaucratic Empire of the Mughals," *The Journal of Asia Studies* 39 (1979): 77-94.

¹⁵⁸ See, Irfan Habib, *Agrarian System of Mughal India*.

¹⁵⁹ See, M. N Pearson, *Merchants and Rulers*.

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mistake to fit a certain bureaucratic, centralised, patrimonial or a segmentary model¹⁶⁰ to Mughal Empire, which at the end of the sixteenth century was more of a process than a structure,¹⁶¹ continuously evolving with the incorporation of new elements at both the local and central levels.

2.2.4 Religion in the Mughal Empire

2.2.4.1 The beginning of religious disputations in the medieval and early modern period

A religious or theological debate inevitably brings a stereotypical image of a Muslim thinker arguing with the people of the Book, the Jews and the Christians, in an effort to prove the superiority of the Islamic faith over other belief systems. The nature of debate was mainly inspired by the motivation to win over the opponent. For a point of reference, consider names such as *Badhl al-Majhud fi Ifhami 'l Yahud* (Striving to silence the Jews through Argument). Scriptural reasoning has been denounced by many Islamic theologians on the basis that the scriptures of the 'People of the Book' may be corrupted or spread apostasy. Ibn Yafi (d. 1367), for example, prohibits the perusal of non-Muslim scriptures on the basis that may be corrupted, they might lead to cultivating friendship with non-believers and lastly, examining them might incline one towards unbelief.¹⁶² The Mughal rulers, especially Akbar and his successor, Jahangir, were accused by contemporary critics of being guilty of the charges prescribed by Ibn Yafi.

¹⁶⁰ The Aligarh school mainly argues for a fixed and centralised-bureaucratic structure of the Mughal Empire perfected under Akbar. For the writings of the Aligarh school approaches see, *Medieval India: A miscellany*, 3 vols. (London: Asia Publishing House), 1972; Athar Ali, "Towards an Interpretation," 38-49. Drawing on Bernier's description of the Mughal State Burton Stein's formulation of a segmentary state for the Vijayanagar Empire in South India draws similarities to Bernier's vision of Mughal Empire as a non-centralised State system consisting of royal sovereignty wielded by the king and autonomous administrations run at the local level by the 'native princes'. For Burton Stein's model see, Burton Stein, "State Formation and Economy Reconsidered: Part One," *Modern Asian Studies* 19 (1985): 387-413.

¹⁶¹ Sanjay Subrahmanyam uses the idea in the hope to open new avenues in the study of Mughal State. See, Sanjay Subrahmanyam, "The Mughal State: Structure or Process? Reflections on recent western historiography," *The Indian Economic and Social History Review* 29 (1992): 291-321.

¹⁶² Abdul Rahman al-Salimi, "Inter-religious Dialogue and Debate in Classical Islam," *Journal of textual Reasoning*, 9 (2016), <http://jtr.shanti.virginia.edu/volume-8-number-1/inter-religious-dialogue-and-debate-in-classical-islam-ibn-kammunas-cultural-model/>.

2.2.4.2 Mughal Religious Innovation

The religion and 'un-religion' of Akbar's mind has intrigued many scholars studying political and religious formations in Mughal times. The introduction of *Din-i-Ilahi* as a new religion or a political tool or both, lies at the bottom of any enquiry into the religious dialogues during the period. Opinions on Akbar's religious motivations can be categorically divided into two broad strands: one, which prescribes to the idea that Akbar abandoned Islam in the wake of a newly invented religion and second which, argues that *Din-i-Ilahi* fit a broad political scheme and was no deviation from Islam. A short glance at these generalisations would enable us to better comprehend the dynamics of Akbar's religious dialogues. Vans Kennedy refers to Akbar's 'Deism' as a system of abolition. On the basis of Akbar's apparent un-Islamic decrees passed over the period of twenty seven years, he argues that every institution peculiar to Islam was gradually abolished. For example, he abrogated the five daily prayers, fasts, alms and pilgrimage, permitted the sale of wine and the game of chance and most famously, forbid polygamy.¹⁶³ Others, like R. Garbe and E. Hardy, argue for an eclectic element in the new religion. These ideas are echoed in the recent research of Iqtidar Alam Khan which establishes the impact of Akbar's personal world outlook. For example, the cultural ethos of Timurid polity, philosophical discourse in Greek philosophy (*sukhnan-i-Hikmat*) and the intellectual influence of Shaikh Mubarak and his sons, Faizi and Abu'l Fazl, on Akbar's religious policy and tolerance.¹⁶⁴

The opposing argument that Akbar had political rather than religious or spiritual motivations in initiating the new religion was first surfaced by F.W. Buckler. In his *A New Interpretation of Akbar's Infallibility Decree*, he argues that the main cause for Akbar to pronounce the *mahzar* or the Infallibility Decree¹⁶⁵ was not merely the idea to announce himself as the spiritual and temporal King, but was a political move to free himself from the religious and political control of Safavid Persia

¹⁶³ Van Kennedy, "Notice respecting the Religion introduced into India by the emperor Akbar," *Transactions of the Literary Society of Bombay* 2 (1820): 260.

¹⁶⁴ Iqtidar Alam Khan, "Akbar's Personality traits and World Outlook: A Critical Reappraisal," *Social Scientist* 20 (1992): 19-20.

¹⁶⁵ F. W Buckler, "A New Interpretation of Akbar's "Infallibility" Decree of 1579," *The Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland* 4 (1924): 591-608.

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on the one hand and the Ottoman jurisdiction of the *Khalifa* on the other hand.¹⁶⁶ Interestingly, official Mughal sources do not mention the decree; it is mentioned and discussed in detail by Badauni, known for his critical opinion of Akbar.

Akbar's religious policies and his approach towards religions beyond Islam have been a case of much historical debate and analysis. The religious debate of *Ibadat Khana* (which was officially closed in 1582) mediated by Akbar, have led many historians to argue the existence of religious plurality in the Mughal Empire. However, contemporary historians like Badauni and Jesuit priests construe an anti-Islamic image of the Emperor, claiming that he ceased to be a Muslim from 1580 onwards.¹⁶⁷ The foundation of these ideas lay as much in the contemporary historians' respective ideologies (for the Jesuits, Akbar's delineation from Islam suggested his conversion to Christianity and for Badauni, the tolerance shown towards non-Muslims was the indication of deviance from Islam) as they do in the building of the *Ibadat Khana* by the Emperor.

Mirza Nur-ud-din Beg Mohammad Khan Salim, popularly known as Jahangir has either been referred to as a 'pale successor of his illustrious predecessor Akbar'¹⁶⁸ or marked achievements have been circumscribed to him being a 'connoisseur of art'.¹⁶⁹ Politically, his role has been mainly overshadowed by the strong portrayals of Nur Jahan, his wife and later by the 'junta' which constituted her father, Itmad-ud-Daula, her brother Asaf Khan and apparently, Khurram or the future Shah Jahan.¹⁷⁰ However, he expounded similar interests in cosmopolitanism and *Sulh i-kul* (Universal peace and coexistence of different religious elements). The

¹⁶⁶ Buckler, "Akbar's Infallibility Decree," 592-593.

¹⁶⁷ Iqtidar Khan, *Akbar's Personality*, 16.

¹⁶⁸ Cited from Corinne Lefèvre, "Recovering a Missing Voice from Mughal India: The Imperial Discourse of Jahangir (1605-1627) in His Memoirs," *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient*, 50, no.4 (2007): 453.

¹⁶⁹ There exists an extensive literature on the progress and innovations in art and paintings in the time of Jahangir; see Sanjeev P. Srivastava, *Jahangir, A Connoisseur of Mughal Art* (New Delhi: Abhinav Publications, 2000); Ebba Koch, "Jahangir and the Angels: Recently Discovered Wall Paintings under European Influence in the Fort of Lahore," in *India and the West*, ed. J. Deppert (New Delhi: Manohar, 1983), 173-195.

¹⁷⁰ First established by historian Beni Prasad in his momentous, *A History of Jahangir* (Allahabad: Indian Press, 1962); the junta theory has been explored and re-explored by varied historians over decades, some terming it as a weakness of the emperor Jahangir and the others regarding it as the initiative of the emperor to attract the bright Iranians from Safavid fold.

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idea is said to have originated in Akbar's rule and Jahangir's attitude towards religious affairs could be more or less seen as a continuation of Akbar's regime. The implementation of *Shariah* was not the major objective of his rule, except in matters of jurisdictional decision making.¹⁷¹ However, there are elements that point towards his appeasement of Muslim *ulama* (clergy), which were largely alienated under Akbar's rule. His reign was still far from being run by strict Islamic ideology. His honorific title *nur-ud-din*, or the light of religion, points towards his efforts to follow the illuminist theory of sovereignty followed by his father.¹⁷² He continued the tradition of theological discussions in the *Ibadat Khana* and the imperial *muraqqas* (albums), murals and painting commissioned during his time were greatly influenced by Christian symbolisms.¹⁷³

2.3 Communicating with the 'Other': Diplomacy in Mughal-Portuguese exchanges

Referring to intertwined empires in Europe and Asia in the early modern world, Sanjay Subrahmanyam wrote: "the crucial point, however, is not just that these empires existed, but that they recognised one another, and as a consequence often borrowed symbols, ideas, and institutions across recognisable boundaries."¹⁷⁴ This statement holds true for our case as well. The Portuguese, as we noted in the previous sections, proclaimed themselves to have established an overseas maritime empire against Spain, with the legitimacy granted to them by the papal bulls. However, this was an agreement unknown and most apparently unrecognised by the Mughal rulers in the Indian subcontinent. Hence, a language of (diplomatic) communication had to be developed in a new cultural setup. The terms 'diplomacy' or 'foreign policy' must be used cautiously to denote the wide spectrum of political negotiations that took place between these early modern polities. In the absence of

¹⁷¹ Sajida S. Alvi, "Religion and State During the Reign of Mughal Emperor Jahangir (1605-27): Nonjuristical Perspectives," *Studia Islamica* 69 (1989): 106.

¹⁷² Corinne Lefevre, "Recovering a Missing Voice from the Mughal India," 463-464.

¹⁷³ For a brief discussion of Catholic meaning and symbolisms employed in the Mughal art see, Gauvin Alexander Bailey, "The Indian Conquest of Catholic Art: The Mughals, the Jesuits and Imperial Mural Painting," *Art Journal* 57 (1998): 24-30.

¹⁷⁴ Subrahmanyam, *Iberian*, 1359.

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appropriate terminology, these terms shall be used to denote, especially in the Mughal context, a conscious understanding of their geopolitical realities, neighbours and allies from near and far and Mughal responsiveness to them in the given political scenario.

The Mughal Empire did not have a well-established department of foreign affairs or a rank parallel to what the Ottomans called *Reis ul-kuttab* (principal secretary to the Ottoman imperial council), who looked after the foreign affairs and drafted imperial letters addressed to foreign dignitaries. In the reign of Akbar, this task was mostly allotted to nobles, Abu'l Fazl (also his official chronicler) and Hakim Abul Fath.¹⁷⁵ However, Du Jarric mentions that there were eight experienced officials who were mainly responsible for introducing foreign emissaries to the Mughal Emperor and explaining to them codes of conduct, protocol and the ceremonial procedures.¹⁷⁶ It was only in the reign of Jahangir that the office of the host to foreign emissaries was given to Nuruddin Quli.¹⁷⁷

The Mughals had a regulated policy towards the protection of their frontiers. Mughal political frontier policies were formulated with the bounds of their strategic interests. A. Anooshahr argues for tracing the “universal early modernity” in the intra-Asian encounters, as they demonstrated “intensification in the sixteenth century of a change in the worldview of a large group of people in the Islamic world.”¹⁷⁸ This Islamic world-view mainly consisted of the changing political dialogues between the Shia Safavids of Persia, the Sunni Ottoman, Uzbeks and Mughal empires. The political dynamics of these Islamic empires shall be taken up in detail in the upcoming chapters. Here, it is just important to state that within this Islamic world, diplomacy was guided by strategic rather than sectarian or religious reasons. The ambassadors were received with much pomp and show. Many travelogues and chronicles give a vivid description of the reception of the foreign

¹⁷⁵ N. R. Farooqui, “Diplomacy and Diplomatic Procedures under the Mughals,” *The Medieval History Journal* 7, no. 1 (2004): 72.

¹⁷⁶ Du Jarric, *Jahangir and Jesuits* quoted in Farooqui, “Diplomacy and Diplomatic Procedures,” 72.

¹⁷⁷ W. M Thackston trans. and ed., *The Jahangirnama, Memoires of Jahangir, Emperor of India* (Washington D. C: Freer Gallery of Art, Smithsonian Institute, 1999), 194.

¹⁷⁸ A. Anooshahr, “Dialogism and Territoriality in a Mughal History of the Islamic Millennium,” *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 55 (2012): 222.

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envoys. The ambassadors were expected to perform *sijda* (prostration) in front of the emperor but in the case of the Ottoman and Persian ambassadors, they were allowed to follow their native tradition. Most reputed ambassadors were also imparted with robes of honour or *khilat*. The ambassadors were expected to approach with a *peshkash* which could mean both a tribute and a gift to a ruler or a patron. However, these protocols, rules and codes of conduct were either completely unknown or strikingly different for the Portuguese. The Mughals thought of the 'Franks' as a peculiar maritime tribe patrolling the seas whose kings were not wealthy enough to send precious gifts.¹⁷⁹

In the last sections, we analysed the nature of the Portuguese 'empire' vis-à-vis the Mughals. It appears that the Portuguese presence on the coasts of the Indian subcontinent with political control over a handful of coastal regions of Daman, Diu, Goa and Bassein and a few vassals in South India hardly gave them an 'empire like' power of negotiation. In this respect, it is crucial to analyse their diplomatic language towards the Mughals. Studies on Mughal-Portuguese diplomacy are almost non-existent and most are mainly focused on description of the embassies. However, some scholars have started a trend of analysing the relationship between Goa and the regional rulers.¹⁸⁰ Venturing in this domain requires a strong understanding of political language and the rhetoric employed by the early modern authors of *farmans* (imperial decrees), letters and orders.

Secondly, in order to encounter the splendid pomp and rich etiquettes of the Asian rulers, the Portuguese had to, in the words of Biedermann, build up an 'art of reception' after having read and been equipped with the 'behavioural guidelines' of their South Asian counterparts.¹⁸¹ This means they enacted a similar pomp and show as was exhibited in the South Asian courts. For example, the visitors would be taken to one ship, fully loaded with the riches of the entire fleet.¹⁸² A similar behavioural pattern could be seen in the lavish celebrations at the Goan churches to secure and

¹⁷⁹ Moin, "Akbar's "Jesus" and Marlowe's "Tamburlaine"," 4.

¹⁸⁰ Jorge Flores, *Os Portugueses e o Mar de Ceilão: Trato, Diplomacia e Guerra, 1498-1543* (Lisbon: Cosmos, 1998).

¹⁸¹ Biedermann, "Portuguese Diplomacy," 22-23.

¹⁸² *Ibid.*, 23.

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propagate the position of Goa as the Rome of the Orient. Moreover, the participation of the Viceroy in the ceremonies underlined the Crown's commitment to Catholicism and demonstrated the Viceroy as the Vicar of God—an image fostered by the Portuguese to draw a parallel to the Mughal emperors usually conferred as spiritual leaders or semi-divine beings.¹⁸³ The Mughals (starting only from the reign of Akbar) were mainly addressed with formal respect as *El Rey Gram Mogor* (To His Majesty the Great Mughal) in the letters addressed to the Mughal court from Lisbon.¹⁸⁴ Also, a highly decorated language was used for the Mughals compared to the other regional rulers in the subcontinent.

2.4 From 'Comparative to Connected': An Outlook

The two newcomers in the Indian environment, the Portuguese and the Mughals, reacted differently to the pre-existing structures. The Mughals, on the one hand, appropriated local religious symbolisms and incorporated the indigenous Hindu and Muslim nobility, in addition to encouraging the assimilation of foreign ones. The Mughal political structure could be viewed as cosmopolitan, diverse and inclusive. On the other hand, the *Estado da Índia* remained attached to its roots in Spain and Portugal and its ranks (both political and religious) were filled mainly by the Europeans. The settlements in the Indian subcontinent were a small part of a largely "redistributive empire" where the Portuguese "skimmed off the profits for themselves but were not able to affect radical changes in routes, products and productive techniques at any level."¹⁸⁵ Since the Portuguese arrived in the Indian subcontinent before the Mughals, they had the opportunity to assess the nature and power of the landed empires in and around the subcontinent, for example, the Vijayanagar Empire, the Sultanate of Bijapur and Gujarat inside and the Ottomans, the Safavids, and the Mings of China outside the subcontinent. One would suppose that the Portuguese were more prepared and informed about modes of conduct

¹⁸³ João Vincente Carvalho de Melo, "'Lord of Conquest, Navigation and Commerce': Diplomacy and the Imperial Ideal During the Reign of John V, 1707-1750," (Ph.D Diss., Swansea University 2012), 36-37.

¹⁸⁴ Melo, "Lord of Conquest," 46.

¹⁸⁵ M. N. Pearson, *The Portuguese in India* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 77.

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with Asian empires as compared to the Mughals who had only started the process of empire consolidation around the 1560s and whose foreign dialogues were restricted to their immediate neighbouring empires and kingdoms.

The Mughal State and the Portuguese enterprise encountered each other in a loosely knit world where strands of religion (through the agency of missionaries), politics and economy (through trading companies and factories), were connecting different parts of the world. These strands connected the Mughals and Portuguese in a complex way, the result of which was the changing of political dynamics in the neighbouring Islamic empires, transformation of regional economies and politics in the Indian subcontinent and lastly, the introduction of a new religious agency, which was distinctively political at times. From our comparative analysis, we found out that the roots of Portuguese legitimacy granted by the papal bulls were not recognised in the Indian subcontinent and the Portuguese were one of the many players stationed at the coastal frontiers of the Mughal Empire. The religious cosmopolitanism and receptiveness of the Mughal Empire, especially under the period of the study, were the main reasons for the development of the elaborate cross cultural relationship, in addition to the religious and economic motivations of the Portuguese. The papal orders might have divided the world between Spain and Portugal, but the latter still had to compete in the subcontinent to establish itself among the diverse local and foreign entities. The complexities of this layered relationship shall be explored in more detail in the forthcoming section.

II. Religion and rhetoric: Dissecting political communication in the court

*We do not know whether he (Akbar) is a friend or an enemy of the King of Portugal; but we have noticed some things we do not like, for he ambitions to be greatest king of all, and apparently he cannot suffer that the King of Portugal be the lord of the sea...*¹⁸⁶

– Father Rudolf Aquaviva

¹⁸⁶ Father Rudolf Aquaviva to Father Everard Mercurian, Fatehpur Sikri, 30 July 1581 in *Letters to the Mughal Court*, ed. Correia Afonso, 96.

3 Reading the ‘political’ in the Jesuit missions at the Mughal court

3.1 Introduction

A global and connected perspective of the time frame of this study (i.e. the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries) shows interesting parallels between Europe and the Indian subcontinent (*Hindustan*). In the period when most of Europe was engulfed in religious wars, from 1524 to 1648 following the onset of Protestantism in many parts of Europe, as was Asia and Persia in particular, the rulers of the Mughal Empire in the Indian subcontinent¹⁸⁷ engaged in multi-religious dialogues with philosophers and theologians of different faiths. A surface understanding of this picture would suggest that a period of religious wars in Europe was paralleled with the period of religious dialogue and even ‘religious innovation’¹⁸⁸ in *Hindustan*. However, the political relationship between the Mughals and the Portuguese *Estado da Índia* (the so called State of India) that developed as a result of the religious dialogues in the Mughal court was a complex one. The religious missions were, at times, vulnerable to the stability of Mughal-*Estado* relationship. However, certain scholarly dispositions have failed to find “any tangible consequence of this Mughal curiosity regarding Christianity during the time of Akbar and Jahangir....”¹⁸⁹

The study of *Mogor* missions¹⁹⁰ is augmented by tapping the depository of letters written by the Jesuit priests residing at the Mughal court, the reports sent

¹⁸⁷ Walter Fischer, “Jews and Judaism at the Court of Mughal Emperors in Medieval India,” *Proceedings of the American Academy for Jewish Research* 18 (1948-49): 9.

¹⁸⁸ *Din-i-Ilahi* could be understood as a one of its kind religious innovation of its time. It shall be discussed soon in the next paragraphs.

¹⁸⁹ Athar Ali, “Muslims’ Perception of Judaism and Christianity in Medieval India,” *Modern Studies* 33 (1999): 245-247.

¹⁹⁰ In the Portuguese literature, *Hindustan* proper and the dominions of the Mughals were called *Mogor*.

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from Goa to Rome, Portugal and Spain on the progress of the Mughal mission, and the contemporary chronicles of the Mughal historians. Another authority for studying the missions at Jahangir's court is from the lens of the new arrivals on the Indian subcontinent: the English. The exchange of letters and correspondence between the English diplomats in India and the English East India Company serves as a valuable source of information on the rival Portuguese missions. The forthcoming discussions in this chapter focus on understanding the strands of religious discussions in the Mughal court and its role in sustaining the delicate balance of power between Mughals and the Portuguese.

The study of the encounter in the courtly setting demands a prior recognition of what Subrahmanyam refers to as “a crude parallel morphology.”¹⁹¹ This implies a mutual acceptance of presence of a similar political system with rulers and courts, which in turn had certain set of rules and etiquettes that had to be translated and understood by both the parties.¹⁹² In other words, the actors involved rely on “analogies, rather than elusive cross-cultural understandings” as they engage with other polities and peoples.¹⁹³ Prior to the Mughals, the Portuguese in Asia had engaged in dialogues with the regional kingdoms of southern India and had some prior knowledge of diplomatic protocols of courts of China and Japan. However, even though the Mughal court witnessed various foreign embassies from Persia, Central Asia and regional kingdoms of the subcontinent, it was the first time the Mughals were beginning to establish relation with a European power. It took long until the Mughals and the Portuguese (represented by the *Estado* and the Jesuit priests) could comprehend and assess each other's code of conduct within and outside the court. The first layer of this multi-dimensional relationship unfolded in the *Ibadat-Khana* (House of Worship), constructed by Akbar for religious debates and dialogues. *Ibadat-Khana* is mentioned in almost all contemporary chronicles of Akbar's time. Badauni, a contemporary chronicler of the time, considers Emperor Akbar's

¹⁹¹ Sanjay Subrahmanyam, *Courtly Encounters: Translating Courtliness and Violence in Early Modern Eurasia* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2012), 24-25.

¹⁹² Ibid.

¹⁹³ Lauren Benton and Adam Clulow, “Legal encounters and the origins of global law,” in *The Construction of a Global World*, vol.6, ed. Jerry H. Bentley et.al (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 82.

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inclination towards the religious discussions as merely a preoccupation in his leisure and peaceful time. "His Majesty would go from time to time to these various parties, and converse with them and discuss philosophical subjects."¹⁹⁴ However, these ideas might be a result of Badauni's personal conservative Islamic ideological bias where other thoughts on religion were not feasible.

The concept of religious debates was not a novel invention during Akbar's time. Special assemblies called *mahzar* existed in the pre-Mughal times but the religious discussions were confined to controversial themes within the predominantly Hanafi school of thought.¹⁹⁵ From the testimonies of Abu'l Fazl (Akbar's key chronicler) and Badauni (contemporary historian and a major critic of Akbar's policies), it appears that the construction of the *Ibadat Khana* and the religious debates that were held there, were not a direct continuation of the religious debates before the Mughal era. Rezavi recognizes it as an instrument of tolerance rather than orthodoxy.¹⁹⁶ The debates in *Ibadat Khana* ranged from the "issues of the trinity, God, the son, his death, Muhammad, *Alcoran*, the day of judgement, death, resurrection and various philosophical and political subjects."¹⁹⁷ The near silence of contemporary chronicles on the religious debates during Akbar's reign, except the most controversial ones, exhibit a conscious act of concealment. These were the theological debates in which the religious priests of all participating religions tried to establish the superiority of their own religion vis-à-vis the other. Akbar, at times, was critical of the arguments presented by the Muslim theologians. Hence, the key chroniclers restricted themselves to cursory mention of these debates. However, the selective silence of the Mughal sources is actualized by the

¹⁹⁴ Badauni, *Muntakhabu-t tawarikh*, vol. 2, 203-205.

¹⁹⁵ It was the first school of jurisprudence in Islam which was founded by the scholar Imam Abu Hanifa. It is mainly differentiated from other schools of law by lesser reliance on mass oral traditions as a source of knowledge. The school established the Quran, the traditions of the Prophet, the consensus of the scholars (*ijma*), analogy (*qiyas*) and lastly local custom (*urf*) as the basis of Islamic law, in that order. On Islamic jurisprudence see, Ahmed El Shamsy, *The Canonization of Islamic Law: A Social and Intellectual History* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2013); Benjamin Jokisch, *Islamic Imperial Law: Harun-Al-Rashid's Codification Project* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2007).

¹⁹⁶ Syed Ali Nadeem Rezavi, "Religious Disputations and Imperial Ideology: The Purpose and Location of Akbar's Ibadat Khana," *Studies in History* 24 (2008): 196-198.

¹⁹⁷ Monserrate, *The Commentary of Father Monserrate S. J*, trans. J. S Hoyland (London: Oxford University Press, 1922), 50.

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European paintings and engravings of religious character presented to the Mughal emperor and copied by Mughal artists.¹⁹⁸ Religious plurality, as discussed by historians certainly existed, but the consequence of that plurality requires a focused approach. Although the cultural and religious cosmopolitanism of Akbar's court generated major arguments and stream of thought in the recent historiography,¹⁹⁹ the political usefulness of these diverse religious dialogues deserves more attention.

Moreland pointed out that a mix of religious and political motives was the "key to the activities of the Portuguese during the sixteenth century, and much of their conduct which inexplicable from the traders' point of view finds an excuse, though not always a justification in the missionary zeal by which the rulers of the country were distinguished."²⁰⁰ The Mughal Empire was going through a similar discourse at the end of the sixteenth century. Akbar's invitation to the Jesuits should be viewed from the perspective of the ongoing debate at the Mughal court questioning the relationship between religion and politics. This sub-chapter looks into the strands of political elements in the Mughal-Jesuit religious interactions in the Mughal courts of Akbar and his successor, Jahangir.

3.2 Disentangling religion and politics: The First and Second missions at Akbar's court

3.2.1 First negotiation and the First Mission

The fall of the Sultanate of Gujarat and Akbar's conquest over the region brought the Mughal Empire in proximity of the neighbouring possessions of *Estado da Índia* (Diu, Daman and Bassein). As a declaration of the arrival of the new power in the region, Akbar sent a *farman* in 1572 to the captain of the Portuguese port of

¹⁹⁸ Avril Ann Powell, *Muslims and Missionaries in Pre-Mutiny India* (New York: Routledge, 2013), 18.

¹⁹⁹ For more views on Akbar's tolerant religious policies and pluralism under his regime see, Iqtidar Alam Khan, "Akbar's Personality Traits and World Outlook: A Critical Reappraisal," *Social Scientist* 20 (1992): 16-30, Rajeev Kinra, "Handling Diversity with Absolute Civility: The Global Historical Legacy of Mughal *Shulh-i Kull*," *The Medieval History Journal* 16 (2013): 251-295.

²⁰⁰ Moreland, *India at the Death of Akbar: An Economic Study* (London: Macmillan and Co., Ltd., 1920), 200.

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Diu, Aires Teles. The Portuguese version of the *farman* suggests that *khutba*²⁰¹ be read in the name of the Mughal emperor at the mosques of Diu and that Mughal currency be adopted in the city. These were the two known methods of declaration of sovereignty in the early modern Islamic world. We cannot assess whether the Portuguese authorities were of this dynamic, but Aires Teles in a letter to the Viceroy explained that the acceptance of the two conditions would be a pragmatic decision as he believed that the reading of *khutba* in Akbar's name had nothing more than a ceremonial value and the circulation of the Mughal gold and silver coins was beneficial for the economy of the region as compared to the old Sultanate coins which were largely false.²⁰² Thus, the first contact between the two ended on a note of Mughal domination.

The first Jesuit embassy at the Mughal court arrived six years after Mughal Emperor Akbar's first encounter with the Portuguese during the siege of Surat in 1573, in which the Mughals and Portuguese faced each other on more intimate and formal ground than in their previous encounters. Although the Portuguese were notably interested in acquiring the port for themselves, but considering the might of the Mughals they contended themselves by taking over the nearby territories of Diu. The treaty signed between the Mughals and the Portuguese restored the possession of Daman with the *Estado da Índia* and Akbar promised not to harbour the Malabar pirates²⁰³ and ensured a free *cartaz* every year from the Portuguese. This relationship, which started on a political note, had its manifestations in the Jesuits missionaries sent to the court of Akbar. The Emperor's invitation to the priests of Goa is reminiscent of his interest and motivations to initiate a dialogue with Goa in the form of a Mughal embassy determined to travel to Goa and subsequently, to Europe. However, due to reasons discussed later in the thesis, the embassy went only as far as Goa. Two versions of the letter that accompanied the embassy sent from Akbar's court have been published. The first and more famous version of the

²⁰¹ It was an official and religious proclamation of an emperor's rule where the emperor's name was read in the Friday prayers.

²⁰² *Farman* of Akbar to Aires Teles, 13 December 1572 in Flores and Saldanha, *The Firangis*, 63-64.

²⁰³ Malabar pirates, presently known as the Mappila Muslims, were a major cause of irritation in the Indian Ocean for the Portuguese. The latter denounced Malabar pirates' engagement in contraband trade and charged them of piracy.

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letter is addressed to the European scholars (*Danyan-i-Firang*), but there are other versions which mention “Ruler of the Europeans (*Farman riwa-i-Farang*).” Other European authors, like Catrou, mention the embassy as an emblem of congratulations to the King of Spain, Philip II, on his accession in 1581 to the throne of Portugal.²⁰⁴

In the royal *farman*, the Emperor invites the priests for the first time to be a part of the debates in *Ibadat-Khana*. He informs them about the arrival of his two ambassadors, Mullah Abdullah and Domingos Pires, in Goa. He further assures the Portuguese that the priests shall be treated with due respect and would be free to depart per their wishes. They were proclaimed to be under the Emperor’s protection.²⁰⁵ The Mughal ambassador in Goa was received with the welcome rituals customary to the arrival of new viceroys from Europe. He was conducted with pomp and celebrations from his ship to Goa.²⁰⁶

3.2.2 Portuguese outlook on the First mission

The Portuguese side witnessed a lot of apprehensions and complex decision making in order to respond to the Mughal request. The Viceroy approached the Archbishop of Goa and other bishops for advice on the matter. The Count Viceroy was strictly opposed to the decision of sending the priests to the Mughal court. He feared that in the event of the Fathers being held hostage at the Mughal court, the Portuguese territories of Daman, Diu and the Province of North might be in danger of Mughal occupation. However, Father Rui Vincente, the Provincial Superior at Goa, supported the cause of the Mughal mission.²⁰⁷ The affirmative decision was made keeping in mind the great possibilities of converting the Mughal Emperor to Christianity and spreading the ‘glory of God’ throughout Asia. In general, the

²⁰⁴ Rev. Father Felix O.C., “Jesuit missions in Lahore,” *Journal of Punjab Historical Society* 5 (1918): 67.

²⁰⁵ Full text of the *farman* has been reproduced in John Correia-Afonso, prologue to *Letters from the Mughal Court*.

²⁰⁶ ANTT, Armário Jesuítico, n.28, “Formão de Zeladin Machamede Achebar, rei posto por Deus, (aos) principais padres de ordem de São Paulo,” f. 88v. The English version of the *farman* has been published in John Correia-Afonso, *Letters from the Mughal Court*, 8.

²⁰⁷ Fr. F. de Souza S.J., “The First Jesuit Mission to Akbar’s Court,” trans. H.Hosten, *Examiner* (1920): 90-91.

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missionaries were thought of as important tools to bring glory to the Empire. In the event of any harm or capture of the missionaries, the Portuguese State rendered to itself, the political-legal opportunity to capture the ports of the Mughal Empire for “having persecuted the Ministers of Gospel and broken both his words and the law of nations.”²⁰⁸

The composition of the first Jesuit embassy to the Mughal court was a political arrangement in itself, in addition to the other political reasons for stationing an embassy at the Mughal centre. The leader of the mission was an Italian, Father Rudolf Aquaviva, son of the duke of Atri and nephew of the Society’s fifth Father General. He had two companions, Father Antonio de Monserrate, a Catalan who chronicled the activities of the mission in the Mughal court and lastly, Francisco Henriques, a Persian convert from Ormuz, in the capacity of an interpreter.²⁰⁹ All the missionaries selected for the mission were non Portuguese to avoid giving security offences to Akbar and also due to the fear of them being held as hostages. The conscious decision to replace a Portuguese priest with Catalan Father Monserrate in Daman also reflected the tendency to unlink the missions from seemingly political agendas.²¹⁰ However, through all the hysteria and initial inhibitions, the Portuguese power centre in Goa agreed to send the first Jesuit mission to the Mughal court which was to be followed by two more consecutive missions to Akbar’s court.

3.2.3 Political dimensions of a religious mission

Jesuits were received at Mughal Emperor Akbar’s court with reverence and respect. The Emperor spent the night discussing his curiosities about the Christian faith and donned Portuguese clothes and hats as a symbol of his interest in incorporating the priests into his court. The Emperor’s inclination towards the priests and the religious-political nature of their work attracted the critique of the chronicler

²⁰⁸ ANTT, Livro 28 de Jesuítas, “Conselho de Arcebispo de Goa e mais bispos da India sobre o que se faria acerca de embaxada do Gram Mogor,” ff. 89-90.

²⁰⁹ Dauril Alden, *The Making of an Enterprise: The Society of Jesus in Portugal, Its Empire, and Beyond, 1540-1750* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1996), 51.

²¹⁰ E. R. Hambye, “The First Jesuit Mission to Emperor Akbar,” in *Islam in India: Studies and Commentaries*, Vol. 1, ed., C. W. Troll (Delhi: Vikas Publishing House, 1982), 6.

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Badauni and other conservative *ulema* of the Mughal court. In the *Muntakhab*, he writes:

Learned monks also from Europe, who are called Padre, and have an infallible head, called Papa, who is able to change religious ordinances as he may deem advisable for the moment, and to whose authority kings must submit, brought the Gospel, and advanced proofs for the Trinity. His majesty firmly believed in the truth of the Christian religion, and wishing to spread the doctrines of Jesus, ordered Prince Murad to take a few lessons in Christianity under good auspices, and charged Abu-I Fazl to translate the Gospel. Instead of the usual Bismillah-irrahman-irrahin the following line was used: Ai name vay Geau Christu (O thou whose name Jesus Christ we call...)²¹¹

However, irrespective of their appreciation or disdain for Akbar's religious dialogues and ideas, no Muslim chronicler claimed that the Emperor intended to embrace Christianity or showed the prospect to convert. Contrarily, from the beginning of the mission, Jesuit priests anticipated the conversion of the Emperor and subsequently, the Mughal Empire. Monserrate's hopeful writing about the fulfilment of the ultimate goal of the Emperor's conversion could have been an overestimation of the Emperor's kind treatment of the Jesuits. According to the priest, the Emperor wished to convert to Christianity without creating an upheaval in the kingdom and as evidence quotes Akbar, "I will pretend that I wish to go on pilgrimage to Mecca, and will go to Goa to get baptised."²¹² This and many other incidents and expressions recorded in the Jesuit literature suggest the hopeful attitude of the Jesuits towards the accomplishment of the *Mogor* mission.

However, the Jesuits' opinion changed over the course of a few months. Monserrate writes, "To the Jesuit missionaries Akbar was first an encouragement, then an enigma, and ultimately a bitter disappointment."²¹³ A disillusioned Father Acquaviva wrote to Father Everard Mercurian, the Jesuit Superior General,²¹⁴ that the Mughal Emperor's friendly gestures were pragmatic political steps in the effort

²¹¹ Badauni, *Muntakhab*, vol. 2, 266.

²¹² Monserrate, *Commentary*, 48.

²¹³ Monserrate, *Commentary*, ii.

²¹⁴ This was the official title of the leader of the Society of Jesus.

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to secure Portuguese friendship in the background of his half-brother Mirza Hakim's revolt against him.²¹⁵ It is, therefore, evident that involvement in secular affairs and securing the political interests of the Portuguese remained at the forefront for the Jesuit missionaries. Within this correspondence, numerous mentions of Mughal rulers' political moves and their consequences for the Portuguese were highlighted.

In this context, it must be noted that the necessity for the Portuguese to conciliate the Mughals became very obvious when Akbar occupied Gujarat in 1572.²¹⁶ The Mughal Empire then became a direct neighbour of the vital Portuguese forts in Diu, Bassein and Daman. Additionally, Gujarat was one of the most important areas for the Portuguese trade. A Jesuit letter gloomily noted:

*We remain surrounded by him, and although it is not possible for him to take our cities and forts by arms, nevertheless if he takes the places from where we got our provisions it would be our certain end, which God not permit, because then we have no other refuge except Ceylon.*²¹⁷

The fear of Mughal occupation, as reflected in the Jesuit literature, was not born out of mere hysteria. There are evident instances of the Mughal Emperor's plans to eliminate Portuguese strongholds. A detailed reading of his *farmans* informs us about the clandestine anti-Portuguese developments in the Mughal court. By the time of the arrival of the first Jesuit embassy at the Mughal court in 1580, the Emperor had already ordered Qutbuddin Khan, the ruler of Broach, to launch an attack against Portuguese infidels. He further persuaded the officials of Gujarat and Malwa to take up military action against the Portuguese infidels. While on the other hand, he motivated the rulers of Deccan to support the royal army with men and material as a mark of their loyalty.²¹⁸ Father Anthony Monserrate exclaimed after the end of the first mission:

²¹⁵ Joseph Wicki ed., *Documenta Indica XVII, 1595-1597* (Rome: Monumenta Historica Soc. Iesu, 1988), 292. Also see, John Correia-Afonso, "Documents of the First Jesuit Mission from Goa to the Great Moghal," in *II Seminário Internacional de História Indo-Portuguesa* (Lisboa: Instituto de Investigação Científica Tropical, 1985): 298.

²¹⁶ Akbar displaced Sultan Muzaffar of Gujarat.

²¹⁷ M. N. Pearson, "The Estado Da India and the Hajj," *Indica* 26 (1989): 117.

²¹⁸ Abul Fazl, *Akbar Nama*, vol. 3, 409-410.

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*It may be suspected that Jalal-ud-din Akbar was moved to summon Christian priests, not by any divine inspiration, but by a certain curiosity and excessive eagerness to hear some new thing, or a design to devise something novel for the destruction of souls.*²¹⁹

A similar quest was assumed to be the reason for an invitation to the second mission.

3.2.4 Another Disillusionment: The Second Mission

The second Jesuit mission (1591) to the Mughal court has been an underwritten topic and is the least focused of the three Jesuit missions. The mission remained in Mughal court for less than a year and the fruits of the efforts have been largely under speculation. The first references of the second mission and Leo Grimon, a Greek sub-deacon, are noted in the proceedings of the Lahore court of Akbar: "On 26th Farwardin (6th April 1590) Padre Farmaliun came to Court from the port of Goa. Owing to His Majesty's appreciativeness he received high honour."²²⁰ The priest was entrusted with taking Akbar's *farman* addressed to the Viceroy of Goa which asked for continuation of the missions. The warrant of safe conduct is as follows:

*The Command of the exhalted Mahomet, great King and Lord of Fosliere to all the Captains, Viceroys, Governors, Treasurers and other officers of my realm. You are to know that I have greatly honoured and favoured Dom Leon Grimon; and it is my will and intention that the Captains and other officers of my Kingdom should do likewise, for I Hope by his means to ensure the despatch of certain other Fathers whom I have invited to come to me from Goa...*²²¹

²¹⁹ Afonso, "The Second Jesuit mission to Akbar," 92

²²⁰ Abu'l Fazl, *Akbarnama*, vol.3, 873.

²²¹ Du Jarric, *Akbar and the Jesuits*, 46. Also in Edward Maclagan, *The Jesuits and the Great Mogul*, 46-47.



Figure 1: The religious assembly in *Ibadat Khana* in the presence of Emperor Akbar and two Jesuit priests from the first Mission, Rudolfo Acquaviva and Francisco Henriques in the black robes. Painting by Narsingh, ca. 1605.

Image no.: CBL In 03.263.

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This letter once again elevated Jesuits' expectations of converting the Emperor to Christianity. These ideas came in the wake of Akbar's adoption of monogamy and his celebration of the day of Assumption of the Virgin in 1590, which culminated in the building of the opinion around his apparent deviation from Islam. The second embassy was highly anticipated in Jesuit circles with ultimately Fathers Duarte Leitão and Christoval de Vega as well as lay brother Estevão Ribeiro heading the mission to Lahore.²²²

However, the mission did not last long in the Mughal court. In a letter from Father Claude Acquaviva to Father Albert Laerzio, it is found that the early return of the second Jesuit mission to Akbar was due to the unexpectedly little harvest in the matter of conversion.²²³ The second mission was not recalled by the Jesuit superiors; rather, it was ended by the spontaneous decision of Father Leitão in Lahore. John Correia Afonso ascribes it as the result of rising hostilities against the Jesuits on the part of Muslim nobles and divines. The Jesuits were lodged near the Emperor's quarters and he treated them with the utmost respect, thereby increasing the speculations and hostilities from the orthodox Muslim *ulema*. This led to the rumour of them being the inventors or collaborators in establishing a new religion, *Din-i-Ilahi*.²²⁴

The members of the Second mission believed that they were being politically manipulated by Akbar to garner legitimacy for his new religious institution. Father Vega wrote that the people "thought that they (the Jesuits) were the authors of these novelties," and the Fathers were convinced that Akbar had called them "to give authority to the institution of his new law by our presence and that of the other priests of false sects whom he had already with himself, and for other ends so that all resulted in a concern for honour and wealth."²²⁵ This mission confirmed that Akbar was not a believer nor a practicing Muslim, though he might not have formally renounced Islam. Some scholars even suggest that *Din-i-Ilahi* was a political step to

²²² Maclagan, *The Jesuits and the Great Mogul*, 48.

²²³ John Correia-Afonso, "The Second Jesuit mission to Akbar," *Indica* 28 no. 2 (1991): 91.

²²⁴ Arnulf Camps, *Studies in Asian Mission History* (Brill: Leiden, 2000), 50-51.

²²⁵ John Correia-Afonso, "The Second Jesuit mission to Akbar," 92.

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prohibit the state from becoming an instrument of the orthodox Muslim community and to make it subservient to its own ends.²²⁶

3.3 An almost political entanglement: Third Jesuit mission

This analysis of the third mission is mainly based on the use of Jesuit and *Estado* sources since Mughal sources have little or insignificant record of this period. Badauni's chronicle ends in 1595 and *Akbarnama* has little or nothing to say about the events with regard to the Jesuits.²²⁷ The second mission resided in the Mughal court for less than a year and after its abrupt end, the Jesuits decided against sending any more missions to the Mughal court. However, the Emperor asked once more for the presence of the Jesuits at his court. The Third Jesuit embassy of 1595 was entrusted to Father Jerome Xavier,²²⁸ and supported by Fathers Manuel Pinheiro and Brother Bento de Góis.²²⁹ Father Jerome Xavier faced a difficult time in Goa due to the irreconcilable differences between Spanish and Portuguese missionaries,²³⁰ and the fact that most of Father Xavier's subordinates were of Portuguese origin. The organisation of the third mission was the result of the personal interest of Viceroy Matias D. Albuquerque (r. 1591-7) in the matters of overseas missions. He pressured the Jesuit provincial to make preparations for a third mission to the Court by announcing the high interest shown by other Christian orders in the *Mogor* mission. The Jesuit missionaries left Goa on 3 December, 1594 and reached Lahore,

²²⁶ Ibid., 93.

²²⁷ Maclagan, *Jesuits and the Great Mogul*, 53.

²²⁸ He was Spanish and his great-uncle was Father Francis Xavier SJ., who was the founder of the Jesuit order and known for his extensive missionary work in the Orient. He was the author of *Mirat al-Quds* or Mirror of Holiness, a text on the Story of Christ commissioned by Emperor Akbar. He wrote it during his stay at Akbar's court and is an exemplary work aimed towards a special Muslim audience and the conversion of the Emperor. For more information on the text see, Pedro Moura Carvalho, *Miratt Al quds (Mirror of Holiness): A Life of Christ for Emperor Akbar A Commentary on Father Jerome Xavier's Text and the Miniatures of Cleveland Museum of Art* (Leiden: Brill, 2012).

²²⁹ Fillipo de Fillipi ed., *An Account of Tibet: The Travels of Ippolito Desideri of Pistoia, 1712-1727* (London: Psychology Press, 1937), 377.

²³⁰ This could have been an effect of the union between the Portuguese and Spanish Hapsburg monarchies between 1580 and 1640.

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the contemporary Mughal capital on 15 May 1595. This mission resided in the Mughal court for nearly two centuries, until the suppression of the order.²³¹

During the course of their stay at the Mughal court, the Jesuits wrote incessantly about developments in the court and towards the fulfilment of their goal. In 1599, they wrote a celebratory letter mentioning the Emperor's orders allowing the Jesuits to preach in Cambay. Fathers Anthony Machado and Peter Paes were selected for this mission. Ties with the Mughals also helped the Portuguese to expand and carve relations outside the subcontinent. Father N. Pimenta in an annual letter on *Mogor* addressed to the then General of the Society Father Claudius Acquaviva explained the course of journey to the kingdom of *Catai* (or Cathay, now known as China), where in his opinion many Christians resided. The Jesuits understood that the easiest way to reach Cathay was to use Emperor Akbar's goodwill in the region. The journey commenced from Lahore, the Mughal capital, traced its route through *Caximir* (Kashmir), also under the rule of Akbar, and reached *Rebat* (Tibet). Since the Kingdom of Tibet and the Mughal Emperor had amicable relations, one could easily pass through to *Casgar* (Kashgar) the letters of introduction from the Mughal Emperor. From here, the first Christian settlement of Cathay was a few miles away.²³² The matter was pursued by the Jesuit priests in the interest of sending a mission to Cathay. They argued that the territory remained deprived of divine law since it was difficult to reach due to the tension and war in the regions that fell along the route. Akbar agreed to help them in their journey and appointed an ambassador to accompany the priests. He further assured their safe stay in Cambay and promised to release orders to this effect.²³³

However, on Father Xavier's insistence on the Emperor's acceptance of Christianity, the latter once again digressed from the issue and invited the Jesuits to accompany him to Deccan for further talks. He said, "I shall halt near Goa, and there

²³¹ Pedro Moura Carvalho, *Miratt Al quds*, 3.

²³² N. Pimenta, "Annual Letter on Mogor," Goa, December 21, 1599, trans. H. Hosten, *Journal of Asiatic Society of Bengal* XXXII (1927): 61.

²³³ Henry Yule ed., *Cathay and the Way Thither: Being a Collection of Medieval Notices of China*, Issue 37 (London: Hakluyt Society, 1866), 550-552.

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I shall manage to find time and listen to you.”²³⁴ This development implied yet another attempt of Akbar to make advances to the Portuguese in Goa and acquire more information about them. He further prolonged the Jesuit priests’ stay at the Mughal court despite the fact that prospect of his leaning towards Christianity was clearly negligible. The Emperor, during the course of the mission, marched to Deccan via Agra and later returned to Agra. Fathers Xavier and Brother Góis accompanied him on his trips whereas Pinheiro remained in Lahore and was later joined by Father Corsi from Goa.²³⁵

The disappointment encountered by the two previous Jesuit missions at Akbar’s court hardly left any sign of hope for the conversion of the Emperor. Therefore, it seemed highly probable that the third mission was undertaken on political grounds. It was said that the Jesuits at the Mughal court were the supported Portuguese claims and Prince Fredrick (Count of Noer). The inherent link between the political and religious affiliations of the priests is sometimes blurred by references found in the texts of contemporary travellers. Father Corsi, a member of the third mission, is described by Thomas Roe, an English traveller, as the “Resident of the King of Spain” and by Terry as the “Agent of the Portugals.”²³⁶ We are further informed by the authority of Father Xavier, that at the request of the Jesuit priests, Akbar liberated fifty shipwrecked Portuguese captives and enabled them to travel to Goa through Ahmedabad and Cambay.²³⁷ The Jesuits evidently worked towards creating goodwill of the Portuguese residents in the Mughal territories. The head of *Estado* was informed on events and decisions of political importance for the survival of the Portuguese in the subcontinent. In his letter from Srinagar, Father Jerome Xavier informs Claudio Acquaviva of the Emperor’s plans to invade Goa and his contemplations of occupying Portuguese possessions on the western coast.²³⁸

²³⁴ Pimenta, “Annual Letter,” 63-64.

²³⁵ Maclagan, *Jesuits and the Great Mogul*, 53.

²³⁶ Rev. Fr. Felix O. C, “Mughal Farmas, Parwanas and Sanads,” *Journal of Punjab Historical Society* 15 (1918): 50.

²³⁷ H. Hosten, “Mirza Zul Qarnain, A Christian Grandee of three great Moghuls, with notes on Akbar’s Christian Wife and the Indian Bourbons,” *Memoirs of the Asiatic Society of Bengal* 5, no.4 (1916): 116.

²³⁸ Pedro Moura Carvalho, *Mir’at al-quds*, 7.

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The mission was also of utmost importance to the King of Spain as who, on various occasions, reminded the Jesuits of the necessity to render fruitful results in the Court. The letter addressed to the Viceroy of India Dom Francisco Da Gama in 1598 reflects the King's disappointment in the mission (*até agora não fizessem fruto*)²³⁹. The increased political inclination of the Jesuit letters written from the Mughal court led the Superior General of the Society of Jesus, Claudio Aquaviva, to caution the Jesuits to strictly focus on religious matters rather than issues of political exigencies. He feared that Jesuit interference in political matters might arouse suspicion among the captains and rulers of the subcontinent.²⁴⁰ The increased entanglement of religious and political issues is further reflected in 1601 when Emperor Akbar issued a *farman* guaranteeing the security of Jesuit churches and residences, and provided a free will to anyone wanting to convert to Christianity. This *farman* generated a lot of anxiety and suspicion in the political circles of Goa and Lisbon because both the King and Viceroy feared that this decree would provide an outlet for Portuguese officials of the *Estado* to operate freely in Gujarat under the guise of the Jesuit mission and without political interference.²⁴¹

3.4 Friends or Foes: Jesuits, Mughals and Portuguese in the times of Mughal expansion

While the third mission was resident at the Mughal court, the political climate intensified with the Mughal attack on Deccan. The Jesuit authorities inform us that Father Jerome Xavier and Brother Bento de Góis were by Akbar's side during the war and reported about the Deccan wars in much detail. Also, since the Jesuits acted as the political agents of the Portuguese crown, it was quite probable that they were sharing strategic information to the Portuguese authorities in Goa who were quite intimidated by the Mughal movement in their vicinity. These apprehensions were, of

²³⁹ Da Cunha Rivara, *Arquivo Portuguez Oriental*, Fasciculo 3, Parte 2 (Nova Goa: Imprensa Nacional, 1865), 919.

²⁴⁰ Claudio Acquaviva to Francisco Cabral, December 1597 in *Documenta Indica* XVIII, ed. Joseph Wicki (Rome: Monumenta Historica Soc. Iesu, 1988), 866.

²⁴¹ HAG, Livros Das Monções, book 7, "King Philip III to Viceroy D. Francisco Da Gama," Lisbon, January 22, 1601, f. 27. Also see, Flores and Saldanha, *The Firangis*, 48.

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course, not without reason. Akbar's expansion in the Deccan was also aimed at capturing Portuguese settlements in the region.²⁴² More than a decade prior to the real expansionist moves, the Emperor had informed the rulers of the Deccan that troops had been sent to remove the *Firangis* (here referred to the Portuguese), who were "stumbling blocks in the way of pilgrims of Hijaz."²⁴³ The Deccan rulers were expected to portray their support for the Mughals by supplying the royal armies with men and arms and in return, gain immunity from Mughal attack.²⁴⁴ In a letter addressed to Burhan Nizamu'l Mulk, Akbar stated the agenda of building a united front to attain "victories over the territories of the *Farangis* (*Farangistan*)."²⁴⁵ However, the alignments changed back in 1590s when Mughal expansion in the Deccan saw Emperor Akbar furthering his forces against Burhanpur²⁴⁶ and the hill fortress of Asirgarh (near Burhanpur).

The Jesuit fathers residing at the Mughal court were wedged in the political struggle between two parties: Mughals on one hand and Deccan forces with new Portuguese collaboration on the other. Considering the Jesuit presence in the Mughal court a sign of Mughal-Portuguese surface collaboration, Akbar proceeded towards the religious priests for political support. Having conquered Burhanpur, the Mughal forces next laid siege on Asirgarh but faced much resistance. The pressing need for artillery to bomb the fortress compelled Akbar to send for the Jesuit fathers' residing in his camp at that time. In lieu of their friendship, the fathers were asked to contact the Portuguese at Chaul (in proximity to Asirgarh) in order to supply ammunitions to the Mughal forces to bombard the fortress. Under the garb of Christian law, the Jesuits refuted the proposal; however, the real reason was the political collaboration between the Portuguese and Deccan rulers against the Mughals.²⁴⁷

²⁴² Fernão Guerreiro, *Relação Anual*, vol. 1 (Coimbra: Imprensa Da Universidade, 1930), 5-6

²⁴³ Abu'l Fazl, *Akbar Nama* vol.3, 409.

²⁴⁴ Ibid.

²⁴⁵ Abu'l Fazl, *Mukatabat i-Allami*, 65.

²⁴⁶ Capital of the Kingdom of Khandesh in Deccan.

²⁴⁷ Du Jarric, *Akbar and the Jesuits*, 106-107.

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As a combined counter-force against the Mughals, secret correspondence ensued between Malik Ambar, the regent of Ahmednagar, and the Viceroy of Goa. The latter received instructions from the King of Portugal to persuade Malik to fight the Mughals. In 1604, the Portuguese sought a secret alliance with Malik Ambar, taking advantage of a weak moment in Mughal politics: the clash between Akbar and the prince Salim (later called the Emperor Jahangir). The Portuguese actuated the plan to use Ahmadnagar as a defending force against the Mughals:

*The disturbing relations between Akbar and his eldest son are most suitable for our state, most of all since the emperor fears getting poisoned by his own son. As a result he has stopped the war with Malik. But since there is a major distrust on this Emperor and considering his desirability of Goa, one must act cautiously and beware of his intentions.*²⁴⁸

This kind of political detailing on Mughal affairs continued after the death of Akbar and through the reign of his successor, Jahangir, thus making the political relationship between the Jesuits and the Mughal more pronounced.

3.5 Politics of conversion in Jahangir's court

The third mission continued at Jahangir's court with the Jesuit priests of the previous mission, except that Father Francis Corsi substituted Brother Góis in 1602 when the latter started his travels to Cathay. Later, Anthony Machado joined the mission from Goa.²⁴⁹ Jahangir's particular interest in the mission at the Mughal Court was initially supported by reasons of political accession. In the midst of struggle for succession to the throne, Jahangir (then Prince Salim) expected to garner support from the Portuguese authorities in Goa in the event of a war for succession. The missions, on the other hand, after the union of the Spanish and Portuguese Crowns in 1580, scrambled to win the favour of eastern monarchs in order to ensure the progress of the missions in the event of shrinking financial resources and the growth

²⁴⁸ Letter from Spanish emperor Philip III to the Viceroy Aires de Saldanha dated Lisbon, January 25, 1601, quoted in Shanti Sadiq Ali, *The African Dispersal in the Deccan: From Medieval to Modern Times* (Bombay: Orient Blackswan, 1996), 91.

²⁴⁹ Maclagan, *Jesuits and Great Mogul*, xvi.

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of other European diplomatic officials and personnel in the royal courts.²⁵⁰ Due to increased pressure from the Portuguese higher authorities to sustain the missions in the Mughal court to gain political intelligence, the Jesuits continued to reside at the Mughal court after Akbar's death. At times, they were even forced into staying by the Portuguese authorities who would threaten reallocating the oriental missions to another religious order.²⁵¹

However, the Jesuits were highly disillusioned by the attitude of the new Emperor, whom they had known as a prince since decades and whose inclination towards Christianity aroused optimism for the mission.²⁵² Despite the brief spell of disillusionment, the Jesuits soon gained the benevolence of Jahangir. The Jesuit priests became the beneficiaries of an annual income for maintenance and constructed several churches in the cities of Cambay, Lahore and Agra. The situation remained undeterred during the early phases of Jahangir's reign, in which despite the abolition of Akbar's law of escheat²⁵³, the present Emperor restored the rights of the Jesuit priests over their property in the Mughal dominions. Moreover, he continued to give them a monthly allowance, increased from 50 rupees to 80 rupees.²⁵⁴ Furthermore, Christian iconography was consistently featured in the art works like album folios and mural paintings commissioned by the Emperor. For example, the use of a halo, putties and the terrestrial globe were used for royal

²⁵⁰ Du Jarric, *Jahangir and Jesuits*, xviii-xx.

²⁵¹ Subrahmanyam and Alam, *Frank Disputations*, 466. Also see, *Documeta Indica (1592-1594)*, vol. 16 (Rome: *Monumenta Historica Societatis Iesu*, 1970), 890.

²⁵² "Muito esperavão do novo rey porque se prometia muito, mas aquietando se as cousas esqueizerão (sic) as promessas se desenganarão as esperanças." *Carta do Padre Manuel Pinheiro para o Padre Manuel da Veiga provincial da Companhia de Jesus na India*, Lahore, August 12, 1605, C.f. A. Da Silva Rego, *Documentação Ultramarina Portuguesa*, vol. 3 (Lisboa: Centro de Estudos Históricos Ultramarinos, 1963, 67. Also see, Fr. Joseph de Castro to Fr. Claudio Francesco Septalio, S. J., Kashmir, August 15, 1627 in *Journal of Asiatic Society Bengal* 23 (1927): 161.

²⁵³ The law of escheat refers to the practice in Mughal India whereby after the death of a noble without an heir, his private property was confiscated by the Mughal state. French traveller to Mughal India, François Bernier laments the state of affairs for the landed aristocracy in the following words: "The land throughout the whole empire is considered the property of the sovereign; there can be no earldoms, marquises and duchies." c.f. Abraham Eraly, *The Mughal World: Life in India's last Golden Age* (New Delhi: Penguin Books, 2007), 179.

²⁵⁴ Rev. Father Felix O. C., "Jesuit Missions in Lahore," *Journal of Punjab Historical Society* 5 (1918): 90-91.

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propaganda and approval for the celestial rule.²⁵⁵ (See Figure 2) The palaces and forts were decorated with murals and paintings reflecting Christian imageries. However, most of these imageries adorned only the interiors of the royal architecture. Hence, the consumption of these works of arts was meant only for royalty and the nobility. Despite his widespread interest in Christianity, the manuscript *Majilis-i-Jahangiri* (a record of night conversations of the Emperor on topics of religion) provides enough evidence to prove that at no point in time did the Emperor inclined towards conversion. This manuscript written by Abdus Sattar Lahori, draws a clearer picture of the Emperor's religious ideas as compared to the memoirs written for the public audience.²⁵⁶

²⁵⁵ Gauvin Alexander Bailey, "The Truth Showing Mirror," 383 and C. Dempsea-O'Shea, "Allegory and the Imperial Image: A Comparative Study of the Allegorical Portraiture of the Mughal Emperor Jahangir and Queen Elizabeth I of England" (Master thesis, UCD School of Art History and Cultural Policy, 2010), 16.

²⁵⁶ Shireen Moosvi, "The Conversation of Jahangir 1608-11: Table Talk on Religion," *Indian History Congress Proceedings*, 68th session (2007): 327.



Figure 2: Jahangir and Jesus by Hashim (1610-1620) and Hasan (1615-1620) in Muraqqa (Imperial Mughal Albums).

Image no.: CBL In 07A.12b.

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3.5.1 Muqarrab Khan: A curious case of Mughal Christian convert

The appreciation of the Western brand of Christianity and thus the show of support for the Portuguese trickled down to the nobles of the Mughal Empire as well. Muqarrab Khan, a surgeon and physician at the Mughal court, was well-known for his apparent conversion to Christianity and inclination towards the Jesuit priests. In 1607, he constituted a part of the embassy sent from Jahangir's court to the Portuguese headquarters in Goa to establish 'friendly relations' with Goa. However, he only went as far as Gujarat, while his companion, Father Manuel Pinheiro, continued his journey to deliver the gifts from the Mughal emperor to the Viceroy of Goa. In 1610, Muqarrab Khan prepared yet again to leave for Goa. It was at this point that the Emperor Jahangir commissioned the conversion of his three nephews to Christianity. Sultan Danyal's sons Tahmurs, Baisunghar and Hoshang were called Dom Philip, Dom Henrique and Dom Carlos, respectively. This news was received with much enthusiasm and celebration in the Society of Jesus in Europe and was considered an optimistic marker for the Emperor's conversion.²⁵⁷ However, Edward Terry, the English chaplain to the Mughal court in 1610, suspected that the reason behind their baptism was to reduce the support of these princes among the Muslim nobility in order to curtail them from claiming the Mughal throne in the future. The proximity of the emperor's blood ties with these princes endangered a possible revolt.²⁵⁸

During his stay in Goa, Muqarrab Khan was mentioned to have been baptised (*as the Portingalls swear and say*).²⁵⁹ The embassy, however, was a political effort on part of the Mughal emperor to mend relations with the Portuguese. *Waki'at-i-Jahangiri* mentions this incidence wherein the Emperor Jahangir informs about sending Muqarrab Khan as the ambassador to Goa due to 'political considerations'

²⁵⁷ Flores, *Mughal Padshah*, 17.

²⁵⁸ Edward Terry, *A Voyage to East-India. Wherein Some Things Are Taken Notice of in Our Passage Thither, but Many More in Our Abode There, Within That Rich and Most Spacious Empire of the Great Mogol* (London: Printed for J. Wilkie, St. Pauls Church Yard, 1655), 425.

²⁵⁹ William Foster ed., *Letters received by the East India Company by its Servants*, Vol. 3 (London: Sampson Low, Marson and Company, 1615), 298.

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and the purchase of some rarities.²⁶⁰ The theme of Muqarrab Khan's conversion has also been looked at from a secular perspective in the Jesuit sources. They inform that his conversion was the result of his desire to procure European wives and Portuguese girls for the Mughal court.²⁶¹ Other sources report that he desired to attract European merchants to Patna as he was the *subahdar* (governor) of the province. The politics of conversion ended shortly thereafter when the three princes reverted to Islam, as well as Muqarrab Khan, soon after his return to the Mughal capital. Jahangir's patronage for the Jesuits was no longer the same as it was prior to Muqarrab Khan's conversion. Moreover, by 1614, the Portuguese had started to lose ground to the English in the western Indian Ocean. The conversion of Muqarrab Khan in 1611 may be placed in the political scene in which the hopes of converting the Mughal emperor were on the rise and the Jesuits were well placed throughout the Mughal court.²⁶²

3.5.2 Jesuit mission amidst political strife

This relationship of political ambivalence came to a halt in 1613 when the Portuguese seized *Rahimi*, a royal ship carrying about 500 Mughal pilgrims and a cargo of high value (about 100,000 pounds), of which Jahangir's mother was a large investor. This led to the first direct confrontation between the Mughals and the Portuguese.²⁶³ The Portuguese settlement of Daman was besieged as retaliation and the Jesuit churches and schools were shut down. Jerome Xavier, the resident Jesuit priest at the Mughal court, was expelled. However, he was expected to act as a peacemaker in the conflict upon his arrival in Surat. References to this expulsion are found in a letter written by Jerome Xavier.

He sent me into exile as it were telling us to go and complain to the Viceroy of what he was doing against us. And he took from us the

²⁶⁰ H.M. Elliot ed., *Wakiat-i Jahangiri* (Lahore: Sheikh Mubarak Ali, 1875), 56.

²⁶¹ Arnulf Camps, *Jerome Xavier S.J and the Muslims of the Mogul Empire* (Switzerland: Nouvelle Revue de Science Missionnaire, 1957), 89.

²⁶² Avril Powell, "Artful Apostasy? A Mughal mansabdar among the Jesuits" in *Society and Ideology: Essays in south Asian History*, ed. Peter Robb (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1993), 79-80.

²⁶³ William Foster, *The Voyage of Nicholas Downton to the East Indies, 1614-1615: As Recorded in Contemporary Narratives and Letters* (London: Haklyut Society, 1939), .xix.

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*alms which he used to give for our upkeep. His sending me here was only a trick to make me arrange with the Viceroy about peace, and to conceal the fact that he was asking for it.*²⁶⁴

The relationship was restored later in 1615 and with the help of Jerome Xavier a peace treaty was concluded between Jahangir and the Viceroy D. Jerónimo de Azevedo. The Jesuit Father Castro, writing in 1627 during the last year of Emperor Jahangir reign, informs the Superiors in Rome about the favours and gifts bestowed upon them by the Emperor and regrets that they could not give anything in return. He complains about the lack of any valuable things sent from Goa or Rome over the twelve years. This may be considered as an effect of the brief spell of strained relations between the Mughals and Portuguese from 1613-1615.²⁶⁵

While describing the situation of the missionaries at the Mughal court, Jerome Xavier claims that Jahangir approached all the religions at the court according to political circumstances. This is further supported by the missionaries who succeeded Xavier after his departure in 1615. In 1620, Corsi writes that due to weakened relationship with the Portuguese, the Emperor's love for the Christian faith had dimmed. Jahangir evoked missionary support during his temporary illness and promised conversion to the Christian faith if he recovered. However, these promises never came to fruition. Castro, who accompanied the Emperor for a long period, confirmed that he had not converted to Christianity during the time of his death and refuted claims of a secret baptism as mentioned in some sources.²⁶⁶

3.6 The triangular dynamics of the English-Mughal-Jesuit relations

The Mughal-Jesuit equation in the court was exposed for the first time to another European competitor: the British. These newcomers entered a fierce competition with the Portuguese to gain the favours of the Mughal emperor

²⁶⁴ Jerome Xavier to Tomás de Ituren, Chaul, December 4, 1615, in Henry Hosten, "Eulogy of Fr. Jerome Xavier," *Journal of Asiatic Society of Bengal* XXIII (1927): 123-124.

²⁶⁵ Father Joseph de Castro to Father Nuno Mascarenhas, S.J., Kashmir, July 26, 1627, in *Journal of Asiatic Society of Bengal* 23 (1927): 156.

²⁶⁶ Arnulf Camps, *Jerome Xavier*, 71-72.

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Jahangir and convince him of their 'loyalty.' However, this was not the first encounter of the two European powers. The Spanish Hapsburg Empire and England were at war from 1584-1604. Henceforth, the British did not make any efforts to approach the Indian coasts during the First and the Second Voyages. After the conclusion of peace between King James I of England and Philip II of Spain, the English finally stepped on Indian soil in their Third Voyage.²⁶⁷ However, establishing a foundation in the Indian subcontinent was a difficult task because of the Portuguese custom regulations and the *cartaz* system. William Finch wrote irritably about the loss of a ship due to the Portuguese: "the Portingals are still the fundamental cause of all our losses."²⁶⁸ Moreover, Jahangir thwarted the designs of English ambassador Hawkins to blockade the Portuguese settlement of Diu using 20,000 men by land and fourteen ships to cut off their supplies from the sea.²⁶⁹ However, as soon as the rumours of Mughal-English dialogues reached Goa (through channels of Jesuit espionage, as Hawkins would like us to believe), there was large scale discord in the Goa political circles.²⁷⁰

The English further profited the most from the Mughal-Portuguese tensions over the royal ship *Rahimi*, as the Emperor ordered Muqarrab Khan to allot a convenient place for the English to build a fortress in Surat. In their letter to the East India Company in 1614 Thomas Aldworthe and W.M. Biddulph celebrate the weakened position of the Portuguese in the Mughal dominions: "Great good might now be done with English shipping, the coming of which is much wished for, the people being debarred from trade."²⁷¹ However, in 1615 peaceful terms were restored between the Mughals and the Portuguese on the conditions that the Mughals shall not entertain the English or Dutch in their territories and harbours,

²⁶⁷ R. Barbour, *The Third Voyage Journals: Writing and Performance in the London East India Company 1607-10* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), 1.

²⁶⁸ William Finch to Captain Hawkins, Surat, July 12, 1609, in *Letters received by the East India Company by its Servants*, vol. 1, introduction by Fredrick Charles Denver (London: Sampson Low, Marson and Company, 1896), 26.

²⁶⁹ William Foster ed., *Early Travels in India 1583-1619* (London: Oxford University Press, 1921), 84

²⁷⁰ Henry Hosten, "Annual Relations of Father Fernão Guerreiro, S. J., for 1607-1608," *Journal of Punjab Historical Society* 7 (1918): 71-72.

²⁷¹ Thomas Aldworthe and W.M Biddulph to the East India Company (EIC), August 19, 1614, in "The Jesuit Post from Mogor for 1615 Gone to England," compiled by Rev. Hosten, *The Examiner* (1919): 319.

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and that the Mughals shall be given 70,000 *xerafins*²⁷² and concessions on *cartazes* as a part of the agreement. Muqarrab Khan played a major role in this settlement.²⁷³

English travelers and ambassadors to the Mughal court wrote prolifically about their engagements with Muqarrab Khan, especially from 1608-1625, when Khan assumed important posts in the province of Gujarat. In 1617, he is mentioned as the *subahadar* or the governor of Gujarat.²⁷⁴ During the discord between the Mughals and Portuguese over the proposal of Hawkins, Khan had sided with their 'ancient friends,' the Portuguese.²⁷⁵ Muqarrab Khan conveniently shifted alliances, or rather followed a policy of appeasement towards both the English and the Portuguese: "for these people doth but delay us with fair words, but they durst not displease the Portugals."²⁷⁶ The English blamed Father Pinheiro to have conspired with Muqarrab Khan to evict the former from the Mughal court.²⁷⁷ Muqarrab Khan earned Emperor's praise for his artful skills of playing the European trading companies vying for commercial advantages, against each other. By 1615-16, he had been awarded with the *mansab* of 5,000, the highest rank attainable by a non-royal title holder.²⁷⁸

Without going much into details about the English ambassadors, it must be stated that the later English ambassador to the Mughal Court, Thomas Roe, also failed to conclude a formal treaty with the Mughal king. This was mainly due to the fact that in the Mughal Empire, diplomatic agreements with foreign powers were

²⁷² Portuguese designation for what was originally a Persian gold coin *Ashrafi* equivalent to Venetian sequin or Dutch ducat. It became a prevalent currency in the Gulf of Cambay and Malabar Coast. J. Gerson Da Cunha, *Contributions to the Study of Indo-Portuguese Numismatics* (Bombay: Education Society's Press, 1880), 36. For value of currencies of the time, see the Table of currency conversion.

²⁷³ "Capitulos das pazes que se fizeram entre os vassallos de El'Rey jahanguir e os Portuguezes, por Nauabo Mucarreb Khan e Gonçalo Pinto da Fonseca," in Julio Firmino Judice Biker (ed.), *Collecção de Tratados e Concertos de Pazes que o Estado da Índia Portuguesa Fez com os reis e senhores com quem teve relações nas partes da Asia e Africa Oriental desde O principio da Conquista até ao fim do seculo xviii*, vol. 1, (New Delhi, 1995), 189-190.

²⁷⁴ Jorge Flores, "The Sea and the World of Mutassadi: A Profile of Port officials from the Port of Gujarat (c. 1600-1650)," *Journal of Royal Asiatic Society* 21 (2011): 59.

²⁷⁵ Henry Hosten, "Annual Relations," 71-72.

²⁷⁶ Captain Alex. Sharpeigh and Mr. John Jourdain to Sir Henry Middleton, Surat, October 12, 1611, in *Letters received by the East India*, vol.1, introduction by F. C. Danvers (London: Sampson Law, 1896), 138.

²⁷⁷ Syed Ali Nadeem Rezavi, "An Aristocratic Surgeon of Mughal India: Muqarrab Khan," in Irfan Habib ed., *Medieval India 1, 1200-1750* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1992), 156.

²⁷⁸ Powell, "Artful Apostacy," 76.

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concluded with the exchange of royal correspondence instead of formal treaties. Additionally, Roe was too close to the English merchants to have a dignified presence at the Mughal court.²⁷⁹ This was contrary to his European counterpart, the King of Portugal, who maintained a continuous exchange of correspondence with the Emperor and other influential officials in the Mughal Empire. For example, in 1612, Dom Philip III wrote a congratulatory letter to Jahangir appreciating the positive developments of conversions of the Mughal King's nephews and the well-being of the Jesuits in the Mughal court.²⁸⁰ The historians have recognized that the Mughal conception of universal monarchy recognized the equivalent neighbouring powers, like Safavids and Ottomans as 'brothers', however, these relationships were maintained through royal exchanges rather than contractual agreements.²⁸¹ This was one of the main reasons behind the initial Portuguese success over the English, and the resident Jesuits played a major role in these exchanges.

3.7 Jesuits, the Mughals and the cultural (mis)understandings

The lack of a common language or an established set of protocols was a major hindrance to the development of any peaceful diplomatic relations in the early modern world. The Mughal-Jesuit interactions are one such case study of this period. Did they manage to find a common ground for inter-cultural communication in the court? More since Persian was the imperial lingua franca of the Mughals and the Jesuits were mostly fluent in Portuguese, Spanish or Latin. As already mentioned, the Jesuits were trained in methods of adaptation and accommodation in the new cultural environment. Hence, the Jesuits residing at the Mughal court impressively mastered Persian in a few years and even began reproducing biblical texts in Persian for Mughal consumption. A number of Persian language catechisms and theological treatises were translated and written by Jerome Xavier between 1597 and 1607. In

²⁷⁹ Robert Travers, "A British Empire by Treaty in the Eighteenth Century," in Saliha Belmessous ed., *Empire by Treaty: Negotiating European Expansion, 1600-1900* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2015), 139.

²⁸⁰ King of Portugal Dom Philip III to Emperor Jahangir, February 12, 1612, *Documentos Remettidos da India, 1611-1614*, vol. 2 (Lisboa: Typographia da Academia Real Das Sciencias), 163-164.

²⁸¹ Robert Travers, "A British Empire," 139.

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most of his works, he was assisted by Abd al-Sattar Ibn Qasim Lahori, the court historian. The Mughal library of European printed books included some monumental Jesuit works and texts on Portuguese law and history. Akbar also owned seven of the eight volumes of Plantin's Polygot Bible.²⁸² Most interesting of Xavier's Persian catechisms was *Ayine-ye Haqq Numa* or The Truth Showing Mirror, recently translated into English.²⁸³ However, this was the result of a consistent effort to learn Persian, which sometimes resulted in frustration and tensions. The Mughals also made efforts to bridge the linguistic gap and, in this regard, Abdus Sattar Lahori emerged as a key figure. In numerous conversations with Jahangir, Lahori often quoted Akbar to show his closeness with the late Emperor. In one such conversation, he notes that he had been told by Akbar to learn the Frankish language and learn about their secrets, and know more about their kings and scientific knowledge base. Lahori learnt Latin from Father Jerome Xavier and started the work of translating Frankish books into Persian. One of the main books produced by him was *Mirat ul-Quds* but due to dominant influence of Christianity in the book he had to distance himself from the work. Therefore, it appears principally in Xavier's voice even though it was a work of joint authorship.²⁸⁴

Apart from being the translators of texts, the Jesuits acted as Mughal ambassadors to the *Estado* in Goa and the King of Spain and Portugal. It is interesting to note that on numerous occasions, the Mughal emperors found the Jesuits worthy of representing them to the Portuguese authorities. Hence, by being the translators and interpreters, the priests assumed significant role as intermediaries. However at certain points, the information traveling back through the Jesuit channels was guided by certain value judgements of Habsburg monarchs and other audiences. It is important to disentangle the (mis)interpretations, exaggerations and over-estimation of events at the Mughal court in the letters written to the Society of Jesus or to the Habsburg monarchs. The emphasis on conversion of the Mughal emperors in the near future and the latter's interest in Christian theology is a recurrent theme

²⁸² Gauvin Alexander Bailey, "The Truth Showing Mirror," 385-386.

²⁸³ Jorge Flores, *The Mughal Padshah*.

²⁸⁴ Muzaffar Ala and Sanjay Subrahmanyam, "Frank Disputations: Catholics and Muslims in the court of Jahangir (1608-11)," *The Indian Economic and Social History Review* 46 (2009): 471.

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in the Jesuits' letters. The use of rhetoric by Mughal emperors and (political) interest in the dialogues with the Jesuits was intentionally or unintentionally misunderstood in order to build a narrative suitable to transport to Europe. The handicap of language was often quoted as the main factor prohibiting the way of the Emperor to adopting Christianity. A letter from the Jesuit priest of the first mission states: "...if we spoke the language well the King would be extremely pleased and I feel we will do a signal service to God."²⁸⁵ In another letter to the Captain of Daman they wrote, "If we were able to speak their language fluently, only a little learning would suffice to convince them."²⁸⁶ The first Jesuit mission thoughtfully included Father Henriquez, a Muslim convert whose "knowledge of Persian, however, though not very extensive," was considered an advantage during their stay in the Mughal court.²⁸⁷ In addition to Father Francisco Henrique who sometimes acted as an interpreter, the Armenian priest Dominic Pires also helped the two sides translate and converse. The 'hopeful misunderstandings' on the part of the Jesuits were, however, only meant for the consumption of the larger Christian audiences in Europe. As seen in numerous examples in the last pages, personal letters addressed to friends and contemporaries reflect pessimism and dejection. Sometimes access to the Mughal court, elites, and even the Emperor was translated as a special gesture and raised the hopes of the Jesuits. The priests tutored the royal princes, had private audiences with the Emperor, presented gifts of Christian symbolism to the emperors and were favoured during the debates in *Ibadat-Khana*. These political and cultural gestures of Mughal emperors were sometimes misinterpreted and misjudged by the Jesuit priests as the former's inclination towards Christianity.

3.8 Concluding Remarks

The Jesuits' agendas at the Mughal court was mainly the conversion of the Mughal emperors leading to wide political ramifications since the Indian subcontinent could have effectively been used for spreading Christianity in the

²⁸⁵ Correia-Afonso, *Letters from the Mughal Court*, 28.

²⁸⁶ Ibid., 29.

²⁸⁷ F. Goldie, *First Christian Mission to the Great Mogol* (Dublin: M. H Gill & Son, 1897), 57.

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neighbouring kingdoms like Cathay and Tibet. The Jesuits further acted as political agents stationed mostly in the proximity of the Emperor and continuously corresponded with Goa and Rome on political developments at the Mughal court. The Mughal emperors, on the other hand, portrayed a mix of idiosyncratic pursuit of the European brand of Christianity and in an effort to maintain political dialogues with the Jesuits and the Hapsburg monarchy prolonged the stay of the religious missions in the court. However, the Emperors never converted to Christianity, but maintained an indefinite position on the issue to sustain the Jesuits' interest in the dialogue. This ambivalence caused much distress for the missionaries as depicted in their correspondence. The presence of the missionaries was further used by the Mughal emperors to counter-balance the growing weight of conservative Muslim theologians at the court. However, the Mughal-Jesuit relationship was mostly volatile due to the Portuguese presence in proximity to Mughal territories. These territories were mostly littoral, and hence, the issue of sea lanes remained a point of interest between the Mughal court and the Jesuits. The sea affairs had an underlying impact on the position of the Jesuits in the court. The two intertwined issues in this respect, were, the issuance of *cartazes* and the religious pilgrimage of Hajj, which shall be dealt with in the next chapter.

4 Crossing the holy sea lanes: Mughal-Portuguese dynamics in the Indian Ocean²⁸⁸

4.1 Religious and Commercial breach: Complexities of Hajj in the early modern period

*Proclaim the Pilgrimage to all people and they will come to you on foot and on every kind of lean camel, emerging from every deep mountain pass to obtain benefits and mention God's name on specific days.*²⁸⁹

Hajj, the fifth pillar of Islam (Five pillars of Islam or *arkan al-Islami*) after the declaration of faith (*shahada*), five daily prayers (*salat*), obligatory alms (*zakat*) and fasting during the period of *Ramadan*²⁹⁰ transgressed the religious colours by assuming politico-economic importance in the Arab world. A common wish for all the *hajjis* was, "May your Hajj be accepted, your sin be forgiven and your merchandise not remain unsold."²⁹¹ The fundamental connection between Hajj and transcontinental trade remained a defining feature of the pilgrimage in the early modern period and it soon became a matter of clashing political interests. In the middle ages, only the official Hajj pilgrimage route from Baghdad, Damascus and Cairo was truly religious in nature. Passing through the Hajj ports of Qulzum, Qusair, Aidhab and Suakin, the pilgrims were following the established routes of commerce supported by the political powers. The Red Sea, hereafter, became a key juncture for

²⁸⁸ Short parts and snippet of first results from this chapter were published in an Indian Ocean anthology. See, Manya Rathore, "'Floating political rhetoric' in the Indian Ocean: Situating the Portuguese in the Mughal foreign politics," in *Indian Ocean in the making of Early Modern India* ed. Pius Malekandathil (Delhi: Manohar, 2016), 249-261. Some portions have been revised based on critical reviews.

²⁸⁹ "Surah al Hajj 22:27," Towards the Understanding of Islam, Islamic Studies, accessed December 16, 2016. <http://www.islamicstudies.info/tafheem.php?sura=22&verse=27&to=29>.

²⁹⁰ For the five pillars of Islam see, Alexander Knysh, *Islam in Historical Perspective* (London: Routledge, 2015) and Wilfred C. Smith, *On understanding Islam* (Hague: Mouton Publishers, 1981).

²⁹¹ S. D Goitein, *A Mediterranean Society*, vol. 1 (Berkley: University of California Press, 1967-78), 55.

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global maritime trade.²⁹² The pious pilgrimage of Hajj connected the Islamic Empires from different corners of the Indian Ocean and emerged as a valuable vantage point for analysing their connected histories. This chapter places the Mughal-Portuguese dialogues in a larger context of the Indian Ocean. It shall be analysed how the religious pilgrimage of Hajj moulded the political ties in the larger Islamic world on the corners of the Indian Ocean and further changed their power dynamics vis à vis the Portuguese.

The historiography of Hajj in the early modern period has largely debated the centrality of trade in this annual pilgrimage. Ashin Dasgupta has stressed in his work the importance of Hajj for the trading communities of western India, especially Gujarat.²⁹³ Merchants from far flung regions gathered in the Mecca to further their commercial prospects. The demand for Indian cloth in Mecca and Jeddah became a point of interest for the Gujarati commercial communities. However, M. N. Pearson challenged the emphasis on trade with regard to Hajj, calling it more of a religious act than a commercially oriented event.²⁹⁴ He demonstrated that the majority of trade passing through Jeddah was not directly related to Hajj or Mecca. He further showed that the lunar calendar determining the dates for Hajj was incompatible with maritime trade, which is largely based on the solar calendar and influenced by monsoon winds.²⁹⁵ This meant that there was a long waiting period between the arrival at Jeddah and Mocha and the performance of Hajj.²⁹⁶ Amidst the debate on the importance of Hajj for Red Sea commerce, this work tries to establish that the Hajj with all of its religious and commercial implications changed the political dynamics between the Mughals on one end of the Indian Ocean, their neighbouring Central Asian empires, the Ottomans who largely administered the affairs of Hajj, and the Portuguese who controlled if not the trade but the traffic and sea lanes to

²⁹² Charles Le Quesne, "Hajj Ports of the Red Sea: A Historical and Archaeological Overview," in Venetia Porter and Liana Saif eds., *The Hajj: Collected Essays* (London: The British Museum Press, 2013), 74.

²⁹³ See, Ashin Dasgupta, *Indian Merchants and the Decline of Surat c., 1700-1750* (Weisbaden: Franz Steiner Verlag, 1979).

²⁹⁴ M.N. Pearson, *Pious Passengers: The Hajj in the Earlier Times* (New Delhi: Sterling Publishers, 1994).

²⁹⁵ Michael Barry Miller, "Pilgrims' Progress: The Business of the Hajj," *Past and present* 191 (2006): 197.

²⁹⁶ H. P Ray, "Piety and Power: pilgrimage in the old world," *Topoi* 6 (1992): 432.

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Hajj. A key issue in this debate is the mechanism of *cartaz*, a political and economic tool employed by the Portuguese to control the traffic on certain sea routes of the Indian Ocean.

4.2 *Cartazes*: Securing or sabotaging?

4.2.1 Nature of the system

Three instruments have been delineated by historians as the defining agents in the Portuguese shaping of the Indian Ocean: forts, blockade and *cartazes*.²⁹⁷ The first instrument, forts, had already landed the Portuguese Crown in huge debt and the second mechanism of blockade also did not fare well in the long run due to the excessive amassing of profits in the Indian Ocean trade. Hence, the transition to what Neils Steensgard calls, “the redistributive enterprise” took place.²⁹⁸ He refers to the Portuguese enterprise in the Indian Ocean as a custom house rather than a business enterprise. The *cartazes*, on the other hand, emerged as a useful tool in establishing a monopoly on Oceanic routes and choke points. In addition to serving economic interest, the *cartazes* may also be seen as political instruments for influencing, threatening or, on the contrary, spreading goodwill among the local merchants and ruling entities.²⁹⁹ The *cartazes* were described by the Viceroy João Saldanha as the indispensable gift and privilege bestowed upon the Portuguese crown by the Portuguese conquerors. He further believed that the fear of the Portuguese arms catapulted the usage of the *cartazes* among Asian monarchs.³⁰⁰

²⁹⁷ Herman M. Schwartz, *State versus Markets: The Emergence of global Economy* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), 36.

²⁹⁸ Niels Steensgard assumed the Asian trading network to be of, peddling nature and small scaled running on limited capital and lastly over small distances. The *Estado da Índia* stood in the same line as the traditional Asian trade even though it traded over long distances and had better access to shipping technology. He called it a ‘redistributive enterprise’ with the view that the Estado’s main aim was to collect tolls, customs and duties and it engaged in plunder and too tributes unlike a commercial organization run on profit accumulation and a business acumen.

²⁹⁹ Teddy Sim, *Portuguese Enterprise in the East: Survival in the Years, 1707-1757* (Brill: Leiden, 2011), 122.

³⁰⁰ HAG Monções dos Reino 93B, “Carta do Vice-Rei João Saldanha da Gama a Sua Magestade,” f. 530. For a detailed analysis of the working of *cartaz* system in the 18th century Indian Ocean see, João Vincente Carvalho de Melo, “Lord of Conquest,” 126-151.

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But what led to the introduction of the *cartaz* system in the Indian Ocean? Pepper was a significant commodity of interest for the Portuguese Crown, who was also a major initial investor. However, over the long term, the volume of pepper in the return cargoes to Lisbon declined. The Crown received major setbacks in the pepper trade as a result of the revival of Red Sea trading and North European trading companies like Dutch VOC and British East India's growing interest in such trade. The liquidity crisis that arose as a result of these factors led the Crown to relocate privileges in private hands.³⁰¹ Portuguese fortifications in India's western and Coromandel Coasts, in East Africa and the Arabian Peninsula further elevated costs of the Crown. Afonso D' Albuquerque (Governor General of India 1509-1515) took the initiative to open *Estado* trade to private native merchants through the issuance of Portuguese trading licences, or *cartazes*, and the paying of customs. This became the new source of Portuguese revenue, if Boyajian's estimates are to be taken into account. He measured that more than half of *Estado's* profits in the second half of the sixteenth century came from the trade licensing on routes to the Persian Gulf and other Asian ports.³⁰²

4.2.2 Viability of the *Cartaz* system in the Indian Ocean

The *Cartaz* system, or the protection racket of the Portuguese Empire, served manifold interests or multiple controls of the Empire: strategic control of the Red Sea trade route aimed to embargo the Red Sea, political control of the enemies of the Portuguese crown, and lastly, fiscal control designed to safeguard the Crown monopolies.³⁰³ The *cartazes* and their adjudication in the Indian Ocean became a major tool for Portuguese control over trade and confiscation of ships. Moreover, they ensured forbiddance of certain reserved commodities, especially spices.

³⁰¹ Teddy Sim, "Survival of the Portuguese Estado da Índia: Political Economy and Commercial Challenges 1700-50," *Journal of Colonialism and Colonial History* 13, no.3 (2012) [https://doi:10.1353/cch.2012.0031](https://doi.org/10.1353/cch.2012.0031).

³⁰² James C. Boyajian, *Portuguese Trade in Asia under the Hapsburgs, 1580-1640* (JHU Press: London, 2007), 7.

³⁰³ Luís Filipe F. R Thomaz, "Precedents and Parallels of the Portuguese *Cartaz* System," in *The Portuguese, Indian Ocean and European Bridgeheads 1500-1800* eds. Pius Malekandathil and Jamal Mohammed (Kerala: Fundação Oriente, 2001), 67.

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Furthermore, they listed the ports and articles of trade. Akin to the western Indian Ocean, trading ships were either forced to stop or to visit the Portuguese ports and pay duties. Thus, the system ultimately enabled the Portuguese to create certain choke points and, thereby, control the trading circuit of the Indian Ocean.³⁰⁴ Even ships possessing *cartazes* were not allowed to visit Muscat or enemies of Portugal. Furthermore, the vessels were prohibited from carrying Turks and Abyssinians as they were considered enemies to the Portuguese. The *Cartaz* system authorized Portuguese officials to forcibly search any ships to ascertain the adherence of rules.³⁰⁵ However, C.R. Boxer argues that the Portuguese thalassocracy was not completely unchallenged. Malabar and Ajtey were known to have been evading Portuguese control and supplying spices to the Red Sea regions.

As a method of appeasement and peaceful persuasion of the local rulers, the Portuguese gave away free *cartazes* or exemptions to the 'friendly' rulers, though they were still barred from carrying prohibited goods and people. The Sultan of Bijapur received four free *cartazes* per year and the Sultan of Ahmadnagar was guaranteed seven free *cartazes* per year, five of which were to be used for ships going to Ormuz, one for the Red Sea and one for Malacca. The Mughal Emperor Akbar was only given one free *cartaz* per year for a ship going to Red Sea.³⁰⁶ The discrepancy between granting *cartazes* to the Deccan sultanates and to the Mughal Empire points towards Portuguese inclination and bonding with certain ruling houses, a matter briefly discussed in the previous chapter. However, present day historians view Mughal incorporation in the system of *cartaz* as one of the most submissive acts by the Emperor. In this context, Pearson writes, "Nothing so damaging to his dignity was ever openly admitted by a Mughal emperor."³⁰⁷

³⁰⁴ Pearson, *Coastal Western India*, 22.

³⁰⁵ K. S. Mathew, *History of Portuguese Navigation in India 1497-1600* (New Delhi: Mittal Publications, 1988), 134.

³⁰⁶ Ibid., 135.

³⁰⁷ Pearson, *Merchants and Rulers*, 84.

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4.2.3 Pass without *Cartaz*: Mughal diplomacy on Daman

Contrary to the belief that Mughals accepted Portuguese supremacy and surrendered to the power play of the Portuguese in the Indian Ocean, the attack on Daman suggests Mughal intrigues and politics in countering the Portuguese claim to dominance in the Indian Ocean through the mechanism of *cartazes*. A regional support for a joint alliance with the Ottomans against the Portuguese came in the form of Qilij Khan Andijani,³⁰⁸ originally a Turk, and the captain of the port of Surat. In a display of strength and bravery, Adijani claimed he would send a ship to Mecca without permit and that “his Permit was here, pointing to the handle of the sword he bore at his waist.”³⁰⁹ This conversation allegedly happened in the presence of Akbar and the text mentions no intervention on the part of the Emperor. Qilij Mohammad later wrote to Surat ordering the preparation of his ship to Mecca be sufficiently provided to face the whole Portuguese fleet. In 1583, he started sending his ships to the Ottoman ports without a *cartaz*. Another detail about this event was the uncooperative nature of the local Gujarati merchants in this so called breach of custom. They refused to load their cargo and Qilij Mohammad’s ship went quite empty in the Red Sea. Later, on its way back to Surat, the Portuguese managed to drown the ship; however, there were no significant losses.³¹⁰ The act appeared to be a display of Mughal resistance in the wake of Portuguese authority. It is almost impossible that Akbar was not informed of this act since Qilij was extremely close to Akbar since childhood and was “advanced beyond the very princes.”³¹¹ Qilij, later in collaboration with the ruler of Broach, Qutb al-Din Khan launched an attack on Daman.³¹²

³⁰⁸ Qilij Muhammad Khan Andijani was an influential Turani administrator in Akbar’s regime and he was prominent in Gujarat and elsewhere. During this episode he was the *Hakim* or local governor of Surat.

³⁰⁹ H. Hosten ed., “The Surat Incident, Translated from Diogo de Couto, Decada X, Liv.II by R.G. Whiteway,” *Journal of Asiatic Society of Bengal* 11 (1915): 193.

³¹⁰ Ashin Dasgupta, *India and the Western Indian Ocean at the Death of Akbar*, in *Akbar and his Age* ed. Iqtidar Alam Khan (New Delhi: Northern Book Centre, 1999), 102.

³¹¹ Ibid., 193-4.

³¹² Detailed information on attack of Daman is provided in M. N Pearson, *Merchants and Rulers*, 57-58.

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The Emperor was, apparently, informed about the attack through the Jesuit priests and denied being a part of this development, explaining that the war had been started on the initiative of two anti-Christian nobles.³¹³ However, the Emperor refrained from taking action against the responsible nobles, Qutb al din Khan and Shihab Khan, as they were “men of age, experience and authority” and any action against them would promote Akbar’s pro-Christian and anti-Islamic image, which was unfavourable to his rule. The Portuguese garrison led by Martin Afonso de Mello confronted the Mughal forces and forced them to retreat. The armed forces from Daman were immediately withdrawn promptly on Akbar’s orders, which made the Jesuits doubt Akbar’s clandestine role in the war.³¹⁴

The present author looks at the issue of *cartaz* as a matter of collaborative negotiation and statecraft. The *cartaz* was undoubtedly instrumental in Mughal ships departing through the Red Sea, but it also ensured Mughal neutrality towards the Portuguese in the coastal areas. So, *cartaz* as a tool for economic gain is certainly a viable concept, but its role as a gift or security mechanism also ensured stability for the Portuguese settlements that were surrounded by powerful regional kingdoms and empires in the subcontinent. Even until the 1700s, the references to the vitality of *cartazes* in Mughal-Portuguese relations were made by the Portuguese to remind the Mughal authorities of the ‘friendly’ bonds established through such mechanisms.³¹⁵

4.3 Hajj: Beyond religion

4.3.1 Setting before the Mughals

The affairs of Hijaz in 1500 were under the control of the *sharif* (Guardian of Holy Places) of Mecca, Madina, Jeddah and Yanbo (the port of Madina), with nominal subjection to the Mamluks in Cairo. Mamluk interest in the security of the

³¹³ Subrahmanyam, *Mughal and Franks*, 65.

³¹⁴ Monserrate, *Commentary*, 168-170.

³¹⁵ HAG, Regimentos 1426, “Instruções que se deu ao Padre Joao de Abreu da Companhia de Jésus para os negócios que foi propor e alancar del Rey Mogor,” f. 64v.

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Red Sea and, subsequently, the events in Hijaz were due to their engagement in and the protection of the lucrative spice trade from the Arabian Sea to the Middle East and the Mediterranean, which passed through the closed waterway and overland route from Suez to Cairo and Alexandria. In 1517, the Ottoman Sultans dismantled Mamluk rule in Syria and Egypt, and took over the reign. This led to the Ottomans becoming the political and spiritual masters of the Arab-Islamic world and the 'Servants of the Two Holy Sanctuaries:' Al *Haramayn*, or the two holy sanctuaries, being Mecca and Madina.³¹⁶

However, the dual purpose of the protection of the spice trade and the Holy places was endangered with the arrival of the Portuguese.³¹⁷ It is largely assumed that the economic interest of the Portuguese in the lucrative spice trade coupled with their religious antagonism to the 'muslim traders' intensified the situation. The imposition of the *cartaz* system in the western Indian Ocean further accelerated tensions. However, the religious aspect of the Portuguese interdiction in the spice route is hugely overrated. It is a known fact that the Portuguese, after their arrival in the Indian Ocean, sought to block the spice trade from the Red Sea to Europe and rather, gained a monopoly by diverting it to the route of the Cape of Good Hope. Of the series of steps taken by the Portuguese to obtain the monopoly, the most crucial step was the prohibition of 'Arab' and 'Turks' from engaging in the spice trade. However, local Indian Muslims were allowed to continue trading with some prohibitions such as selection of specific Muslim groups, armaments, and spices in particular.³¹⁸ The selective barricading of a particular Muslim group against the other is an indicator of the Portuguese political interest to implement their protectionist *cartaz* policies.

It is crucial, here, to understand the terminologies employed by the Portuguese for the complex mix of Muslim ethnicities they encountered in the Indian subcontinent and Central Asia. In Portuguese records, the term used for the

³¹⁶ F. E. Peters, *The Hajj: The Muslim Pilgrimage to Mecca and the Holy Places* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994), 145.

³¹⁷ M. N. Pearson, "The *Estado da Índia* and the Hajj," *Indica*, 26 (1989): 103.

³¹⁸ Pearson, *The Estado da Índia* and the Hajj, 113-114.

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Ottomans was usually either 'Turks' or commonly used native word *Rumi*. The Portuguese had a different terminology for the Indian Muslims i.e. moors. They, unlike other European powers, were conscious of the ethnic differences existing within the panoramic usage of the term 'Muslims.' There was also a conscious awareness that a strict differentiation existed within the Ottoman ethnicities.³¹⁹ This is evident in the earliest commentaries of Albuquerque, the second viceroy of India and other chroniclers, like Castenhada, who mentions *Rumis* as Ottomans.³²⁰

Religious factors were publicly declared as the major reason for Ottoman opposition to the Portuguese; however, this relationship was more layered than is directly mentioned in contemporary sources. For example, the letter from the Ottoman commander in the Red Sea to the Ottoman Sultan in 1525 appears to be highly anti-Portuguese in nature, mainly on political and economic grounds. The report of commander Salman Reis suggests deep-rooted economic and political tensions between the Ottomans and the Portuguese. The report refers to the long standing Ottoman interest in Portuguese possessions in India. It mentions the stationing of 18 ships and guns of various types at Jeddah "to capture and hold all the fortresses and ports in India under Portuguese domination."³²¹

Ottoman interest in the Indian waters dates back to the early sixteenth century when Ottoman Sultan Suleiman the Magnificent made efforts to link Ottoman ports in the Red Sea to trade centers in the Indian Ocean with the help of various merchant groups. Ottoman viceroy Salim Sulaiman Pasha was invited by the merchant governor of Gujarat in 1538 to fight the Portuguese and the capture of Diu. Since then, Ottomans considered the western Indian Ocean as their sphere of influence. The Portuguese, in efforts to counter the Ottoman menace, constructed a string of settlements along the western coast of India in Bassien (1534), Diu (1536)

³¹⁹ For detailed information on differentiation of Ottoman ethnic diversities see, Giancarlo Casale, "The Ethnic Composition of Ottoman Ship crews and the 'Rumi Challenge' to the Portuguese identity," *Medieval Encounters* 13 (2007): 125-126.

³²⁰ Walter de Gray Birch trans. *The Commentaries of Great Afonso Dalbuquerque*, vol. 3 (London Haklyut Society, 1875-84), 69.

³²¹ Salih Özbaran, *The Ottoman Response to European Expansion: Studies Ottoman-Portuguese relations in the Indian Ocean and Ottoman administration in the Arab lands during the sixteenth century* (Istanbul: The Isis Press, 1994), 83.

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and Daman (1559).³²² Ottoman interest in the Indian territories shall be of further interest once the third power, the Mughals, appears in the political landscape of the Indian Ocean.

4.3.2 Magnitude and importance of Hajj in early modern Hindustan

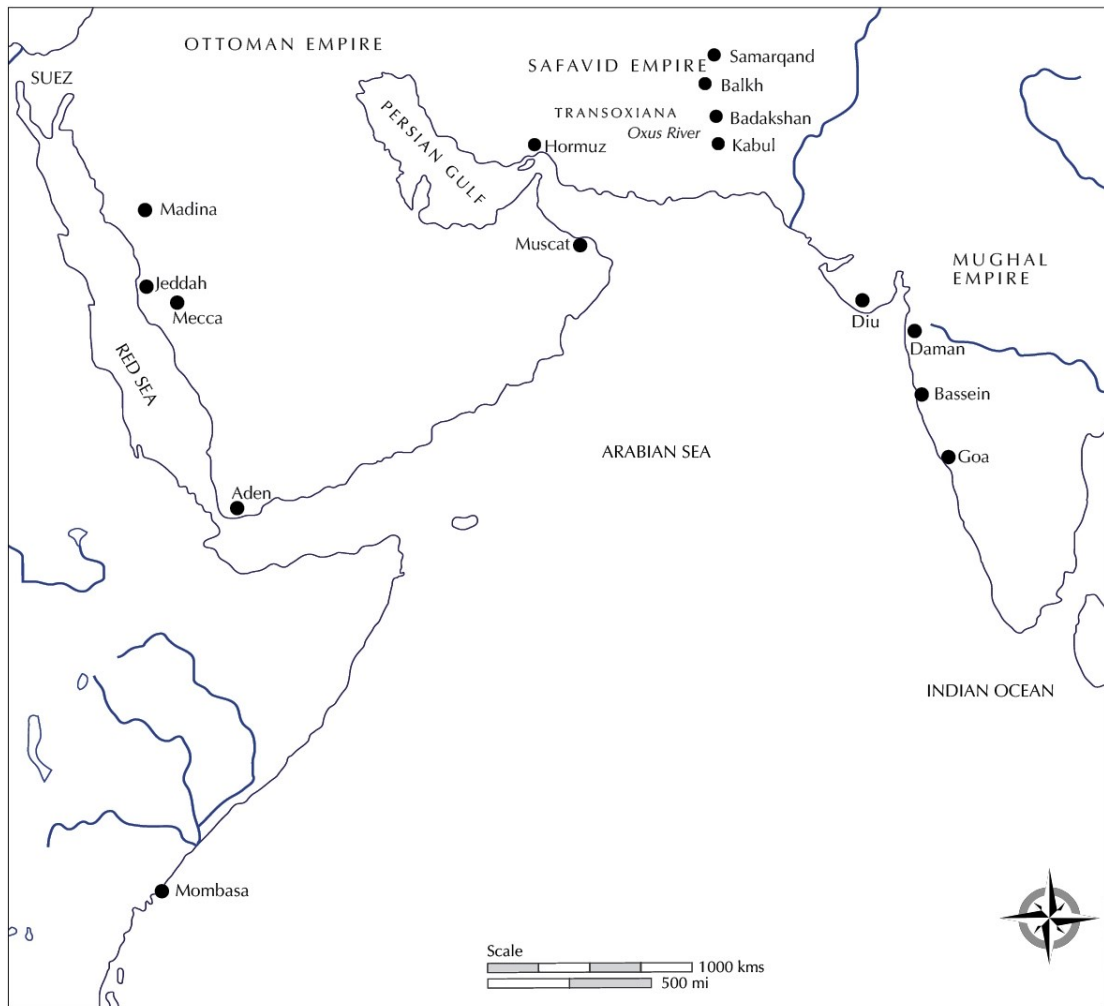
The amount of the Muslim population making Hajj every year during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries can be estimated from the reports of the various travellers residing in the subcontinent during this time. In order to quantify the amount of people making the journey every year, a glance at the contemporary travel records would be insightful. For example, Jean Mocquet noticed 700 pilgrims on a ship from Diu to the Red Sea, while Edward Terry noticed about 1700 people on a ship traveling from Surat to Mocha. Around 1612, the ship of Jahangir's mother carried 1500 passengers and presumably most of them *hajjis*.³²³ To estimate roughly, approximately five to six state sponsored ships departed from the Indian subcontinent with 1000 people each and taking into account those who travelled on other ships, this number doubles. M. N. Pearson estimates that out of the estimated Muslim population of 22,500,000, around 10,000 made Hajj every year.³²⁴ This accounts for approximately 22.5% of the total Muslim population. In addition to the number of people making Hajj every year, another important aspect of the pilgrimage was the eminence of the people making Hajj, who, in the majority of cases, were attached to the royal houses. This made it even more politically crucial to protect the routes to the Holy places. The intertwinement of political and religious elements makes the issue of sea-route to Hajj an important one.

³²² Pius Malekandathil, *Maritime India: Trade, Religion and Polity in the Indian Ocean* (Delhi: Primus Books, 2010), 118.

³²³ *Hajjis* are the pilgrims who perform Hajj.

³²⁴ M. N. Pearson, "The Hajj Pilgrimage from Mughal India: Some Preliminary Observations," *Indica* 23 (1986): 152.

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Map 3: Major political players and sites of importance in the Indian Ocean (1570-1612)

4.4 Mughal elites and Hajj: Three cases of Mughal-Portuguese confrontation

Hajj was an inextricable mix of religion and politics. The yearly pilgrimage linked the entire Islamic world politically. It assumed this political character due to the involvement of elite parties traveling to perform the pilgrimage, which forced the involved political powers to indulge in diplomatic dialogue. Routinely, there was the exchange of gifts when a group of people were sent from one side of the Indian Ocean to the Arabian Peninsula. The Ottomans, who were in charge of Hajj affairs received these delegations and ensured their well-being. The assimilation of Gujarat in the Mughal dominion under Akbar in 1573 opened the route to Mecca for the Mughal pilgrims.³²⁵ Hajj in the Mughal Empire was once a resort of the defeated or those condemned to exile. However, starting with Akbar and Jahangir's rule, the subsidizing of Hajj and the increased elite Mughal presence in Mecca was a method of establishing influence in the Muslim world. In the case of Akbar especially, it was a means of creating ideological authority over the subjects.³²⁶

In this context, the pilgrimage of three Mughal elites changed the dynamics between the Mughals, Central Asia, Safavids and the Ottomans. However, the Mughal parties departing from Gujarat towards the Arabian Peninsula had to first deal with the Portuguese patrol of sea-lanes and indulge in diplomatic and sometimes difficult negotiations. Drawing on the lines of Syria and Egypt, Mughal royalty resolved that every year a Mir Haji (Superintendent of pilgrims to Hajj) be appointed and a caravan be dispatched from Gujarat to Hajj.³²⁷ In regard to Hajj, the Mughal response to the Portuguese can be effectively viewed and understood within the context of three case studies of Mughal elites: Bayazid Beg, Gulabadan Begum and Maryam us zamani.

³²⁵ Eric Tagliacozzo, *The Longest Journey: The Southeast Asians and the Pilgrimage to Mecca* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013), 90.

³²⁶ Simon Digby, "Bayazid Beg Turkman's Pilgrimage to Makka and Return to Gujarat: A Sixteenth Century Narrative," *Iran* 42 (2004): 161.

³²⁷ Khwaja Nizamuddin Ahmad, *Tabaqat-i-Akbari: A History of India from the Early Musalman Invasions to the Thirty-eighth year of the Reign of Akbar*, vol. 2, trans. Brajendranath De (Calcutta: Royal Asiatic Society of Bengal, 1936), 472.

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4.4.1 Gulbadan Banu Begum

The royal pilgrimage party headed by Gulbadan Begum, paternal aunt of Akbar including other elder members of Babur, Humayun and Akbar's families, as well as close relatives was mainly organized for and by royal women in the *haram*.³²⁸ Gulbadan Begum and Salima Sulatana Begum (former wife of Bairam Khan, *Khan Khanan* and later entered the Emperor's harem), asked for Emperor Akbar's permission to circumambulate the sacred places (*Karbela, Kum, Mash-had* and *Mecca*). In 1575, the royal ladies began their holy journey from Agra and embarked in their hired Turkish transport, the *Salimi*. However, the rest of the pilgrims sailing in the royal ship *Ilahi* were seized by the Portuguese seeking a *cartaz*.³²⁹ After a year-long wait for the Portuguese *cartaz* in Surat, the royal caravan finally reached Jeddah in the following year.³³⁰ The contemporary historian Badauni mentions the dangers and insecurities of traveling for Hajj at those times. One route passed through Shia Iraq and the second route through Gujarat across the Arabian Sea required a pass (Portuguese *cartaz*), "which bore the idolatrous stamp of the heads of the Virgin Mary and Jesus Christ (on whom be peace)."³³¹

An interesting case of Mughal pragmatism and struggles for power in Gujarati regions is strongly visible in their approach towards the Portuguese in the town of Bulsar³³² (Butzaris, as called by Monserrate), which became the first bone of contention between the Portuguese and the Mughals. During her stay in Surat, Akbar's aunt Gulbadan Begum, gifted Bulsar to Portuguese (1575) as a means of securing a safe passage against the Portuguese attack during her journey to Mecca. Jesuit Father Monserrate's commentary suggests that Gulbadan must have had the

³²⁸ Ruby Lal, "Mughal Palace Women," in Anne Walyhall ed., *Servants of the Dynasty: Palace Women in the World History* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2008), 109.

³²⁹ Gulbadan Begum, *Humayun-Nama*, 71-72.

³³⁰ Badauni, *Tawarikh*, vol. 2, trans. A.H Lowe, 216.

³³¹ Ibid., 480.

³³² Bulsar located in the Kingdom of Gujarat had earlier been attacked by the Portuguese Viceroy D. Constantino in 1556 with the view to enriching Daman in its close proximity. The Abyssinians in charge of the province under the Sultan of Gujarat struggled to protect the area from the Portuguese.

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authority from Akbar to hand over Bulsar to the Portuguese.³³³ The approval coming from the Mughal centre was, hence, a calculated and drafted decision. However, once Gulbadan Begum returned, she persuaded the people of Surat to demand Bulsar back and troops were sent to occupy the town, but they were routed by the Portuguese.³³⁴ This was a key point in Mughal-Portuguese dialogues in which a territory was not only contested but fought for by the Mughals for the politico-religious purpose of Hajj.

Once back in Fatehpur Sikri, Gulbadan Begum resisted the presence of the Jesuit priest Rudolf Acquaviva who was residing at the Mughal court as a part of the first Jesuit mission. She disliked the fact that Prince Murad was given lessons in the Christian faith and that the priest was revered at court. Gulbadan, along with other women at the harem, protested against the royal countenance of Christianity. While departing for Goa, Father Acquaviva requested to be accompanied by a Russian slave and his Polish wife with two children who resided in Hamida Banu Begam's harem. The demand was rejected by Hamida Banu Begum, who was a part of the royal party that suffered due to the *firangi* (Portuguese) menace. However, Akbar gave freedom to the family to depart.³³⁵ Gulbadan Begum sketches a strong case for Mughal harem's resistance and lobbying against the Portuguese both in the court and outside it.

4.4.2 Bayazid Beg

Bayazid Beg Turkman, a distinct and respected Turani Mughal noble in Akbar's realm is mentioned in the *Ain-i-Akbari* as the commander of 300.³³⁶ His account, *Tazkira-i Humayun wa Akbar* was used as a feeder text to *Ain-i-Akbari* and *Humayun Nama*. It provides vivid and descriptive imageries of the Mughal-Portuguese frictions experienced during his voyage to Mecca in 1578, two years after Gulbadan's journey. He was to commence the journey from the port of Surat where,

³³³ H. Beveridge, "Notes on Father Monserrate's Mongolicae Legationis Commentarius," *Journal of Asiatic Society of Bengal* 11, no.7 (1915): 192.

³³⁴ Monserrate, *Commentary*, 166-167.

³³⁵ Gulbadan Begum, *Humayun-Nama*, 76.

³³⁶ H. Beveridge, "The Memoirs of Bayazid Biyat," *Journal of Asiatic Society of Bengal* 68 (1898): 297.

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ultimately, he ended up staying for two years before embarking on the voyage. There he was charged for the embezzlement of 100,000 rupees. However, after having been pardoned by the Emperor Akbar, he was allowed to continue his journey. In March 1580, the ship *Muhammadi* carrying Bayazid and other relatively poorer and non-distinct pilgrims was held by the Portuguese revenue farmers at the harbours of Daman and the customs of Diu were demanded.³³⁷ Bayazid, being the only influential noble offered them a sum of 10,000 *mahmudis* and only then was the ship allowed to progress.

The timing of this ship nearly coincides with Akbar's *farman* (February 1580) addressed to Qutb al-din Khan (the commander in Gujarat) ordering to commence preparations to attack the Portuguese enclave of Daman. The Emperor must have feared a potential threat to the Mughal ship by the Portuguese. Interestingly, this was also the time at which the first Jesuit embassy reached the Mughal court. Bayazid's sons were captured by the Portuguese in Daman as a result of the unsuccessful Mughal aggression against the Portuguese in April 1582.³³⁸ His account provides elaborate details of the impact of Diu taxes (*ashur-i Div*) on Mughal shipping contrary to the image of glorious Mughals and 'subservient *firangs*' constructed by Abu'l Fazl.³³⁹ The importance of Diu for the Portuguese treasury may be estimated from the fact that by the end of the sixteenth century, it contributed about 117,000 *cruzados* per year.³⁴⁰ Bayazid's account provides a short prologue into the regional political and economic tensions on the western coast of India as it was the crossroads for the Hajis and Portuguese.

4.4.3 Maryam us-Zamani

Maryam us-Zamani, Jahangir's mother and Akbar's wife, was an influential woman at the Mughal court. She held a high rank of 12,000 *sawars* (or cavalrymen)

³³⁷ Simon Digby, "Bayazid Beg," 160.

³³⁸ Muzaffar Alam and Sanjay Subrahmanyam, *Indo-Persian Travels in the Age of Discoveries, 1400-1800* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 306-308.

³³⁹ Digby, "Bayazid Beg," 160.

³⁴⁰ K. S. Mathew, *Portuguese and the Sultanate*, 58.

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in the *mansab* system.³⁴¹ Moreover, she possessed enormous wealth and is remembered as a sponsor of overseas commerce and trade. Her case study provides yet another survey of friction over the issue of *cartazes* between the Mughals and the Portuguese. In 1609, when Zamani's ship was being loaded to travel to Mocha (a sea port near Mecca), the Portuguese threatened to abscond with the ship to Diu until a heavy sum was paid for the *cartaz*. However, the violence was forestalled and a small sum of money was agreed to be given to the Portuguese. This may be seen as a prologue to the events that culminated in the capture of the ship *Rahimi* by the Portuguese in 1613. In addition to the trading ventures it was supposed to be involved in, the *Rahimi* carried about 700 Muslim pilgrims on their way to perform Hajj. Findly calls the capture of *Rahimi* "an illegal act" of "deliberate religious persecution"³⁴² since it was carrying a legitimate *cartaz* to cross the Portuguese naval control.

However, the capture of the ship was a display of power by the Portuguese as a reminder of their supremacy in the seas. The Mughals had clearly bargained their way out of the sums they were supposed to pay for the *cartazes* previously. However, this time, Portuguese capture of the royal ship with pilgrims aboard was reminiscent of their disagreement over the seemingly 'unfair' arrangement. The event disfigured the Mughal-Portuguese relations to a large extent. Jahangir ordered the shutting down of Jesuit churches in Mughal territories, the passage of Portuguese through the port of Surat was restricted, the Portuguese town of Daman was seized and all benefits endowed upon the Jesuits were suspended.³⁴³ Even Jahangir's favourite Jesuit priest, Jerome Xavier was deported to Surat. The Sultan of Ahmadnagar, a Mughal ally in the Deccan, laid siege to the Portuguese settlement of Bassein.³⁴⁴ The Portuguese, thereby, realised the importance of the Deccan

³⁴¹ Foster, Hawkins in *Early Travels*, 98.

³⁴² Ellison B. Findly, "The Capture of Maryam-uz-Zamani's Ship: Mughal Women and European Traders," *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 108 (1988): 227.

³⁴³ Ibid., 227.

³⁴⁴ N. R Farooqui, *Mughals, Ottomans and Pilgrims*, 206.

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kingdoms in the Mughal-Portuguese dynamics and ensured to maintain good terms with the kingdom of Ahmadnagar against the Sultan of Bijapur in 1630.³⁴⁵

4.5 Dynamics of the Mughal and Portuguese in the Islamic World: Intertwined interests

The relations between the Mughals, Safavids and Uzbeks were complex and dynamic, with new dimensions added by the Ottoman factor over time.³⁴⁶ At several points in time starting from the mid-1500s, the Uzbeks and Ottomans made overtures towards the Mughals to unite under the Sunni banner against the Shi'ite Safavids. However, these efforts were thwarted by the repeated Mughals claims to the Central Asian lands which they believed to have been the natural right holders of and the Uzbeks to be the usurpers. Secondly, at multiple points in time the early Mughals, Babur and Humayun accepted the status of Safavid vassals.³⁴⁷ Tracing its roots from Timur's legacy, the Mughal culture was thoroughly Persianized as well, and saw a huge scale immigration or 'brain drain' of talented Persians towards the Mughal Empire.³⁴⁸ More importantly, the strategic securing of the borders from the Uzbeks³⁴⁹ prevented any prospects of a Mughal-Uzbek-Ottoman joint venture against the Safavids, even though it was at the cost of blocked land route to Mecca.³⁵⁰ Hence, the Mughals were left with the sea route option to Mecca, which

³⁴⁵ Carta de Aviso Rei da Índia o Conde de Linhares para, o Rey de Goa a 16 Agosto 1631 in Appendix V-C of Afzal Ahmad, *Indo-Portuguese Diplomacy During the 16th and the 17th centuries, 1500-1663* (Delhi: Low Price Publications, 2008), 418-420.

³⁴⁶ In the last quarter of the sixteenth century the following rulers of the global Muslim world played a crucial role in cementing the relations between the Central Asian Empires; Mughal Emperor Akbar (1556-1605), Ottoman Sultans Sulayman I (1520-1566), also known as Sulayman, the Magnificent and Qanuni Sulayman (the Law giver) and Murad III (1574-1595) and lastly the Persian Shah Abbas I (1588-1629). For more information their broader relations see, Douglas E. Streusand, *Islamic Gunpowder Empires: Ottomans, Safavids and Mughals* (Philadelphia: Westview press, 2011).

³⁴⁷ Richard C. Foltz, *Mughal India and Central Asia* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), 6.

³⁴⁸ Ibid., 3.

³⁴⁹ The disintegration or falling of Persia in Uzbek hands would have led to increase in the Uzbek power. The Mughal territories in Afghanistan would have stood exposed to the Uzbek threat. See, Naimur Rahman Farooqi, *Mughal-Ottoman relation: A Study in Political and Diplomatic Relations 1556-1748* (Delhi: Idrah-i-Adabiat-i Deli, 1989), 150.

³⁵⁰ It was only under Jahangir in 1622 that anti-Safavid initiative was made by Mughal-Uzbek-Ottoman alliance after Persia occupied the Mughal territory of Kandahar. However, the Mughal emperor died in 1627 and alliance did not fructify.

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brought them into conflict with the Portuguese. Before we dive into the increased complexities of the Islamic Empires' equations with the coming of the Portuguese, let us have a brief look at the major areas of influence and the power dynamics in Central Asia in relation to the Mughals.

A vast stretch of Central Asia was connected to the Mughal Empire via land and sea routes. The principal routes on the mainland passed through the Khyber and Bolan passes with Lahore, Multan, Kabul and Qandhar being the major *entrepots*. There were further Kashmir routes where routes from China, Tibet, Ladakh and India converged and proceeded to Kashgar leading to Samarqand and Bukhara. Samarqand was the major city of Transoxiana and a meeting point of land routes from India, Persia and Turkey.

4.5.1 Courtly diplomacy on Hajj

Facing the political climate of the Empire, Akbar understood the crucial importance of Hajj and, hence, commanded that "the great *amirs*, the officers of every territory, the guardians of the passes, the watchmen of the borders, the river-police, and the harbour masters should ensure good services for the travelers."³⁵¹ Considering the criticisms and resentment he had received for his socio-religious experiment of instituting *Ibadat-Khana* (House of Worship) to discuss different religions, Gulbadan's Hajj pilgrimage in particular held great political importance for Akbar. The mechanism of Hajj as a state sponsored activity helped him create the picture of a devout Islamic state. At those times, making Hajj at those times through sea route was certainly getting into 'deep waters' because of the Portuguese system of *cartazes* or passes.

As previously suggested, Akbar was quite concerned with portraying an Islamic image in his empire, but this concern also extended to the rest of the Islamic world. Abu'l Fazl indicates that Shaikh Abdu-n-nabi and Mulla Abdullah Sultanpuri, conservative *ulama* (clergy) of Akbar's court, had been "made more comfortable by having the control of the body of pilgrims, and the veil remained suspended over

³⁵¹ Abul Fazl, *Akbar Nama*, vol. 3, 207.

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their wretchedness.”³⁵² This means that owing to their opposition of Akbar’s ‘jewels of knowledge,’³⁵³ they were dispatched to Mecca, where they seemed to have used “frowning language” in Hijaz and maligned the name of the Emperor, exclaiming him to have fallen from conservative Islam.³⁵⁴ These allegations were taken very seriously by the Emperor and aroused his concern about the portrayal of his image as a pious Islamic ruler in the Muslim world. He had also been sending alms, money and dresses of honour for the deserving people in Mecca and Madina.³⁵⁵ In the first year of the voyages to Hajj, the Emperor had spent a total of 600,000 rupees and gifted 12,000 robes of honour. In the next year, he gifted 100,000 rupees to the Sharif of Mecca.³⁵⁶ This may be construed as a political strategy of Akbar to portray himself as a patron of the Holy Cities and affirm his position to be on par with the Ottomans. This act gives a contradictory impression of Akbar’s eclectic beliefs and his apparent deviation from Islam during the 1580s.

The abrupt termination of gift giving to Mecca from 1582 onwards requires probing. A letter written by Abu’l Fazl to the *Sharifs* of Mecca refers to this issue and provides clarification for not sending gifts in 1582, stating rebellion and unrest in the regions of Punjab and Kabul as the underlying cause.³⁵⁷ However, further reading of the incidence brings out a contrary picture. The extended stay of the royal women in Mecca was a great source of tension for the Ottoman government considering the growing population and declining resources to support the population in Hijaz.³⁵⁸ Furthermore, the annual Akbar-sponsored Hajj caravans and *sadaqat* (alms), were seen as a challenge to Ottoman supremacy and monopoly over Hajj affairs.³⁵⁹

The translation of Ottoman documents by N.R. Farooqi shows the sudden halt of Mughal caravans and *sadaqat* to Mecca in 1581, had a background larger

³⁵² Ibid., 572-573.

³⁵³ Referring to their opposition to Akbar’s religious experiments and policies.

³⁵⁴ Abul Fazl, *Akbar Nama*, vol.3, 572-573.

³⁵⁵ Muhammad Arif Qandhari, *Tarikh-i-Akbari*, trans. Tasneem Ahmed (Delhi: Pragati Publications, 1993), 278-280.

³⁵⁶ Giancarlo Casale, *The Ottoman Age of Exploration* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 153.

³⁵⁷ Abu’l Fazl, *Mukatabat i-Allami*, 1.

³⁵⁸ The royal ladies and their companions performed Hajj four times, and returned only in 1582.

³⁵⁹ N. R. Farooqi, *Mughal-Ottoman relations*, 19.

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than Akbar's pre-occupation with unrest in the empire. Documents 1-5 in his paper portray a constant speculation and scheming on the issue of Mughal caravans and pilgrims. Document number one addressed to the 'qadi of Makka' and Qadi Husain, former 'qadi of Madina' and currently 'Sheikh al-Haram'³⁶⁰ of Makka is as follows:

*Whosoever come for the circumambulation (tavaf) of the Ka'ba Sarif, be it the Mughal caravan or someone else, send them back, after the circumambulation, to their homes like other pilgrims (hujjaj) and make special efforts to prevent them from settling in the Haram Sarif as mujavir so that it may not become the source of hardship for the provisions and supplies of the denizens of Makka. Pay the utmost attention to this urgent matter.*³⁶¹

Abul Fazl refers to Khwaja Yahiya, who was sent as an emissary by Akbar to initiate the return journey of the chaste ladies from Mecca, but the Ottoman document reveals that the ladies were asked to leave Mecca based on the economic and political motivations of the Ottomans.³⁶²

4.5.2 Employing rhetoric: Mughals and the foreign players

Antagonized by the Ottoman treatment of the royal caravan and chaste ladies, Akbar expressed to Father Rudolf Aquaviva multiple times his desire to forge a Mughal-Portuguese alliance against the Ottomans, and he was even ready to monetarily support this plan.³⁶³ After the Mughal success in the Kabul campaign of 1581, Father Aquaviva hastened to congratulate the Emperor, and it was on this occasion that the latter privately put forward the proposal of forming an embassy³⁶⁴ to be dispatched to Lisbon for establishing a 'peaceful bond' with the Portuguese.³⁶⁵ Though this embassy was sent under the garb of requesting a fresh Christian mission to the Mughal court, the language of the letter was filled with heavy rhetoric and

³⁶⁰ The title for civil governor of Mecca.

³⁶¹ N. R Farooqi, "Six Ottoman documents on Mughal-Ottoman Relations during the reign of Akbar," *Journal of Islamic Studies* 7 no. 1 (1996): 37-38.

³⁶² Abul Fazl, *Akbar Nama*, vol. 3, 568-69.

³⁶³ Monserrate, *Commentary*, 172.

³⁶⁴ Sayid Muzaffar, Abdullah Khan and Father Monserrate formed the embassy.

³⁶⁵ E. Rehatsek, "A Letter of the Emperor Akbar asking for Christian Scriptures," *The Indian Antiquary* 16 (1887): 136-137.

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political intents. Sayid Muzaffar, who had to convey the “oral message” of the Mughal Emperor to the Spain’s King Philip II,³⁶⁶ was supposedly forced into the embassy, fled to Deccan and never reached Lisbon. Father Monserrate and Abdullah Khan were only supposed to travel until Goa and remain there, the purpose remains questioned. In 1587, Akbar tried to form another Mughal-Portuguese alliance against the Ottomans. This prompted an order by the Ottoman ruler to the governors of Egypt and Basra to send immediately fifteen and five galleys (ships) to Yemen in case joint Mughal-Portuguese fleets were to appear in the Red Sea or the Persian Gulf.³⁶⁷

Most historians consider the endeavor to form an embassy a failure, but after having gauging the political dynamics and diplomacy involved in the formation of the embassy, it is much more accurate to say that aligning with the Portuguese in opposition to the Ottomans was more of rhetoric than a political reality. This envisaged two purposes for Akbar: one it guaranteed Portuguese support and friendship towards the Mughals and, hence, safeguarded the sea routes to Hajj. Secondly, the Mughals evaded from taking a stand or initiating military action against the powerful Ottomans. Monserrate writes that, the reason for Akbar’s hostile attitude towards the Ottoman embassy was the latter’s proposal of waging a holy war against the Hapsburgs. The Mughals, who had by now established a permanent embassy in Goa (1584)³⁶⁸ and reached a new agreement with the Portuguese allowing the Mughals two annual passes for their ships sailing the Red Sea, rebuked the Ottoman proposal.³⁶⁹ The Mughal Emperor even ordered the banishment of the Ottoman ambassadors to Lahore, a move against regular Mughal diplomatic protocol. Monserrate described the reception of the Ottoman embassy as being so ungracious that it “vanished in a cloud of smoke,” stating the reason as “the arrogance of both the ambassadors themselves and of the king who sent them, and

³⁶⁶ The embassy also meant to congratulate King Philip II on his accession to the throne of Portugal.

³⁶⁷ Kaushik Roy, *Military Transition in Early Modern Asia* (London: Bloomsbury, 2014), 156.

³⁶⁸ Giancarlo Casale, *Ottoman age of exploration*, 170.

³⁶⁹ Ibid., 159.

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the endeavor which they made to persuade him to wage war against the king of Spain and Portugal.”³⁷⁰

These instances reflect a more anti Ottoman, rather than the pro-Portuguese, attitude. It portrays that it was for rhetorical and diplomatic reasons that pro-Portuguese attitude was adopted on the Mughal side. However, the economic ties between the Mughals and Ottomans remained uninterrupted since Mughal ships regularly traversed, despite troubles from the Portuguese, between Surat and the Ottoman ports of Jeddah and Mocha during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

The theoretical image of Mughal Portuguese friendship is blurred by Akbar's recurring emphasis on war against the Portuguese in his conversations with the ruler of *Turan* (Transoxiana), Abdullah Khan Uzbek. However, these conversations must also be placed in the background of increased security concerns over the Mughal territory of Kabul after Abdullah Khan's capture of Balkh and Badakshan, which acted as buffer zones between the two empires.³⁷¹ In response to Abdullah Khan Uzbek's accusation that Akbar has deviated from the path of Islam, the Mughal Emperor, in a letter dated 1586, refers to his intentions of evicting the '*farangi* infidels' from the seas, referring to them as trouble makers.³⁷² He states:

*I have kept before my mind the idea that when I should be entirely at liberty from these tasks, I should, under the guidance of God's favour, undertake the destruction of the farangi infidels who have come to the islands of the ocean, and have lifted up the head of turbulence, and stretched out the hand of oppression upon the pilgrims to the holy places. May God increase their glory! They have become a great number and are stumbling-blocks to the pilgrims and traders.*³⁷³

In another letter from Akbar to Hakim Humam (the Mughal envoy to *Turan*), the former mentions that *sulhnama* or treaty with *Turan* (under Abdullah Khan

³⁷⁰ Monserrate, *Commentary*, 204-205.

³⁷¹ Abu'l Fazl, *Mukatabat i-Allami*, 39.

³⁷² Akbar to Abdullah Khan Uzbek, September 1586 in Rizaul Islam, *A Calendar of Documents on Indo-Persian relations (1500-1750)*, vol. 2 (Tehran: Iranian Culture Foundation, 1982), 210-211.

³⁷³ Abul Fazl, *Akbar Nama*, vol.3, 757.

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Uzbek), must soon be finalized since the Emperor is directing his attention towards conquest of *Jaza'ir-Farang*, or the stations and ports of the Portuguese.³⁷⁴ In a conversation with his nobles, in as late as 1601, Akbar affirmed that taking over Portuguese possessions would be easy once Deccan was engulfed in the Mughal domain.

We must note that Akbar's outlook towards the Portuguese power center and his attitude towards the Jesuits as the representatives of the Portuguese in the Mughal court, were highly pragmatic and diluted with political interests along with religious motivations. One such example is Akbar's letter to Aires de Saldanha (Viceroy of India) in 1601, in which he emphasizes the importance of a Mughal-Portuguese friendship, with a backdrop of the issues of safety of traders and merchants on the sea routes, concern for the ports, and informs about sending an embassy. It may also be noticed that the usage of the term 'sea of Hindustan' is suggestive of the Mughal claim to dominance over both the sea routes and ocean surrounding the subcontinent.

*It has always been in our royal heart and in our eyes that leading traders and merchants should be able to come and go with complete safety and confidence, and they continually pray to God for the constant increase in our prosperity, especially the inhabitants of the kingdoms of the Portuguese, who cannot go and come freely outside this kingdom and, who are accustomed to navigating the sea of Hindustan."*³⁷⁵

Furthermore, Mughal ambassadors frequented Goa, to ascertain their military strength and were strategically sent at times when ships were due for Portugal in order to be informed about the men and merchandise that aboard the ships.³⁷⁶ All of these letters and conversations reflect a cautious and active detailing of Portuguese activities in the subcontinent by the Mughals.

³⁷⁴ Abu'l Fazl, *Mukatabat i- Allami*, 213.

³⁷⁵ Flores and Saldanha, *The firangis*, 78-79.

³⁷⁶ Du Jarric, *Akbar and the Jesuits*, 112-113.

4.6 Concluding Remarks

The *farmans* and political correspondence mentioned here portray an anti-Portuguese element in Mughal political thought but they must be placed in the political climate of the Islamic world where Mughal rulers had to justify themselves as Islamic rulers and protectors of faith. It is important to consider that, at times the rhetoric of the Portuguese was used to portray oneself (Mughals) as a defender of Islam. In regard to the Portuguese, this correspondence is reminiscent of the position that the Portuguese held in the Mughal foreign approach. The continuous presence of the Jesuits at the Mughal court did not alter Mughal perception of the Portuguese as enemies in the seas. Jahangir did not resume the office of *Mir Hajj* nor the annual Hajj pilgrimage since he was a firm believer of Akbar's policy of tolerance. However, after the Portuguese seizure of the royal ship, he repeatedly made proposals to the English to fight the Portuguese at sea. One English official's letter addressed to the English East India Company notes, "The Moors have vowed to drive them (The Portuguese) out of the country."³⁷⁷ The Mughal-Portuguese relationship became further complicated with the involvement of new political entities. This chapter studied the convergence of various dynamics and the political relationships between the Mughals, Islamic Empires, and the Portuguese. Since the Portuguese were a stable political entity in the Indian Ocean by the sixteenth century, the safety of Hajj became a key issue in the Islamic world bordering the western Indian Ocean and also brought in new political players affected by the Portuguese power play. The Mughals' strategic collaboration with or against other Islamic powers was primarily driven by political exigencies rather than the sole factor of religion, and the vicissitudes of the Mughal-Portuguese relationship experienced fluctuations as a result of these parallel dynamics.

³⁷⁷ John Sandcrofte to the East India Company, November 29, 1614, *Letters received by the East India* vol. 2, with an introduction by W. Foster (London: Sampson Low, 1897), 213.

III. Maritime frontiers of the Mughal- Portuguese interactions

*A kingdom without ports is like a house without portals.*³⁷⁸

-Tome Pires

³⁷⁸ Armando Cortesão ed., *The suma Oriental of Tome Pires, An Account of the East From Red Sea to China*, vol. 1 (New Delhi: Asia Educational Services, 2005), 57.

5 Scramble for the western coast: Gujarat and Konkan

5.1 Introduction

*Prestige was a matter of controlling vast areas on which were located fat, meek peasants...To courtiers, including the emperors, the sea was a marvel, a curiosity, a freak. This was not an arena where glory was to be won.*³⁷⁹

The Mughals, as described by Pearson, focused on expansionist agendas on land. However, prestige was not only won at land. Expansion in the maritime frontiers of the Indian subcontinent was a gradual process and paralleled expansion in the interiors. As seen in the previous chapter, the sea lanes that connected the Mughals to the rest of the Islamic world were crucial to the establishment of the idea of Mughal supremacy in the Islamic world for various reasons. As the Mughals expanded their maritime frontiers in the western parts of the subcontinent, they became neighbours of Portuguese India whose mainstay in the region was commerce.

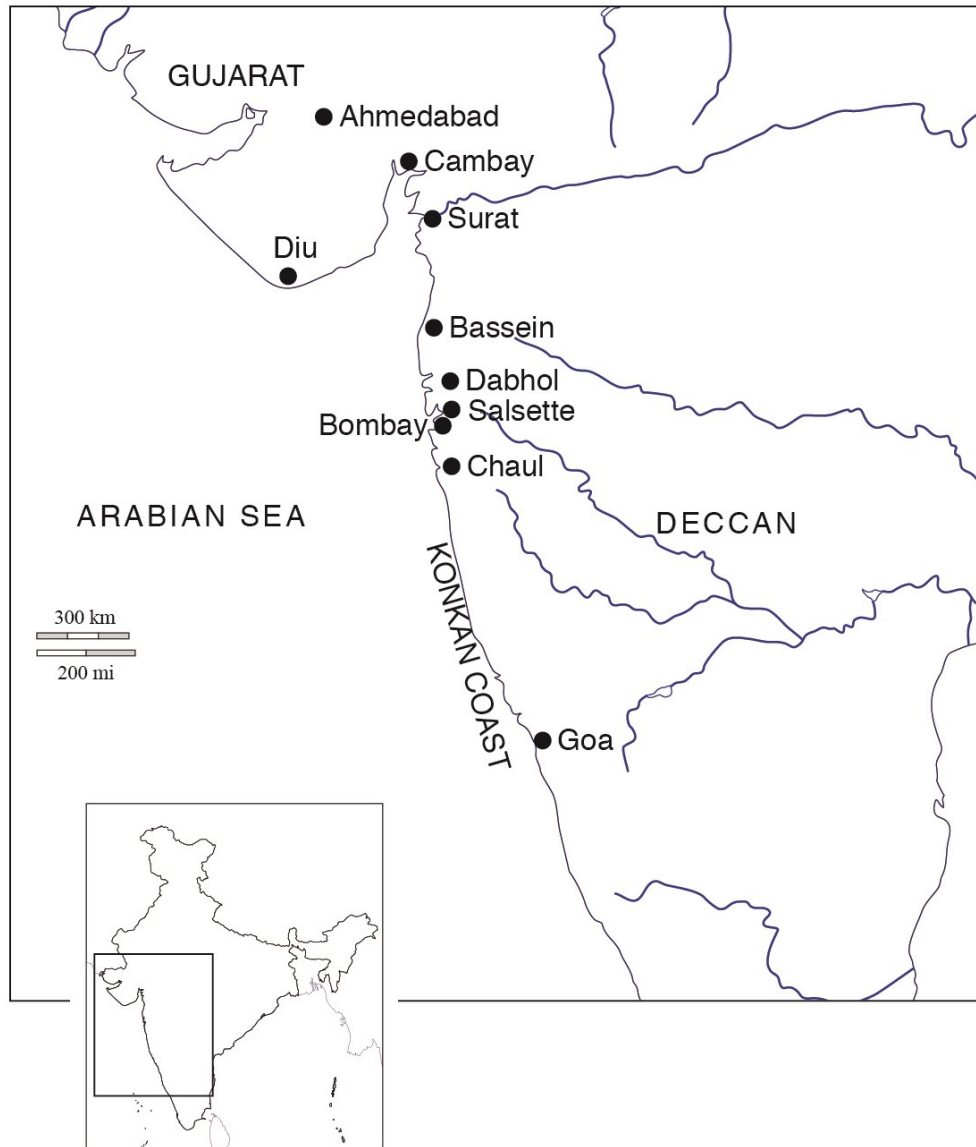
Three parallel processes were at work in northern India in the second half of the sixteenth century: first, the territorial expansion of Mughal India that led to the incorporation of north-west India, Gujarat, parts of northern Deccan, and Bengal and Orissa in the east. The second process was the introduction of a sound monetary policy, which would have been much less successful without the third factor: the influx of American silver (mainly through Portuguese agencies), which created the ideal conditions for monetary expansion and consolidation.³⁸⁰ This chapter studies the interrelationship of these three factors and notices the patterns of commercial and political exchange between the Mughals and Portuguese in the maritime region

³⁷⁹ M. N. Pearson, *The Indian Ocean* (London: Routledge, 2003), 116.

³⁸⁰ Jaroslav Strnad, *Monetary History of Mughal India as reflected in Silver Coin Hoards* (New Delhi: Harman Publishing House, 2001), 65.

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of Gujarat. The western coast of the Indian subcontinent extends southwards through the coast of Konkan which had a distinct role in the establishment of Portuguese presence in the subcontinent. The Portuguese acquisition of Goa and nearby territories marked the beginnings of colonial relations between Europe and Asia. And the Mughal ascend towards Deccan (and thereby in the proximity of Goa) stirred inhibitions in Portuguese political circles. However, this chapter will only focus on one small and largely under-researched port city of Dabhol on the Konkan coast to show the process of confluence of multiple regional political powers and situate Mughal-Portuguese dynamics in this web. Mughal ambition for the western coastal frontier is reflected in the scramble for these port cities.



Map 4: Western coast of the Indian Subcontinent

5.2 General observations on Pre-Mughal Gujarat

There were a number of well-defined international routes in the sixteenth century, the most important of which were: from China and Indonesia to Malacca; from Malacca to Gujarat; from Gujarat to the Red Sea; from Malabar to the Red Sea; from Gujarat to Malabar and intermediate ports on the western coast; from Aden to Hormuz; from East Africa to Gujarat and from Gujarat to Hormuz. Despite the complexities of these routes, the most important merchants, according to M. N. Pearson, were the Gujaratis carrying not only their own cloths, indigo and opium, but also the goods of others, especially spices.³⁸¹ The strategic location of Gujarat, which lay on the west to east trade route, transformed it into the gateway to the western world.³⁸² Gujarat was long associated with trans-continental trade and moreover, internal forces were working towards market intensification, accumulation of merchant capital, merchant control over artisans, and monetization of state fiscal arrangements.³⁸³

Qansawh al Ghawri, the Sultan of Cairo maintained dominance over the important trade centres of the Middle East such as Alexandria, Cairo, Beirut, Damascus, Jidda, Mecca and Suez mainly the spice trading centres. The annual income from the custom revenues of these regions came to around 600,000 *ducats* a year. The arrival of the Portuguese, however, led to the shrinking of Arab ships and the dwindling of trade in these regions.³⁸⁴ Nevertheless, Gujarat maintained cordial relations with the Gulf and it was the major source of bullions for the Muzaffarids (rulers of Gujarat from 1391-1583).³⁸⁵ Various ports of Gujarat were contested regions of “contained conflict”³⁸⁶ between the Sultanate of Gujarat and the

³⁸¹ Strnad, *Monetary History*, 10.

³⁸² Sohinee Basak, “Coastal Gujarat on the Eve of Portuguese Arrival,” *Maritime Affairs* 10 (2014): 95.

³⁸³ Ruby Maloni, *Surat: Port of the Mughal Empire* (Mumbai: Himalaya Publishing House, 2003), 20-22.

³⁸⁴ K. S. Mathew, *The First mercantile battle in the Indian Ocean: The Afro Asian front against the Portuguese, 1508-1509* (Lisbon: Instituto de Investigação Científica Tropical, 1985), 181.

³⁸⁵ S.A. Tirmizi, “Gujarat-Gulf Relations, 1405-1573 AD,” *Al-Watheeka* 14 (1993): 223-24.

³⁸⁶ The idea of contained conflict used first by Sanjay Subrahmanyam proposes a middle path in the two extreme arguments in the study of the East and the West. He rejects the notions total cultural incompatibility and opposition between the East and the West on the one hand and the idea of mutual partnership and amicability between the two on the other hand.

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Portuguese throughout the sixteenth century until its Mughal occupation. The Sea of *Larawi* (Sea of Gujarat) engaged in internal and external trade on a large basis and can truly be called global in its outlook and engagement with foreigners. As a result, merchants from various parts of the world came to Gujarat and Diu, in the first quarter of the sixteenth century. The small port town of Diu engaged in short and long distance trade with Dabhol and Chaul on the Konkan coast; Calicut and Cochin in the south and Bengal in the east, extending as far as Quilon, Arabia and Persia.³⁸⁷

Long before the arrival of the Portuguese, Gujaratis had developed a merchant colony reaching to distant lands in the African continent like Melinde and Mombasa. The Portuguese gradually started expanding on the western coast of India looking towards Gujarat and Diu, a matter of grave concern for the Sultanate of Gujarat until the Mughal conquest. Trade to the region of Cambay in Gujarat received the highest priority by the private Portuguese traders starting from 1509, despite the dissuasion of the church and the state. The Portuguese government emphasised on building strong bond between the merchants and the state and discouraged the movement of merchants outside the reach of the church because then they would have fewer chances of taking the sacrament: “They did not take the sacrament and did not listen to the divine office.” (*Sem receberem os Sacramentos, nem ouviam os officos divinos*).³⁸⁸ Moreover, the Portuguese government feared that these merchants could be easily taken as hostages in the event of war with the Mughals.³⁸⁹

The importance of Gujarat can be assessed from the interest shown by the Portuguese traders since the start of their history in the Indian subcontinent. ‘Sword and the Cross’ approached Gujarat in the form of a fleet sent under the patronage of St. Thomas, the apostle of India, and under the supervision of Nuno Da Cunha (governor of Portuguese possessions in India from 1528-1538), who was required to

³⁸⁷ For a detailed description of seasons of sailing from Diu to various ports in West and Southeast Asia see, Lotika Vardarajan, “Diu and its Trade,” in *History of Traditional Navigation* eds., G. V. Rajamanickam and Y. Subbarayalu (Thanjavur: Tamil University, 1988): 115-128.

³⁸⁸ Joaquim Heliodoro da Cunha Rivara, *Archivo Portuguez Oriental*, vol. 4 (Nova Goa: Imprensa Nacional, 1872), 52.

³⁸⁹ Pearson, *Merchants and Rulers*, 38.

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assume a strong fortress on the coast of Gujarat in order to buttress the Portuguese dreams of ruling the Red Sea route. The quest for Gujarat culminated in the shifting of Portuguese capital base from Cochin to Goa, from which Gujarat could be better accessed.³⁹⁰

The region of Bassein (*Baçaim*) was surrendered by the Sultan of Gujarat fearing Portuguese expansion in Gujarat and Diu and the peace treaty on Bassein was signed on 23rd December 1533,³⁹¹ while the first step towards capturing Diu was taken by the Portuguese in 1539. The treaty divided the customs' income between the Sultan of Gujarat and the King of Portugal.³⁹² Finally, after the second siege of Diu, the region was engulfed in Portuguese possession by treaty of 1548. The treaty compelled all Gujarati ships to come to Diu and pay customs before proceeding to Mecca. As discussed in detail in the previous chapter, the possession of *cartazes* became mandatory for all the ships.³⁹³ In the 1570s, the customs revenue from twenty three Gujarati ports equalled thrice the total revenue of the entire Portuguese *Estado da Índia*. Custom revenues from Diu doubled from 1556 to the 1590s, making it the second most important source of revenue for the Portuguese crown after Goa. For example, in 1588, the income from Diu reached around 46,350,000 reis.³⁹⁴ The fort of Diu grew to become one of the most profitable assets for the Portuguese due to its connectivity to the Red Sea, and the missionaries reaped large benefits from this commercial prosperity in terms of enhancing their establishments.³⁹⁵

³⁹⁰ K. S Mathew (ed.), *The Portuguese and the Sultanate of Gujarat* (Delhi: Mittal Publications, 1986), 5.

³⁹¹ For detailed information on the terms of the treaty see "Título Do Livro Do Tonbo Da Fortaleza e Cidade De Baçaim," in Mathew (ed.), *The Portuguese and the Sultanate*, 177-200.

³⁹² "Treaty of 1539," in *Ibid.*, 226-235.

³⁹³ "Treaty of 1548," in *Ibid.*, 236-237.

³⁹⁴ Artur Tiodoro de Matos ed., *O Tombo de Diu-1592*, (Lisboa: Centro de Estudos Damião de Góis, 1999), 12.

³⁹⁵ Andreu Martínez d'Alòs-Moner, *Envoys of a Human God: The Jesuit Mission to Christian Ethiopia, 1557-1632* (Leiden: Brill, 2015), 63.

5.3 The foundation of Surat as reflected in Mughal sources³⁹⁶

The importance of integrating Gujarat into Mughal dominion is best reflected in the words of Portuguese Jesuit Duarte de Sande, who considered it as a “gem of India.”³⁹⁷ The capture of various regions in Gujarat, especially Surat, was of strategic importance to the third Mughal Emperor Akbar considering its maritime importance and it being the gateway to the sea lanes to Hajj. Surat was called *Bab-ul-Macca* or *Bandar-i-Mubarak* (Blessed port) as a pious embarking point for Mecca. It is believed that the fortress of Surat was built by Safar Aqa, titled Khudawand Khan, on the shore of the Arabian Sea to evade disturbances caused by the *firangis* (Portuguese in this case).³⁹⁸ Following the conquest of Surat, Akbar inspected the fort for repairs and improvements. During this inspection, some large mortars (called Sulaimanai) and three great cannon (*zarbazan*) were found. The name *Sulaimani* is indicative of Sultan Sulaiman of Rum/Sulaiman Basha al-Khadim who had sent the mortar accompanied by a large army via the sea when he envisioned overtaking the European ports on the borders of Hindustan.³⁹⁹ Ottoman concerns against the depredations of the Portuguese led them to sending Sulaiman to help the local Gujarati opponents in their struggle against the Portuguese. He marched upon Gujarat and even brought Diu under control.⁴⁰⁰ However, he assumingly left Gujarat due to lack of assistance from local Gujaratis and defeat from the Portuguese.⁴⁰¹

Akbarnama articulates that the Turkish expedition was unsuccessful because the rulers of Gujarat considered the Turks tougher opponents, and evaded crossing swords with the Turks, than the *firangis*. Hence, they sided with the *firangis* against the Turks and deprived them (Turks) of the provisions.⁴⁰² The political pragmatism of choosing a lesser enemy over a formidable one can be rooted in this act of the

³⁹⁶ This short passage is a part of my research article, “Floating political rhetoric,” 251-252.

³⁹⁷ Jorge Flores, “The Sea world of the Mutassadi: A profile of port officials from Mughal Gujarat (1600-1650),” *Journal of Royal Asiatic Society* 21 (2011): 55.

³⁹⁸ Khwaja Nizamuddin Ahmad, *Tabaqat-i-Akbari*, vol. 2, 381.

³⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, 387-88.

⁴⁰⁰ Zainuddin Makhdoom, *Tuhfat al-Mujahidin* (Kuala Lumpur: Islamic Book Trust, 2005), 74.

⁴⁰¹ Pearson, “The Estado and Hajj,” 106.

⁴⁰² Abu'l Fazl, *Akbar Nama*, vol. 3, 41.

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Gujarati rulers giving prologue to the future attitude of the Mughals towards foreign powers discussed in the previous chapter.



Figure 3: Akbar's Triumphant entry into Surat by Farrukh Beg (ca. 1590-95).

Image no.: 2009BX3725

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5.4 Change in trade dynamics after the Mughal conquest of Gujarat

It is widely argued that the Mughal Empire largely thrived on land revenue, which mostly averaged between 40-50% of the gross agricultural produce paid in, or largely converted into cash. This extremely high agricultural produce required a great deal of exchange and trading activity.⁴⁰³ The conquest of Gujarat and Bengal by the Mughals undoubtedly enhanced the regional interdependence (between the two regions) for raw materials like cotton and silk, however, it is beyond the scope of this study to analyze each of the intricate regional or local patterns of trade in the Indian subcontinent. We are more concerned with the Mughal Gujarati ports as sites for both Mughals and Portuguese economic interest.

5.4.1 Gujarati ports and confluence of commercial interests

Vast changes were brought to the economic and urban structure of Gujarat upon its integration into the Mughal dominion in 1573. For a long time, Cambay remained the most important Mughal port in Gujarat, overshadowing Surat and Rander. Since weaving and artisan works were made in Cambay, it became the biggest manufacturing center in Gujarat, rivaling Ahmadabad, which specialized in producing silk. Akbar ordered the repair of city walls and lowered transit duties during his first visit to the sea. He also reduced taxes on import and export of goods passing through the sea ports to 2.5 percent of their value.⁴⁰⁴ Allowing the artisans to settle in the suburbs of Cambay acted to encourage the manufacturing sector. There was no direct domination by the Portuguese *Estado da Índia* in Cambay as there was in Goa, Bassein, Diu and Daman. Cambay played a dual role as a supplier to Portuguese demands and a concurrent independent exporter, mostly to West Asia. The Portuguese preferred Cambay to remain an independent port, albeit under their influence, for supplies to Goa and Diu. Aceh remained the main hub for

⁴⁰³ Om Prakash, "Some Aspects of Trade in Mughal India," *Proceedings of Indian History Congress* 42 (1981): 174.

⁴⁰⁴ Abu'l Fazl, *Ain-i-Akbari*, vol. 1, 233.

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Gujarati shipping. The triangular trade continued, and was in fact reinforced. Gujarati cotton was exchanged for Sumatran pepper from Aceh, which was sold in the Red Sea and thus brought back bullion to Gujarat. Though Cambay's role became confirmed as a supplier to Goa and also as a satellite to the Portuguese world market, its commercial links with the Red Sea lingered in later years. One of the major reasons for the downfall of Cambay, as noted in European travelogues, was its receding sea line that made it difficult for big ships to anchor near the port city.⁴⁰⁵ Cambay was finally eclipsed by the port town of Surat, which became an Indo-Portuguese entrepot of importance.⁴⁰⁶

The *Mirat* explains the rise in Surat's revenue to the entry of "a large number of merchants from all parts of land and sea."⁴⁰⁷ Portuguese interference in Surat trade caused the decline of Ahmadabad during the latter part of the sixteenth century. However, after its integration into the Mughal system as the seat of the Mughal *Subahdar* (governor) of Gujarat, its prosperity recovered. Aside from the European presence, the merchant population was already cosmopolitan as the city's dominant position was based on its multidimensional activities. While being the seat of government authority, it was also a centre of export commodities and craft productions in gold, silver, ivory and pearls. It acted as a collection point for goods from the surrounding areas, located astride caravan routes conducive to itinerant merchants. According to Moosvi's assessments, during Akbar's time, Surat's revenue and custom dues amounted to 4 *lakh* rupees annually.⁴⁰⁸ At the turn of seventeenth century, 18.65% of the total assessed revenue (*jama*) in the province of Gujarat came from trade and commerce. In Surat, specifically, the proportion was 29.75%. Hence, it may be seen that taxation on trade and commerce in Gujarat evidently

⁴⁰⁵ Jean Baptiste Tavernier, *Tavernier's Travels in India (1640-1667)*, vol. 1, trans. V. Ball (London: Oxford University Press, 1925) 57.

⁴⁰⁶ Ruby Maloni, "Europeans in Seventeenth Century Gujarat: Presence and Response," *Social Scientist*, 36, no.3 (2008): 68-69.

⁴⁰⁷ Ali Muhammad Khan, *Mirat-i-Ahmadi*, 193.

⁴⁰⁸ 1 lakh equals 100,000 rupees.

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provided a large source of income for the Mughals as compared to other provinces (*subas*) of the Empire.⁴⁰⁹

The province also became a major gateway for the entry of the single most important import commodity for the Mughals: the bullions,⁴¹⁰ or precious metals mainly silver *reales*, *ducats* and a variety of other coins. Celebrated economic historian of Dutch history in the Asian seas, Om Prakash, has famously termed this trade as “bullion for goods.”⁴¹¹ The Dutch and English East India Companies are widely known for their large scale import of bullion in the Asian and especially, Indian subcontinents however, the next few pages will focus on the Portuguese as the pioneers of silver imports in the subcontinent and a crucial commercial collaborators of the Mughals on the western coast by the end of sixteenth century. The growth of urbanisation and the development of an effective monetary system also support the thesis of Om Prakash who contested the argument of Wallerstein and others that the imported bullion in India was not utilised for productive purposes.⁴¹² The present thesis advocates and subscribes to the idea that bullion was used for economic purposes in the Indian subcontinent and furthers the proposition of the Mughals and Portuguese as economic collaborators.

5.5 Trading Silver: Bullion influx and the Mughal-Portuguese commercial relationship

The Mughal Emperors were “as bullionist as were the Europeans in the seventeenth century.”⁴¹³ Regardless of any theoretical underpinnings, they were inclined to see the bullion influx in India. Around 80% of Mughal imports in India

⁴⁰⁹ Sagufta Parveen, “Surat as a Major Port Town of Gujarat and its Trade History,” *IOSR-Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences* 19 (2014): 71.

⁴¹⁰ Bullionism is an economic theory that defines wealth by the amount of silver and gold owned.

⁴¹¹ Om Prakash, *Bullion for Goods: European and Indian Merchants in the Indian Ocean Trade, 1500-1800* (New Delhi: Manohar, 2004).

⁴¹² Nagendra Rao, review of *Bullion for Goods: European and Indian Merchants in the Indian Ocean Trade, 1500-1800*, by Om Prakash, *Enterprise and Society* 7 (2006): 600-602.

⁴¹³ M. N. Pearson, “Merchants and State”, in *The Political Economy of Merchant Empires: State Power and World Trade, 1350-1750*, ed. James Tracy (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 97.

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were bullions, mostly silver.⁴¹⁴ It is well known that the discovery of silver mines in the New World in the 16th century was followed by the heavy influx of silver into Europe. A considerable part of this silver reached India and China through Euro-Asian trade channels after a certain time lag. During the first half of Akbar's reign, silver had begun to replace copper, though silver was still not the dominant currency metal in the Empire.⁴¹⁵ Mughal India followed a multi-metal coinage of gold *muhrs*, silver rupees and copper *dams*. However, gold *muhrs* mainly had ceremonial value and most ordinary transactions took place in the latter two, predominantly in silver rupees. Ain-i Akbari reports an administered *dam* to rupee rate of 48:1 in 1575.⁴¹⁶ In addition to the standardized coinage, Mughal market transactions were conducted in non-standardized money like *mahmudis*—silver coins of the Gujarat Sultanate used in Surat, Broach and Baroda until the mid-seventeenth century.⁴¹⁷

5.5.1 Bullions and monetary unification in the Mughal Empire

The eastward migration of international silver and westward expansion of the Mughal Empire prepared the groundwork for the establishment of a sound monetary system by the Mughal Empire. This period also witnessed the political unification of trade routes from Levant to Basra and Yemen, and the rise of Hormuz as an important center for international exchange. Mughal coastal and caravan cities became the principal beneficiaries of these developments, especially at a time when political and commercial links between entrepôts and hinterlands were deepening and the monetary structure was transforming. This was paralleled by the Mughal state's efforts in the 1590s to incorporate silver into the monetary system and standardise Mughal currency by reminting old currency.⁴¹⁸ However, the transition from the old Gujarati currency (*mahmudis*) to silver rupees was slow and gradual. By

⁴¹⁴ Pearson, "Merchants and State," 97.

⁴¹⁵ Anirban Biswas, *Money and Markets from Pre-Colonial to Colonial India* (Delhi: Aakar Books, 2007), 35.

⁴¹⁶ Om Prakash, "Co-existence of Standardized and Humble Money: The Case of Mughal India," (Paper for session 61 of the XIV International Economic History Congress, Helsinki, Finland, 21-25 August, 2006), 6.

⁴¹⁷ Prakash, "Co-existence of Standardized and Humble Money," 7.

⁴¹⁸ Najaf Haider, "The Quantity Theory and Mughal Monetary History," *The Medieval History Journal* 2 (1999): 382.

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1592, an imperial order ordered imposed demonetisation of all previous currencies which were henceforth to be treated as gold and silver bullion in the market.⁴¹⁹ Nonetheless, our main concern here is the bullion import from outside the Indian subcontinent.

Following the conquest of Gujarat, the linkage between Ahmadabad (the capital of the province) and the core areas of the empire became even stronger. The capital was officially the major source of revenue remittance for the province, complemented by the existing flow of silver to the inland towns through trade. Silver that travelled through the trading channels of Iran, Turkey and Iraq (*Wilayat, Rum wa Iraq*) ended up in Ahmadabad, which was also the hinterland market for the port cities of Cambay, Diu and Gogha.⁴²⁰ The imperial mint of Ahmadabad started coining rupees remitted by merchants operating in Gujarat to pay for the commercial dealings in the inland regions. The official rate of custom charges for all goods imported or exported through Mughal ports was 2.5% *ad valorem*, whereas for bullions it was only 2%. By the end of Jahangir's rule, regular custom charges were increased to 3.5% but custom rates for bullion remained the same under both Emperors.⁴²¹ The fact that the Mughals clearly understood the importance of bullion trade is reflected in the differential rates of the custom duties for bullions and other goods.

5.5.2 Empirical Data on Silver Influx in the Mughal Empire via the Portuguese

There is enough reliable data to show the large influx of silver into India after the 1570s. Hamilton's histogram of Spanish imports of American silver shows that during this period, the volume of bullion transported from America to Spain achieved its highest level (undergoing a dramatic rise in 1576-80). The peak was

⁴¹⁹ For more information on circulation of regional currency and Mughal emperors' monetary experiments see, Najaf Haider, "Mughals and Mahmudis, The Incorporation of Gujarat in the Imperial Monetary System," *Proceedings of Indian History Congress* 60 (1999): 270-286.

⁴²⁰ Haider, "Mughals and Mahmudis," 271.

⁴²¹ Arshia Shafqat, "The Customhouse at the Port of Surat under the Mughals," *Proceedings of Indian History Congress* 67 (2006-2007): 387.

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indeed reached in the years 1591-95 with only a marginal descent in the next half-decade). Most scholars recognize that a large part of American silver was spilling into Asia.⁴²²

It should be observed here that Portugal not only brought in silver through the Cape of Good Hope route, but also from the Far East. The amount of American silver brought to the Philippines reached enormous proportions during the 1590's when, at one time, almost as much silver was transported across the Pacific as across the Atlantic. If the Portuguese had imported only two tons of silver from Japan (which, itself received American silver) in the 1580's, their silver imports from the Far East must have been considerably more in the 1590's. Moreover, there were direct mercantile connections between the Gujarat ports and Achin, and some bullion must have travelled through them. Shireen Moosvi further informs us that if even a fifth of the trans-Pacific silver reached India, it would have meant something like 30 to 100 tons of silver coming annually to India in the 1590's. Considering these large quantities of silver entering the Indian Ocean during this time (probably approaching 150 tons per annum), the estimated annual output of 159.62 tons by the Gujarat and North-Western mints during 1586 to 1605 should not seem unreasonable, especially if we make an allowance for the minting of old coins and the bullion previously hoarded.⁴²³

The supply of bullion by the *Carreira*⁴²⁴ voyages from Lisbon was the most significant commercial feature of the Indian west coast during the sixteenth century. Out of the total capital investment by the Portuguese over one third was directed towards trade with the individual regions of the Mughal Empire. During 1586-90, the high point of Portuguese trade with the Mughal Empire, the average annual export of silver was 11.22 metric tons. The amount was considerable enough to upset the

⁴²² Shireen Moosvi, "The Silver Influx, Money Supply, Prices and Revenue-Extraction in Mughal India," *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 30, (1987): 60.

⁴²³ Moosvi, "The Silver Influx," 61-62.

⁴²⁴ *Carreira Da India* was a term used by the Portuguese to signify the round voyages between Goa and Lisbon. A complete *Carreira* voyage between Portugal to India and back required at least eighteen months or more. The term *carreira* was also applied to interport or 'feeder lines' of Portuguese Asia. See, C.R. Boxer, "Carreira and cabotagen. Some aspects of Portuguese trade in the Indian ocean and China sea, 1500-1650," *Renaissance and Modern Studies* 30 (1986): 45.

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gold-silver ratio on the western coast, as well as the monetary policies of the *Estado da Índia*. Due to a high demand for *reales* from Sind and Gujarat, on one hand and Bengal, Malacca and China on the other, Goa had to regulate the profits on money-changing in view of favouring the expansion of Luso-Indian coinage. However, whenever such restrictions were enacted, they soon had to be withdrawn due to the huge demand for silver. When the outflow of *reales* to western India was prohibited in 1583, local merchants rushed to Goa with enormous quantities of gold to obtain the specie. Following a general decline in Portuguese exports of silver to India from roughly 26.71 metric tons in 1585 to 6.55 metric tons in both 1615 and 1618, there was also a fall in exports to the Mughal Empire. Compared to the last quarter of the sixteenth century, exports in the first half of the seventeenth century were reduced to almost one third (see Table 1). A sharp downward trend set in after 1600 with exports falling to their lowest level in 1608.⁴²⁵

⁴²⁵ Haider, "Quantity Theory," 316

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Year	Gujarat and Sind	Bengal	Annual Total
1586-90	50.45	5.65	11.22 a)
1591-95	22.45	2.74	5.04 a)
1596-1600	42.81	3.93	9.34 a)
1602	3.38	0.43	3.81
1605	0.00	0.00	0.00
1608	1.02	0.13	1.15
1615	2.14	0.27	2.14
1616	4.98	0.61	5.59
1618	4.12	0.47	4.59

a) Annual Average

Table 1: Estimates of Portuguese Exports of Precious Metals to the Mughal Empire: 1586-1631 (silver equivalent in metric tons).

Source: James Boyajian, *Portuguese Trade in Asia under the Hapsburgs* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1993) Appendix A, 247-53.

5.5.3 Nature of Mughal-Portuguese trade

It is possible to estimate the size of this trade using the figures of Portuguese imports given by James Boyajian derived from the descriptions of the *Carreira* cargo as declared at the *Casa da India* (Lisbon), or as recorded by independent observers on the arrival of ships from India. Among the two regularly traded items, which comprised nearly the entire value of Mughal, indigo stood out as a high-value product in terms of its weight and thus fetched a higher price than pepper in the markets of Lisbon. In terms of the total value exported, however, textiles from Sind

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and Gujarat and to a lesser extent Bengal had the highest share.⁴²⁶ From the pattern we have observed of India's foreign trade, there is little doubt that almost the entire export to Lisbon was paid for in precious metals, mainly silver. Whatever merchandise the Portuguese brought to supplement their bullion capital was likely less than the value of indigo and textiles meant for the regional and South-East Asian markets. Thus, the assumption here is that the estimated value of these silver imports effectively represents the volume of Portuguese exports of bullion into the Mughal Empire.⁴²⁷

After the decline of Surat as the major supplier of bullion, the Mughals started expanding their base in Deccan in the vicinity of Portuguese settlements to ensure a regular supply of bullion. By the 1670s, Bombay and Bassein replaced Surat as bullion entry point and later, in 1683 it is said that Aurangzeb shifted his capital to Aurangabad in order to meet the bullion needs. This rubric provided a reflection of the business of bullions between the Portuguese and the Mughals. The commercial ties between the two powers were borne out of mutual interests. The Portuguese maintained commercial relations with the Mughals since they were a powerful landed empire and after having lost Vijayanagar as an ally, the Portuguese needed the support of a strong indigenous power. On the other hand, the Mughals entertained the Portuguese as they were the importers of bullions, which were then minted into coins and formed a stabilising aspect of the Mughal economy. Beneath these commercial ties was a strong friction for scavenging new territories, especially in Gujarat and in the coast of Konkan.

5.6 Konkan

Konkan occupies a considerable area of the western coastline in the subcontinent. Commercial geography and existing levels of technology imbued a certain degree of commonality and continuity over time. Ports of the region enjoyed

⁴²⁶ James Boyajian, *Portuguese Trade in Asia under the Hapsburgs* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1993), 44.

⁴²⁷ Haider, "Quantity Theory," 315.

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a hinterland, as well an entrepot. The political suzerainty first extended by Bahmanis⁴²⁸ and later by successor states such as Ahmednagar and Bijapur, integrated these regions into a single core economic zone.⁴²⁹ Maritime commerce of Konkan ports was comprised of three major components: coastal trade within the local region, coastal trade with the ports of Gujarat and Malabar (heavy traffic incurred between these two areas due to the relative inaccessibility of Gujarat by inland routes), and foreign trade with the Red Sea and Persian Gulf in the west, as well as with Southeast Asia in the east. Konkan ports held a strategic position as a midway point on the west coast of India, as well as on the sea route from the Red Sea to Southeast Asia.⁴³⁰ It was an extremely economically viable zone due to the continuous supply of bullions. Though there were numerous regions of importance on the Konkan coast and despite the small size of the port of Dabhol, it assumed centre stage at the time of Mughal expansion in the Deccan. This port town deserves more scholarly attention with respect to Mughal maritime interest.

5.6.1 Dabhol

Dabhol, a small port town situated on the coast of present day Maharashtra, was an important medieval town for commerce and trading in the South Konkan region. The port was some eighty five miles south from modern Mumbai. In the fifteenth century, it had established trade connections with the Mediterranean, the Red Sea and the Persian Gulf. The disturbances and repeated turbulence in the relationship of Deccan and Mughals made overland trade quite strenuous. Apparently, there were no overland trade links between northern India and central Asia since the revolt of Bahmani Sultanate (1347-1527) against the Tughlaq overlord. Hence, the route via Arabian Sea was used to trade in war horses with Central Asia,

⁴²⁸ The breakup of Bahmani Sultanate resulted in five Deccan states of Ahmadnagar (1490), Bijapur (1490), Berara (1490), Golkonda (1518) and Bidar (1528).

⁴²⁹ Lotika Varadarajan, "Konkan Ports and medieval trade," *Indica* 22, no.1 (1985): 9-10.

⁴³⁰ A. R. Kulkarni, M.A. Nayeem, T.R. de Souza eds., *Medieval Deccan History: Commemoration Volume in Honour of Purshottam Mahadeo Joshi* (Bombay: Popular Prakashan, 1996), 111.

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Dabhol being one of the major ports receiving this traffic.⁴³¹ Varthema speaks of Dabhol as extremely flourishing centre of trade built in European fashion with a huge number of Moorish populations.⁴³² Not just a trading port, Dabhol commanded a huge naval force as well. When the Raja of Calicut solicited help from the kings of Deccan and sent for collaboration with the King of Egypt against the Portuguese, the naval force of Dabhol joined them. So the force of Dabhol in cooperation with admiral Mansoor Ghooory of Egypt and the forces of Mahmud Shah of Gujarat united against the Portuguese in Chaul at the end of the fifteenth century. However, the Arab vessels were captured by the Portuguese.⁴³³

5.6.2 Pre-Mughal equations in Konkan

The Portuguese capture of Goa in 1510 from the Bijapur kingdom (1490-1686) in 1510 is a much noted event in the study of European expansion in the subcontinent. Numerous attempts were made by the Sultan of Bijapur to recapture Goa, and as a mark of retaliation, Dabhol was plundered repeatedly by the Portuguese.⁴³⁴ The Portuguese settlements of Konkan and especially Goa, were under threat from the Sultans of Ahmadnagar and Bijapur, who were now freed from the intimidation of the Hindu Vijayanagar Empire (1336-1646) with the murderous defeat of the last Vijayanagara ruler. Though the relations between Goa and Vijayanagar were not always amicable, the Portuguese power center did try to make use of Vijayanagara as a counterweight to the Deccan sultanates at several junctures in the early sixteenth century. However, after the fall of Vijayanagara, the anti-Vijayanagar alliance of Bijapur and Ahmadnagar was transformed to the the anti-*firangi* (Portuguese) alliance. A league formed by Bijapur, Ahmadnagar and Zamorin of Calicut planned to attack the Portuguese to recover the lost territories

⁴³¹ Richard Eaton, *A Social History of the Deccan, 1300-1761: Eight Indian Lives*, vol. 1 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 59-60.

⁴³² Lodovico de Varthema, *The travels of Ludovico de Varthema*, trans. J.W Jones (London: Hakluyt Society, 1863), 115.

⁴³³ Mahomed Kasim Ferishta, *The History of the Rise of the Mahomedan Power in India till 1612*, trans. John Briggs, vol. 4, (Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal, 1829), 308.

⁴³⁴ F.C. Danvers, *The Portuguese in India: Being a history of the rise and decline of their Eastern Empire*, vol. 1 (Delhi: Asian Educational Services, 1988), 195.

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and commerce. In 1571, the Deccan and Bijapur monarchs marched against Reevadunda and Goa, however, they were forced to end their sieges and return to their capitals. As a result, the Portuguese became exasperated with the Muslim rulers and attacked the Mughal ships coming from Mecca with pilgrims. They later plundered the towns of Adilabad and Carapatnam and proceeded to Dabhol for the same purpose.⁴³⁵ After this incident, Emperor Akbar laid an embargo on the ships sailing to either the Persian Gulf or Red Sea.⁴³⁶

A treaty was henceforth signed between the Portuguese and Bijapur in December 1571. As a result, Bijapur's control over Salsette and Bardez was passed on to the Portuguese and Bijapur granted exclusive trading rights to the Portuguese in their ports.⁴³⁷ However, in 1578, Adil Khan (ruler of Bijapur), allowed Malik Tucan (governor of Dabhol), to build a fleet in the port town of Dabhol to be sent for Mecca.⁴³⁸ This intimidated the Portuguese since they feared the strengthening of Bijapur's naval force. And according to treaty of 1571, Bijapur's ships were to be guarded by the Portuguese, thus rendering the need for a navy irrelevant. Once again, the relations between Bijapur and the Portuguese became strained. In the first quarter of the sixteenth century, the name 'Idalcao' or Adil Shah II, appeared as a prominent enemy of the Portuguese and as a major threat to Goa and Konkan. Though after 1580s, the political equations underwent a change with the entry of a new player in Deccan politics: the Mughals appeared in a formidable way.

5.6.3 Port of political confluence

It is interesting to see the changing dynamics between the hostile Portuguese and the Deccan sultanates, especially Bijapur and Ahmednagar, with the expansionist tendencies of the Mughals in the Deccan. The Portuguese soon realized that safeguarding their political and commercial interests in Goa and in the Northern Province would require amicable relations with neighbouring kingdoms on the

⁴³⁵ Ferishta, *The History of the Rise of the Mahomedan Power*, 308.

⁴³⁶ Ibid., 310.

⁴³⁷ Complete treaty can be found in Julio Firmino Judice Biker ed., *Collecção de Tratados*, Tomo-1, 160-167.

⁴³⁸ Afzal Ahmad, *Indo-Portuguese diplomacy*, 289.

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eastern border of Goa, i.e. Bijapur and its rulers Adil Shah and Nizam Shah.⁴³⁹ Letters and correspondence between the King of Portugal and Bijapur suggest the importance of this alliance to thwart the Mughal threat to Portuguese possessions.⁴⁴⁰ Politics of mutual interest and befriending one's enemy was a fruitful prospect for both the Portuguese and Deccan states in opposition to the Mughals. Safeguarding the sixty mile stretch lying between Daman and Bombay required that the Portuguese maintain Ahmednagar as a buffer state. In return, the ships of Ahmednagar were put under Portuguese protection, abiding the norms of *cartazes*. In exchange for the sailor's provisions and timber for their ships, the Portuguese safeguarded the coast of the Ahmadnagar kingdom from pirates. As a result of Portuguese cooperation, Chaul developed as a major trade entrepot.⁴⁴¹

Correspondence between Malik, the Chief of Dabhol and the Portuguese is an evidence of possible negotiations between the two in order to thwart the imperialist designs of Akbar after 1590. Since Mughals, in order to make an attack on the Portuguese would have to pass through Dabhol and *Província do Norte* (Province of North),⁴⁴² it became indispensable for the Portuguese to collaborate with these provinces. Also, a possible friendship between Dabhol and the Portuguese would have provided security for both of them. Akbar's maritime interest is again reflected in his vision of expanding towards the maritime front. However, these intentions were very well assessed by the Portuguese. King Philip II of Spain ordered the viceroy Dom Francisco de Gama to gear up the defences for Mughal attack.⁴⁴³

⁴³⁹ In this context services of a Portuguese Jew called Coge Abraham were indispensable. He was one of the trusted diplomats sent by the Viceroy of Goa to establish relations with Bijapur. See, Walter J. Fischel, "Leading Jews in the services of Portuguese India," *The Jewish Quarterly Review* 47 (1956): 37-57.

⁴⁴⁰ Rivara, *Archivo Portuguez Oriental*, Fasc. 3, document 141 (Nova Goa: Imprensa Nacional, 1861), 439.

⁴⁴¹ For a history of Chaul's development as a port see, J. Gerson da Cunha, *Notes on the History and Antiquities of Chaul and Bassein* (New Delhi: Gyan Books, 1993).

⁴⁴² It refers to the geographical stretch running from Bulsar (Valsad) in the north on the Gulf of Khambat (Cambay) to Karanja in the south. It includes the island of Diu (20km from Valsad) and the city and hill of Chaul. These territories belonged to the Sultanate of Gujarat and Ahmadnagar, annexed by the Mughals in 1576 and 1636 respectively.

⁴⁴³ HAG, Monções *Do Reino*, No.4, Ano de 1595 to 1598, "King Phillip II to Viceroy Dom Francisco Da Gama," February 25, 1596, f. 629.

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Dabhol as a highly prominent port has been underrated as compared to the ports of Gujarat, for example Surat. As a port of the Adil Shahi sultanate, it shared a turbulent relationship with the Portuguese. Just like the royal 'ship of Surat' and the 'ship of Cambay' (as the Europeans referred to them) owned by Jahangir and his mother, there were huge ships of Dabhol owned by Adil Shah. Ashin Das Gupta is probably the only historian who tries to correlate the decline of Dabhol and the simultaneous progress of Surat as the most important base for Indian shipping. With the coming of the seventeenth century, the monopoly of royal ships was taken over by medium-sized merchant ships hence making the merchants more autonomous relying on royal power only to 'blackmail' the Europeans on land. A string of events in 1620s like the capture of Qandhar from the Mughals and the rebellion of Prince Khurram, who was mainly responsible for maritime protection of ports, opened opportunities for the English and Dutch to attack Dabhol under various pretexts (for example, being an ally of the Portuguese). This led to a relative decline of Dabhol as opposed to Surat, which rose to prominence with a new group of Gujarati ship owning merchants.⁴⁴⁴

Though the power struggle for the provinces in Konkan intensified during the periods of later Mughals Jahangir and Shah Jahan, it was strikingly visible that Akbar, immediately after his conquest over Gujarat had his eyes set on the Konkan coast which certainly changed the dynamics of diplomacy and power between the Deccan Sultanates and the Portuguese.

5.7 Concluding Remarks

This chapter attempted to illustrate a picture of the Mughal Empire with diverse maritime and politico-economic ambitions, the result of which was the evolution of a distinct monetary system, profitable foreign trade and a gradual expansion of the coastal frontiers on the western side of the Indian subcontinent. A relationship of conflict and collaboration ensued between the Mughals and

⁴⁴⁴ Ashin Das Gupta, "Indian Merchants and the Western Indian Ocean: The Early Seventeenth Century," *Modern Asian Studies* 19 (1985): 492-494.

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Portuguese in the region. However, both sides maintained peaceful terms and diplomatic overtures to ensure the continuance of commerce. The New World Silver especially *Real de a ocho* (Silver coin worth eight Spanish *reales*) that poured in Goa via *Carreira Da Índia* soon began to make its way to Gujarat, hence establishing trade connections between the two regions and feeding the Mughal mints to bear *rupias*.⁴⁴⁵ Merchants from the Mughal territories adhered to Portuguese custom regulations ranging Diu to Daman, and the Portuguese ensured peaceful trade connections with the region. Trade with Mughal Gujarat was also crucial for the Portuguese, since commerce was their mainstay in the region. Ships loaded with cotton cloth sailed every year between Gulf and Goa. The Portuguese governors had soon realized that tensions with Gujarat were harmful for the economic health of Portuguese India. However, scavenging for ports in coastal regions like Gujarat and Konkan had both economic and political concerns for the Mughals as opposed to the Portuguese, whose primary interests rested on occupation of the ports for purposes of commerce (though the Portuguese also had underlying imperial ambitions, however unsuccessful). The power struggle for the occupation of coastal zones and ports reflects the Mughal interest in expanding the maritime frontier. Mughal occupation or even presence in the vicinity of Portuguese settlements raised suspicions of the Portuguese and as commercial collaborators, political diplomacy ensued in the times of direct confrontation between the two parties. Hence, it may be said that the western coast defined the Mughal-Portuguese relations as 'conflicting collaborators.'

⁴⁴⁵ Subrahmanyam, *The Portuguese Empire in Asia*, 156.

6 Bengal: Confronting the Waters

6.1 Approaches to the study of early-modern Bengal

K.N. Chaudhuri's analysis based on Braudel's trinity of social times (structure, conjuncture and events) for the Mediterranean, led him to underline the cohesiveness of the Indian Ocean. He analysed the integrated networks of trade in the Ocean that led to the formation of a genuine regional commercial culture, or *économie-monde* as called by Sanjay Subrahmanyam. Within this network-oriented approach to the Indian Ocean, the Bay of Bengal has emerged as a distinct entity with an open frontier but "more tightly knit than the whole Indian Ocean itself."⁴⁴⁶ Scholars like J.S. Gommans and Subrahmanyam also contend that in precolonial Bengal the development of Western shipping, technology and communication broke the established patterns of trade based on monsoons.⁴⁴⁷ Numerous studies on Bengal correspond mainly to the economic impacts⁴⁴⁸ of the East India companies operating in the region, while various others focus on the region beginning with the career of Emperor Shah Jahan and the conquest of Hughli as the major upfront battle between the Mughals and the Portuguese. However, Bengal assumed political, strategic and economic importance in the Mughal Empire much before that.

The integration process of maritime regions of Bengal into the Mughal fold commenced under Emperor Akbar and was consolidated under Jahangir. This, in turn, impacted the pre-existing institutional structures of Bengal viz. the Bengal Sultanate, the Portuguese merchants and the neighbouring kingdoms. The

⁴⁴⁶ Sanjay Subrahmanyam, "Connected histories," 745.

⁴⁴⁷ Stephan Egbert Arie van Galen, "Arakan and Bengal: The rise and decline of the Mrauk U kingdom from the fifteenth to the seventeenth century AD," (PhD diss., Leiden University, 2008), 15.

⁴⁴⁸ Important contributions on East India companies' activities in Bengal include Sushil Chaudhuri, "European Companies and the Bengal Textile Industry in the Eighteenth century: The Pitfalls of Applying Quantitative techniques," *Modern Asian Studies* 27 (1993): 321-40; "Merchants, Companies and Rulers: Bengal in the Eighteenth century", *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 31, no.1 (Feb 1988): 97-103; Sudipta Sen, *Empire of Free Trade: The East India Company and the Making of the Colonial Market place* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1998).

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application of the macro concept of the thesis, i.e. the layered relations of the Mughal-Portuguese, to this micro region of Bengal shall be tested on various grounds: economic, religious and political, with a focus on the Mughal maritime approach. This was the age when the Mughal Empire was becoming globally integrated in Eurasian political, religious and economic interactions as illustrated in the previous chapters. Parallel to the expansion of trade, missionary activities were stabilising in regions of economic interest and Bengal may be looked upon as the case in point.

The Portuguese, who had long established themselves in Bengal, came in direct contact with the Mughals after integration of the region into the Mughal Empire. Chittagong or Chatigan (refer Map 1) was the principal port of entry for the Portuguese in Bengal. The geographical location of the region, just at the mouth of the Meghna River, rendered it suitable for navigation. It served as the main route for entry into Gaur, the royal capital or seat of power in Bengal. However, with the fall of Gaur, the trade at the Chittagong port was diverted to Satgaon (Satigan), and later supplanted by Hughli (Hooghly). Already in 1554, Antonio Nunez referred to Chittagong in eastern Bengal as *Porto Grande* (great port), in contradistinction to *Porto Pequeno* (small port), which was first mentioned in reference to Satgaon (in western Bengal) and later to Hughli.⁴⁴⁹ Until the middle of sixteenth century, large vessels with merchandise traversed Satgaon bringing a revenue of 12,00,000 *dams* or 30,000 rupees in Akbar's reign. Despite being rich in natural and material wealth, Bengal was not inculcated in the Portuguese enterprise or the *Estado da Índia*.⁴⁵⁰

It remained a hub of private adventurers and officials and a part of the so-called 'shadow empire' for a long period until the Mughal's final occupation of the province. In his work, George Winius distinguished between the 'formal' and the 'informal' empire of the Portuguese in the Indian subcontinent. The region, according to him, "fell between semi rule and no ruler at all."⁴⁵¹ However, categories

⁴⁴⁹ Syed Ejaz Husain, "Rise and Decline of Bandar Satgaon: Based on Numismatic Evidence," *Proceedings of the Indian History Congress* 58 (1997): 323.

⁴⁵⁰ J. J. A. Campos, *History of the Portuguese in Bengal* (London: Buttworth and co., 1919), 21-22.

⁴⁵¹ George Winius, "'The Shadow Empire' of Goa in the Bay of Bengal," *Itinerario* 7 (1983): 83.

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such as these can be dangerous for studying the region, which extended trade to Malacca, Macau and beyond. Moreover, the absence of an empire based rule does not necessarily reflect 'no rule' or a state of anarchy. The region was coveted and governed by various contending powers at different points in time. The study of early modern Bengal's sources stands as difficult as understanding the complexity of the region itself in comparison to the western coast under Portuguese and Mughal occupation. They do not necessarily constitute a part of correspondence to or from the *Estado*. They involve a third dimension originating from the Arakanese Empire, an agrarian kingdom at the beginning of the fifteenth century that grew to become a powerful empire by the early seventeenth century with Mrauk-U as the capital. The broader picture of Mughal-Portuguese relations in Bengal regularly features Arakan (Arracan).



Map 5: Bengal and the eastern frontier of the Indian subcontinent

6.2 Geo-Historical background of Bengal

It is important to highlight the geo-historical importance of Bengal at the beginning. The Indian side of the Bay of Bengal constituted two significant trading regions. One was Coromandel, roughly the strip running from the south of present day Orissa (Orisa) on the eastern coast to Madras. The other is Bengal, a delta stretching across Sagor near present day Calcutta up to Sandwip (Sundiva) near Chittagong forming a complex web of rivers, islands and sandbanks. The ports in Bengal held by the Portuguese were riverine, rather than open-sea, resulting in a more effective relationship with the hinterland, both economically and politically.⁴⁵² This distinctive feature of the Bengal coast affected its historical developments under various agencies (Mughal, Portuguese and Arakan). Despite these complexities ingrained in the geographical position of the region, it is possible to demarcate the transitions in power dynamics in the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. The case of Bengal stands distinct due to the prevalence of multi layered patterns of authorities within the region: the Mughals, the *Estado* and Portuguese renegades and lastly, the Arakanese Empire. The multiple entities within the Mughal and Portuguese Empires interacted at various levels leading to the creation of what I would refer to as 'negotiated sovereignty.' The aspect of negotiated sovereignty stands true in the light of multi-layered power dynamics in Bengal where authority was not simply shared, but negotiated, for dominance over the ports and maritime outlets.

As opposed to the western coast of the Indian subcontinent, the eastern coast provided a wider base of opportunities for the extra-*Estado* Portuguese agents from Goa and Cochín.⁴⁵³ The tools of maintaining authority in the oceans viz. *cartazes* and patrol of the sea routes did not actualize in the larger period of

⁴⁵² Rila Mukherjee, "The Struggle for the Bay: The life and times of Sandwip, an almost unknown Portuguese port in the Bay of Bengal in the Sixteenth and the Seventeenth Centuries," *História. Revista da Faculdade de Letras* 9 (2008): 68.

⁴⁵³ For more information on this unofficial Portuguese element in Bengal see, Alexandra Maria Pinheiro Pelucia, "Curso e Pirataria, Presas Portuguesas no Golfo de Bengala (1516-1666)," (PhD diss. Biblioteca Nacional Lisboa, 1998).

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Portuguese presence in Bengal as compared to the western coast. The Portuguese *casados* acted as one of the merchants existing in the larger Bay of Bengal regional network. The commercial privileges granted by the Bengal Sultan Mahmud Shah to Portuguese officials: Martim Afonso de Mello to build factories and Nuno Fernandez Freire and João Correa to collect custom duties at Chittagong and Satgaon respectively, was a friendly gesture in response to Portuguese support against Sher Shah (an Afghan ruler of Suri dynasty and predecessor of Mughal Emperor Akbar), which opened the gates for future private Portuguese enterprise and custom houses in Bengal.⁴⁵⁴

6.3 The Portuguese presence in Bengal

6.3.1 A Shadow Empire in the east?

The traditional literature on the Portuguese in the Indian Ocean circulated around, or was understood in terms of, the Portuguese crown and the *Estado da Índia* comprising of mainly fifty fortified settlements stretching across the Indian Ocean littoral, from Sofala in Mozambique to Macao in China, and converging at the headquarters in Goa. The rest of the settlements on the coastline were considered to be under the shadow of Goa and hence, of peripheral importance. One such region, Bengal one of the most productive zones of the Indian subcontinent, began to thrive under the shadow of the official *Estado* of Goa. The region became an abode of foreign settlers due to its plentiful natural and human resources. Alexander Hamilton, a British merchant writes, “The Plenty and Cheapness of Provisions are incredible, and the Country is full of Inhabitants...”⁴⁵⁵ The deserters from the umbrella

⁴⁵⁴ João de Barros, *Da Ásia*, Decada 4, Book 9, Cap.7 (Lisboa: Na Regia Officina Typografica, 1777), 499-500 and Pius Malekandithil, *Maritime India* (Delhi: Primus Books, 2010), 167.

⁴⁵⁵ Alexander Hamilton, *A new account of the East Indies: being the observations and remarks of Capt. Alexander Hamilton, who spent his time there from the year 1688 to 1723, trading and travelling, by sea and land, to most of the countries and islands of commerce and navigation, between the cape of Good-hope ...*, volume 2, ed. R. C Temple (Cambridge: Hakluyt Society, 1744), 23.



Map 6: Portuguese map of Bengal

Source: João Baptista Lavanha, Quarta Decada da Asia de João de Barros, Madrid: Impressão Real, 1615.

Digitised copy procured from Biblioteca Nacional Portugal.

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of *Estado* usually called *arrenegados* or *chatins*, pursued fortunes in Bengal. They were mainly mercenaries or private traders.⁴⁵⁶ These renegades (*arrenegados*) are sometimes referred to as rebels (*alevantados*) in contemporary accounts.⁴⁵⁷ Couto dubs the *arrenegados* as *chatins* nearing the connotation of mercenaries. These mercenaries after having moved to the Asian landed areas, worked for the local potentates, as in the cases of Bengal and Pegu.⁴⁵⁸ The *arrenegados* acted as potent intermediaries in the times of frictions between their new Asian lords and the Portuguese. In some cases, they even played “*dupla espionage*,” or double spies, between the two fronts.⁴⁵⁹ They made careful affiliations with the Mughal and Arakanese Empires, sometimes fluctuating between the two.

Until the 1530s, the *Estado* followed a policy of non-interference in the areas of influence of *arrenegados* in the east. However, both the official and unofficial elements remained at loggerheads until 1536-1537 when the *Estado* first established its base in Satgaon and Chittagong. Simultaneous developments in Portugal in the 1540s led to the waning of the so called monarchical capitalism (*o capitalismo monárquico português*)⁴⁶⁰ replaced by “a more straightforward semi-Absolutist conception of state’s relation to trade, in which trade was seen as beneath the dignity of the royal estate.”⁴⁶¹ Bengal became a hot bed of Portuguese activity as a result of the intensive initiatives by private Portuguese individuals. The trading licenses granted to these individuals led to the proliferation of a parallel Portuguese power domain in Bengal alongside the official element of *Carreira de Bengala*. The increase in the number of private traders made the existence of *Carreira*

⁴⁵⁶ Sanjay Subrahmanyam and Luis Filipe Thomaz, “Evolution of Empire: The Portuguese in the Indian Ocean during the sixteenth century,” in *The Political Economy of Merchant Empires*, ed. James D. Tracy (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 321.

⁴⁵⁷ Subrahmanyam, *The Portuguese Empire in Asia*, 262.

⁴⁵⁸ Couto, *Da Asia, Decada 7*, Book 7, Cap. 3, 74.

⁴⁵⁹ Maria Augusta Lima Cruz, “Degredados e arrenegados portugueses no espaço Índico, nos primórdios do século XVI,” *Revista Textos de História* 6 (1998): 182.

⁴⁶⁰ The term refers to the Merchant King of Lisbon with all his state fleets, factors and monopoly imbibed in the institution of *Casa de Índia*. The term was first used by Nuñez Diaz. However, M. N. Pearson believes that due to huge costs of maintaining monopoly in India with forts and fleet, the attempt at monarchical capitalism failed in Portugal. See, Pearson, *Merchants and Rulers*, 43. For further reference see, Ferdinand Braudel, *Civilization and Capitalism, 15th-18th century*, vol. 2 (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992), 444.

⁴⁶¹ Subrahmanyam and Thomaz, *Evolution of Empire*, 303.

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questionable in Bengal. In addition, it drew the attention of the *Estado* in Goa towards the lucrative trade options in Bengal, which at that point, were being monopolised by the free agents.⁴⁶²

6.3.2 Portuguese and Arakan: Patron to rivals

The Portuguese *chatins* in Bengal claimed to contribute major tax revenues from Sandwip (Sundiva) and Chittagong and in return, sought for the official recognition and royal protection from the *Estado*. However, the Crown under Philip I (Philip II of Spain) rejected the proposition due to the lack of financial resources and the futility of expansion in the region.⁴⁶³ However, the Arakanese ruler Man Raja Kri showed interest in maintaining cordial relations with the *chatins*. A diplomatic mission without a royal stamp could have been a challenging task for the Portuguese but in 1599, Manuel De Mattos accompanied by Jerome de Monteiro and Father Fonseca reached Mrauk-U and drew many secular and religious benefits from the king. The Jesuits were given lands and financial assistance to build churches in Mrauk-U and Chittagong. In return for providing military support against the Mughals as “species of advanced guard,”⁴⁶⁴ the Portuguese received estates worth 30,000 *cruzados*.⁴⁶⁵

The Portuguese (under Kedar Rai⁴⁶⁶) collaborated with the Arakan ruler in the struggle for Sandwip against the Mughals in 1603. The Arakan and Portuguese relations, however, took a turn when the Portuguese, under Manuel de Mattos and Domingos Carvalhos, occupied the island of Sandwip and started operating independently within the Arakan domain littoral. Sandwip was offered to the *Estado* as a mark of loyalty. In return, the Portuguese crown bestowed on them the titles of

⁴⁶² Sanjay Subrahmanyam, “Notes on the Sixteenth century Bengal trade,” *Economic and Social History Review* 24 (1987): 274.

⁴⁶³ Stephan Egbert Arie van Galen, “Arakan and Bengal: The rise and decline of the Mrauk U kingdom from the fifteenth to the seventeenth century AD,” (PhD diss. Leiden University, 2008), 62-63.

⁴⁶⁴ Francois Bernier, *Travels in the Mogol Empire*, trans. Archibald Constable (London: Oxford University Press, 1916), 175.

⁴⁶⁵ Fernão Guerreiro, *Relação Anual*, vol. 1, book 3 (Coimbra: Imprensa Da Universidade, 1930), 286. “...o qual se servia muito dêles e pelo muito que o ajudavam em suas guerras, tinha dado a diversos, em terras e comedias, mais de trinta mil cruzados de renda.”

⁴⁶⁶ He was a local zamindar or landlord.

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fidalgos da Casa Real (respectable noble men of the House) and *Hábito do Christo*⁴⁶⁷.⁴⁶⁸ However, dual loyalty to the Portuguese Crown and the King of Arakan was seen as a betrayal by the Arakan rulership and ultimately led to the Arakan attack on Portuguese communities. By the first quarter of the seventeenth century, the Portuguese were left without a base in the region. Mughal-Portuguese relations in Bengal can be viewed in light of this fluctuating relationship between private Portuguese merchants and the Arakan Empire.

The Portuguese had established their ports on the frontier regions of the Mughal territories in Bengal, one of the most important being Chittagong or *Porto Grande*. The Mughals, for this reason, maintained a cautious detailing of Portuguese activities in the region and the latter's collaboration with the Arakenese Empire. The *chatins*, or free Portuguese traders, in the region were integrated in the Arakenese Empire as advisors and mercenaries. In the midst of this situation, it became necessary for the Mughals to establish cordial relations with the Portuguese, especially in the quest for Chittagong in 1619 and 1623. Manrique mentions the Mughals' strategic efforts to pacify the Portuguese in the service of the Arakanese Empire in the form of *farmans* despatched from the governor of Dacca (Ibrahim Khan Fath Jang) with the seal of Emperor Jahangir, and offered "under the Royal promise, most advantageous terms."⁴⁶⁹ Since the Portuguese settlements in the region ranged from Hughli to Satgaon, the Portuguese remained major hurdle to the Mughal efforts at centralisation until the end of Jahangir's reign. The Mughals obtained the revenues of the markets and customs and realms of the government in

⁴⁶⁷ *Hábito do Christo* can be translated as Knight of the order of Christ. Habito refers to elevation in the social, political and juridical ladder. For more information see, Olival Fernanda, "Para um estudo da nobilitação no Antigo Regime: os cristãos-novos na Ordem de Cristo (1581-1621)," in *As Ordens Militares em Portugal: actas do I Encontro sobre Ordens Militares* (Palmela: Câmara Municipal de Palmela, 1991), 234.

⁴⁶⁸ Philip II to Viceroy of India Dom Martin Affonso de Castro, March 2, 1605. *Documentos Remettidos Da India ou Livros Das Moncoes*, vol. 1 (Lisboa: Typographia da Academia Real das Sciencias, 1881-1893), 25. "E porque os anos atrás também informação do que Domingos Carvalho e Mauel de Mattos fizeram na tomada da ilha de Sundiva, e pelos bons sucessos que n' aquella empreza tiveram, conviniencias a meu serviços que foram pelo dito Ayres de Saldanha representadas, me movi a fazer aos sobreditos mercê de os tomar no foro de fidalgos de minha casa, de lhe mandar lancar a cada hum o hábito de Christo."

⁴⁶⁹ C. E. Luard and Hosten trans., *The Travels of Fray Sebastien Manrique, 1624-1643*, vol. 1 (Oxford: Hakluyt Society, 1927), 146-7.

some regions were left to the Portuguese. In accordance with the orders of the Spanish King, the Portuguese elected a *Capitan Convidor* and four assistants every year. The Viceroy of Goa had little control over them and even the Viceroy of Bengal, upon entry to Hughli, had to submit to certain formalities.⁴⁷⁰

6.4 Eastern Frontier of the Mughal Empire

6.4.1 The topography and strategic location of Bengal for the Mughals

Richard Eaton calls Bengal “a frontier zone,” one which was surrounded by mountains on the north and east and by sea towards the south, a geographical situation that exposed the region to a continent-wide process of Turko-Mongol conquest and migration. He further distinguishes the region into having agrarian, cultural and political frontiers, further demarcating the political frontier as the territory within which various rulers, the Mughals preceded by Bengal sultans and the Turks, performed administrative functions of minting money, collecting revenue, et cetera.⁴⁷¹ It is this political frontier that we shall mainly be concerned with. However, for our purposes, it is also crucial to carve out the maritime frontier of Bengal, which became crucial for the Mughals.

The term *bhati* is repeatedly used in various sources on medieval Bengal. In *Baharistan i Ghaybi*, Mirza Nathan uses it for south-eastern Bengal, whereas Abu'l Fazl Allami outlined that, “a tract of country on the east called *Bhati* is reckoned a part of this province,” i.e. Bengal. In another passage, he treated *Bengala* and *Bhati* as mutually exclusive regions, *bhati* mainly standing for ‘downstream direction.’ In the Mughal context, Eaton refers to *bhati* as including the entire delta east of Bhagirathi-Hoogly corridor. The frontier between Mughal *Bhati* and *Bengala*

⁴⁷⁰ Tapan Raychaudhuri, *Bengal under Akbar and Jahangir* (Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal, 1969), 111.

⁴⁷¹ Richard Eaton, *The Rise of Islam and the Bengal Frontier, 1204-1710* (California: University of California Press, 1996), xxiii

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constitutes the present day frontier between Bangladesh and West Bengal.⁴⁷² By 1584, when western Bengal was largely pacified by its ruler Sultan Daud, eastern Bengal, which the Mughals called *bhati*, still remained turbulent and frictional. The anti-Mughal rebels formed an alliance and resisted Mughal authority in the region for the next three decades. The ecological setting of East Bengal made it a difficult terrain for the Mughals. So, they had to recruit boatmen, build riverboats, quip them with canons, musketeers, and archers, and pursue naval battles in war boats that matched the rebel boats. However, subjugation of the east was completed by 1609 under Akbar's successor, Jahangir. The Mughals then secured the lucrative trade of Bengal, safety of ports and waterways as an official priority and put a check on piracy.

In addition to its geographical location, the prosperity of pre-colonial Bengal depended on its integration within the Mughal Empire. This may be marked as the key component in the commercialization of Bengal. Until the early medieval times, the Ganges had flown down the western corridor of the Bengal delta through the Bhagirathy-Hoogly corridor, ultimately joining the Bay of Bengal near present day Kolkata. As a result, eastern Bengal remained aloof from the riverine system of the Ganges. The continuous sedimentation of the Ganges, however, led to the development of new channels in the east. Consequently, by the end of the 16th century, Ganges merged with the Padma River flowing to the heart of East Bengal.⁴⁷³ Mughal incorporation of north-west Bengal coincided with the merging of the Ganga and Padma Rivers, which opened up a direct internal water route running from the imperial heartland to eastern Bengal.⁴⁷⁴

Environmental shifts and changes in the course of the river have been cited as major causes for the shift of focus from Chittagong (*Porto Grande*) to Satgaon

⁴⁷² John Deyell, "Monetary and Financial Webs: The Regional and International Influence of pre-Modern Bengali Coinage," in *Pelagic Passageways, The Northern Bay of Bengal before Colonialism* ed. Rila Mukherjee (Delhi: Primus Books, 2011), 127.

⁴⁷³ Atis Dasgupta, "Islam in Bengal: Formative Period," *Social Scientist* 32 (2004), 33.

⁴⁷⁴ Asher and Talbot, *India Before Europe*, 235.

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(*Porto Pequeno*). This is corroborated by the fact that concession voyages⁴⁷⁵ to Satgaon (3000 *cruzados*) exceeded those to Chittagong (2000 *cruzados*), and by the late 1570's, the traders and *casados* were losing interest in the concession voyages to Chittagong. Does this change of preference fall under the wider shift of Portuguese interest from eastern Bengal to western Bengal? Was it part of the great environmental shift that Bengal was witnessing, as has been suggested by numerous historians, or should it be seen in the background of a rather big political shift? Eaton explains that in addition to the geographical supremacy of the region assumed due to the eastward movement of Bengal's rivers and the formation of an active delta, its integration into Mughal India and increases in money supply with the influx of imported silver as payment for local textiles, led to the development of a booming rice frontier in east India. He succinctly described the ecological miracle that led to commercial gains for the Mughals and expansion of the Empire in the east. With the change in course of the Ganges from south to east and into the Padma River, the northwest Bengal formed direct river connections to southeast Bengal, ultimately easing its subjugation in the Mughal Empire.⁴⁷⁶

The change in prominence of Satgaon to Hughli has been repeatedly attributed to the changes in river passages and silting of the River Saraswati. However, there were strategic reasons behind it that cannot be overlooked, such as the repeated invasions of Gaur (the capital of Bengal) by Sher Shah Suri, Humayun and the King of Orissa, which deprived the port of Satgaon of its functions around 1565. At the same time, we notice the Portuguese gaining the permission of Emperor Akbar to build a port in Hughli. However, Hughli never developed into a town like Satgaon and maintained its functions as a port. Its importance enhanced with the establishment of Dacca as the capital of Mughal Bengal in 1608. It was renamed Jahangir Nagar as a mark of respect to Emperor Jahangir. After its

⁴⁷⁵ Beginning in the 1550s, with the concession system, the Crown reserved the authority to confer the grantee with special privileges or exclusive trading rights for a voyage between the Indian Ocean and the South China Sea. A detailed account of concession voyages can be found in Om Prakash, "The Portuguese and the Dutch in Asian maritime trade: a comparative analysis," in *Merchants, Companies and Trade* eds., Sushil Chaudhury and Michel Morineau (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 175-188.

⁴⁷⁶ Deyell, "Monetary and Financial Webs," 302.

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annexation by the Mughals under Shah Jahan, it became a major outlet to the sea in Mughal Bengal with connections to upper India.⁴⁷⁷

The ecological changes resulted in better soil fertility and between 1595-1695, Mughal revenue demands for these regions hiked by 115% in southeast, 97% in the northeast and only 54% in southwest Bengal regions. Whereas the ecologically declining area of the northwest saw a decline of 13% in revenue demands. The shift of the Mughal provincial capital to Dhaka (eastern Bengal) was, hence, not a matter of coincidence. The Mughals granted tax-free and favourable tenures to individuals with the capacity to bring more land under cultivation in this mainly forested region. This policy aimed to create local communities that were politically and economically loyal to the Mughal regime.⁴⁷⁸

6.4.2 Economic Viability of Bengal for the Mughals

Bengal, by the sixteenth century had grabbed the attention of the Europeans. For the Mughals, the economic viability of Bengal lay in the fact that it was a huge repository of silver during medieval times. The region engaged in maritime commerce and maintained political contacts with Southeast Asia (Suvarnabhumi) since the first millennium. This maritime contact was further reinforced in the thirteenth century with the establishment of Islamic Sultanates and integration of Bengal into the Arab trade network of the Indian Ocean. The region was interlinked with Tibet, Yunnan and Burma with all three being sources of silver; the Malay Straits and Kerala, being the hubs of eastern and western trade; and lastly, the Maldives, a source of *kauris* (cowry shells). The arrival of the Portuguese into the Indian Ocean littorals, especially Malacca, adversely affected the functioning of Bengali maritime networks but interestingly, monetary developments and the movement of bullion was not prevented. The change in bullion flows happened in 1584 with the Mughal

⁴⁷⁷ S. Jayseela Stephen, *The Indian Trade at the Asian Frontier* (New Delhi: Gyan Publishing House, 2008), 96.

⁴⁷⁸ Atis Dasgupta, *Islam in Bengal*, 34.

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incorporation of Bengal into the empire and the diversion of silver coins to Agra or Delhi.⁴⁷⁹

The turn to silver currency in the Mughal Empire should now be placed in a global scenario. Kuroda carves out the existence of two silver centuries. Throughout the Eurasian continent, from England to Korea, silver remained prominent until the 1360s. The first silver century saw the Mongol Empire lowering commercial barriers to allow the ready flow of silver along the trade routes. In contrast, the second silver century witnessed a tougher competition between territorial states with the creation of a space for compatible monies.⁴⁸⁰ Deyell, in his exceptional work on monetary webs in pre modern Bengal, shows the adoption of silver coinage by the neighbouring states of Bengal which did not (originally) use silver prior to the sixteenth century. Furthermore, he argues that most of the silver from the Dacca mint has been found in the hoards in Delhi, which suggests a one way flow of tribute from Bengal to the Mughal capital. The importance of silver in the Mughal economy starting from the late sixteenth century may also be related to the increasing Mughal-Portuguese dynamics in the region and beyond.⁴⁸¹

Evidently, silver augmented currency minting and the circulation of money in the Mughal Empire. The most important export commodities from Portugal to Goa were gold and silver, from which the Portuguese made a profit of 50%.⁴⁸² The flow of silver into the Mughal Empire through Bengal was certainly secondary to Gujarat and Sind, but it was the highest during Akbar's reign than any other time. The following table shows the Portuguese exports of precious metals in the Bengal region during Akbar's rule and after its integration into the Mughal Empire.

⁴⁷⁹ Deyell, "Monetary and Financial Webs," 284-85.

⁴⁸⁰ Akinobu Kurodu, "The Eurasian silver century, 1276-1359: commensurability and multiplicity," *Journal of Global History* 4 (2009): 245.

⁴⁸¹ Rila Mukherjee, *Pelagic Passageways*, 92.

⁴⁸² T. R. de Souza, "Goa based Portuguese Seaborne trade in the early Seventeenth century," *Indian Economic and social History Review* 12 (1975): 438

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1586-1590	1591-1595	1596-1600	1602	1605
5.65	2.74	3.93	0.43	0.00

(Silver equivalent in metric tons)

Table 2: Portuguese exports of silver bullion in Bengal.

Source: James C Boyajian, *Portuguese Trade in Asia Under the Habsburgs, 1580-1640* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1993), 247-53.

As previously discussed, the town of Hugli came into existence as a result of environmental changes, but it was the establishment of the Mughal court which gave it an economic push. The establishment of a luxurious court generated a brisk demand for certain Chinese luxury products such as porcelain, jade, silk and embroideries. Trade in these commodities was controlled by Portuguese *chatins*, or the free traders or adventurers as they are called in numerous contemporary sources. This engagement in Chinese trade of luxurious items was a motivating factor for Akbar to invite the priest Pedro Tavares to his court. The latter guaranteed an annual delivery of Chinese *objets de luxe* in return for permission to build a settlement at Hughli. The arrival of the Augustinians in 1599 initiated the building of monasteries and religious establishments, like St. Nicholas of Tolentino and a church named Our Lady of the Rosary.⁴⁸³ The deliberations with the missionaries shall be attended in detail in the last section.

6.5 A Mughal maritime region: Between Theory and Practice

6.5.1 References to Admiralty and sea-faring in Contemporary Sources

The *Ain-i-Akbari* elaborates on the Department of Admiralty (in Ain 26) established under Emperor Akbar in much detail. Some of the important functions of the department, as mentioned in the *Ain*, shall be discussed in this sub-chapter. These references enable us to develop the credibility and strategic position of the ships and shipbuilding in the forthcoming sections. *Ain* proclaims that the Emperor

⁴⁸³ Maurice Collins, *The Land of Great Image* (London: Faber and Faber Ltd., 1943), 77-78.

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considered the maintenance of this department as an act of divine worship. In the effort to efficiently run the department, he prescribes four functions. The first function refers to the fitting of strong boats capable of carrying elephants and adept for laying sieges and conquering strong forts. These ideal ships functioned as houses and dromedaries for experienced officers like those in Zanzibar, Europe and Turkey. The main hubs of ship building in the Mughal Empire were Bengal, Kashmir and Sind. The second function relates to the appointment of experienced sea men acquainted with the knowledge of coasts, tides and ocean. The third function relates to the duty allocation of securing rivers and controlling ferry traffic. The fourth function relates to matters of taxes and the remission of duties. It further gives a detailed record of river tolls levied on various categories of people. However, the most important section relates to the state share on taxation in harbours.⁴⁸⁴

His Majesty, in his mercy, has remitted many tolls, though the income derived from them equalled the revenue of a whole country. He only wishes that boatmen should get their wages. The state takes certain taxes in harbour places; but they never exceed two and a half percent, which is so little as compared with the tax formerly levied that merchants look upon harbour taxes as totally remitted. The rule is that one-half or one-third of the tolls thus collected go to the state (the other half goes to the boatmen).⁴⁸⁵

The Ain further gives a variation of ranks of employment within a ship.

In large ships there are twelve classes. 1. The Nakhuda, or the owner of the ship. This word evidently a short form of Navkhuda. He fixes the course of the ship. 2. The Musallim, or Captain. He must be acquainted with the depths and the shallow places of the ocean, and must know astronomy. It is he who guides the ship to her destination, and prevents her from falling into dangers. 3. The Tamdil, or the chief of the khalsis, or sailors. 4. The Nakhuda Kashab-He supplies the passengers with firewood and straw, and assists in shipping and unloading the cargo. 5. The Sarhang, or mate, superintends the docking and landing of the ship, and often acts for the Musallim. 6. The Bhandari has the charge of the stores. 7. The

⁴⁸⁴ Abu'l Fazl, *Ain-i-Akbari*, vol.1, 280-281.

⁴⁸⁵ Ibid.

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*Karrani is a writer who keeps the accounts of the ship, and serves out water to the passengers. 8. The Sukhangir, or helmsman. He steers the ship according to the orders of the Musallim. 9. The Panjari looks out from the top of the mast, and gives notice when he sees land or a ship, or a coming storm, etc. 10. The Gumti belongs to the class of khalasis. He throws out the water which has leaked through the ship. 11. The Top andaz, or gunner, is required in naval fights; the number depends on the size of the ship. 12. The Kharwa or the common sailors. They set and furl the sails.*⁴⁸⁶

A detailed account of comparative salaries in major coastal regions has also been provided in the text.⁴⁸⁷ Below are salaries (in rupees) of the *Nakhudas*, or the ship owners, in different regions:

Region	Salary
Satgaon	400 R
Cambay	800 R
Lahore	300 R

Table 3: Region wise salary breakup of ship owners

Source: Ain-i-Akbari, vol. 1, 281.

Several references of port functions and control mechanisms also figure in the contemporary chronicles.

*Between the port of Sind and the ocean there lay an uninhabited spot called Sui Miani. A guard belonging to Mir Bandar or port-master, with a loaded piece of ordnance, is always stationed. Whenever a ship enters the creek, it intimates its approach by firing a gun, which is responded to by the guard-house, in order, by the signal, to inform the people at the port, of the arrival of a strange vessel...If the ship belongs to the port it is allowed to move up and anchor under Lahori Bandar (port of Lahore); if it belong to some other port, it can go no further, its cargo is transferred into boats, and forwarded to the city.*⁴⁸⁸

The passage refers to a functioning system of patrol and securing of Mughal ports, a practice applied to all major ports of Mughal interest. In addition to a code of

⁴⁸⁶ Ibid., 281.

⁴⁸⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁸⁸ Mir Tahir Muhammad Nasyani, "Tarikhi-i-Tahiri," in *The History of India as told by its historians*, vol.1, ed. Elliot and Dowson (London: Trubner and co., 1867), 277.

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practice in the rivers and oceans, the Mughals used small boats called *khelna* to record depth of the rivers before the arrival of main fleets.⁴⁸⁹ We also find references in Monserrate's Commentary to water bridges built under Akbar in Ganges-Brahmaputra delta region, since he followed the Emperor in many of his expeditions:

*The King overcame the difficulty and danger of constructing bridges; for if these are built over a broad river-bed they are apt to be swept away by the force of the current, and hence to bring disaster upon an army crossing them. It is the custom in India to make temporary bridges of boats, which are tied together by grass ropes. Over these boats is laid a roadway made of branches of trees, bushes and hay...Wherever on nearing a river, a small block house was set up and occupied by the King's officers, who took care that a large number should not carelessly crowd the bridge at one and the same time, and so sink the boats.*⁴⁹⁰

We may now transgress from a theoretical to a practical setting of Mughal presence in the maritime zones.

6.5.2 Mughal Shipping in Bengal

The adherence to the practicality of traversing and trading on the sea can be noted in the importance put in ship building on the coasts, especially in Sind, Kashmir and Bengal. The Ain also elaborates on the categorizations of sailors and boats built under the Mughals. The Mughals, after establishing rule in Bengal, faced numerous impediments to their expansion in the region and in their encounter with regional forces: Magh and Portuguese pirates, and the Arakan forces. Like their predecessors, the Sultans of Bengal, the Mughals under Akbar also faced difficulties in extending their sway over the region due to the challenging terrain. This, however, should not be taken as an unchanged trait of the Mughal Empire in Bengal as referred to by certain historians like Majumdar who believe that the Mughal cavalry proved "useless in traversing the numerous rivers and streams of south-eastern

⁴⁸⁹ Kaushik Roy, *War, Culture and Society in Early Modern South Asia, 1740-1849* (London: Routledge, 2011), 13.

⁴⁹⁰ Monserrate, *Commentary*, 81.

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Bengal” and that “the Mughals were weak in war-boats, the only effective instrument of war in Bengal.”⁴⁹¹ Contrarily, the Mughals were able to raise a huge fleet for the conquest of Bengal and it is in these circumstances that we notice the use of heavy and light gunpowder cannons, which could have been more easily transported and sited on the boats than in the drier regions.⁴⁹²

Maritime border control under Akbar ran in consonance with control over the land and the subjugation of territories. Once Bengal was inculcated in the Mughal Empire as a *subah*, its water frontier was pragmatically put to use for political and commercial purposes. Having established the headquarters of the eastern provinces in Dacca, Akbar commissioned a flotilla of 3000 vessels that involved an annual expenditure of around 0.85 million rupees, of which 0.35 million constituted the wage bill, including the remunerations to 923 employed Portuguese sailors, and about 0.50 million rupees covered the expenses of new and old ships.⁴⁹³ This seems more than most historians would imagine, considering that the total expenditure incurred by the Mughal Empire between 1595-1596 was 99 million from which a sweeping 81 million went to the *mansabdars*, 5 million to the imperial treasury, 10 million to the *ahadis*, (central standing force of the emperor) and 0.5 million to the arsenal department.⁴⁹⁴

Taking into account the rest of the expenditure data, the Department of Admiralty and ship building does not seem to have been ignored but rather, sufficiently financed. This amount is further increased by the private expenditures of the *mansabdars* on ships and flotillas. An analysis of *Ausir Toomar Jumma* (original established revenue) of Bengal in 1582 by Raja Todar Mal (the minister in charge of finances), one finds specific land assignments for naval establishments.⁴⁹⁵ Certain *perganas*⁴⁹⁶ were exclusively assigned for the maintenance of *Imperial Nowwara* (Mughal flotilla). Under the *Omleh Nowarrah*, meant for the support of armed

⁴⁹¹ R. C. Majumdar ed., *History of Bengal*, vol. 2 (Dacca: Dacca University, 1948), 245-46.

⁴⁹² Gommans, *Mughal warfare*, 164-165.

⁴⁹³ Deyell, “Monetary and Financial Webs,” 172.

⁴⁹⁴ Kaushik Roy, *Military Transition in Early Modern Asia*, 172.

⁴⁹⁵ R. Mookerji, *A History of Indian Shipping and maritime activities from the earliest times* (London: Longmans Green and co., 1912), 209.

⁴⁹⁶ *Pergana* is a revenue unit in the Mughal Empire, consisting of one or more villages.

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vessels guarding the coast against Maghs (the Bengali expression for Rakhine people of Arakan), there were about 3000 vessels or boats, later reduced to 768, of which certain vessels and men were maintained by the *zamindars* in return for the lands they held under the *jagir*. In addition to the *perganas* assigned for the upkeep of the naval establishment, there existed a certain tax called *Mheer Bari*, which taxed the



Figure 4: Akbar giving Thanks on Hearing of the Victory in Bengal, by Lal and Nand (ca. 1590-1595).

Image no.: 2009BX3739

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building of boats at the rate of 8 *annas*⁴⁹⁷ to 1 rupee 4 *annas*, depending on the size of the vessel. The tax was levied on all boats arriving at or leaving from the naval headquarters whose crew members were non-residents of the district. The implementation of the tax was an effective check on dacoits since the registry of boats and boatmen of the district was maintained by the *zamindars*.⁴⁹⁸

Riverine warfare played a crucial role in the inclusion of Bengal in Mughal domains and finally, in the light of strained relations with the Arakanese and the Portuguese pirates, the protection of littoral borders on the east coast of the subcontinent became indispensable for the Mughals. The lack of finances or neglect of sea affairs hardly holds a strong case to define a general non-orientation of the Mughals towards seas. This amount might be considered meagre when compared to the European companies' expenditures on admiralty, but the consideration and practicality of guarding their sea fronts and littoral areas was certainly in the practice and state budget of the Mughals.

The Mughals stationed a fleet of 768 armed vessels and boats to protect the coast of Bengal against the Maghs and pirates of Arakan. This flotilla appeared for the first time in the revenue statement of Bengal prepared by Raja Todar Mal. It estimated around 29000 rupees per month. The revenue of certain parganas was reserved for meeting the expenses of this flotilla and the deficiencies were met by taxes like *Mheer Bari*. The first Mughal initiative towards building a strong fleet was taken by Akbar during the siege of Patna, however, it was certainly the general move towards the eastern coast that necessitated the availability of a fleet. In addition to the war equipment, these huge ships carried the Mughal royal elites and around 500 elephants. The occupation of Kuch Bihar in 1596 has been listed in *Akbarnama* as an event which enhanced the Mughal power by adding 4000 horses, 200,000 infantry, 700 elephants and 1000 war boats. Boats as war booty or tributes formed an important aspect of the Mughal Empire in the east.⁴⁹⁹ In this geographical terrain of

⁴⁹⁷ 1 anna (as.) was equal to 1/16th of a rupee.

⁴⁹⁸ James Taylor, *A sketch of Topography and Statistics of Dacca* (Calcutta: G.H. Huttman, Military Orphan Press, 1840), 193-198.

⁴⁹⁹ P. Nath, "Mughal amphibious warfare" in *Chinese and Indian Warfare-From the Classical Age to 1870*, ed. Peter Lorge and Kaushik Roy (New York: Routledge, 2014), 160.

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the Ganges delta, one notices a change in Mughal policy towards its neighbours. The Mughals formed an important subordinate ally in the ruler of Kuch Bihar, Lakshminarayan, which added to their then meagre Mughal fleet.⁵⁰⁰ As opposed to their aggressive expansion in the northern continent, the Mughals sought to form new bonds and forge alliances with neighbouring kingdoms in the east, any move that would strengthen their power in the waters. An example of this as cited in the *Akbarnama*, is the incidence of sending gifts and propositions of concord by the Magh ruler in 1586 to the Mughal governor of Bengal. This has been referred to by Abu'l Fazl as a matter of great relief and "marvels of good fortune" as the major tool of wars in the region were war-boats.⁵⁰¹

For the later ship building projects, the major raw material in the form of timber came from Sylhet and Sandwip (from Sunderban forests). Hughli, Chittagong and Dacca emerged as the major ship building centres of the Mughal Empire. Hughli was a town approximately two *karohs*⁵⁰² away from Satgaon and assumed importance due to the diversion of trade and population that resulted from the silting of the Saraswati River during the first half of the sixteenth century.⁵⁰³ The Portuguese captured Sandwip from the Mughals in 1607. Regarding the regional ship building activities, the Venetian traveller Cesare di Fedrici, wrote in 1565 that around 200 ships were laden with salt annually and the region was so famous for cost efficient ship building that the Sultan of Constantinople preferred building his ships there rather than in Alexandria.⁵⁰⁴ The Mughal Imperial Nowwara (flotilla) included the exquisitely decorated budgrows, called *mahalgiri*, mainly for the usage of royalty. Such budgrows were always detached from the war fleet for use by admiralty and high nobles, and were mainly built in Lahore and Allahabad.⁵⁰⁵

⁵⁰⁰ Abu'l Fazl, *Akbarnama*, vol. 3, 1067.

⁵⁰¹ Ibid., 722.

⁵⁰² 1 karoh= 2 miles.

⁵⁰³ Ghulam Husain Salim, *Riyazu-s-salatin*, trans. Maulavi Abdus Salam (Calcutta: Calcutta Asiatic Society, 1902) 29-30.

⁵⁰⁴ Taylor, "Topography of Dacca," 71.

⁵⁰⁵ Abu'l Fazl, *Ain-i-Akbari*, vol. 1, 290.

6.6 Religious Frontiers in Bengal

6.6.1 Building a Missionary Enterprise

Bengal was not only a fertile ground for economic and political exchange but a diverse arena for missionary orders. In addition to Jesuits, different Portuguese orders like Dominicans, Augustinians and Franciscans established themselves in Bengal and remained deeply rooted in the Portuguese crown. There are references stating the missionaries' responsibilities to bring the Portuguese adventurers and private traders active in the eastern part of India under the garb of the Crown.⁵⁰⁶ At times, they were even allocated the secular jobs of dealing with state funds and cases of default of revenues.⁵⁰⁷ However, one of the main tasks of the missionaries was directed towards Portuguese deserters and the obvious subjects: the non-Christians.

The first missionaries to arrive in Chittagong in 1578, Anthony Vaz and Father Peter Dias, had attracted the attention of Mughal Emperor Akbar due to their fair conduct with the Portuguese defaulters of Mughal taxes. Even the roots of the first Jesuit mission to the Mughal court were sown in Bengal. There existed numerous Portuguese settlements in Mughal Bengal and the major one amongst them was Hughli, which in later years became a source of friction in Mughal-Portuguese relations in the reign of Emperor Shah Jahan. The port was established by Pedro Tavares, known as the *capitan genral de la genre estrengera* (captain general for the foreign people).⁵⁰⁸

Akbar's first interest in Portuguese activities in Bengal arose from the enormous amounts of goods the Portuguese brought as part of their trade with Borneo, Malacca and other ports near the eastern coast of India. As a result, the Emperor asked the Nawab of Dacca, the ruler of Hughli district, to send two

⁵⁰⁶ António da Silva Rego, *Documentação para a História das Missões do Padroado* (1566-1568), vol. 10, Decree 9, 386.

⁵⁰⁷ C. R. Boxer, *Portuguese India in the Mid-Seventeenth century* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1980), 47.

⁵⁰⁸ Joseph Wicki S. J ed., *Documenta Indica (1577-1580)*, vol. 11, Document 89 (Rome: *Monumenta Historica Societatis Iesu*, 1970), 649.

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Portuguese to the Mughal court in Agra. The prolonged delay in meeting the request ended up in the visit of Pedro Tavares, also known as *Partab Bar Feringi* in Mughal records.⁵⁰⁹ The Emperor's interests in the immense Portuguese involvement in regional trade finally led to the religious dialogues at court and the spread of Christian missionary activity in Bengal. Father Julianne Pereira, the Vicar general of Bengal, visited the Mughal court at the request of Pedro Tavares in 1578. He laid the foundation of Akbar's curiosity in Christianity. He taught a few words in Portuguese to the Emperor, who according to Pereira, wanted to learn the language to be able to read the Gospel.⁵¹⁰ However, the Father was not a Jesuit priest and lacked a certain rhetorical training in the practice of Christianity, so he could not satisfy the emperor's thirst for Christian knowledge. He suggested the Emperor to invite more learned priests from Goa, which ultimately resulted in the first Jesuit embassy to the Mughal court.

The *farman* issued in 1579 by Emperor Akbar to Tavares, authorized him to choose any place in Hughli⁵¹¹ to construct a church and preach the gospel.⁵¹² In return, the Portuguese were expected to free the seas of pirates, a commitment that the former could not fulfil.⁵¹³ In addition to the land in Hughli, the Emperor gave Tavares numerous other subsidies and grants. The *Nababo* (Nawabs or the rulers of Bengal) and the *seguidares* (*shiqdar* in Arabic or tax collector) were instructed to provide the Portuguese with all necessary materials for the construction of houses. Furthermore, the *farman* gave permission to the *Brethren* (here Augustinians) to build churches and monasteries and baptize all heathens who desired to follow the Christian faith.⁵¹⁴ After the Bishop of Cochin transferred the possession of the Church and the right to proselytise to the Augustinians, the region became the grand

⁵⁰⁹ Campos, *History of the Portuguese in Bengal*, 51-52.

⁵¹⁰ ANTT, *Armário Jesuítico*, livro 28, "Carta de Gileanes Pereira, de Fatehpur," June 5, 1579, ff. 86-87.

⁵¹¹ By late 1580s Hughli began to be termed as *Porto pequeno de Bengala* because it assumed great strategic importance and replaced Satgaon in its function. Subrahmanyam, *Notes on sixteenth century Bengal*, 284.

⁵¹² Armando Cortesão, "A Cidade de Bengala do século XVI e os Portugueses," in *Esparsos* vol. 1 (Coimbra: Universidade de Coimbra, 1974), 387.

⁵¹³ Jayanta Kumar Ray, *Aspects of India's International Relations, 1700-2000: South Asia and the World* (Delhi: Pearson Education India, 2007), 12.

⁵¹⁴ Luard and Hosten trans., *Travels of Fray Sebastien Manrique, 1629-1643*, vol. 1, 37-38.

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mission ground of this order since 1599. They erected a house dedicated to San Nicholau of Tolentino and Casa de Misericordia (Alms House) with a chapel. The fathers even advanced loans to the poor Portuguese settlers of the region who engaged in piracy. As opposed to the Jesuits' acceptance of land and income from local lords, the Augustinians avoided gaining any native endowments.⁵¹⁵ However, religious and secular lines were often blurred in cases of priestly involvement in the regional trading activities of free Portuguese merchants.

Ecclesiastically, Bengal fell outside the ambit of Goa, which was under the diocese of Cochin. The Augustinians mostly strived to hold and reserve the provinces of Bengal for themselves than let other Christian orders intrude. They slowly fanned out to other provinces of Portuguese commercial establishment and later spread to Ceylon. The Mughal governors of Bengal mostly tolerated these missionaries in order to attract the Portuguese merchants in the settlements and discourage their tendency towards the rival kingdom of Arakan. The Eurasian and native Portuguese were formed into military companies to protect Chittagong and other Arakan held places from the expansionist tendencies of the Mughals. The Portuguese mercenaries at Dianga regularly pillaged the place and took captives, which over time became a major distress for the Mughals. These attacks became a source of embarrassment for the Portuguese in Goa, who at this time, were trying to forge friendly bonds with the Mughals.⁵¹⁶

6.6.2 Missionaries as the link in Bengal

Bengal remained an area traversed by official and unofficial Portuguese entities, a continuum of their ongoing power struggles within Portuguese Asia. Within this struggle, the Christian missionaries formed the link between *Estado* and the private merchants in Portuguese Bengal. The private settlers acknowledged the Cross and the monarchy, but not *Estado da Índia*. Within this tri-partite division of power between Lisbon, Goa and Bengal, the common factor was the missionaries.

⁵¹⁵ Tahmidal Zami and Carola Erika Lorea, "Interreligious Encounter and Proselytism in Pre-Mughal Bengal: An Analysis of the Report by the Jesuit Father Nicolas Pimenta," *Indian Historical Review* 43 no. 2 (2016): 240-241.

⁵¹⁶ Lach, *Asia in the Making of Europe*, Vol. 3 Book 1, 142-143.

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Since the Crown had the authority over the overseas missions, in an 'independent' region like Bengal, these missions were a direct connection to the Crown in the absence of the *Estado*. In addition to seeking converts, the missionaries in the region, as direct envoys of the Crown, usually carried diplomatic messages from Goa to the local rulers and *nawabs*.

Akbar initiated negotiations with the missionaries, the only linking agents to the Portuguese mercenaries in this region who brought luxury commodities and most importantly silver to the Mughal capital, the demand for which had increased with the integration of Bengal in the Mughal Empire. Ultimately, the missionaries opened the doors to the Mughal court for private Portuguese enterprise to establish factories in Mughal Bengal. Initial Portuguese contact with the Mughals laid by the missionaries eventually resulted in a string of Portuguese settlements in the region. Hence, these missionaries were the connecting link between the *Estado da Índia* in Goa, the Portuguese Crown and the Portuguese free agents in Bengal. Therefore, it is necessary to read their role as political intermediaries in the region and beyond, and as the religious link to multi-layered secular authorities.

6.7 Concluding Remarks

Since its inclusion in the Mughal administration, Bengal *suba* (district) has figured in the revenue record books and government manuals just like other *subas*. However, in reality, the region was difficult to govern or rule in totality due to its geographical condition. Institutionally, this presented challenges for the fast expanding Mughal Empire to engulf the region in its garb like the landed terrains in northern India. The term 'negotiated sovereignty' best elucidates the Mughal approach in the region due to the fact that at certain junctures, the Mughals bargained and leased out the sovereignty of various ports and coastal regions to local regional allies, Portuguese missionaries and Portuguese free traders for better administration and (Mughal) economic interests. We also notice the development of Mughal shipping in the region as a response to the topographic and political challenges they faced in the region. Study of Bengal, hence, advances the discussion

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of the maritime orientation of the Mughals. Once the Mughals granted permission to establish missions in the port of Hughli, the region witnessed development of religious and commercial patchwork of missionary orders along with free Portuguese traders, in which religious enterprise mostly followed commercial (enterprise). This demonstrates Bengal as a unique case of overlapping powers and textures of religion and politics.

Connecting the Court and Coast: Final Remarks

The encounter between the Mughals and Portuguese gradually shaped and defined the two powers over the course of time. The distinctive relationship prepared the groundwork for Mughal interaction with other European enterprises and introduced a certain degree of flexibility and dynamism in the Mughal approach towards foreign polities. Although the Portuguese had formerly made contacts with several Asian and European Empires through trade and religious missions, and thus had an existing methodology to function in an intercultural environment, this was their first encounter with a region of such interwoven religious, cultural and geographical diversity. Although, the Portuguese largely followed precedence in dealings with the Mughals, the latter had established a full-fledged relationship with a European empire in the court and also on the maritime frontiers for the first time. Hence, a multi-dimensional approach that created comparisons and connections was required to comprehend this complex and layered topic. In the final analysis, I will try to elucidate on my findings and weave together the multiplicities of macro and micro level themes embedded in the thesis.

Seeing through the Mughal glasses

To elucidate the Mughal perspective and their side of the story in this intercultural encounter was one of the main challenges I faced during writing this thesis. This, I may say, is one of the biggest challenge any scholar faces while writing a history of intercultural encounters in which there is a dearth of direct documentation on the relationship from a particular side due to various reasons. Sometimes, the encounter does not fit the larger narrative of the chronicler and the story being constructed, as we see in many key contemporary Mughal chronicles and the large scale omission of religious dialogues with the Jesuits. The gap is filled by Mughal correspondence with other regional political powers with reference to the Portuguese and the Jesuits. Constructing a Mughal voice is, hence, a much more

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difficult task than writing about Portuguese perspectives reflected in bulk of Portuguese literature devoted to the *Mogor*. Mughal correspondence relating to the Portuguese draws a dynamic picture of the Mughal approach towards the latter. I have consciously deferred from using the term 'policy' in the context of Mughal dealings with the Portuguese due to the multiplicity of regional, cultural and economic interface shared by the two powers and adoption of different approaches suitable to the framework.

Mughal relationships with other foreign powers like the Safavids, Ottomans and Central Asian kingdoms depicted what Subrahmanyam calls a cultural commensurability.⁵¹⁷ He opposed the structuralist idea of total compatibility or incompatibility of two different cultures.⁵¹⁸ Even though the Mughals and Portuguese did not have a historically shared cultural zone, their cultural and religious interaction gave rise to unique artistic and architectural traditions. However, this is not the primary theme of this thesis. I observed that despite coming from different normative systems, both sides developed an understanding of the respective political and diplomatic mechanisms after repeated contact and successive missions to the Mughal court. For example, the first and second missions were the period of cultural acquaintance. However, from the third mission onwards, the political and strategic intents of the Mughals became visible.

It was also noticed that Mughal attitudes towards conversion were driven by the political climate in the court. The Jesuits were supported within and outside the court however, their main agenda to convert the Mughal Emperors never fructified. The political link established by the Jesuit presence in the Mughal court was used by the Mughal Emperors to cultivate a relationship with the Portuguese power centers in Goa and abroad. The conscious recognition of the Portuguese as neighbours as well as competitors to the Mughal Empire led the Mughals to forge indirect diplomatic ties under the garb of Jesuit missions. At numerous events, the Jesuits were employed by the Mughals as political buffers in contentious situations like the siege of Asirgarh, Hajj pilgrimages of Mughal elites and the struggle for succession.

⁵¹⁷ Subrahmanyam, *Courtly Encounters*, 29.

⁵¹⁸ Ibid.

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Making of the Mughal maritime frontier

My second observation relates to the understanding of the Mughal Empire as a 'maritime conscious,' if not a maritime empire. I started to pursue this idea after years of studying Mughal history which featured the empire mainly as an agrarian land oriented empire, an argument which I do not intend to contest but expand. Portuguese presence in the maritime zones of the subcontinent and its consequent relationship with the Mughals provides an opportunity to study the Mughal Empire in a larger context and broaden its characterization. The Mughals did not follow a defined policy of expansion in the seas, however, their direct and indirect interactions with the Portuguese expanded the worldview of the Mughals. The Mughals consciously recognized the ports and territories of the Portuguese in the subcontinent as *Farangistan* (land of the *farangs*) and Mughal correspondence constantly featured efforts to conquer these lands. Mughal-Portuguese interactions on the maritime frontiers of the Indian subcontinent configured one reality for the Mughals: the need to secure the maritime frontiers.

"Frontiers may be seen as spatial counterparts to revolutions: the one denotes a perceived break in continuous territory, the other a perceived rupture in time."⁵¹⁹ The study of Mughal-Portuguese maritime frontiers breaks the customary image of intercultural encounters between two antagonistic political entities or cultures. By analyzing the various layers of their relationship that unfolded in multiple geographical and cultural settings, this thesis contributes to the formation of a multifaceted approach towards intercultural encounters. The Mughal-Portuguese relationship in the maritime frontier was more complex than in the courtly setting. In Gujarat and on the western coast, their relationship may be summarized as that of 'conflicting collaborators' since bullion trade was accompanied by scavenging for strategic posts on the Arabian Sea. Even though the Mughal chronicles largely featured Bengal as a *suba*, neither the Portuguese nor the Mughals had 'absolute' control over the region. The power dynamics in the region

⁵¹⁹ Richard M. Eaton, "'Kiss My Foot,' Said the King: Firearms, Diplomacy, and the Battle for Raichur," *Modern Asian Studies* 43, no.1 (2009): 289.

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demanding a strategic formation of political alliances. It is due to this reason that I refer to the Mughal approach as 'negotiated sovereignty.' Maritime access to Bay of Bengal and the topographic peculiarity of the region resulted in the progress of Mughal shipping, if not a full-fledged navy.

Understanding diplomacy in Mughal-Portuguese relations

Two strands of intercultural diplomacy become clear in the study of Mughal-Portuguese relations. The first strand relates to the Jesuits' role as political negotiators, intermediaries or informal diplomats of the Portuguese Emperor. The Jesuits served at the Mughal court in various capacities as translators of Christian texts, educators and interpreters, in addition to their primary duty as theologians and propagators of Catholicism. It may not be an overstatement to say that Jesuits in the early modern world were best equipped for the task of political negotiators or diplomats with their vast language base and adaptability skills. The dense network of interactions forged by the Jesuits between the Mughal court and Portuguese authorities in Goa, Spain and Portugal may lead to their characterization as the carriers of informal political communication if not formal diplomats. It is possible that the Jesuits resembled the general prototype of resident ambassadors in early modern Europe. However, in our case, the Jesuits were not addressed as official ambassadors.⁵²⁰ Stationed at the Mughal court, they documented the minutest of details about the Mughal Empire and kept the Portuguese authorities and Rome informed about the happenings. On many occasions, they were granted immunity and protection by the Mughal emperors while at other times, they faced the direct consequences of political strife between the two entities. The status of informal diplomats granted them freedom in information-gathering and correspondence.

The second strand is related to the diplomatic outlook of the Mughals towards the Portuguese, which was largely governed by political exigencies. Even

⁵²⁰ In the fifteenth century, the Sforza court of Milan first established a residence ambassador in Florence followed by Naples, Genoa and Rome and then in France. England had established Henry Wotton as the resident ambassador in Venice. See, Robert Henke and Eric Nicholson eds., *Transnational Exchange in Early Modern Theater* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2008), 7.

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though the Jesuit embassies continuously stayed at the Mughal court and accompanied the emperors on their campaigns, Mughal correspondence with regional and foreign rulers depicts a dynamic approach mostly based on political and religious vicissitudes of the Empire and the larger Islamic world. The antagonism towards Portuguese was mostly used as a political symbol to create a mental imagery of the 'Other' and demonstrate a picture of an Islamic Empire coherent with the rest of the Islamic world, even though the ground reality suggested that the Mughals and Portuguese collaborated at various levels. Also, as already seen, there was no unified Islamic world. As seen in Mughal correspondence, the use of 'Portuguese enemy' in political imagery and securing the Hajj routes from the Portuguese threat was thereby a means of gaining legitimacy and dismantling the idea of Mughal Empire's diversion from the path of Islam.

Layers of Mughal-Portuguese interactions

Religious dialogues, trading connections and the political inevitability of encountering the neighbour in the maritime frontier resulted in a distinct relationship that cannot be neatly confined. Religious agencies were the link that kept the layers of this relationship connected. The presence of the missionaries at Mughal court ensured a direct connection to Portuguese Goa and furthered the diplomatic ties. "Trade," as suggested by Halikowski-Smith, "was a preeminent success story of diplomatic interaction. This was the most universal language that intercultural contacts could make."⁵²¹ We notice the development of trading relationships in the region of Gujarat and the Mughal efforts to adapt to the expansion in maritime Bengal. Power relations, on the other hand, were at most times in the backdrop of this relationship. The use of political rhetoric and symbolism on both sides blurred the lines between competitors and collaborators. We have for long, written and studied narratives that depict disproportionate cultural and power identities. However, with the rise of works on global history, one may envision the

⁵²¹ Stefan Halikowski-Smith, "The Friendship of Kings was in the Ambassadors": Portuguese Diplomatic Embassies in Asia and Africa during the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries," *Portuguese Studies* 22 (2006): 133-134.

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reading of various layers and intersections in these intercultural encounters. In this case, between the court and maritime frontiers lay the different layers of the Mughal-Portuguese relationship.

Table of currency equivalence used in Mughal-Portuguese commercial zones.

The following data suggests a rough estimate of the value of regional Indian, Mughal and Portuguese currencies in prevalence during the period of the study (late sixteenth to early seventeenth centuries). Although there was a plethora of indigenous and foreign currencies prevalent during the period, only the ones used in the thesis have been stated and converted vis-à-vis reis and rupee.

Currency	Value
Rupee ⁵²²	40 dams
-	200 reis ⁵²³
Xerafim (Xs) ⁵²⁴	300 reis
-	Roughly 1.5 rupees
Mahmudi (Diu)	1.5 Xs
Cruzado ⁵²⁵	390 reis
-	Roughly 2 rupees

⁵²² Abu'l Fazl, *Ain-i-Akbari*, vol.1, 275

⁵²³ Pearson, *Merchants and Rulers*, 155.

⁵²⁴ Cunha, *Indo-Portuguese numismatics*, 56-57.

⁵²⁵ Afzal Ahmad, *Indo-Portuguese diplomacy*, 390.

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Abstract

This dissertation explores the complex Mughal-Portuguese relationship that enfolded in the Mughal court and on the maritime frontiers of the Indian subcontinent during 1570-1627. While assessing the various layers of this relationship, the dissertation lays a special emphasis on locating the approach of the Mughal State towards political negotiations with a contemporary early modern European empire for the first time.

The entanglement of religion and politics at the Mughal court is an inherent theme of the project which manifested itself in various ways. The dissertation demonstrates the political dimensions of the (religious) Jesuit missions by analysing the dense network of formal and informal communication forged by the missionaries between the Mughal court and Portuguese authorities in Goa (*Estado da Índia*) and Portugal. Moreover, the subject of Hajj pilgrimage and access to its sea route, with all of its religious and commercial implications, was a matter of considerable interest for the Mughals and other Islamic empires in the Indian Ocean. The thesis shows that the dynamics of Mughal-Portuguese relationship experienced fluctuations as a result of changing equilibriums, with the involvement of new regional and foreign players like the Ottomans, Uzbeks and Safavids. It thereby places the Mughal-Portuguese relations in the broader framework of the Indian Ocean world.

Furthermore, an effort has been made to fill the historiographical gap that resulted from straightjacketing the Mughals as a land-based empire. Contrarily, the layered Mughal-Portuguese interactions in Gujarat, Konkan, and Bengal, present a case for dynamic political scramble for ports between the so called land-based Mughal Empire, 'sea-borne Portuguese State' and shifting regional alliances. This analysis creates a narrative of "Mughal maritime consciousness" as manifested in bullion trade, port administration and shipping. In general, this thesis tries to connect the enmeshed layers of religion, politics and commerce visible at levels of courtly and maritime interactions between the Mughals and Portuguese.

Zusammenfassung

Diese Dissertation untersucht die komplexen Interaktionen zwischen Moguln und Portugiesen, die sowohl am Hof des Mogulkaisers also auch an den maritimen Grenzen des indischen Subkontinents zwischen 1570 und 1627 stattgefunden haben. Obwohl verschiedene Sphären dieser Interaktionen untersucht werden, liegt der Fokus dieser Arbeit auf dem Ansatz des Mogulstaates im Hinblick auf politische Verhandlungen mit einem zeitgenössischen europäischen Empire.

Ein Hauptthema dieser Arbeit ist die Verflechtung zwischen Religion und Politik am Hof des Mogulkaisers, die sich auf verschiedene Art und Weise manifestierte. So wird etwa die politische Dimension der Jesuitischen Mission deutlich, die ein dichtes Netzwerk unterhielt, das eine Kommunikation zwischen dem Hof des Mogulkaisers und portugiesischen Autoritäten in Goa (*Estado da Índia*) ermöglichte. Auch die Hajj Pilgerschaft und ihr Zugang zu Seewegen, mit all ihren religiösen und kommerziellen Implikationen, war für den Mogulstaat von großem Interesse. Die Dissertation zeigt, dass die Dynamik in der Beziehung zwischen dem Mogulreich und den Portugiesen vor allem ein Ergebnis einer sich stets wandelnden überregionalen politischen Landschaft war. Mit Blick auf regionale und internationale politische Akteure, wie den Ottomanen, den Usbeken oder den Safawiden, bettet die Dissertation diese bilaterale Beziehung in den größeren Raum des indischen Ozeans ein.

Außerdem wurde der Versuch unternommen eine Lücke in der Geschichtsschreibung zu schließen, die aus der Annahme resultiert, das Mogulreich wäre vor allem ein landgestütztes („land-based“) Empire gewesen. Ein Blick auf die Interaktionen zwischen den Moguln und den Portugiesen in Gujarat, Konkan und Bengalen führt jedoch zu einer Revidierung dieser Annahme. In dynamischen politischen Auseinandersetzungen kämpfte das „Land-basierte“ Mogulreich mit den Seefahrt-erprobten Portugiesen um wichtige Häfen auf dem Subkontinent. Im Wesentlichen versucht diese Dissertation die verstrickten Sphären von Religion, Politik und Handel auf der Ebene von höfischen und maritimen Interaktionen zwischen den Moguln und den Portugiesen sichtbar zu machen.