‘Lord of Conquest, Navigation and Commerce’
Diplomacy and the Imperial Ideal During the Reign of John V, 1707-1750

João Vicente Carvalho de Melo

Submitted to Swansea University in fulfilment of the requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

Swansea University
2012
Summary

This dissertation explores the diplomatic practices of the Portuguese Estado da Índia in the first half of the eighteenth century, a period when the Portuguese imperial project in the Indian Ocean faced drastic changes imposed by the aggressive competition of the European rivals of the Estado and local powers such as the Marathas or the Omani. Based on documents from the Biblioteca Nacional de Portugal (Lisbon), the Biblioteca da Ajuda, the Academia das Ciências de Lisboa, the Arquivo Histórico Ultramarino, the British Library and the Historical Archives of Goa, this research suggests that diplomatic practices of the Portuguese Estado da Índia were not only concerned with protecting the interests of the Portuguese Crown in the West Coast of India, but were a part of a strategy designed to promote a prestigious reputation for the Portuguese Crown in the region despite the ascendancy of other European imperial powers. Besides a detailed analysis and description of the processes and circumstances by and which diplomatic contacts between local sovereigns and the Portuguese colonial administration were established, the rituals and language of diplomatic ceremonies with Asian sovereigns were also examined in detail in order to give a precise account of the ways in which Portuguese diplomats presented the Portuguese Crown to Asian rulers.
Declarations and Statements

This work has not previously been accepted in substance for any degree and is not being concurrently submitted in candidature for any degree.

Signed .......................................................... (candidate)

Date .............................................................

This thesis is the result of my own investigations, except where otherwise stated. Where correction services have been used, the extent and nature of the correction is clearly marked in a footnote(s).

Other sources are acknowledged by footnotes giving explicit references. A bibliography is appended.

Signed ..........................................................

Date .............................................................

I hereby give consent for my thesis, if accepted, to be available for photocopying and for inter-library loan, and for the title and summary to be made available to outside organisations.

Signed ..........................................................

Date .............................................................
## Contents

Summary .................................................................................................................................................. iii
Declarations and Statements ................................................................................................................ iv
Acknowledgements .............................................................................................................................. vii
List of Illustrations ............................................................................................................................ viii
Abbreviations ........................................................................................................................................ ix
Glossary .................................................................................................................................................. xvi
1. Introduction ...................................................................................................................................... 1
2. The King’s Alter Ego: The public image of the viceroy .............................................................. 25
3. The Ceremonial Rules of Goan diplomacy .................................................................................... 44
4. Seeking Prestige and Survival: Gift-exchange practices between the Portuguese Estado da Índia and Asian rulers .............................................................................................................. 68
5. Vassals and Friends of Goa: The Estado da Índia and its relations and rituals of vassalage .................................................................................................................................................. 95
6. The cartaz and the Portuguese claim to the ‘Lordship of the Seas of India’ .............................. 126
7. Mombasa: A failed project to materialise the royal ditado ......................................................... 151
8. Conclusion ...................................................................................................................................... 177

Bibliography ........................................................................................................................................ 196

Primary Sources .................................................................................................................................. 196
Secondary Sources ............................................................................................................................... 202
Acknowledgements

My first words of gratitude are for the Fundação para a Ciência e Tecnologia (FCT). Without the sponsorship of the FCT this work would not have been possible. I am also very grateful to my supervisors, Stefan Halikowski-Smith and Huw Bowen. Their guidance, suggestions, comments and patience were essential. Muito obrigado. Any errors and mistakes are my fault.

This dissertation was written in three countries. In Great Britain I am very grateful to wise comments of John Villiers and Malyn Newitt. The professionalism and efficiency of the British Library staff should also be praised and mentioned. In Portugal, Diogo Ramada Curto, João Paulo Oliveira e Costa, Manuel Lobato, André Murteira and Timothy Walker (an adopted Portuguese) helped me with their suggestions and comments. My words of gratitude are also extended to everyone at the Biblioteca Nacional de Portugal (Lisbon), Academia das Ciências de Lisboa and the Arquivo Histórico Ultramarino (special thanks to the always helpful and friendly Sr. Fernando). In India (Goa) my thanks go to José and Clara Lobo, for their hospitality, Vasco Silveira, António Sabido Costa and Eduardo Kol de Carvalho for their friendship and help. At the Historical Archives of Goa I am very grateful to Blossom Medeira and Ramishwar. I am also very grateful to Ines Zupanov and Ernestina Carreira for sharing with me their experiences in the Goan archives and commenting my ideas on early modern Goa.

The love and patience of Mãe, Vóvó and Ni made this work possible. My walks with Toffy helped my thoughts. The constant presence, companionship, encouragement and love of Margarida made all this work and time worthwhile.
List of Illustrations

India, c. 1707 ................................................................................................................. xi

India, c. 1740-1750 ............................................................................................... xii

BNP C.C. 1781 A., Estado da India c. 1747. ......................................................... xiii

BNP Inv. 10922, Estado da India c. 1770-1777. ......................................................... xiv
Abbreviations

ACCSSL - Arquivo da Casa dos Condes de Sabugosa/São Lourenço

ACL – Academia das Ciências de Lisboa

AHU – Arquivo Histórico Ultramarino

APO – Arquivo Português Oriental

BFUP – Boletim da Filmoteca Ultramarina

BL – British Library

BNP – Biblioteca Nacional de Portugal

HAG – Historical Archives of Goa

MR – Livro das Monções

Legend: P – Portuguese, E – English, F – French, DEN – Danish, D – Dutch

Legend: P – Portuguese, E – English, F – French, DEN – Danish, D – Dutch

Remaining Mughal territories
Glossary

Abunhado: A native rural worker who was forced to live and work in the estate where he or she was born.

Ajudante-General: A military rank equivalent to a Lieutenant-General.

Armada do Estreito: The Portuguese war fleet deployed to protect the Portuguese ships at the Persian Gulf and the factory at Bandar-Kung.

Armada do Norte: The Portuguese war fleet deployed to protect the Provincia do Norte.

Armada do Sul: The Portuguese war fleet deployed to protect the Portuguese ships in the Kanara coast at the factory at Mangalore.

Bastão de mando: If translated to English literally it would mean baton of command. It was used by the viceroys as an equivalent to the royal sceptre, and was designed to be the ultimate symbol of the viceroy’s authority.

Brahman: The first varna of the Hindu caste system.

Cabido: A Portuguese word for the chapter of a Cathedral. It can also be translated to English as canon (priest).

Cadeira de espaldas: A Portuguese word for armchair. It was used to describe an imposing and lavishly decorated chair that was used in most viceregal ceremonies as an equivalent to the royal throne.

Cafre: An early modern Portuguese term used to describe Africans. The word is derived from the Arabic kaffir (infidel). The Portuguese took the word from Arab slave merchants in the Swahili Coast, who used the word kaffir to refer to the local populations.
Capitão de mar e guerra: A post in the Estado’s army equivalent to a captain.

Carreira da Índia: The sea route between Lisbon and India via the Cape of Good Hope.

Carta de poder: A document signed by the Portuguese king which defined the powers and functions of a viceroy during his mandate.

Cartaz: A naval passport granted by the Portuguese authorities to non-European ships and merchants.

Chatrapati: A Marathi word for the title of emperor.

Cherubin or Curumbim: A rural worker of the Shudra caste or varna.

Chouto or Cauth: A pension paid by the Estado da Índa to the rajah of Ramnagar in exchange for the rajah’s collaboration in the defence of the Daman border.

Condestável: An early modern Portuguese term for commander. The English word constable is often used as a translation.

Conquistas: A Portuguese word which means conquests. It was used in the early modern period to refer to the colonies of the Portuguese Crown.

Conselho do Estado: A consultative body of the Estado da Índa formed by senior members of the Estado’s administration, high courts and upper clergy.

Corso: Privateering. A private person or a ship authorised by the Estado da India or by the Portuguese Crown to attack and capture foreign ships or ships without a cartaz.

Dessai: Semi-autonomous feudatory chieftains who were obliged to serve their lord during times of war.
**Dessaiado:** A fief or a province granted to a dessai.

**Diwan:** A Mughal title granted to the chief revenue officer of a province.

**Édito:** A royal or viceregal decree.

**Entrada:** The first public entry of a viceroy in Goa.

**Entrega:** The ceremony when the outgoing viceroy would present the termo de posse to an incoming viceroy.

**Festa do mar:** A festive parade of ships.

**Fidalgo:** A member of the Portuguese nobility. The term fidalguia means nobility.

**Gentio:** The Portuguese word for gentile (pagan). It was used to refer to Hindus.

**Infante(a):** The son or daughter of a Portuguese king who were not heirs to the throne.

**Jagirdar:** The holder of life estate granted by the Mughal emperor.

**Lingua do Estado:** An interpreter working for the Estado da Índia.

**Malemo:** A maritime pilot of East African or South Asian origin.

**Manchua do Estado:** The viceroy’s yacht.

**Mansabdar:** The holder of a Mughal senior military rank.

**Melinandar:** A Persian word used to refer to an escort appointed by the shah to a foreign ambassador.

**Mercês:** Privileges or benefits granted by the Crown.
**Nawab:** An honorific title granted by the Mughal authorities to the Muslim rulers of princely states.

**Nayaka:** The title of the rulers of Keladi.

**Padroado Real:** The papal concession to the Portuguese Crown of the monopoly of missionary work in regions allocated to the Portuguese Crown by the treaty of Tordesillas.

**Palio:** A Portuguese word for canopy. It was used as a symbol of the viceroy’s dignity in all public and private ceremonies in which he took part.

**Pareas:** An early modern Portuguese word for tributes.

**Peshwa:** A Marathi word for the titular of a post equivalent to Prime-Minister.

**Procurador da Coroa:** A magistrate of the Portuguese Crown.

**Procurador:** The head of the Estado’s courts.

**Procuradores do Povo:** The equivalent to aldermen. Another word used in Portuguese to this post is vereador.

**Propaganda Fide:** The Sacred Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith (Sacra Congregatio de Propaganda Fide) was founded by Pope Gregory XV in 1622 as an organisation to arrange and supervise missionary work on behalf of different religious orders. The support of the French Crown to the Propaganda Fide led to several conflicts with the missions of the Padroado Real and the Portuguese authorities in Asia.

**Provincia do Norte:** The territories of Bassein, Chaul, Daman, Diu, and Salsette.

**Refresco:** An early modern Portuguese word for meals and provisions.

**Regimento:** A set of rules defined by the Crown or the viceroy.
**Reis Vizinhos**: The name given by the Portuguese authorities to the potentates which neighboured the Estado da Índia.

**Requerimento**: A petition or a document used in judicial processes to make a request.

**Resposta**: A formal ceremony when a foreign ambassador or envoy was informed of the viceroy’s decision concerning diplomatic negotiations or the exchange of correspondence with the Reis Vizinhos.

**Royal ditado or Real ditado**: The list of titles of the Portuguese monarchs.

**Sagoate**: A gift usually exchanged during diplomatic negotiations.

**Sardessai**: The title of the rulers of Sawantvandi.

**Secretario do Estado**: The head of the Secretaria do Estado and the second-figure of the Estado da Índia’s administration. The Secretario do Estado was responsible for the administration of the Estado’s bureaucracy, and also had diplomatic functions, being responsible for the correspondence between the Portuguese authorities and the Reis Vizinhos.

**Shah**: The title of the ruler of the Persian Empire.

**Sipai**: An Indian or East African soldier serving the Portuguese army. The name was also used to describe soldiers of local potentates such as the Marathas or Sonda.

**Subadhar or Sarsubhedar**: The governor of a province (subah) of the Mughal Empire.

**Tanadar-Mor**: A senior official of the Estado’s Treasury. He was responsible for the administration of farming communities and lands.

**Termo de posse**: A document with a list of the cities, towns, villages, fortresses, ships and soldiers possessed by the Estado da Índia.
**Ultramar:** A Portuguese term for overseas which was commonly used to refer to the Portuguese possessions in Africa, Asia and South America.

**Vedor da Fazenda Real:** The administrator of the Estado’s Treasury and estate.
1. Introduction

Goa and the Portuguese Imperial Ideal

When João V was acclaimed King of Portugal in January 1707, he inherited from his father, Pedro II, an empire which was showing signs of revitalisation. The recent discovery of gold and diamond mines in Brazil, the colony which was already described by his grandfather, João IV, as the Crown’s ‘milk-cow’, promised a bright future to Portugal’s ambitions to achieve a relevant position among other European powers. Under Pedro II, the Estado da Índia experienced a period of resurgence. Since the 1680s, the Carreira da Índia had been operating on a regular basis, and Goan commerce, despite the setbacks imposed by the losses to the Dutch East India Company (Vereeningde Oost-Indisch Compagnie), still offered interesting profitable opportunities.

Due to the gold and diamond mines discovered in Brazil, Portugal entered in the eighteenth century in a new cycle of colonial wealth which allowed João V to recover the imperial ideals of the Manueline era. As had Manuel I two centuries earlier, João used the riches from his empire to display an image of imperial splendour and power. The Royal Palace, for example, was often decorated with oriental carpets to create an exotic and lavish atmosphere which evoked the glories of the Portuguese Empire in Asia – a decorative style which was copied by the higher nobility in their houses.¹ The first attempt made by João V to present the Portuguese monarchy as an imperial power was made during the celebrations of his marriage to Marianna of Austria. Indeed, under the supervision of royal officials, the decorative works included a triumphal arch adorned with a statue of Lisbon with the legend ‘Princess of cities and emulation of Rome’s greatness’, a verse taken from Camões. The imperial symbolism of this arch would be revived in other ceremonies and embassies.²

João’s imperial ideal was presented to European powers on 8 July 1717, when his ambassador to Pope Clement XI, the Marquis of Fontes, made his public entry in Rome. Fontes’s entry was carefully prepared. The ambassador arrived in Rome in 1713 but his public entry was delayed for four years due to a long waiting list for public

² Ibid., p. 149.
entries in Rome. Despite this setback, Fontes used his time in Rome carefully to prepare the ceremony and to cultivate an important friendship with Annibale Albani, the nephew of Pope Clement XI, who received from the Portuguese ambassador a gift of a collection of ‘precious objects’ from Brazil and India, as well as a set of Chinese and Japanese porcelain.\(^3\) The gift was an obvious symbol of Portugal’s empire and a preview of what would be the public entry of the Portuguese embassy.

As the anonymous relação (account) dedicated to Fontes’s embassy explained, the Marquis led a parade which wanted to show the Pope that ‘the Portuguese Monarchs besides the titles they have in Europe, and in their vast dominions in other parts of the world, like to use for their own glory the titles of Lords of Conquest, Navigation and Commerce in Ethiopia, Arabia, Persia and India’.\(^4\) The first carriage was a celebration of the Portuguese feats of ‘Conquest and Navigation’, the second was dedicated to the ‘defeated Barbarian Nations’, and the third to Portuguese overseas commerce.\(^5\) The three golden carriages— another demonstration of the imperial riches enjoyed by Portugal – sought to celebrate ‘the value of their [Portuguese] victories and Religion’ as the author observed.\(^6\)

The first carriage included a sculpture of Pallas, described by the author as ‘the director of the most famous and illustrious enterprises’, which her right hand ‘did the action of commanding’. On the back of the carriage was a sculpture of Adamastor, the mythological character created by Camões to represent the adversities faced by the Portuguese naval explorations, ‘despised by the Goddess’ and ‘transformed into a stone’. Close to this statue was another of a triton – a symbol for the shipwrecks suffered by the Portuguese – carrying Thetis, ‘a figure of navigation’, holding a compass and measuring a globe to indicate to the Portuguese ‘the path to India’. On the left side, the carriage was adorned with ‘a piece of a mount covered with plants, and flowers’, which demonstrated ‘the benignity of the Indian lands’. Next to this image was a sculpture of Bellona, the goddess of conquest and the ‘companion of Pallas’.\(^7\) Although the author stated that it was not possible to mention everything on detail without tiring his readers, he did mention that the carriage’s ceiling had four trophies

---

\(^3\) Ibid., p. 132.
\(^4\) Biblioteca Nacional de Portugal (BNP), F. 3087, Embaixada do Marquez de Fontes, fs. 57v-58.
\(^5\) Ibid., f. 58.
\(^6\) Ibid., f. 58.
\(^7\) Ibid., f. 58v.
made of arms of the ancient Roman style’ as well as four helms also of ‘ancient style’. The evocations of Adamastor, Thetis and Bellona on the first carriage reminded the audience that the Portuguese were the first European nation to reach India and to build an empire in Asia. Indeed, Fontes wanted to give a history lesson to the Pope and the foreign ambassadors at the Papal Court, stating that Portugal was already an old imperial power whose possessions dated from before the emergence of other European colonial empires.

The second carriage was a ‘representation of how the Portuguese kings were taken by a heroic impulse to destroy the infidel, through their dangerous navigations and innumerable conquests’. The front of the carriage was decorated with flying genies surrounding a naked youth crowned with a laurel – a symbol for ‘the love for heroic virtues’, since ‘a hero must be naked from all passions’. Next to the youth was a woman ‘with a pleasant and shinning face’ who held a serpent which bit its tail – two elements which, according to the relação, demonstrated the ‘immortality of the Portuguese name’ and its glories ‘for the illustrious conquest of the Orient’.

On the back, a sculpture of Lisbon had at her feet ‘great number of Barbarians’ arms and two half-naked slaves, ‘one Black, and the other Turk’. Between them was a dragon – the symbol of the House of Braganza – smashing a crescent ‘with its head turned to Lisbon, as if it was dependent on its prompting’. Lisbon was accompanied by sculptures of two women representing Providence, who carried a ‘cornucopia of fruits’, and Glory, who were crowning Lisbon with a ‘Crown made of flowers’.

The third carriage presented a more complex allegory. Two dolphins carried two ‘naked old men’ representing the Atlantic and the Indian Oceans, holding their hands ‘as a sign of a new friendship’. Between the two men was a rock where two genies guarded a globe enlightened by a rising sun which showed that ‘the aim of such a long navigation was commerce and to introduce through it the sacred goods of the Gospel to the most remote regions of the Orient’. On the back were four sculptures representing the four seasons with their attributes as an allegory to the ‘winds which are necessary

---

8 Ibid., f. 59v.
9 Ibid., f. 60.
10 BNP, F. 3087, Embaixada do Marquez de Fontes, f. 60v.
11 Ibid., f. 60v.
12 Ibid., f. 61v.
for the navigation across the different parts of the world to ensure the conservation of general commerce’.  

Fontes presented in Rome a golden image of the Portuguese empire in Asia which wanted to renovate the old Manueline imperial ideal, and redesign the image of the Portuguese Crown in Europe by presenting the country as a true European and imperial power following the royal *ditado* (list of titles) of the Portuguese monarchs claimed to be ‘Lords of Guinea and of Conquest, Navigation and Commerce of Ethiopia, Arabia, Persia and India’. These claims of sovereignty over Africa and Asia were an attempt to make the Crown’s imperial project public, and promote a tacit recognition from other powers of Portugal’s supposed imperial rights and power. The empire was in fact regarded as the basis of the country’s relevance in the European political scene, as well as the guarantee of the country’s subsistence and independence. In his *Instruções Inéditas*, for example, Dom Luís da Cunha presented the Portuguese overseas possessions (the *conquistas*) as ‘the only valuables that the Old Lady has’ and ‘the thing which honour us and sustain us’. If Lisbon wanted to be regarded as a true European power, the ultramar should be protected and, if possible, expanded. 

By choosing the *Lusiads* and India as the theme of his public entry in Rome, Fontes was celebrating what most Portuguese considered to be the finest moment of their history. Vasco da Gama’s discovery of a maritime route to India, and the conquests of Francisco de Almeida and Afonso de Albuquerque were regarded as the genesis and apogee of Portuguese imperial power. Brazil could be the most profitable colony of all, but Goa was still the most prestigious and the one that due to its history and geographical position brought a true imperial aura to the Crown. Moreover, India was the stage where the main European powers – Great Britain, France and the Netherlands – were competing, and by celebrating the Portuguese feats in the Indian Ocean, Lisbon could claim an equal status to that enjoyed by London, Paris and The Hague. In fact, the splendour of Fontes’s embassy was an effort to contradict the perception that most Portuguese and Europeans had of the decline of the Portuguese possessions in India, and present Portugal as a strong imperial power which still had expansionist ambitions.

---

13 Ibid., f. 61v.
The Estado da Índa during a time of change

The decline of the Estado da Índia was a long process with several stages. The arrival of the Dutch VOC in the Indian Ocean is generally regarded as the starting point of the end of the Portuguese supremacy in the region. The hostilities between the Portuguese and the Dutch began in 1605, when the VOC expelled the Portuguese from Ambon. The expulsion of the Portuguese from the Moluccas was a significant blow to the Estado’s aspiration to control the ‘spice islands’. In 1634 and 1640 Malacca was blocked by the Dutch and forced to surrender in 1641. Between 1638 and 1658, the Portuguese positions in Ceylon were taken by the VOC in a long war which involved local potentates. In 1662, Cochin was conquered by the Dutch, eradicating Goa’s hopes to revive the Portuguese spice trade. Besides losing its influence in the spice trade, the Estado da Índia lost the capacity to control the main trading routes of the Indian Ocean. As Charles Boxer noted, in 1663 the VOC controlled the Asian seas from Japan until Arabia.17

Besides the Dutch, the English East India Company (EIC) also troubled the Estado da Índia. The attempts made by the EIC to secure a strong position in the region led to a violent Portuguese reaction. In 1612, an EIC fleet defeated four Portuguese warships and 26 barques at Swally, a village near Surat. The English victory, although with no territorial significance, damaged the reputation of the Portuguese before local powers such as the Mughal and Persian empires, exposing the naval debilities of the Estado da Índia.18 Ten years later, the tensions between Portuguese and English in the Persian Gulf resulted in the successful Anglo-Persian invasion of Hormuz on 22 April 1622. Despite the conflicts with the EIC, the ascendancy of the Dutch VOC led to a convergence of interests between the Honourable Company and the Estado da Índia. After the end of the ten years truce signed by Lisbon and The Hague (1642-1652), the Portuguese authorities made several attempts to cement the proximity between Portugal and England in Europe and Asia. The marriage of Catherine of Braganza and Charles II of England in 1662 was the culmination of the alliance between Lisbon and London, and would have a significant impact in the future of the Estado da Índia.19 The inclusion of Bombay in the dowry of the Portuguese infanta made the EIC too close to the

---

17 Ibid., p. 119.
19 The marriage treaty of Charles II and Catherine of Braganza was signed in 1661, but the marriage ceremonies took place in Portsmouth in 1662.
Estado’s territories, and the loss of the seven islands was regarded by many in Lisbon and Goa as a serious obstacle to any attempt to revitalise the Portuguese presence in India.20

The 1670s and the 1680s were a period of reorganisation of the Estado da Índia which coincided with the reign of Pedro II, the father of João V, who wanted to make the Asian possessions of the Portuguese Crown more self-supporting and profitable. Indeed, Pedro made several efforts to rehabilitate the Estado through the implementation of measures inspired by French, English and Dutch colonial examples.21 Pedro’s reforms were based on the principle that the remaining Asia and East African possessions were profitable if they were run and explored by an efficient administration.22 Besides several administrative reforms, Lisbon promoted the creation of commercial companies based on the English and Dutch models. In 1690, a company was formed with the Crown’s political and financial support but the fall of Mombasa in 1698 forced the company to merge with another commercial company in 1700. Five years later, however, the pressures of private merchants who were not involved in the new company’s activities and the suspicion of New-Christian influence in the company led to the end of the company in 1705, despite the profits registered during its existence.23 The Crown also promoted the rehabilitation of the Carreira da Índia by increasing the number of ships and changing the rules behind the organisation of the Indian fleets. By the end of Pedro’s reign, the Lisbon-Goa route operated on a regular basis.24 Despite the revitalisation of the Estado, the correspondence between Goa and Lisbon was still sombre and full of dramatic reports related to the decline of Portuguese trade; the permanent attacks and threats of hostile potentates; the fragilities of most food supplies which were controlled by enemies or by fragile neighbours; and complaints as to the scarcity of men and funds.25

When João V ascended the throne in 1707, the Portuguese Crown controlled in India only the cities of Goa, Daman, Diu and the fertile enclave of the Província do Norte which was formed by the cities of Bassein, Chaul and Thana. The Província do Norte and Daman were surrounded by Maratha territories and small potentates who paid

21 Ibid., p. 3.
22 Ibid., p. 5.
a tribute to the Marathas and the Mughal emperor. Located in the Gujarat, Diu shared its limits with territories controlled by the Siddi and the Mughal Empire. Goa’s frontier was extremely vulnerable. The northern district of Bardez fronted with Sawantvandi, a small and hostile semi-autonomous Maratha potentate, known by the Portuguese as Bonsolós. In the east, Goa bordered with the Marathas, and the southern district of Salsete bordered with Sonda, a vassal of the Estado which was regarded as an important buffer state against the territorial ambitions of the Marathas. This geo-strategic position meant that the fate of the Estado da Índia in 1707 was linked to the destinies of Mughals and Marathas.

João V ruled over another turbulent period for Goa. Setbacks like the disastrous attempts to retake Mombasa in the 1720s and the loss of the lucrative Provincia do Norte to the Marathas in 1739 undermined Goa’s efforts to secure what was considered to be its prestigious position on the Indian political scene. The hardships faced by the Portuguese in India contributed to the widespread perception that the Estado da Índia was a burden for the Royal Treasury. Almost every year Lisbon sent to India men and money to revitalise the Estado, but the increasing competition from the European companies and the military successes of hostile local potentates such as the Marathas made these ‘remedies’ insufficient. In 1724 the Marquis of Abrantes presented to João V a project to sell the Estado da Índia to the VOC, claiming that this was the only viable way to end the constant expense demanded by Goa and to obtain an important income. Abrantes’s proposal was a drastic reaction to the recurrent catastrophic portraits of Goa which circulated in Lisbon, such as the one made in 1702 by the Franciscan friar António do Rosário who, while comparing Brazil and India, stated that ‘East India for several years due to sins and injustices no longer is an India; Brazil, for its sugar, [and] the shining diamonds which are shipped in a thousand boxes each year, is the true India and Mina of the Portuguese’. Four decades later, in 1745, Thomé Ribeiro Leal, the man who read a welcome speech to the incoming Viceroy, Marquis of Castelo-Novo, complained that Goans were ‘only Portuguese in name’ and very distant from their ancestors who were ‘the terror of all Asia’ dominating the seas, conquering cities and destroying ‘with iron and fire everything that opposed Portuguese liberty’.  


speech ended with an apology to Castelo-Novo for not being received with ‘the ostentation deserved by your person, and worth [merecimento]’, as well as an appeal to the Viceroy: ‘cast your eyes in the ruin of this City, and the miserable state of its inhabitants, and take the necessary measures for its improvement’.28 This negative vision of the Portuguese presence in India was also shared by foreigners. One official from the EIC presented the Portuguese ‘general character’ with negative words such as ‘pride & laziness & boasting themselves of selling but empty titles’.29

Much of Goa’s troubles were caused by two factors: the decline of the Mughal Empire and the rise of the Marathas. The impact of these events had profound consequences on the development of the subcontinent’s political scene throughout the eighteenth century.

Lisbon and Goa regarded the Mughal Empire as the main Indian power and precious ally against other Europeans and Indian powers. Indeed, the Portuguese authorities had a careful approach towards Delhi, investing in regular diplomatic contacts with the Mughal court in order to establish a solid alliance. Goa also made special concessions to Mughal merchants and helped Delhi’s military activities with supplies of guns and ammunitions. A good summary of the Portuguese Mughal policy is the instructions given on 20 November 1708 by Viceroy D. Rodrigo da Costa to a special envoy to the Mughal court, the Jesuit João de Abreu. The viceroy wanted the padre to make the emperor aware of the ‘great friendship that had always been maintained by the Portuguese nation and his Crown, as well as the zeal, and attention which this Estado had always sought to increase this friendship’. As an example of Goa’s interest in the Mughal empire, Padre Abreu should remind the emperor of the ‘gallantries’ (finezas) made by several viceroys and Estado officials to the nawabs and vassal princes of the empire, such as the concession of free Portuguese naval passports and military support.30

However, from the 1710s onwards, the Portuguese authorities perceived that Delhi’s power was facing a process of change. In a letter to João V, Viceroy Vasco Fernandes César de Menezes considered that the ‘power of the Mughal is only formidable in India more because of the greatness of his empire, than by the worth of

28 Machado, Relaçãó da Posse, p. 15.
30 Historical Archives of Goa (HAG), Regimentos, 1426, ‘Instruçãó que se deu ao Padre João de Abreu da Companhia de Jesus para os negocios que foi propor e alcançar d’El Rey Mogor’, f. 64v.
his nation’. Despite the political instability and military decline faced by Delhi, the Estado still regarded the Mughals as important actors who shared similar concerns and interests. The crisis of the Mughal Empire was often regarded as temporary, and the apparent vast financial and military resources at the disposal of the emperor led Lisbon to instruct viceroys to maintain a close relation with the emperor and the nawabs who enjoyed more power and prestige. Indeed, César de Menezes, as well as his predecessors and other Portuguese senior colonial officials, still advocated the reinforcement of the close ties between Goa and Delhi. The viceroy often presented the Mughal emperor as a ‘friend of the Portuguese nation’, and alerted João V to the fact that the Mughal expansionist campaigns under Aurangzeb resulted in a rather dangerous proximity of the Mughal territory to the lands of the Estado, making ‘necessary, from our side, to maintain all the attention and good correspondence with this monarch’. Menezes’s careful approach was in harmony with a long diplomatic tradition followed by Lisbon. When confronted with Asian rulers who had effective military and territorial power, as the Great Mughal, the Portuguese favoured a sophisticated diplomatic approach, similar to the one which was used in the relations with European powers such as England, France, Holland or Rome. Almost all viceroys pursued a friendly policy towards the Great Mughal, writing regularly to the emperor, and sending embassies and envoys to Agra or Delhi. This strategy was successful thanks to several Portuguese personalities who lived at the Mughal court and that often represented the interests of Goa, such as the Jesuit fathers António Magalhães, José da Costa and João de Abreu, and Juliana Dias da Costa, a Portuguese woman who lived most of her life at the Mughal court as a protégé and a maid of honour of the imperial family.

Goa was also forced to adjust its Mughal policy to the emergence of the autonomous nizamat or Nawabi state, which operated under Mughal sovereignty. The diplomatic contacts between the Portuguese and the Mughal emperor were often troubled by these new actors who often intercepted the routes of the Portuguese envoys.

\[31\text{Doc. XII, }\text{Uma Dona Portugueza na Córte do Grão-Mogol: Documentos de 1710 e 1719 precedidos d'um esboço histórico das relações políticas e diplomáticas entre o Estado da Índia e o Grão-Mogol nos séculos XVI-XVII ed. Ismael Gracias (Nova Goa: Imprensa Nacional, 1907), p. 124.}\]

\[32\text{Ibid., p. 124.}\]

\[33\text{For a detailed information on these actors see for example }\text{Uma dona portugueza na Córte do Grão-Mogol: documentos de 1710 e 1719 precedidos d'um esboço histórico das relações políticas e diplomáticas entre o Estado da Índia e o Grão-Mogol nos séculos XVI- XVIII ed. J.A. Ismael Gracias (Nova Goa: Imprensa Nacional, 1907) and Boletim da Filmoteca Ultramarina Portuguesa (BFUP). Volume 46 (1984).}\]

in the hope of arresting them and receiving a considerable ransom to fund their military and economic activities.\textsuperscript{35} The increasing influence of the nawabs forced the Portuguese authorities to develop a new Mughal policy in the 1720s based on regular contacts with nawabs who were still loyal to the Mughal emperor, or who enjoyed a large autonomy sanctioned by Delhi. An example of the decline of the influence of the Mughal emperor in Goa’s foreign policy is the Mughal correspondence of the Marquis of Alorna which was only addressed to nawabs and generalissimos.

The rise of the Marathas began with the emergence of Sivagi (1627-1680), a species of \textit{caudillo} who was able to unify the Maharashatra communities towards an independence war based on the defence of Hinduism against the Muslim Mughals. Sivagi’s heirs were not able to continue his success, and the government of the new empire relied on the increasing influential Peshawa dynasty founded by Balagi Vishvanath Bhat (1712-1719), a Chitparan Brahman. Under the years of the Peshawar Baji Rao I (1719-1740), the Marathas enjoyed a period of important victories against the Mughals and the Estado da Índia.\textsuperscript{36}

After the domination of Indian territories, the Marathas wanted to consolidate their power and prestige with victory over a European power. A victory against the EIC or the Estado da Índia was regarded by Shahu as a crucial aspect to secure his position, which was facing some opposition from other Maratha feudal lords. From 1733 onwards, the Marathas started several hostile actions against Bombay and Goa, forcing the English to propose a defensive alliance to Goa which was never agreed.\textsuperscript{37} In 1734, the Maratha opened three fronts against the Estado, besieging Chaul, Bassein and Goa. The kingdom of Sunda was also invaded, and the rajah was forced to cut the rice supplies and join the Maratha attacks against the Estado. At the end of the year, the island of Salcete and the key fort of Sabayo were occupied by Maratha troops, causing serious damages to the chains of food supply to Goa, Bassein and Damão. This first Maratha invasion of the Provincia do Norte was contained in March 1735 thanks to

\textsuperscript{35} HAG, Livro das Monções do Reino (MR) 72, “Carta de Sua Magestade ao Vice-Rei D. Rodrigo da Costa, 14/12/1707”, f. 27.
Bombay’s mediation, but the problems faced by the Portuguese in stopping the Maratha incursions were regarded with apprehension in Europe. A Jesuit review of 1735 written by Brother António Gablesperger dramatically mentioned that ‘India is aflame with war’, suggesting that the end of the Portuguese presence, as well as the existence of the Jesuit missions, was near. In 1737, the *Província do Norte* was invaded again by the Maratha, who conquered the fortress of Tana in the same year, initiating a new war between Goa and Poona. In 1739, the Marathas invaded Damão and confiscated the local rice production destined for Goa. The Estado’s capital was now with only two months of food reserves. At the same time, the forts of Margão and Cuncolim were lost, and the fortress of Rachol sieged, while the Sawants of Wadi invaded Bardez, and killed all Portuguese troops. In April, most of the *Província do Norte* was lost, and Chaul found itself under a heavy Angria attack. In May, the population of Bassein surrendered to the Marathas, and was evacuated by British vessels to Bombay, where most refugees would definitely settle.

After the fall of Bassein, the Marathas intensified the siege of Goa, isolating the capital, and forcing Sandomil to open negotiations with Poona, under British mediation. A peace treaty was signed on 18 September 1740. The Estado da Índia was obliged to pay a large compensation to Poona, and admit the loss of the *Província do Norte*. The Marathas, in their turn, agreed to not occupy Salsete and Bardez, or the fort of St. Jerome near Damão. Poona also gave to Goa the Naer Pragana – an area of vital importance for the survival of Damão. The treaty also included the provision that Sunda would be a tributary kingdom of Poona, and that Maratha troops were allowed to be in Pondá, as well as the Portuguese trade with the Ghatas. The outcome of the Luso-Maratha wars was dreadful for the Portuguese. The military prestige of the Portuguese was deeply shaken in front of local and European powers, and the defensive lines of Goa were extremely weakened and at the mercy of an external attack.

1739 was, indeed, the *annus horribilis* of Portuguese India and, according to historians such as Ernestine Carreira and Francisco Bethencourt, the beginning of the Estado’s transformation from a European maritime power into a regional power.

Before the pressure from its Asian and European rivals, the Portuguese authorities

---

40 Ibid., p. 75.
41 Ibid., p. 62.
opted, from the tenure of the marquis of Louriçal onwards, to abandon the dispersed *conquistas* of the past and concentrate the Estado’s military forces and territories around the region of Goa in a territory measuring 3,600 square kilometres. Lisbon’s plans for India represented a new paradigm of empire. The Crown decided to abandon the traditional network of maritime trade routes and ports, favouring now a territorial implantation based on factors of economic viability, geographical position and military/political interest.

**Eighteenth-century Goa: assessment of the historiography of a rather obscure theme**

The eighteenth century was for several decades of the twenthieth century regarded by historians as an inferior or an uninteresting period of the Portuguese presence in India. The first stages of Portuguese overseas expansion and the victories obtained in India during the sixteenth century by colonial heroes such as Vasco da Gama, Francisco de Almeida, Afonso de Albuquerque or João de Castro had always been more attractive to Portuguese and other historians than the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the times when the empire was no longer able to face the challenges posed by other powers. The American historian Glenn Ames complained about the cliché ‘everyone loves a winner’ for this state of affairs. Indeed, during the long years of the *Estado Novo* dictatorial regime (1933-1974), the country’s history was often studied and presented through a nationalist view, which was more concerned with exalting the supposed moments of national glory and neglecting the periods of crisis and decline. In the historiography of the Estado da Índia, the sixteenth century was therefore regarded for many years as the ‘golden age’ of Portugal, and the basis for national myths which were explored by the regime’s propaganda, while the ‘dark age’ which started from the first half of the seventeenth century was neglected. As Jorge Flores observed in his doctoral thesis, the seventeenth and the eighteenth century are almost a ‘desert’ in the historiography of the Portuguese Empire in Asia. Until the mid 1980s, few works were published on this

---

43 Lopes, *Goa Setecentista*, p. 29.
period. The rare exceptions were Alexandre Lobato’s *Relações Luso-Maratas*, José de Oliveira Boléo’s article, ‘A Incorporação das ‘Novas Conquistas’ no Estado da Índia (Épocas de D. João V e D. José)’, and Manual Artur Norton’s biography of the marquis of Alorna, *D. Pedro Miguel de Almeida Portugal*. The timing of these publications coincided with the diplomatic offensive against Delhi orchestrated by the Portuguese regime after the 1961 invasion of Goa. Lobato’s work on the relations between the Portuguese and the Marathas, for example, was the product of the author’s participation in the Portuguese mission at the International Court of Justice, which presented the Indian 1954 invasion of the enclave of Nagar-Havely as illegal. Boléo followed the regime’s nationalist view and described the brief period of military resurgence of the Estado after the fall of the Provincia do Norte which resulted in the conquest of the territories controlled by Sawantvandi and the Marathas. The *Novas Conquistas* were presented as a resurgence of the Estado, and Joaime Indian policy as a ‘policy of peace with the neighbours without damaging the prestige of the Portuguese’.

Norton’s biography followed the regime’s appreciation for colonial heroes and it is close to a twentieth century hagiography of Alorna, although the author was able to relate the viceroy’s actions with the evolution of the Indian political scene in the 1740s. Another important work published during the Estado Novo years which would influence the current vision of eighteenth century Goa was Jaime Cortesão’s *O Ultramar Português Depois da Restauração*. According to Cortesão, after 1740 the Portuguese Crown, thanks to the military campaigns initiated by the Marquis of Louriçal, entered into a new expansionist chapter in the history of Goa which had quadrupled the Estado’s territory and contributed to ‘restore the prestige which had been lost’.

António da Silva Rêgo’s collection of essays, *O Ultramar Português no Século XVIII*, also presents a throughout synthesis of the transformations faced by the Estado da Índia during the reign of João V based on the impact of the territorial losses to the Marathas in the re-shaping of the territorial presence of the Portuguese in India.

More recently, the eighteenth century has caught the attention of some Portuguese historians who, following Cortesão’s vision, studied this period as a time of

---


change in the territorial, demographic and administrative structures of the Estado da Índia. This thesis has been developed since the 1990s by the contributions of Joaquim Romero de Magalhães, Francisco Bethencourt, Ernestina Carreira and Maria de Jesus dos Mártires Lopes.49

A scholar engaged in research into the second half of the eighteenth century, Maria de Jesus dos Mártires Lopes, had studied the impact of the Novas Conquistas in the daily life of Goa. Although Lopes’s work is essentially concerned with the Pombal years (1750-1777) and the reign of Mary I, her Goa Setecentista: Tradição e Modernidade (1750-1800) argues that the 1740s were a turning point in the history of the Portuguese Empire in Asia, introducing a new conception of the organization and objectives of the Estado da Índia. This was the product of a military and diplomatic process which aimed to create a ‘territorial unity’ and ‘a territory with an autonomous life and with its own rhythm of development’.50 This new Goan territory, according to Lopes, promoted the introduction of social reforms inspired by the spirit of the enlightenment such as the extinction of the Goan Inquisition, the equal status of non-Christian population, or the appointment of locals to the colonial administration.

Joaquim Romero Magalhães’s chapter “As Tentativas de Recuperação Asiática” for the third volume of the História da Expansão Portuguesa edited by Francisco Bethencourt and Kirti Chaudhuri, presents a good synthesis of the Portuguese political and economic presence in Asia in the eighteenth century. For Magalhães, the Portuguese Crown had lost control of areas which were considered crucial for its colonial projects to the EIC and the VOC, and was forced to pursue an active diplomacy in India to secure the existence of the Estado da Índia. The Crown is also presented as facing an impasse before the intention to preserve a colony which was considered to be the ‘relic’ of the empire, and its incapacity to improve the military, administrative and economic capacity of the Estado.51 Magalhães also describes the military activities of Goa as ‘defensive wars’ concerned with maintaining the authority of the Portuguese Crown, but does not make any mention of expansionist campaigns such as the 1728

50 Lopes, Goa Setecentista, p. 30.
expedition to recapture Mombasa. Regarding the economic activities of the Estado, Magalhães considers that in spite of the relegation of India to a ‘secondary’ position in the empire’s commerce before the Brazilian gold, diamonds and tobacco, the Carreira da India still enjoyed some relevance. Lisbon received from Goa and Diu precious stones, cinnamon, pepper, cotton, tapestries, furniture and saltpetre. Regarding the geostrategic evolution of the Portuguese presence in India, Francisco Bethencourt’s chapter on the Estado da Índia in the same volume of the História da Expansão Portuguesa argues that the eighteenth century was a ‘period of radical changes in the configuration and functioning of the Estado da Índia’ caused by the competition of other powers and military conflicts. In other words, the transformations of the Estado da Índia were a consequence or a reaction to the activities of the Mughal Empire, the Marathas, the EIC and the Compagnie des Indes – political actors which, according to Bethencourt, had ‘dictated the rules of the [imperial] game’. Bethencourt’s chapter is based on a perspective close to the long durée and gives special attention to the expansionist process of the Novas Conquistas which started in 1740 and lasted until the end of the century. This process allowed for the first time in the history of the Estado the promotion of a territory with a sustainable economy and well-defined and protected borders. Bethencourt relates the evolution of the Estado with the balance of power between the Portuguese, the Mughals, the Marathas and the Omanis, which had led to a ‘decadence of the territories between the 1720s and the 1730s’. These years were also a period when the local powers started to assimilate the technological innovations of the Europeans. The survival of the Estado is also associated with the reinforcement of the Anglo-Portuguese alliance, which allowed the Estado to take advantage of the ascendancy of the EIC at a moment when the Dutch and the French presence in India were entering a period of decline.

In her chapter for the volume of the Nova História da Expansão Portuguesa, Ernestina Carreira, a Portuguese historian who studies the interaction between Goa and the French Compagnie des Indes, suggests that between 1720 and 1820 the Estado went through a period of transition which should be considered the ‘third epoch of the

---

52 Ibid., p. 44.
53 Ibid., p. 44.
55 Ibid., p. 250.
56 Ibid., p. 256.
57 Ibid., pp. 257-258.
History of the Estado da Índia. This third epoch was dominated by the dismantling of the old organization of the Estado and the stabilization of the Goan territory between 1720 and 1750. According to Carreira, until 1717 the priority of the Estado was to recover its position in the Persian Gulf and eliminate the Omani influence in the Indian Ocean. However, the decline of Safavid rule in Persia, the Omani civil war and the emergence of the Marathas forced the Estado to redefine its priorities. The final chapter of Goa’s ambitions in the Indian Ocean was the failed attempt to recapture Mombasa in 1728-1729. For Carreira, the 1720s and the 1730s were years of progressive decline in the Estado’s control of its coast due to several attacks instigated by local potentates such as Sawantvandi, the Angria clan and the Marathas of Satara. Goa was also politically isolated from the other powers. Bombay and its borders were throughout this period a constant cause of conflict between the Estado and the EIC. Until the 1720s, the relations between Goa and the French Compagnie des Indes was also turbulent. The proximity of the French possessions in the Indian Ocean with Mozambique and the Portuguese participation in the Spanish War of Succession against the Bourbon cause raised several tensions. The ascendency of the EIC, however, was behind the establishment of close ties between Goa and Pondicherry. Like Bethencourt, Carreira also argues that the successful Maratha invasion of the Provincia do Norte (1737-1739) provoked the dismantling of the Estado, comparing the impact of the fall of Bassein in 1739 to the Dutch conquest of Cochin in 1663. The 1740s were, therefore, a period of reorganisation of the Estado based on a coherent territorial expansion concerned with acquiring territories around Goa which would protect the Estado’s capital from enemy attacks. This strategy was labelled by Carreia as the ‘construction of a continental Estado’, since it was no longer based on a network of port cities.

The economic evolution of the Estado da Índia during the eighteenth century has been studied by Luís Frederico Antunes, who has highlighted the importance of East Africa for the Portuguese trade in the Indian Ocean and the participation of Banyan merchants. Carmen Radulet’s analysis and critical editions of the works of the Goan

---

59 Ibid., p. 67.
60 Ibid., pp. 70-71.
61 Ibid., p. 75.
62 Ibid., p. 91.
adventurer, diplomat and political thinker, Dom António José de Noronha, were also an important contribution to the historiography of eighteenth-century Goa. The tenure of the Marquis of Alorna has also been recently reviewed by Filipe do Carmo Francisco, who in his *O Primeiro Marquês de Alorna: Restaurador da Índia Portuguesa (1744-1750)* relates the successful policies followed by the viceroy in Goa with the ascension of the House of Alorna and Assumar in the Portuguese court. Paulo Teodoro de Matos’s works on the demographic changes of *ancien regime* Goa are also quite useful in understanding the impact of the transformations of the eighteenth century. The evolution of the military presence of the Portuguese in Asia during the Joane years has been studied by the Singaporean historian Teddy Sim Yong Huei. In his article “*War and Diplomacy in the Estado da Índia, 1707-1750*”, Huei identifies the main goals of the Joane diplomacy in India, but does not relate them to the transformation faced by the Estado and with João’s imperial project. Although concerned with another period of the history of the Portuguese presence in Asia, Stefan Halikowski-Smith’s article “*The friendship of kings was in the ambassadors*: Portuguese diplomatic embassies in Asia and Africa during the 16th and 17th centuries” made an important contribution to the study of the diplomatic practices of the Estado da Índia by exploring the embassies organised by the Portuguese authorities as a form of ritual and social interaction between Europeans and Asians. Halikowski-Smith highlights the differences between the diplomatic practices followed by the Portuguese in Europe and Asian diplomatic etiquette, as well as the attempts made by the Estado to reconcile them. The categories, origins and interests of the diplomatic agents (missionaries,
merchants, renegades, and emigrants) were also carefully studied and related to the objectives followed by the Portuguese authorities in India, China or Japan. 68

Concerning the rites and ceremonies of the Estado da Índia, the work of Catarina Madeira Santos, ‘Goa é a chave de toda a Índia’: perfil político da capital do Estado da Índia, is still the only one which has explored the use of instruments of symbolic power by the Portuguese authorities in India, although the main concern of the author was to analyse the processes behind the political and institutional centrality of Goa in the Estado da Índia during the sixteenth century. Santos’s study of the sixteenth-century viceregal ceremonies argues that there was an interpenetration between the royal political body and the viceroyalty. 69

Compared with the historiography of the diplomatic relations between Lisbon and the other European courts, little is known of the non-European diplomatic relations of the Joanine court. Diplomacy during the reign of João V was the focus of Eduardo Brazão’s works. However, his three major works – Portugal no Tratado de Utrecht, 1712-1715, Dom João V e a Santa Sé: As relações externas de Portugal com o governo pontifício de 1706 a 1750, and the two volumes Relações Externas de Portugal, Reinado de D. João V – were based on European diplomacy, especially on relations with the Vatican. 70 Despite the focus on European affairs, Brazão published in 1948 a description of the diplomatic relations between China and Portugal between 1516 and 1753 71. This work, however, was essentially a description of the Portuguese embassies to Beijing and, with the exception of the Padroado Real, does not explore the political relations between the Emperor and João V. Rui Bebiano’s Dom João V – Poder e Espectáculo highlights the diplomatic aspects of the Joanine ostentation, but is essentially a work dedicated to royal ostentation under the influence of Norbert Elias’ Court Society. 72

A pioneer work on the Portuguese diplomacy in India in the eighteenth century was J. A. Ismael Gracias’s Uma dona portugueza na corte do Grão Mogol. Documentos

---

68 Stefan Halikowski-Smith, "‘The friendship of kings was in the ambassadors’: Portuguese diplomatic embassies in Asia and Africa during the 16th and 17th centuries’, Portuguese Studies, Vol. 22, Nº. 1 (2006), pp. 101–134.
70 Eduardo Brazão, Portugal no Tratado de Utrech, 1712-1715 (Lisbon: Lucas, 1933); Eduardo Brazão Dom João V e a Santa Sé: As relações externas de Portugal com o governo pontifício de 1706 a 1750 (Coimbra:Coimbra Editora, 1937); Eduardo Brazão Relações Externas de Portugal, Reinado de D. João V, 2 Vol., (Oporto: Civilização, 1938).
71 Eduardo Brazão, Apontamentos Para a História das Relações Diplomáticas de Portugal com a China, 1516-1753 (Lisbon: Agência Geral das Colónias, 1949).
de 1710 a 1719 precedidos d’um esboço historico das relações políticas e diplomáticas entre o Estado da Índia e o Grão Mogol nos séculos XVI-XVIII, a study of the influence of Juliana Dias da Costa, a Mughal courtesan of Portuguese origin, in the relations between Goa and Delhi. Gracias, however, probably due to the influence of Ranke’s methodology, only presented a brief summary of the correspondence exchanged by Juliana with the Portuguese authorities. Panduronga Pissurlencar’s Agentes da Diplomacia Portuguesa na Índia: Hindus, Muçulmanos, Judeus e Parsees (Bastora-Goa, 1952) is another pioneering work which offers a good account of the way in which the Portuguese authorities used members of the local populations as diplomatic agents during the sixteenth, seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Pissurlencar’s main work, however, is still The Portuguese and the Marathas, a work which was extremely criticised by Alexandre Lobato who accused it of having a pro-Maratha bias. Lobato accused Pissurlecar of being an ‘unsuspected panegyrist of the Marathas’ for omitting some sources and events in his work.\(^{73}\) Indeed, Pissurlencar’s work was based on his collaboration with the Indian authorities and the Goan independence movement during the case which opposed Portugal and India at the International Court of The Hague in 1954.\(^{74}\)

Apart from Pissurlencar’s work, António de Vasconcelos de Saldanha’s Iustum Imperium: dos Tratados como Fundamento do Império dos portugueses no Oriente: estudos de história do direito internacional e do direito português is the main reference on the history of the diplomatic contacts between Portuguese and Asians. Saldanha’s work is concerned with the treaties signed by the Estado with other Asian potentates and with the Portuguese classification of Asia peoples. Under the patronage of the Fundação Oriente it was published as A Embaixada de D. João V de Portugal ao Imperador Yongzheng, da China (1725-1728)\(^{75}\) a book edited by António Vasconcelos de Saldanha on the embassy led by Alexandre Metelo de Sousa de Meneses. Despite its contribution, this work does not fill the existing gap on the Portuguese non-European diplomacy of the period since it is centred on a description of the embassy. Considering the diplomatic contacts between the Viceroy in Goa and local rulers in the eighteenth century, the existing literature is almost non-existent. There are several works based on

\(^{73}\) Lobato, Relações Luso-Maratas, pp. 23, 34.
\(^{75}\) A Embaixada de D. João V de Portugal ao Imperador Yongzheng, da China (1725-1728) ed. António Vasconcelos de Saldanha (Lisbon: Fundação Oriente, 2005).
the sixteenth century diplomacy such as Zoltan Biedermann’s article “Portuguese Diplomacy in Asia in the sixteenth century”\textsuperscript{76} and Jorge Flores’s works on Ceylon and the Mughal Empire.\textsuperscript{77} Biedermann’s article is an important summary of the development of the Estado da Índia’s diplomacy throughout the sixteenth century. The article presents the first decades of the sixteenth century as period of ‘diplomatic apprenticeship’ which allowed the Portuguese to develop, especially during the tenure of Afonso de Albuquerque, a diplomatic language which could be easily accepted (or interpreted) by Asian rulers and diplomats. Biedermann highlights the influence of conflicts between the strategies of the Portuguese Crown and the private interests of some agents in the Portuguese Asian diplomacy, and gives special importance to the role played by ‘pomp and circumstance’ in the construction of a prestigious image of the Portuguese Crown in Asia. As Biedermann notes, in face of the complex and sometimes hostile scenario ‘(...) it was absolutely essential for the Portuguese to build up a larger-than-life image of political greatness and military power in order to be taken seriously’.\textsuperscript{78}

Reputation and Survival: research question and aims

How was Goa able to present the Portuguese king as an imperial ruler while the Indian political scene faced several transformations which questioned the existence of the Estado da Índia? This question summarises the aim of this thesis. Indeed, what is proposed is an exploration and analysis of how one of the European powers established in India presented itself to local powers and how it reacted to the political transformations of the subcontinent in the first half of the eighteenth century.

The contradiction between the conversion of the Estado da Índia from an expansionist European power into a minor actor in the subcontinent’s political scene and João V’s ambition to present Portugal in Europe as a real imperial power was a


\textsuperscript{78} Zoltan Biedermann, “Portuguese Diplomacy in Asia in the Sixteenth Century”, pp. 22-23.
problem which could not be easily solved. João and his viceroys were confronted with an issue which concerned several early modern European political writers: how to preserve one’s reputation? Thomas Hobbes, for example argued that ‘the world is governed by opinion’, and Diego Saavedra Fajardo in his *Empresas Políticas* warned rulers to be aware that ‘if the Crown is not firmly planted on this central column of reputation, it will fall to the ground’. Influenced by this view of political affairs, a seventeenth century Portuguese Viceroy, the Count of Linhares, once wrote that it was through reputation ‘that Empires and potentates are sustained’.

Influenced by this view of political affairs, a seventeenth century Portuguese Viceroy, the Count of Linhares, once wrote that it was through reputation ‘that Empires and potentates are sustained’. Linhares’s comment encapsulates the main concern of almost all diplomatic efforts and practices of the Estado da Índia in presenting a powerful image of the Portuguese Crown. Before the growing perception of a declining Estado da India, Goa became increasingly obsessed about maintaining its ‘golden’ image. It was believed that any recognition of the weaknesses of the Portuguese in India would affect the royal *ditado* and the Estado’s ‘majestic’ image, besides encouraging Goa’s enemies to take advantage of its fragilities.

There was also another important reason for the Estado’s efforts to maintain a prestigious image – the king. The distance that separates Portugal from India impeded local rulers from having a direct contact and knowledge of the Portuguese monarchs, and therefore the Estado should guarantee that they would experience the supposed power and prestige of the Portuguese Crown whenever they contacted Goa.

The subject of this work breaks new ground. As mentioned earlier, the existing historiography of eighteenth-century Goa had identified the existence of a process of transformation of the nature of the Estado da Índia, but had not explored how the Portuguese authorities managed this process, especially during the Joanine reign. During this period, the changes were imposed not by the development of a new colonial policy defined by Lisbon, but by the combination of events which had, in most cases, an external origin, such as the decline of the Mughal Empire.

Over the next pages it will be suggested that the diplomatic apparatus created by the Estado da India not only aimed at securing the interests and the survival of the Portuguese presence in Indian Ocean, but was a part of a strategy designed to promote a prestigious reputation of the Portuguese Crown which would help Lisbon to maintain


the credibility of the royal *ditado* in spite of the ascendancy of other European imperial powers. Besides a detailed analysis and description of the processes and circumstances in which the diplomatic contacts between local sovereigns and the Portuguese colonial administration were established, the rituals and language of the diplomatic ceremonies with Asian sovereigns will be examined in detail to give a precise account of the ways in which the Portuguese diplomats presented the Portuguese Crown to Asian rulers.

This thesis is divided into two sections. The first section questions how the Estado da Índia presented the Portuguese monarch and the imperial ideal of the Crown before the local potentates through an analysis of the rituals and diplomatic protocols adopted by the Estado da Índia. Chapter One analyses the rites and ceremonies related to the viceroy and explores its role as the delegate of the Portuguese king. Chapter Two studies the diplomatic protocol of the Estado da Índia, especially the rules related to diplomatic receptions and the correspondence between Goa and the *Reis Vizinhos*. Chapter Three analyses the *sagoate*, an important gift-exchange ritual which was behind a regular diplomatic correspondence between the Portuguese authorities and their Indian counterparts. The second section questions the effectiveness of the efforts made by the Portuguese authorities to materialise the Joanine imperial ideal through an analysis of three case-studies. Chapter Four explores the attempts made by the Estado to create a group of vassal rulers which would support the Portuguese presence in the subcontinent and support the monarchs’ claims to be ‘Lords of Conquest’. Chapter Five is a survey of the efforts made by Goa to enforce the *cartaz*, the Portuguese system of naval passports in the West Indian Ocean, which was an essential instrument to validate the title of ‘Lord of Navigation’. Chapter Six describes and analyses one of the main goals of João V’s colonial policy, the conquest of Mombasa and the control of the Swahili Coast, a project which aimed to revitalise the Estado’s economy and recover the military prestige lost in the seventeenth century. Finally, in the conclusion discussion focuses on whether or not the strategies of the Estado da Índia were successful and whether or not they had any elements which were specifically Portuguese.

**Sources**

Despite the scarcity of works in the eighteenth century, the existing sources for this period are abundant. The only problem is probably the state of their condition, especially in the Goan archives where the tropical climate has caused considerable
damage. This research was based on documents from Portugal (Biblioteca Nacional de Portugal, Torre do Tombo, Arquivo Histórico Ultramarino, Academia das Ciências de Lisboa), Great Britain (British Library) and India (Historical Archives of Goa). The Biblioteca Nacional de Portugal (BNP) in Lisbon contains a rich collection of state papers (royal orders and letters, letters and reports from colonial administrators, diplomatic correspondence, etc.); historical miscellanies about different events of the period; as well as panegyrics and accounts related to the actions of viceroys and the military activity of the Portuguese in the region. The Biblioteca da Ajuda and the archive of the Academia das Ciências in Lisbon also possess a good collection of letters and reports written by missionaries and colonial administrators.

The most important archive for this research was the Arquivo Histórico Ultramarino (AHU). This contains all the orders, decrees, grants, dispatches, projects and reports related to the Portuguese colonial administration, including the papers related to the decisions taken by the Overseas Council and the king. Despite being the depository of the Portuguese colonial administration, the documents of the AHU, with the exception of the Brazilian papers, are not catalogued. Research was also carried out at the Historical Archives of Goa (HAG) which possess all the documents related to the administration of the Estado da Índia. Collections such as the Livro das Monções (reports, letters and administrative documents sent to Lisbon), Livro dos Reis Vizinhos (the diplomatic correspondence between Goa and local potentates), Livro dos Segredos (classified instructions to diplomatic envoys and military officers), and the Cartas & Ordens (non-classified instructions from viceroys to diplomats, military officers, factors, missionaries) were of particular importance for this dissertation. The collections of Portuguese documents of the India Office Records of the British Library was also studied, as well as the abstracts of letters received from Bombay.

Primary printed sources such as the collection of diplomatic treaties signed by the Estado da Índia with Asian and East African rulers organised by Júlio Biker in the 1880s, the collections of diplomatic documents taken from the Livro das Monções organised by A. B. Bragança Pereira in the 1930s and Panduranga Pissurulencar in the 1950s were also of great importance, as well as the printed editions of two volumes of the Livro das Monções published by the Boletim da Filmoteca Ultramarina.81 Other

relevant printed primary sources were the coeval accounts and panegyrics concerning embassies and viceroys which often presented the imperial ideology of the Portuguese Crown and the perception that Lisbon had of the political theatre that was India and the Indian Ocean.
2. The King’s Alter Ego: The public image of the viceroy

Introduction

Following the Spanish experience in Naples, the Portuguese Crown created in 1505 the Viceroyalty of the Estado da Índia to establish a powerful representation of the monarch in Asia, and offer to the network of port cities under Portuguese control a head of command that would give some strategic and institutional coherence. The Viceroy was designed to be a political agent with quasi-monarchical powers which allowed him to define economic and military policies, exercise justice, and sign peace treaties on behalf of the King. In most royal instructions to the Viceroy, the King stressed that any act or decision made by a Viceroy was ‘as if it had [been] done by myself in person, and agreed and signed in my presence’.¹ This relationship between King and Viceroy was regulated by the *carta de poder*, a species of contract that defined the powers and functions that the holder of the post had to respect during his three-year mandate in Goa. The *carta* allowed the Viceroy to represent the Crown with all the powers of the monarch, especially to declare war and celebrate peace with ‘all the Kings and Lords of India’. The *carta de poder* conferred vast legislative, diplomatic and military powers on the Viceroy which contributed to the creation of what Max Weber would define as a charismatic leader. For the German sociologist, charisma was a ‘gift of grace’ or a supernatural property that allowed individuals to exercise authority and demand obedience.² The *carta de poder* and the King’s signature on it was the Viceroy’s ‘gift of grace’. These two elements which had the power to transform a ‘mere’ metropolitan fidalgo or grandee into an emulation or *alter ego* of the monarch with the natural right to demand and impose obedience.

To consolidate the Viceroy’s charismatic aura and ensure that he would be presented and perceived as the equivalent of a sovereign, the Crown offered to holders of the post three symbols that would establish an immediate association between the holders of the post and the monarch: the *cadeira de espaldas*, the *bastão de mando* and the *palio*. The *cadeira de espaldas* was meant to be an equivalent to the royal throne, an imposing and lavishly decorated chair that could only be used by Viceroy (interim governors were not allowed to use it) in public and private ceremonies. The *bastão de mando* (literally

---


baton of command) was an equivalent to the royal sceptre; it was designed to be the ultimate symbol of viceregal authority and a reflection of the special nature of the post. The palio [canopy] was a symbol of dignity that was exclusive to monarchs and members of the Church’s elite, and was extended to the Viceroy to demonstrate in all public and private ceremonies in which he took part the authority and power enjoyed by the Viceroyalty.

As a representative of the powers and sovereignty of the Portuguese monarchy, the Viceroy became progressively associated with an image of power that was, sometimes, beyond the real influence of the Estado da Índia in the subcontinent. In the Livro das Fortalezas que a Coroa de Portugal tem nas partes da Índia (1635?), Portuguese Viceroyalty were presented as true monarchs who emulated the Portuguese monarch in Asia:

The Viceroyalties of India are the most revered and feared Kings of the Orient, [including] Moors and Gentiles, because all of them have a friendship with the Kings of Portugal, or are their subjects or vassals and almost all of them pay tributes, with respect for the sea trade over which the Portuguese are lords for the high power of their large fleets of galleys and vessels which impeded their [Asians’] navigations and commerce.³

In another work written in 1582, the anonymous Livro das Cidades e Fortalezas, the viceregal office was described ‘as the most prominent and authoritative and the most honourable post that any prince of the world could have, because of the greatness and importance of the State [Goa] where the Viceroyalties are obeyed and revered as Lords of many Kings and Princes, as well as for the power that they have…’.⁴

The face of Goa

The construction of the public image of the Viceroy began with the viceregal induction, a ceremony which was divided into two moments, the termo de posse (or entrega) and the entrada. In legal terms, the termo de posse was the more important stage of the viceregal ceremonial induction. The ceremony took place at the Franciscan College of Reis Magos, usually three days after the arrival of the new Viceroy, in order to avoid potential problems caused by the existence of two Viceroyalties. It consisted of the

³ Francisco Paulo Mendes da Luz, Livro das Fortalezas que a Coroa de Portugal tem nas partes da Índia (Lisbon: Centro de Estudos Historicos Ultramarinos, 1960), p. 6.
presentation of the Viceroy’s *carta de poder* and the offer from the *Secretario do Estado* and outgoing Viceroy of, respectively, the *termo de posse* (the document which gave the name to the ceremony) and the *bastão de mando*. Like the *carta de poder*, the *termo de posse* was a symbol of viceregal authority. This document, which listed the cities, towns, villages, fortresses, ships and soldiers possessed by the Estado, with a detailed description of their present state, was initially designed to introduce the Viceroy to the conditions of the Estado at the beginning of his tenure, but it rapidly became seen as a symbol of the might of the Portuguese in Asia and East Africa, a demonstration of the extension of the Portuguese empire and its military power.

An important feature of the *termo de posse* was its audience. At Reis Magos, the new Viceroy was confronted with a group of spectators formed by the religious, military and administrative elites of Goa. In a position of high visibility were the members of the *Conselho do Estado*, the General-Inquisitor and the *Vedor da Fazenda Real*, while the ‘lowest place’ was reserved for the municipal senators. On the *Epistola*, ‘at a place paralleled to the *Conselho do Estado*’, were the royal judges and the Chancellor. Close to them were the *prelados* ranked by order of seniority, while on the main stands of the church were the junior members of the administrative, religious and military apparatus of the *Estado da Índia*. This selection and rigid ordering of the audience also aimed to introduce the new Viceroy to the men with whom he would work alongside, creating a kind of *tableau vivant* of the Estado’s organisation, and creating some similarities between the viceregal induction and the metropolitan *Cortes*, the main legislative and advisory council of the Portuguese early modern monarchy. The audience of the *entrega* was a mirror of the social organisation of the *Estado da Índia*. The Bishop, the General-Inquisitor and the clerics who attended the ceremony represented the clergy. The members of the *Conselho do Estado*, who were all *Fidalgos de S. Magestade* [His Majesty’s Nobles] and members of the restricted Order of Christ, embodied the best of the Portuguese nobility; while the *vereadores* and the judges attended the *entrega* on behalf of the people. Indeed, the absence of Hindus or mixed raced Indo-Portuguese offered an image of a harmonious European and Christian (Catholic) society, which subscribed to Portuguese visions of the empire as a Christian and European enterprise.

Like other public entries involving monarchs, the viceregal *entrad a* was designed as the precise moment in which the incoming Viceroy was presented to the population.

---

5 Until the 1750s, Goa controlled Mozambique.
6 The *epistola* is the right side of an altar.
After the termo de posse and the official depart from office of his predecessor, the new Viceroy was now allowed to enter the city. Since the fixation of the court in Lisbon during João III’s reign, public entries were extremely rare in Portugal, and were an exclusive privilege of the monarch that was conceded to the Viceroy as the representative of the Crown. The Goan entries had two purposes: to introduce the new Viceroy to the entire city; and to present Goa’s expectations towards the new mandate – something which was assured by a public reading of speech, the *fala*, written by a distinguished Goan. The *entrada* was also organised to introduce new Viceroyos to local rulers. Indeed, most *reis vizinhos* would send embassies or write letters to congratulate the new Viceroy for his arrival, paving the way for a new cycle of diplomatic relations. For example, during his first tenure (1717-1720), the first act of the Count of Ericeira (later Marquis of Louriçal) was to reply to letters sent by the King of Calicut, the King of Tanor and the Sarsubhedar of Ponda immediately after his public entry.  

Dom Rodrigo da Costa’s diplomatic activities were also extremely intensive after his entry in Goa in 1707, writing several letters to the Rajah of Sonda, the King of Tanor, the vassal *dessais* of Goa, and VOC officials.

The ceremony obeyed a rigid *regimento* (set of rules) defined by the Crown, which wanted to secure its authority on what was considered to be a transplantation of the Portuguese capital to Asian territory. According to Lisbon’s instructions, the new Viceroy should be welcomed by the *Vereadores* of the last two terms and the *Ouvidor*, if any *Vereador* was unable to attend the ceremony. The *Vereadores* should carry a canopy with six handlers led by Goa’s *Procurador* with a red pole, and the Chancellor and the *Veador da Fazenda* (Administrator of the Treasury), who would carry a silver plate containing the city’s keys. This retinue was completed with the *Guarda da Câmara* carrying another silver plate with the Gospels and the *Livro dos Privilegios* (Book of Privileges); the judges and the *mesteres* (guilds). Following all these figures

---


8 The *dessais* were semi-autonomous feudatory chieftains who were obliged to serve their lord during times of war.

were ‘the citizens and (other) persons’. The entrada began in front of the Senado da Câmara, the headquarters of the municipality, where ‘all citizens and noble persons and Procuradores do Povo (the vereadores), would be called according to rank’. The viceregal parade also included a more popular or burlesque festival of ‘dances’ and ‘follies’, which aimed to attract large crowds and capture their attention throughout the ceremony.

This retinue would leave the Câmara in the direction of the quays, where the new Viceroy awaited. When the final destination was reached, the Vereador who was chosen to offer the city’s keys approached the Viceroy, kissed him and declared:

This very noble and always loyal city of Goa gives to Your Lordship the keys of its gates and of the loyal hearts of its inhabitants for with them, and with what they have [may they] serve Our Lord the King and Your Lordship so that Our Lord may give you many victories and [enable you to give] good services under your government for the [good] of the holy faith and the expansion of this state.

Such a speech was intended to remind the Viceroy of his obligations before the Crown, namely to expand the faith and the empire, and to render to the local population ‘good services’. The description of Goa as ‘very noble and always loyal’ was directed at the population to remind them of their civic and patriotic duties. The speech could be, therefore, interpreted as a contract where both parties (Viceroy and Goa) defined their mutual obligations. This agreement was sealed by an act of humility performed by the Viceroy. According to the rules defined by the regimento ‘it is usual that the Viceroy takes the keys, and after some words of appreciation to the city, returns them again to the captain’. By returning the keys, the Viceroy performed an act of humility which expressed his goodwill towards Goa, and respect for the city’s privileges and power – subject to no-one, except the Crown and God.

After the offer of the keys, the retinue would continue to the city’s gates, where the Viceroy would listen to a welcome speech, the fala, read by a citizen of importance. The symbolic power of the entrada was focused on the city’s gates. As Arnold van Gennep has pointed out, in cases in which there was what he considered to be a ‘magico-religious’ prohibition on entering a certain place or territory, as it happened in the

---

10 José F. Ferreira Mendes, Crónica dos Vice-Reis e Governadores da Índia (Imprensa Nacional: Goa, 1919), p. 466.
11 Ibid., p. 466.
12 Ibid., p. 466.
13 Ibid., p. 467.
viceregal entry, this was often indicated by signs such as statues, portals or walls which constituted a boundary.\(^{14}\) St. Catherine’s gate functioned in the *entrada* as such a portal, establishing a barrier that separated incoming Viceroyos from the city. The symbolism of St. Catherine’s gates was reinforced by a statue located in ‘the place where our victorious weapons commanded by the great Afonso de Albuquerque entered, whose statue adorns the best place of this superb monument’.\(^{15}\) By staging the ceremony in the same place where Albuquerque entered in Goa for the first time, and before his statue, that is his ‘eyes’, the *entrada* not only recreated the moment of the conquest of Goa as it also strengthened the association between the new Viceroy and Albuquerque, reminding the holders of the post of their responsibility to continue and preserve Albuquerque’s legacy. After the speech, the same Vereador who offered the keys would approach the Viceroy saying ‘may Your Lordship render honour and favour this city, due to the custom of making an oath to protect and execute all the privileges, honours and liberties that the King our Lord has given for its merit and services’. The viceregal oath to respect Goa’s royal privileges was a part of the myth of Golden Goa, a moment in which the capital of the Estado da Índia celebrated its majesty and importance.

The *regimento* was particularly concerned with decorative works. The areas crossed by the viceregal parade from the city’s gates to the quays were decorated with arches and flags, while the Viceroy’s Square and the Sabayo Square would be decorated with flags that topped poles adorned with flowers.\(^{16}\) The Goan authorities were instructed to ensure that all ships were decorated with flags and, if they possessed artillery, would participate in the cannon salutes. The gunsmiths’ workshops should have their front doors decorated with armour, spears, helmets and other weapons. And the windows of the houses should be adorned with tapestries, and the doors covered with flowers ‘in the richest manner that is possible’.\(^{17}\) The authorities should also choose four citizens, each to lead a company of 50 well-dressed and well-armoured soldiers that would welcome the Viceroy with gun salutes. The members of the goldsmiths’ guild were instructed to be well-dressed and offer some gold to the Viceroy, an obligation that was shared by the cloth merchants and artisans who were ordered to present gifts of fine cloths and crafts. Such gifts were an attempt to demonstrate to the Crown and the rivals of the Estado da

\(^{14}\) Arnold van Gennep, *The Rites of Passage* (London: Routledge, 2004), pp. 16-17.


\(^{16}\) Mendes, *Crónica dos Vice-Reis*, p. 469.

\(^{17}\) Ibid., p. 469.
Índia the wealth of Goa and how, despite the setbacks suffered by the Portuguese, the city was still as wealthy as in the times of the mythical Golden Goa.

Ostentation and conspicuous consumption were considered by the authorities and the population as an important instrument to conceal Goa’s ‘miserable state’. In a relação dedicated to Viceroy Marquis of Castelo-Novo, Monterroio Mascarenhas mentions that the marquis’ public entry in 1744 was staged in such a lavish way that ‘the vision of so many lights [diamonds] and the richness of the attires, denied the indigence in which this State lives’. Ambrosio Machado, who also wrote another account of Castelo-Novo’s arrival at Goa, after describing the naval parade led by the Viceroy, stated that this festa do mar was so lavish and splendid that ‘no one could infer the poverty to which the accidents of war had reduced [Goa]’. This contradiction revealed by Tomé Gomes Leal’s catastrophic words and the lavish display offered by the viceregal induction ceremonies was taken for granted by most Goans, and for the Portuguese Crown, which regarded ostentation as a crucial element in safeguarding Lisbon’s interests in India. Six years later, as a statement of the recovery of the arms and prestige of the Portuguese Crown, the last Joanine Viceroy, the Marquis of Távora, was received with a display of wealth and a military apparatus, which expressed an image of splendour and vitality. Távora’s induction, since it was staged during a period of recovery, seemed to be even more lavish than Castelo-Novo’s. One of Távora’s panegyrist, Francisco Raymundo Pereira, mentioned that on the day Távora arrived in Goa, the viceregal manchua was followed by a ‘shining fleet’ [luzida frota] formed by the ‘fidalguia, Nobility and Officers’. A new lavish manchua do Estado was especially built for his entrada, and the marquis of Alorna, to celebrate the entrada of his successor, decorated his accommodation with 60 torches, ‘a thing that for being rare in the Orient, caused much novelty’. And to increase the lavishness of the celebrations for Távora’s induction, between the posse and the entrada the Marquis offered banquets to celebrate his and the King’s birthday.

---

21 Ibid., p. 237.
The King’s alter ego

In order to give some credibility to the Viceroy’s royal nature and to the Estado’s claims of superiority, the Crown sought to control every action and gesture made by the Viceroy in his public and private life. Through the definition and establishment of precise rules for the behaviour of Viceroyos, Lisbon was able to model the head of the Estado da Índia according to a specific prototype of kingship which would make him immediately accepted and recognised by the Goan population and the local potentates as a legitimate and sovereign ruler, reinforcing the image of the Estado as a part of an imperial power. An important element in the construction of the public image of the Viceroy was the ceremonial rules which sustained his public and private life. Most of these rules were summarized in an undated document entitled *Cerimonial de que usaõ os Senhores V.Reys e Capitaens Generaes da India*, which was probably written during the final years of the mandate of the Marquis of Alorna (1744-1750). The *Cerimonial* provided a brief explanation of the rituals that sustained the public image of the Portuguese Viceroyos with precise instructions on how they should act in public and private. The document was particularly concerned with the ways in which the Viceroy should address the local nobility, and the members of the Estado’s administration.

The Archbishop, as the head of the Goan Church and the second public figure of the Estado da Índia, was the only one who had the privilege of being addressed as *Excellencia* [Your Excellency] by the Viceroy – a sign of the influence and power of the Church, as well as an element that reflected the image of Goa as the Rome of the Orient. Despite the concession of an honourable title, the Archbishop was relegated to a secondary role in the Estado’s protocol which transmitted an image of the submission of the head of the Church to the head of the State. If the Archbishop wished to visit the Viceroy he should send first an emissary to arrange a meeting for a convenient time. When the Archbishop arrived at the palace, the Viceroy waited for him at the first door of the saleta. When both were face-to-face, the Viceroy offered his left-hand to the Archbishop and led him to the saleta, ‘without any compliment’. Since greetings are an expression and recognition of a person’s identity, the refusal to greet someone might be seen as a statement which rejected any recognition of a person’s claim to a specific position in the social hierarchy.22 The ceremonial instruction to not greet the Archbishop was therefore an indication of the Viceroy’s superiority (as well as the Crown) over the

---

Church. At the saleta, the Viceroy was to be seated in the cadeira de espaldas under a canopy, while the Archbishop had the right to be seated on a cadeira de espaldas outside the canopy.\(^\text{23}\) Although Viceroyes were forbidden to visit members of the local society, they were allowed to dine with the Archbishop, as well as visit him in exceptional cases as when he was sick, to exchange Christmas greetings or during ‘particular businesses’ between the Estado and the Church. In each case, the Viceroy had to send a subaltern official to prepare the meeting. This procedure, as the Ceremonial pointed out, was similar to the Archbishop’s obligations before meeting the Viceroy, except in one aspect: ‘[while] the Archbishop requests an hour from the Viceroy, the latter determines the hour when he should make the visit’.\(^\text{24}\) Whenever the Viceroy participated in religious ceremonies at the Sé, the Archbishop was to welcome him at the main gates, giving his right-hand, while the other clergymen should bow as the Viceroy entered the Sé.

Those who had the foro de Fidalgo (noble status) were addressed as Mercê (Your Grace). During public ceremonies in which the Viceroy participated, the fidalgos were to attend the ceremony seated on a low chair (tamborete razo), which was to be located in some inferior place (peor lugar).\(^\text{25}\) The Crown also instructed Viceroyes to treat magistrates and clergymen in the same manner as the fidalgos (se trata como tivessem o foro de fidalgo). Ouvidores (judges) and factors should be addressed as Vos, even if they were fidalgos or had served the Estado in important positions (postos grandes). Those who had served the Crown in India in mayores Postos (high ranking posts) and did not belong to the aristocracy were treated by the Viceroy in an impersonal manner, without any particular form of address. A special form of treatment was, however, reserved for the small minority of Estado’s officials who obtained their posts through inheritance, and to whom was reserved the privilege of being addressed by the Viceroy as Senhoria (Your Lordship), as well as of being seated on a cadeira de espaldas in an inferior place.\(^\text{26}\) Despite the restrictions imposed on the contacts between Viceroyes and the local population, the Ceremonial allowed them to be compadres (friends) or godfathers of distinguished persons, but they were not allowed to be present at the ceremony, being represented by the captain of the guard or another person of distinction.

\(^{23}\) Academia das Ciências de Lisboa (ACL), Cod. 273 – Ceremonial de que usaõ os Senhores V.Reys e Capitaens Generaes da India, fol.3.

\(^{24}\) ACL, Cod. 273, f.3.

\(^{25}\) Ibid., f.1v.

\(^{26}\) Ibid., f.2v.
appointed by the Viceroy. Whenever a person of distinction was sick and the Viceroy wished to visit him or her, the visit had to be made by the Viceroy’s closest aides (the captain of the guard, the manchua’s captain or the lord steward).

On the King’s birthday, the Viceroy was obliged by the Ceremonial to offer a public banquet to the local nobility (mesa publica a nobreza) – an obligation was also extended to the local nobility, who were instructed to offer food at their table throughout the day – and invite the ‘persons of great distinction to the same act of hand-kissing [beija-mão]’ recreating the traditional hand-kissing ceremony that was staged in Lisbon during royal birthdays, when the entire court and state apparatus appeared before the King to kiss his hands and congratulate him. The importance of the King’s birthday and its symbolism as part of the Viceroy’s ritual roles was used by most Viceroys to consolidate their image as doppelgangers of the monarch. For example, after officially inaugurated his tenure of office, the Marquis of Alorna chose João V’s birthday for his first public entry in Goa, giving to this ceremony a truly royal apparatus. The symbolism of the King’s birthday was also manipulated by the Marquis of Távora, who according to Pereira ‘did not have any hesitation in following the example of his predecessor’. Other significant events relating to the royal family were also used as a pretext for the exhibition of viceregal power. Viceroy João Saldanha da Gama’s entry, for example, was staged on 13 November 1725, the same day on which the municipality organised luminarias to celebrate the birth of the infante Alexander.

The rigid rules imposed on Viceroys aimed to protect them from the conflicts involving different local groups of interest; and ensure that the Viceroy’s image would be supported by notions of royal dignity and superiority. By reducing the opportunities to interact with the local elites, and establishing precise rules of interaction between Viceroys and the Goan aristocracy, the Crown promoted a distance that aimed to avoid the formation of relations of familiarity between the Viceroy and the fidalguia, which were often feared due to the possibility of the emergence of a viceregal clique that could use its close access to the Estado’s ruler to obtain political and social advantages that would damage the local social and political order. The dangers posed by the local society were addressed by the Count of Ericeira’s instructions to his successor,

---

27 ACL. Cod. 273, f. 3v.
28 Ibid., f.3v.
29 Ibid., f.4v.
31 Moraes Pereira, Relação da Viagem, p. 221.
32 ACL. Cod. 547 – Noticias da India desde a monção de 1723, até a de 1726, f. 128v.
Francisco José de Sampaio e Castro, who was advised to not trust in anyone – ‘the men of India, for their most part, do not have any sincerity’ – and to favour a life of secrecy to protect his person and the Crown’s interests – ‘More than any other place, secrecy is the most important thing in India’.33

Like the Weberian charismatic leader, the head of the Estado da Índia needed to live apart from ‘the ordinary worldly attachments and duties’.34 The restrictions and discretion imposed by the Ceremonial created a wall of etiquette and precedence which aimed to protect the Viceroy and separate him from the rest of Goan society, contributing therefore to the creation of an image of a ruler whose distance from the public eye was a sign of his power. Distance was also a solution to protect the Viceroy from the ambiguity of being a quasi-monarchical figure, highlighting the different and superior position of the holder of the viceregal post. This distance, or the imposition of limits regarding the Viceroy’s interactional capacity seemed to be concerned in transforming his personality into a sacred thing. Indeed, it is possible to analyse the public image of the Portuguese Viceroys according to Durkheim’s observations on the sacred and the profane. As a ‘sacred thing’, the Viceroy was ‘set apart and surrounded by prohibitions’ which confirmed his superiority and ensured that he was able to perform his function as the King’s delegate.35

The Ceremonial contributed to the creation of a stereotyped image and lifestyle which allowed every incoming Viceroy to exercise his authority, and to be presented to local potentates in the same way as past Viceroys. However, in addition to imposing or creating a lifestyle, the Ceremonial was also an instrument of discipline which aimed to control the actions and personality of the holders of the viceregal post. Indeed, the restrictive nature of most rules led to a depersonalisation of the Viceroy, which forced him to erase his own personality in order to live as an ideal type of the monarch. As Pierre Bourdieu pointed out, delegates or representatives, such as the Viceroy, needed to be modelled according to the figure of the agent who granted them their position, in order to appropriate for themselves the agent’s power. To facilitate the identification between delegate and agent, the former has to ‘make a gift of his person’ to the agent, stating that his existence depends on the agent.36

33 Biblioteca Nacional de Portugal (BNP), Cod. 1445, Instrução que deixou o Conde da Ericeira Vice Rey e Capitam General da India A Francisco José de Sampayo e Castro que lhe foy succeder no dito emprego no anno de 1721, fs. 2-2v.
Oriental Rome

Religious ceremonies also played an important part in the construction of the Viceroy’s public image. Besides the Corpus Christi procession, the Viceroy took an active part in three other main religious feasts in Goa – St. Catherine’s day, St. Francis Xavier’s day and the feast of the Chagas de Christo (Christ’s wounds). According to sources such as the Epanaphora Indica, these festivities were moments in which high-ranking members of Goa’s political and social order were brought together. Led by the Viceroy and the Archbishop, the members of the State Council, royal judges, the higher clergy, and the local nobility appeared before the eyes of the city’s population and the foreign communities established in Goa, surrounded by a lavish and pompous ceremonial. However, the importance of the Goan religious festivities did not reduce the opportunities for conspicuous consumption and ecclesiastic and viceregal display. They were an essential part of one of the most important instruments of Portuguese colonialism – the Padroado Real, or the papal concession to the Portuguese Crown of the monopoly of missionary work in regions allocated to the Portuguese Crown by the treaty of Tordesillas. This monopoly was often used by the Portuguese authorities to secure their presence in regions where Lisbon did not have any formal or effective control. The foundation of the Propaganda Fide in 1622, which was allowed by Rome to act in the regions under the Padroado, was another setback faced by the Estado da Índia in the seventeenth century. Moreover, the French support for the Propaganda was regarded by Lisbon as a serious menace to the imperial ambitions of the Portuguese in Asia, and the actions of the Propaganda missionaries were often seen as an attack on the interests of the Portuguese Crown. The lavish celebrations of the Goan Church were therefore an attempt to secure the reputation of Goa as an Oriental Rome and the image of the Portuguese overseas dominions as an ‘emporium of faith and religion being among all nations, the one with the greatest devotion’, as the Brazilian born friar Apolinário da Conceiçăo wrote\(^\text{37}\), sending a message to Rome which demonstrated the successful work done by Goa for the glory of God and His Church. The Viceroy’s participation in these ceremonies was a demonstration of the Crown’s commitment to the expansion of Catholicism, as it was an attempt to follow in Goa the sacralisation of royal power promoted by João V in Lisbon, allowing the Viceroy to imitate the

monarch’s role as the Vicar of God – an image which was often used by the Portuguese authorities to establish a parallel between Portuguese monarchs and the Mughal emperors who, since the reign of Akbar, were often presented as spiritual leaders or quasi-divine agents.\textsuperscript{38}

St. Catherine’s day was of special importance to the Viceroy, since she was considered to be the patron saint of the city and the Viceroy. The relationship between St. Catherine’s and the Viceroyalty was forged by Afonso de Albuquerque, who chose that saint’s day to conquer Goa. The success of the Portuguese army during the siege and invasion of the city was associated with St. Catherine’s protection, and Albuquerque made her the patron saint of the city. The saint was celebrated with a procession which crossed the main streets of Goa, led by the Archbishop, who carried a relic of St. Catherine, and was attended by the Viceroy and the Estado’s military and bureaucratic apparatus, besides the high ranking members of the nobility and the clergy. The feast became, therefore, a moment which evoked the foundation of Portuguese Goa, and the city itself as the \textit{Golden Goa} exalted in works of the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. It was also a moment which offered the Viceroyos an opportunity to create a bond with the city, as well as being an indirect celebration of Albuquerque’s feats which allowed the Viceroyos to establish an association between them and one of the founding fathers of the Estado da Índia. This allowed them to be presented as true successors of Albuquerque not only through the position they held, but by sharing the same devotion to the city’s patron saint. The Marquis of Castelo-Novo, for example, was especially aware of the importance of this day for his public image and was extremely eager to be seen as a pious Goan, by joining the Brotherhood of St. Catherine and participating in its ceremonies during St. Catherine’s eve, ‘dressed with a habit similar to any other brother’.\textsuperscript{39}

The procession of St. Francis Xavier’s day was a different celebration, which used the Apostle of the Orient to exalt Goa’s role as the ‘Rome of the Orient’, and the efforts of the Portuguese Crown to convert Asia to Catholicism. On each 3 December, the Cathedral of Bom Jesus welcomed ‘all the fraternities, communities, clergymen, \textit{cabido[s]}’ as well as the members of the municipality, to participate in a procession which was attended by the Viceroy, the State Council and the royal magistrates. For the


\textsuperscript{39} Monterroyo Mascarenhas, \textit{Epanaphora Indica}, Pt. I, p. 33.
Viceroys, St. Francis Xavier’s day was an important opportunity to demonstrate their role as the King’s representative, since they were often asked by the King to kiss the feet of the Saint’s image at the Bom Jesus on his behalf. The Marquis of Castelo-Novo did this nine days after the procession, in a ceremony which was performed far from the public eye, with an audience formed only by the Provincial and the ‘grave priests’ who were the only ones allowed to see the Viceroy and the Archbishop – the two main figures of the Estado da Índia – perform an act of humility. Although there were restrictions concerning the audience, the ceremony was amply announced and mentioned and described in metropolitan works dedicated to India such as the *Epanaphora Indica*. In fact, more than the act itself, what really mattered to the Crown and the Viceroy was the message, the diffusion of the image of a King who was extremely zealous in his religious devotions and duties as the ‘Vicar of God’ or as ‘God’s lieutenant on Earth’, while the Viceroy demonstrated that he had a close relation with the head of the empire and was fully entrusted to perform on his behalf an act that had an essentially private nature. During the Joannine years, the relationship between King and Viceroy was reinforced in the processions dedicated to St. John the Baptist. The saint’s day was already a part of the popular religious life of the Portuguese world, but the fact that St. John shared the same name of the King, the day consecrated to the saint was widely celebrated in Portugal and her empire as if it was a second royal birthday. Besides the performance of religious ceremonies – usually a mass and a *Te Deum* – the day was used to reinforce the importance of acts made by the Viceroy. After the conquests of Alorna, the Marquis of Castelo-Novo chose the 24 June to promote the officers who took part in the campaign, ‘on behalf of His Majesty’ and grant *mercês* to the widows of dead officers.

**The Military Republic**

Between the sixteenth century and end of the eighteenth century war was a constant feature of Goan life. Diogo do Couto in his *Soldado Prático* (a title that reflects the role of war) described India as a ‘frontier, where it is always necessary to carry weapons in our hands’. In the eighteenth century, the Conselho do Estado corroborated this vision,

---

40 Ibid., p. 47.
presenting the Estado da Índia as ‘a military and warrior government’, and the Marquis of Castelo-Novo described it to João V as ‘a military republic whose preservation depends entirely on our weapons on land and sea’. Castelo-Novo’s vision of a military republic was supported by the long wars with the Marathas, as well as by the endless skirmishes with minor potentates such as the Sardesais of Sawantvandi and the constant naval combats with the Angrias, which obliged Viceroy to sustain a strong military apparatus, which often suffered from lack of funds and men. Despite the military defeats by local and European powers, the military nature of the Estado da Índia was regularly celebrated by Joanine panegyrist with constant evocations of Afonso de Albuquerque, Francisco de Almeida or D. João de Castro. When the Marquis of Castelo-Novo conquered the territories which would be known as the Novas Conquistas (New Conquests), the glorious times evoked by the panegyrist seemed to be real again.

This enthusiasm was reflected by the two triumphal parades offered by the Goan municipality in homage to the Viceroy’s conquests. The organisation of triumphs in Goa was not a complete novelty, but was rare. The first triumphs were organised by Albuquerque and D. João de Castro. Castro’s triumph after the siege of Diu was particularly famous for its pomp and lavish decorations, which were designed to recreate the Roman triumphal parades. During most of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, however, triumphs became rare due to the setbacks suffered by the Portuguese, and when they were organised they were on a scale far from Castro’s pomp, consisting of small-scale processions which ended at the Bom Jesus, where a mass and a Te Deum were celebrated, like the celebrations arranged by the Viceroy Marquis of Louriçal, when the news of the victory of a Portuguese army led by Manoel Soares Velho over the Marathas reached Goa. The programme of the celebrations included a Te Deum and other events such as luminárias (vigil fire), which counted with an enthusiastic participation of the population with ‘those demonstrations of pleasure,

---

44 For a more detailed analysis of the military conflicts between the Estado da Índia and these two potentates see Alexandre Lobato, Relações Luso-Maratas (Lisbon: Centro de Estudos Históricos Ultramarinos, 1965); Paduronga Pissurlemcar, The Portuguese and the Marathas (Bombay: State Board for Literature and Culture, 1975); Derek L. Elliot, “Pirates, Politics and Companies: Global Politics on the Konkan Littoral, c. 1690-1756”, Working Papers, Department of History, London School of Economics, Nº 136/10 (http://eprints.lse.ac.uk/27888/1/WP136.pdf) [accessed 4/12/2010].
offered by victories’. Occasionally, as in the celebrations of the conquest of Mombasa, ephemeral triumphal arches were built in the main streets of Goa.

Castelo-Novo’s triumph, however, was staged at a different moment compared to Louriçal and Castro’s cases. After decades of decline and humiliation inflicted by the Dutch and the Marathas, the Viceroy’s victories over the SarDesais of Sawantvandi seemed to pave the way to a new period of success. Moreover, Goa needed to erase the widespread image of the decline of the Estado da Índia, which was current in Europe and India. A triumphal parade before the Goan population and the local foreign communities was regarded as an opportunity to restore the prestige of the Portuguese. Castelo-Novo’s first triumph took place on 26 June 1746, one day after St. John’s the Baptist day. The Ceremony was organised by the municipality, ‘which as the head of the State, wanted to pay its homage to the lord of the Armies for his great victory’. Triumphal arches were erected in the streets crossed by the future Marquis of Alorna, which were also ‘pompously adorned with rich tapestries’. Followed by the fidalguia, nobility and clergy, the Viceroy was received at the city’s gates by two vereadores (aldermen) and two capitãens de mar e guerra, who together with other municipal officials carried a canopy which covered the Viceroy. This retinue stopped at the Bom Jesus, where a mass and a Te Deum were celebrated, and a ‘panegyric and congratulatory oration’ was read by the Archbishop.

The second triumph, which was staged after the conquest of the fortress of Tiracol, was more elaborate. At St. Catherine’s beach an artificial quay was built and adorned with ‘precious tapestries from Persia’. Triumphal arches were built on all the streets which led to the Bom Jesus, the final stop of the parade ‘because it is there that the body of the glorious Parton, and defender of the Estado, St. Francis Xavier, is buried and because the Viceroy considers that his powerful intercession led to the good success of his [Alorna’s] enterprise’. Dancers from Goa and the neighbouring villages were recruited and instructed to make special salutes to the Viceroy during the parade. Two nights of luminárias were also organised by the municipality, and all the ships that were captured during the campaign against the Bhonsles were exhibited at the Ribeira as a

---

45 Anonymous, Relação das Victorias Alcançadas na India contra o Inimigo Marata, sendo o Vice-Rey daquelle Estado o Illustissimo, e Excellentissimo D. Luiz Carlos Ignacio Xavier de Menezes, V. Conde da Ericeira, e I. Marquez do Louriçal. Com huma breve noticia da sua morte (Lisbon: Officina Luiz Jozé Correa Lemos, 1743), p. 12
46 BNP, Cod. 465, Notícias da India, f. 135v.
48 Ibid., p. 59.
prize and proof of Portuguese military and naval power to be seen by all the inhabitants of the city, Indo-Portuguese and foreigners.⁴⁹

The triumphal parade took place on 6 January 1747, a day dedicated to the ‘feast of the holy Kings from the Orient, who went to adore the true born God’. The date was seen as appropriate by the municipality, since the Viceroy ‘was an illustrious hero, who came from the Occident to exalt and extend the dominions of his King [and], the cult of the same God, in oriental lands, [and] regions where no temple dedicated to His name had ever been erected for the Catholic cult’. The Viceroy left his palace on the manchua do Estado, which was ‘brightly adorned’, leading a retinue formed by ‘many boats of the nobility’.⁵⁰ When the manchua arrived at the Ribeira, all the ships stationed there saluted the Viceroy with their cannon. At the quay, the Viceroy was welcomed by all the military officers of Goa, 24 guards and one infantry regiment. Then, Alorna and this retinue crossed the streets of Goa in the direction of the Bom Jesus. As in the first triumph, the Viceroy stopped at the first triumphal arch, where the vereadores awaited him to read a speech presenting the city’s gratitude and congratulations for his actions. From this arch as far as the Cathedral, Alorna was taken under a canopy carried by the vereadores and followed by ‘all the Ecclesiastics and secular nobility’, who were accompanied by an ‘infinite number of dancers, of different sorts’.⁵¹ All this was watched by an audience who acclaimed and hailed the Viceroy. At the Bom Jesus, a mass and a Te Deum were celebrated, and on behalf of the Archbishop, who was sick, a Jesuit Padre, Manoel de Figueiredo, read a sermon dedicated to the Viceroy’s conquest.⁵² After the mass, the Viceroy returned to the palace followed by the guards and ‘all the Nobility’. Throughout the evening most Goans decorated their houses with shining [viztosas] luminárias. Some fidalgos took their baloens (ceremonial barges) to Panelim, carrying musicians and choirs who played serenades, ‘giving more credit to the satisfaction of this triumph’.⁵³

⁵⁰ Ibid., p. 63.
⁵¹ Ibid., p. 66.
⁵² Ibid., p. 67.
⁵³ Ibid., p. 67.
Final Remarks

Surrounded by symbols of royal power, Viceroyys were true emulations of the monarch, as well as symbols of the imperial past forged by Afonso de Albuquerque, Vasco da Gama, Francisco de Almeida and D. João de Castro. Indeed, their actions became quite close to what the American sociologist Erving Goffman called ‘face-work’, that is the actions that individuals took to project and sustain a certain image of themselves. Despite the several setbacks suffered by the Portuguese, Viceroyys were obliged to do their utmost to preserve the symbolic capital of the Estado da Índia as an imperial power. The Viceroyys’ image should not only be that of the King’s alter ego, but the reflection of the greatness of Goa. They were obliged to offer an idealised vision of the Estado da Índia, to incorporate and demonstrate the imperial project and image proposed by the Crown. This concern with the Viceroy’s image is reflected by João V’s decision to grant more privileges to former and new Viceroyys in the hope of making the post more prestigious. The Count of Ericeira received the title of Marquis of Louriçal as well as other privileges to his family due to its ‘merit, and splendour’. His successor, the Count of Assumar, received the title of Marquis of Castelo-Novo before leaving Lisbon and, after the success of his military campaigns against the Bhonsles was rewarded with the title of Marquis of Alorna, after the name of one of the fortresses captured by the Portuguese army. The concession of these titles was mentioned in the panegyrics dedicated to the Joanine Viceroyys to have impressed most local rulers, who did not expect the Estado to be governed by talented and worthy men. This strategy seemed to be somehow successful. As Alexandrowicz and Saldanha pointed out, Asian rulers were more eager to accept a relation of inter-sovereignty with the Portuguese Crown – despite being mediated by a third element, the Viceroy – than to concede a relation on the same terms with a commercial company, as the EIC or the VOC. In 1760, the Maratha Peshwa, during a negotiation with the Portuguese, praised the Estado for being ruled by a King that was ‘a worthy soldier, and not a merchant as the English’.

---

54 Anonymous Relaçam das Victorias, p. 8.
Besides the evocation of Goan history and the concern with the Estado’s status before other Indian potentates, these ceremonies transmitted the image that the Portuguese King wished to present to other European sovereigns, supporting Portugal’s claims to be an imperial power. This concern was reflected by the utilisation of European or metropolitan ceremonial models. Indeed, the ritual language of the Estado da Índia was profoundly influenced by the Renaissance and Baroque visions of majesty, triumph, glory, power and fame. The reproduction of the metropolitan ceremonies intended to create a link between the populations of the colonies and Portugal, but was also a strategy which aimed to influence the vision that other European nations had of the Portuguese empire, offering an opportunity to send particular political messages to Portugal’s European rivals in India. The European nature of the Goan public ceremonies allowed that any European who attended, for example, Castelo-Novó’s triumph or a viceregal entry would recognise the scenarios, allegories and gestures offered by these ceremonies. This need to influence the English, Dutch or French visions of the Portuguese Empire was behind the translations into French and Italian, the two eighteenth-century languages of culture and diplomacy, of the panegyrics dedicated to Castelo-Novó’s victories over the SarDesais of Sawantvandi\(^57\), an event which the Crown considered to be a turning point for the Estado and suited the Joanine pursuit of prestige and magnificence.

3. The Ceremonial Rules of Goan diplomacy

The Ceremonial de que uzão os VReys quando escrevem aos Reys da Azia

Goa’s diplomatic contacts with the Reis Vizinhos were based on two codes of conduct which aimed to guide viceroys and high-ranked Estado officials when they had to write to local rulers or receive their envoys and ambassadors in Goa – The Ceremonial de que uzão os VReys quando escrevem aos Reys da Azia (Ceremonial used by the Viceroys when they write to the Kings of Asia) and the Fórma dos Tratamentos que se faz aos Embaixadores e Enviados dos Reis visinhos que vem ao Estado (Ways of treating the Ambassadors and Envoys of the neighbouring Kings who visit the Estado). These two documents, which have not yet been studied in detail by Portuguese nor other historians, were elaborated to propagate a specific vision of the Indian political scene where the Portuguese Crown occupied a privileged position. Both documents were destined only for the Viceroy and other senior Estado officials, and were written between the 1690s and the 1700s probably by bureaucrats of the Secretaria do Estado. The longevity of the Ceremonial and the Fórma dos Tratamentos is unknown, but both were possibly used until time of the the viceroys appointed by the Marquis of Pombal (1750-1777). As in the ceremonies which surrounded the daily life of the viceroy, Goan diplomatic protocol was influenced by the ceremonial rules of the Spanish Habsburgs as well as by some aspects of the Persian protocol.

The Ceremonial reflected a concern with deference and precedence which was leading to a formalisation of social contacts and interactions. In 1739, João V signed a new law of treatments (lei dos tratamentos) which extended the forms of address which had been approved by Philip I (II of Spain) in 1597. João introduced new forms of treatment such as ‘Very Illustrious and Very Excellent Sir’, ‘Illustrious Lordship’, ‘Very Illustrious and Very Reverend Sir’, ‘Very Excellent and Very Reverend Sir’, or ‘Very Reverend Paternity’.

The Ceremonial was a manual of etiquette which aimed to help the Viceroy in his contacts with local rulers, who were ranked according to Lisbon’s vision of the Asian political scene. Persia and the Mughal Empire occupied the leading positions and were followed by the Marathas, the princedoms of Kanara, Sonda, Tannor, and the Sardessais

of Sawantvandi. The document also included precise instructions to address the Commander-in-chief of the Mughal army and his son, an inclusion which reveals how the Portuguese regarded the Mughal Empire as the main power in the subcontinent and a potential ally of the Estado.

The high position given to the Persian Shah and the Great Mughal was translated into a rich and elaborate form of address. The Shah, who was regarded by the Portuguese as a king, was addressed as the ‘very high and very powerful Monarch of Persia, Defendor and Protector of the Muslims, and heir of the Expanded and always great Monarchy in fame and greatness of the always immortal Shah Abbas. Greetings.’ (Ao muito alto e muito poderoso Monarcha da Persia Fulano Defensor e Protector dos Mussulumanos, e herdeiro da Dilatada e sempre grande Monarchia daquelle na fama e na grandeza sempre immortal Xá Abás. Saude). This form of address was followed by a note that reminded the viceroy that the Persian sovereign should be treated as Majesty (o tratamento he por Majestade), and the subscript destined to ‘The King of Persia’ (El Rey da Persia). The deference for the Persian emperor and the Great Mughal dates from the second half of the sixteenth century. In a 1629 relação (account) dedicated to the Reis Vizinhos, the Persian Shah and the Great Mughal claimed special attention for their ‘great difference in power, reputation and authority’. The author held special consideration for the Great Mughal, describing him as a real emperor ‘because he is the lord of eighteen or twenty kingdoms’. In his Conquista Espiritual (1685), Father Fernão de Queiroz mentioned that ‘throughout the centuries the Persian Monarchy was always vast and powerful, a nation similar to the Europeans’. By the end of the seventeenth century, Persia was regarded by the Portuguese Crown as an important ally in destroying the ascent of the Omanis in the Gulf and on the Swahili Coast. The Omani attacks on Persian possessions and ships, and their rivalry based on the disputes between Shiites (Persia) and Yaurubid (Oman), made Isfahan a suitable ally to the Portuguese interests in the region. As Patricia Risso has noted, the Gulf was a region where European and local powers were involved in a fierce and violent competition for the control of the main maritime trading routes. The Estado da Índia, through the enforcement of the cartaz (naval passports) in the region and the several attempts to

---

3 Quotation taken from Ibid., p. 375.
recapture Hormuz and establish a permanent presence in the Swahili Coast, hoped to obtain an advantageous position in a region which the Overseas Council considered to be of vital importance for the future of the Portuguese in the Indian Ocean. By consolidating an alliance with Persia, the Portuguese authorities believed that they would have the support of a powerful ally which shared the same interests and animosity towards the expansionist ambitions of Oman. Persia could be an interesting ally for Goa, but it was also a very unstable one. On 22 February 1715, the Viceroy informed the head of the Portuguese factory at Bandar-Kung that his plans to destroy the Omani were wrecked by the lack of will of the Persian authorities who only seemed to want the presence of Portuguese warships to protect their coast. In his correspondence with the Bandar-Kung Factory, Menezes often expressed his frustration at the lack of interested from the Persian authorities. In one letter to the Portuguese factory at Bandar-Kung, Menezes joked with Shah Soltan-Hosayn’s claims that Goa was obliged to send every year an Armada, mentioning that the Shah’s position was probably based on ‘his lack of knowledge or caused by the excess of liquor that the King [shah] consumes’. However, Menezes decided to send an armada in the hope that the Shah would pay the ‘present pensions and the old debts as well’. Menezes was also suspicious of the sheiks that claimed to be vassals of the Shah, and instructed the factor to treat them as ‘enemies’, since he believed that all of them were ‘unreliable’ given the scenario of political instability in Persia. Despite the frustration of the Estado regarding Persia, in 1718, the Viceroy Count of Ericeira received a Persian embassy led by Thamamas Beg – the first since the one sent by Ismail Shah to Afonso Albuquerque after the conquest of Hormuz, and considered by the Viceroy a diplomatic triumph of the Estado da India.

As in the case of the Persian emperor, the Great Mughal should be treated as Majesty, and the subscript should be addressed to El Rey Gram Mogor (To His Majesty the Great Mughal), as in the letters sent by Lisbon to Delhi. However, the form of address for the Great Mughal was extremely formal and respectful – another sign that the Portuguese authorities regarded Delhi as the main power in the subcontinent. Indeed, when dealing with the Great Mughal, the Viceroy would use a long and richly elaborated form of address:

6 Ibid., p. 182.
7 Arquivo Histórico Ultramarino (AHU), Cod. 213, fol. 120v.
In the name of the Holy Trinity, Father and Son and Holy Spirit, three distinct persons, and only one true God, True Creator of the skies, and earth, and Saviour of the Humankind.

By the grace of the same God, reigns in Europe the Very High, and Very Powerful and Magnificent Dom João the Fifth, Lord of the Four Parts of the World, King of Portugal and the Algarve on this side and the other side of the sea in Africa Lord of Guinea and the conquest, navigation, commerce of Ethiopia, Arabia, Persia, and India, Brazil and Coast of America.

To the very high, and very powerful, and magnificent Prince, Most Precious object of all mortal men, born and emerged from the throne, and shining ornament of the Universe, King of the first order, first noble, and from the ancient nobility, Distributor of Crowns, and thrones, Conqueror of many Empires, Fount of Justice, and Universally Respected.

I name with all the titles Viceroy and Captain-General of all the Coast of Africa, Kingdoms of Monomotapa, Sofala, Mozambique, Quiloa, Ampari, Mellinde, Mombassa, Persian Sea, Red Sea, India, Siam, China, and of the Kingdoms of Manabao, Bataviao, Amarrassi, Liphao, Islands of Sollor, Sumba and Timor.

The religious elements of this greeting were probably inspired by the interest revealed by emperors such as Akbar and Jahangir in Christianity, as well by the presence of Jesuits at the Mughal court. The reference to the existence of ‘only one True God, True Creator of the skies, and earth, and Saviour of the Humankind’ also allowed the Portuguese to surpass the previous mention to the Holy Trinity, which was criticised by Muslim theologians, and suggest the existence of a common ground between Catholics and Muslims by presenting God in a similar way to the descriptions of God’s unity made by the Qur’an, especially in chapter 112, a brief *sura* which is frequently used to adorn mosques and monuments: ‘Say God is one God, the Eternal God; He begetteth not, neither is He begotten. And there is not any one like unto Him’.

For the Marathas, the Portuguese created a less elaborated, but still respectful form of address: ‘To the very illustrious and very Excellent Prince Xao Raja, Dominator of Fortune, I Viceroy of India with all the titles. Greetings’ (Ao muito Alto e muito Excelente Príncipe Xao Raja Dominador da Fortuna, Eu Fullano Viso Rey da India

---


com todos os titulos. Saude). The Ceremonial instructed the Viceroy that at the end of a letter written to the Maratha ruler he should finish with the blessing ‘may God enlight you in His Holy Grace, and have you under His Protection’ (Deos ó alume com a sua santa grace, e o tenha em Sua guarda). The raja should also be treated as Lordship (o tratamiento he por Senhoria). The apparent second-rate treatment given to Marathas might also be related to their ambiguous status before Delhi. Before an undefined scenario, the Portuguese authorities decided to adopt a cautious attitude towards the Maratha Confederacy and avoid any hostility from Delhi. Shahu was treated in a similar fashion to the polite letters sent by the Portuguese monarchs to their aristocratic officials, and deserved the title of ‘Illustrious’. However the use of Senhoria, despite being the form of address of the Portuguese upper-nobility, revealed a distance and the concession of a minor status to the Maratha ruler. After the Maratha conquest of the Provincia do Norte in 1739, there were some minor changes in the forms of address used by the viceroys in their correspondence with Satara which could be interpreted as a tacit recognition or concession by the Estado of a new status of the Marathas as a relevant power in the subcontinent. In a letter dated 27 August 1745 to Shau Rajah, Castelo Novo addressed the Maratha sovereign as the ‘Very Illustrious and very Excellent Prince Xiao Raja [sic], master of Fortune, and Lord of a great State. Greetings’ (Muito Illustre e muito Excelente Principe Xiao Raja dominador da fortuna, e senhor de grandiozo Estado. Saude). Castelo Novo’s letter aimed to present to the Maratha rajah the Estado’s intention of redefining the relations between Goa and Satara, as well as to state the esteem and respect which the Portuguese Crown had for the heirs of Sivagi. Indeed, the Viceroy informed Shau that Goa had received instructions from João V (‘the very and very powerful King my Lord’) had instructed him to ‘maintain with all the possible efforts the peace, and good correspondence which we have with Your Lordship’ (quanto fosse possivel goardasse com VSª aquella boa paz, correspondência em que nos achamos). Therefore Castelo Novo wanted Shau to send someone to Goa who could ‘communicate important businesses of the convenience of both States’, or allow the Estado da India to send to Satara a similar diplomatic agent. If Shau approved the viceroy’s suggestion the Maratha envoys would enjoy from Castelo Novo ‘the welcome which deserves the person of Your Lordship, who have my esteem and veneration for the many titles you have being one of them, according to the Authors of

10 Historical Archives of Goa (HAG), 979, Reis Vizinhos, “Para Xiao Raja, 27/08/1745”, f. 107.
11 Ibid., f. 107.
our histories of the Indies, the heroic actions and generosity of spirit of your Grandfather, the great Sivagi, from who Your Lordship inherited not only the fortune, but the spirit and virtues’. Another sign of the relevance of the Marathas to the Estado was a letter with the same date destined to the Peshwa, who was greeted as the ‘Very Illustrious and very honourable Naro Pandito Mointri, Prime Minister of the very happy Yao Raja’ (Muito Illustre, e muito honrado Naro Pandito Mointri, primeiro Ministro do felicíssimo Yao Raja).

For the rajahs of Sonda, Kanara and Tannor, there was no such concern with an elaborate address. The viceroy was instructed to begin his letters ‘with no preamble’ [começase a carta de negocio sem nenhum preambulo], presenting immediately the issues he wanted to address with these rulers. The Viceroy should conclude the missive by mentioning that he hoped that God would enlighten the ruler ‘with His Holy Grace’ (e se acaba Deos à alume com a sua Santa Graça). The Rajah of Amber, Sawai Jai Singh II, had a different and more elaborate form of address: ‘To the very illustrious [and] powerful Rajah, and [the] greatest among the Rajas of Hindustan Great King and Loyal to the Powerful Mughal King. May God help you, and send you His grace’ (Ao muito Ilustre Raja poderozo, e grande entre os Rajas do Industaó Grande Rey e Fiel ao Poderozissimo Rey Mogor Deos lhe assista, e lhe comunique a Sua graça). As with the other three rulers, the king of Indarsiri should be treated as Highness (o tratamento por Alteza). Concerning the dessais, the ‘Ceremonial’ instructed the viceroy to use distance and an impersonal form of address – ‘to any dessai one should write without any compliment, and the treatment is to be impersonal’ (se lhe escreve sem comprimento nenhum, e o tratamento he por impessoal). Impersonality was meant to materialize the dependence on and submission of the dessais to the authority and power of the Portuguese Crown, stressing their condition of vassalage. One possible explanation for this attitude is the model of foreign relations used by Asian power such as Japan, China or the Great Mughal, which approached most foreign rulers on the terms of a relationship between sovereign and subject. In fact, the greetings used in the contacts with tributary rulers could be interpreted as instruments of coercion which impeded the (re)negotiation of the position enjoyed by the inferior party.

---

12 Ibid., f. 107v.
13 Ibid., f.108.
By creating predetermined greeting forms, the Ceremonial aimed to establish a certain level of predictability in the contacts between Goa and the Reis Vizinhos which would avoid any attempt on the part of the local powers to question the discourse of power and authority propagated by the Estado da Índia. Indeed, the formalisation of speech, as Max Weber observed\textsuperscript{15}, is an exercise of authority which restricts what can be said, imposing only one mode of communication, which forces all recipients to adopt the proposed speech. The language or discourse adopted by one actor, as Maurice Bloch noted in his studies on Merina society, ‘contains within itself a set of pattern for the other party’.\textsuperscript{16} In other words, the Ceremonial was an attempt to oblige the Reis Vizinhos to accept the Estado’s supposed prestigious reputation and power in the subcontinent.

In an essay dedicated to the relationship between greeting and respect, Esther Goody noted that the institutionalization of greeting rituals led their participants to expose their unequal status. For example, the Estado’s refusal to greet the SarDessays in an elaborate form—several letters do not have any greeting speech—aimed to expose Kudal’s inferior status and the superiority of Goa. As Esther Goody has observed, the promotion of inequality is particularly strong when there exists an ‘obligation to greet with institutionalized deference’\textsuperscript{17} due to the formality associated with institutional relations. The same happens in diplomatic relations, and the Ceremonial was particularly concerned about protecting the relations of equality and superiority pursued by the Portuguese Crown in India, and was also an attempt to create an ideal political order based on a ranking of Indian powers vis-a-vis Goa. Lisbon’s concern with the forms of address used with Persian and Indian rulers was related to the need to ensure that the Estado would maintain its allies and vassals. The respectful and polite greeting formulas used in the contacts with the Shah and the Great Mughal reveal that the Portuguese wanted to avoid the hostility of the two local major powers, which were also allies of the Portuguese Crown.

As Raymond Firth pointed out in his studies on greetings, politeness is a mark of respect for the receiver of a greeting. But this respect did not place the Estado in a secondary position before its allies and neighbours. Viceroyos were instructed to mention

\textsuperscript{16} Ibid., p.9.
all the titles and dominions of the Portuguese Crown, as well as the titles related to their post and aristocratic position, in order to present the prestige and might of the Portuguese monarch, as well as to express, for example, the existence of a relation of equality between the Portuguese Crown and the rulers of the Persian and Mughal empires. In the correspondence with the Marathas and other rulers, the forms of address did not include the rhetorical devices related with politeness, and only stressed the titles of the Portuguese Crown and Viceroy in a strategy that aimed at fomenting a relationship in which the Estado would have a leading position. For example, by treating the Maratha Raja as ‘Lordship’, the Estado reminded the Maratha ruler that he was still regarded by Goa as a vassal of the Mughals, and therefore enjoyed an inferior status before the Portuguese King. These different strategies in the forms of address seem to confirm Esther Goody’s view that greetings contribute to define or establish relations of superiority and dependence.\(^{18}\)

Speech is often used by political actors to fight their opponents and convince an audience of their power and ability, or even to claim more power.\(^{19}\) In this way the Ceremonial aimed at persuading the Reis Vizinhos to accept the image of the Portuguese Crown which was presented to them. Indeed, by selecting specific words to address Indian and Persian rulers, the Ceremonial suggests that more than exhibiting the respects of the Portuguese Crown, the real intention was to influence the approach made by the local potentates in their contacts with Goa. Words of admiration for the Mughal and Persian emperors intended to provoke a reciprocal attitude towards the Estado da Índia in their reply, while the distance and indifference followed in the correspondence with minor potentates was a demonstration of Goa’s superiority, which should be acknowledged with words of respect and submission from the addressed rulers.

The pursuit of reciprocity and power was also sought with the recurrent use of polite words and queries on the health state of the recipient and his family. This was probably an attempt to create an impression of familiarity and proximity. One of the aims of this strategy was, indeed, to create a false intimacy which would reduce the formality of the contacts between the Estado and the Reis Vizinhos, or even alleviate existing tensions. This was particularly present in the correspondence between the Portuguese viceroy and the Maratha authorities. In a letter to Balagi Bagi Rao, the form of address highlights the wish of a ‘perpetual friendship’, and the Peshwa is addressed

---

\(^{18}\) Ibid., pp. 57-58.

as the ‘Very Illustrious, Great and Happy’ (*Muito Ilustre Grandioso e Felicissimo*). The wishes of ‘perpetual friendship’ were used with other high-ranking officials of other Reis Vizinhos.

**The Fórma dos Tratamentos que se faz aos Embaixadores e Enviados dos Reis visinhos que vem ao Estado**

During the viceroyalty of Caetano de Mello e Castro (1704-1707), the Secretaria do Estado elaborated a protocol to be used during the reception of foreign ambassadors or envoys. The document was entitled *Fórma dos Tratamentos que se faz aos Embaixadores e Enviados dos Reis visinhos que vem ao Estado*, and offered a set of precise instructions to be followed by all Goan officials whenever the Estado was visited by the diplomatic agents of the Great Mughal, the Keladi Nayaka, the Maratha raja, the king of Sonda and the ‘governors’ of Ponda. Like the Venetian *Libro Ceremoniale*, the *Fórma de Tratamento* established specific and rigid ceremonies which would define and protect Goa’s position before other local powers, as well as offer to foreign diplomats a personal experience of Portuguese power and superiority. The power of each potentate and its importance for the Estado diplomat was reflected in the reception of its diplomatic agents in Goa.

Ambassadors from the Great Mughal were welcomed according to the Empire’s position as the main Indian power and potential ally of the Portuguese, and the respect given by the Portuguese to Mughal diplomats was translated into the staging of lavish receptions. The Estado da Índia was not alone in offering an extremely sumptuous reception to Mughal diplomats. The English East India Company was also eager to please and thus obtain the favour of the Mughal emperor. The reception of Mughal diplomats or senior officials was organised with extreme care and solemnity by the EIC. In 1701, Thomas Pitt received a Mughal embassy headed by Daud Khan, the nawab of the Carnatic, with considerable pomp. The nawab was honoured with cannon salutes and gifts of wine, food and ‘a small ball of ambergrise encased with gold and a gold chain to it’. A banquet of 600 dishes was organised to honour the presence of Daud

---

21 “Forma dos Tratamentos que se faz aos Embaixadores e Enviados do Reis Vizinhos que vem ao Estado” in Collecção de Tratados e Concertos de Pazes que o Estado da Índia fez com os Reis e Senhores com que teve relações nas partes da Asia e África Oriental desde os Princípios da conquista até ao fim do século XVIII., Vol. V ed. Júlio Firmino Júdice Biker (Lisbon: Imprensa Nacional, 1884), p. 10
Khan and ‘dancing wenches’ entertained the guests. The negotiations, however, collapsed due to the EIC’s refusal to become a tributary of the Mughal emperor. Seven years later, in July 1708, Pitt received the diwan Zia-ud-din Khan in Madras’s Great Walk ‘with all ceremony usual’ to celebrate the *husb-al-hukum* (imperial instruction) signed by the Great Mughal which confirmed the city’s privileges.

When the Mughal ambassador arrived at Goa, he was received by the *Língua do Estado* (the official interpreter) who would take him to his designated residence, and indicate the day when the viceroy would receive him. The accommodation destined for foreign diplomats was usually located in the outskirts of Goa, a solution which aimed to isolate them from local society. Indeed, there were fears that foreign envoys could bribe Estado officials or even contact or recruit spies. This rule of isolating foreign diplomats was probably inspired by the Portuguese diplomatic experience with Persia, where Portuguese envoys and ambassadors were usually isolated from the rest of the court or accompanied by a *Melinandar* (escort) who would control the movements of the embassy. This forced isolation also had the advantage of forcing foreign envoys to have only contacts which would favour the diffusion of a positive image of the Estado da Índia. The ambassador’s residence was decorated according to precise rules, which aimed to reflect the respect that the Portuguese held towards the Mughal Emperor, as well as to impress the envoy with the supposed wealth of the Estado da Índia. The ambassador would have ‘all that is necessary’: 24 leather chairs for his entourage and another one made of velvet destined to him; four damask *guardaportas*, two *bufetes* with damask clothes, two small *alcatifas* and a kitchen with ‘the necessary apparatus’.

The first formal audience with the viceroy was staged with extreme care. The ambassador would enter the palace accompanied by the *Tanadar-Mor* (first treasurer), the captain of the Viceroy’s Guard, and the captain of his yacht (*Manchua do Estado*). In the palace courtyard, the ambassador was saluted by an infantry regiment arranged in two wings. Inside the palace, the *Tanador-Mor* and the two captains would escort the ambassador to the *Sala Real* (Royal Hall) where he was awaited by the viceroy, the members of the State Council, the High Court judges, the Cathedral Chapter (*Cabido*),

---

26 British Library (BL), I/3/148 – *Victories of the Portuguese in Asia (1717-1720)*, fol. 4
27 “Forma do Tratamento”, *Collecção de Tratados*, V, p. 10
several prelates and the members of the municipal administration. Indeed, the *Forma dos Tratamentos* aimed to confront the Mughal ambassadors with a faithful reproduction of the administrative and social organisation of the Estado da Índia. The viceroy was seated in his armchair (*cadeira de espaldas*) under a canopy, on a dais with five steps. In front of him, at a short distance from the dais was a velvet stool for the ambassador, while on the viceroy’s left was another stool for the *Secretário do Estado* (state secretary). The members of the State Council and the Royal Judges had the privilege of using chairs, while the municipal officials and prelates were seated on ‘backless benches’ covered with cloths and damask curtains.\(^\text{28}\) According to the *Fórma dos Tratamentos*, when the ambassador entered the *Sala Real*, the viceroy would rise from his chair to salute him, without removing his hat. The ambassador would then make three genuflexions and hand his credentials to the viceroy, who would remove his hat at the precise moment in which he took the document to demonstrate his respect for the Mughal emperor. The credentials were then handed to the *Secretario do Estado*, a sign that the viceroy recognised the ambassador as the representative of the Great Mughal. After presenting his credentials, the ambassador would talk to the viceroy without ‘proposing any kind of business’ and leave the palace escorted again by the *Tanadar Mor* and the captains. On the same day, or the day after, the Estado would offer the ambassador and his entourage a *refresco* (meal) of rice, lentils, wheat, rice, butter, sugar, chickens, lambs, cows, vinegar, olive oil, fruit, wines and vegetables for their stay in Goa.\(^\text{29}\)

On the following day, the ambassador would request a private audience with the viceroy to open the negotiations. Whenever the ambassador met the viceroy he would not be accompanied by Portuguese officials, although he was allowed to ‘bring a sumptuous group of people to form a retinue’. Despite the approval of a retinue, the imposition of private audiences was an attempt to reduce the importance of the ambassador and enforce some discretion and secrecy in the dealings between the Portuguese and Mughals. The private audiences also took place in the *Sala Real*, where the viceroy was again seated on a dais under a canopy, accompanied by the *Secretario do Estado*, who sat on a stool on his right, and the *Língua do Estado*, who stood throughout the meeting to facilitate the interaction between the viceroy and the ambassador. On the last day of the embassy, the ambassador would participate in the

\(^{28}\) Ibid., p. 10

\(^{29}\) Ibid., p. 11
resposta (reply). This ceremony consisted of a final visit to the viceroy to present the documents relating to the negotiations and receive a gift (sagoate) from the viceroy for the emperor. The viceroy would also offer the ambassador and his entourage ‘a piece of money’.  

Envoys and ambassadors from the Keladi Nayaka, a minor potentate who was Goa’s main rice supplier, were also received in a respectful manner, though with some differences which reflected Keladi’s minor position on the Indian political scene. Keladi diplomats were received by the Tanadar-Mor, the captain of the viceroy’s guard and the Língua do Estado. During their reception at the viceregal palace, they were welcomed in the palace courtyard by a single regiment of the Goan guards. In the Sala Real the prelates would not be present. The ambassador’s house was also decorated with fewer items (twelve leather chairs, two guardaportas (curtains), one sideboard, one tamborete (stool) and one small carpet and his refresco (meal) would not include chickens, lambs, cows, wine and vinegar.  

Any diplomatic agent from the Marathas was usually regarded by Goa as an envoy, a minor status which reflected not only the hostile relations between the Estado and Satara but also Goa’s refusal to grant the Marathas an important position in the Indian political scene until their status with the Mughal Empire was cleared. Indeed, by the time that the Forma do Tratamento was written, the Mughal Emperor still regarded the Maratha ruler as a vassal prince, a classification which the Portuguese also adopted to avoid the hostility of Delhi. However, the decision taken by the Count of Alvor (viceroy from 1681 to 1686) to receive a Maratha envoy as an ambassador after the first Luso-Maratha war made the reception of Maratha diplomats a difficult issue for the Estado. Before the precedent created by the Count of Alvor, the Forma de Tratamento granted Maratha diplomatic agents the title of envoy and received them as ambassadors of Keladi. Even so, the reception of Maratha diplomats was less sophisticated than that of Mughal and Nayaka ambassadors. When the Maratha envoy was close to the border of the Estado, he was obliged to ask the viceroy’s permission to enter Portuguese territory by sending a letter presenting himself and ‘the business he has in his charge’ in order to be granted an audience. This requirement stressed the envoy’s status as the representative of a mere vassal prince of the Mughal Emperor and implied that he did

31 Ibid., p. 12.
32 Ibid., p. 13
not enjoy true diplomatic immunity, since, as a Maratha envoy, he required the viceroy’s permission to enter the Estado. The envoy’s house was equipped with six chairs, one stool and one box (esquife) – a modest arrangement when compared with the other ambassadors’ reception. On the day of his arrival in Goa, the envoy was received by the viceroy. At the palace stairs, ‘some opulent noble people’ (alguma gente luzida nobre) welcomed the envoy and escorted him to the Sala Real where the viceroy awaited him, accompanied by the leading members of the Goan fidalguia (nobility), the royal judges and the Secretario do Estado. When the envoy stood before the viceroy, he made three genuflections and presented his credentials, along with a gift from the rajah. As happened with other ambassadors, the first audience was only concerned with presenting the envoy’s credentials and gifts. Negotiations would only take place after he had arranged a private meeting with the viceroy. The envoy’s refresco merely consisted of fruit up to the value of 60 xerafins. On the last day of the embassy, the envoy paid a visit to the viceroy to present his resposta and receive a gift from the Estado.\(^3^3\)

As with the Maratha diplomats, the rajah of Sonda’s ambassadors presented their credentials to the Portuguese authorities before entering Goa. The ambassador’s house was equipped in the same way as that of the Nayaka’s ambassador and the protocol rules were the same as those used with Maratha envoys – with one exception, to demonstrate Goa’s friendship with Sonda – the refresco was ‘more substantial’ (mais avantajado).\(^3^4\) The Sonda ambassador was welcomed at the border by the Lingua do Estado and two horsemen. Envoys sent by the governors of Pondá were also received by the Lingua do Estado and brought a letter and a gift to the viceroy. Due to their low diplomatic prestige, the Forma do Tratamento stated that the Estado was not obliged to arrange a house for them and the refresco would be limited.\(^3^5\)

Despite the restrictions imposed to the ambassadors from the Reis Vizinhos, there was occasionally breaches of protocol. Depending on the circumstances of the negotiations, the viceroy could turn a blind eye to the attempts made by envoys and ambassadors to exhibit wealth or military power in order to demonstrate Goa’s goodwill or friendship. However, these small concessions could turn into serious diplomatic incidents. In 1734, Goa received an embassy from Sonda to negotiate a peace treaty after several Portuguese incursions in Sonda to punish the rajah for his support of local

\(^{3^4}\) Ibid., p. 14.
\(^{3^5}\) Ibid., p. 14.
pirates and attacks on Portuguese missionaries at Sivangar and Ancola. The embassy arrived at Goa on 10 June, but a treaty was only to be signed on 4 December 1735. Sandomil accused the ambassadors of using all kinds of pretexts to delay the conclusion of the negotiations, claiming that they needed the rajah’s approval for each point of the treaty. The rajah’s answers only reached Goa after several months, an exaggerated period, since the correspondence between Goa and Sonda usually took eight days. Sandomil also mentioned that the ambassadors used the religious feasts and their illnesses as a pretext to suspend the negotiation and return to Sonda. When the viceroy presented a draft of the treaty, the king sent another embassy which demanded new clauses. The new ambassadors also refused to be lodged in Goa, and established a camp on the border, visiting the viceroy only on the days scheduled for the negotiations.36

According to Sandomil, the ambassadors, during their time in Goa, were able to ‘exceed their licence’ and introduced in their residence ‘through disguise’ several sipais (soldiers). According to one viceregal report, there was a strong suspicion that the embassy would be used to launch the first stage of an invasion, by introducing 500 armed men who would be integrated in the ambassadors’ retinue. Based on these rumours, the viceroy decided to allow the ambassadors to be escorted only by 100 people and reinforce the Goan forts with ‘some companies with the best Portuguese men’. The houses next to the ambassadors were also occupied with soldiers who caught the attention of the Portuguese authorities for ‘walking in the streets of this city...with immoderation which was distant from the ancient respect with which they had always treated the Portuguese’.37 The arrogant attitude of the sipais created a tense atmosphere which led to an altercation between a Portuguese grenadier and four Sonda soldiers. The cause of the incident was not explained by the viceroy who only mentioned in a report destined to João V that the grenadier was arrested by the Sonda sipais and taken to the ambassadors’ residence. When the news of this incident reached the grenadiers’ garrison, the entire regiment decided to besiege the Sonda residence. Before the sipais’s refusal to release the grenadier, the Portuguese soldiers decided to occupy the residence forcing one of the ambassadors to promise to release the soldier, a promise which was

36 HAG, Livro das Monções do Reino (MR) 105, “Carta do Vice-Rei Conde Sandomil a Sua Magestade, 20/01/1733”, f. 54.
37 Ibid., f. 54.
concluded after the arrival of a viceregal officer, Lieutenant-Colonel João Barbosa Barros.  

This incident was extremely embarrassing to the viceroy, since it suggested that the Estado was unable to control the movements of foreign diplomats in Goa. To make things worse, on 18 April 1736, Lisbon informed Sandomil that the ambassadors had written to João V a formal complaint of the Estado’s actions against the princedom. The viceroy was accused of authorising raids which resulted in the burning of five Sonda villages and the death of five men. The ambassadors also claimed that Sandomil had also impeded the entry of their retinue, allowing only the presence of an entourage of 150 people. The most serious complaint, however, was the siege of the ambassadors’ residence after a quarrel between a Portuguese soldier and one member of the Sonda retinue. João was also informed that the viceroy treated the ambassadors as hostages by impeding them from leaving their residence. Despite the different versions presented by the viceroy and the ambassadors, the incident with the sipais had exposed the inability of the Goan protocol to control the activities of foreign ambassadors, the lack of authority of the viceroy over the army, and the absence of an effective control of what was happening on Goa streets. Indeed, Sandomil confessed in his report that the grenadier was arrested because at that time ‘there were no Portuguese, but only several naturals of the lands’.  

The Sonda incident, however, was a rare exception, which exposed the limitations the Portuguese had to control the actions of foreign diplomats, in spite of adopting a rigid diplomatic protocol. It was a flaw of the ceremonial rules followed by the Estado that the reception of diplomats was not mentioned by the Fórma de Tratamento. 

When a viceroy was confronted with the reception of an envoy who was not mentioned in the protocol, the general rule was to reciprocate the reception that the envoy’s ruler had arranged for a Portuguese ambassador or envoy. The count of Ericeira followed this rule of thumb when he had to arrange the reception of the 1718 Persian embassy led by Tamaras Beg. As Ericeira pointed out in a letter to João V, Beg’s embassy to Goa was the first since that sent by Ismail Shah to Afonso Albuquerque.

---

39 HAG, MR 105, “Carta do Vice-Rei Conde Sandomil”, f. 51v.  
after the conquest of Hormuz. The importance of the embassy was reflected in the reception offered by the Portuguese viceroy to Beg. Following the protocol adopted by Isfahan during the Portuguese embassy led by Gregorio Pereira in 1696, Ericeira decided to give Beg a monthly allowance of 3,000 xeraphins ‘due to his large entourage and the greatness of his King, as well as due to the good image that the most remote Nations should have of the Portuguese monarchs’. Ericeira wanted to give more money to Beg, since Pereira’s allowance in Persia reached the sum of 6,000 xeraphins, but the diminished resources of Goa’s treasury and the need to fund the defence of the Estado’s borders made it impossible. As compensation, the Viceroy offered the ambassador on the day of his arrival a refresco ‘with decent and necessary ornaments’. During his days in Goa, Beg was escorted by the former Portuguese factor at Bandar-Kung, Jacinto de Araújo e Castro, who, as in the Persian protocol, was appointed by Ericeira as Beg’s Melinandar (escort), a decision which one account applauded since it not only demonstrated the respect that the Portuguese Crown had for the Persian shah but also demonstrated the advantage of ‘introducing a spy who may constantly observe the movements of the ambassador of the King of Persia’. Despite the lack of funds, another anonymous account of Ericeira’s tenure mentioned that Beg was received by the viceroy ‘with all the pomp which might fully represent the grandeur of the King of whom he was a vassal’ at a ‘magnificently adorned’ viceregal palace of Panaji.

Sandomil was also forced to solve another limitation of the Goan protocol when in the spring of 1736 the Viceroy received a letter from a diwan requesting permission to visit Goa to see the temples and the Goan littoral. The viceroy was inclined to refuse visit, but, as Sandomil explained to João V, the diwan was ‘the second person of Nizamal Maluco (Nizam al-Mulk, the Viceroy of the Deccan), one of the most powerful vassals of the emperor, and his lieutenant-general controlling all Deccan’. Sandomil believed that the real intention of the visit was to spy on the Estado and evaluate the Portuguese military and naval capacity, but the prestige of the Nizam’s protégé forced the viceroy to allow the visit. Moreover, the constant skirmishes with the Marathas in Chaul in the Provincia do Norte suggested that the Estado would need the support of the

---

42 Ibid., p. 365.
43 Ibid., p. 366.
44 BL, I/3/157 – Noticias da India (1717-1750), f. 16
45 BL, I/3/148 – Victories of the Portuguese in Asia (1717-1720), f. 4
46 HAG, MR 106, “Carta do Vice-Rei Conde Sandomil a Sua Magestade, 20/12/1736”, f. 3.
Mughal Empire to reduce the expansionist impetus of the Marathas.\textsuperscript{47} If the Viceroy decided to refuse the visit of someone attached to a relevant figure of the Mughal court like the Nizam, the prospects of Mughal aid could be seriously damaged. Sandomil made an attempt to discourage the diwan by writing a letter asking him to delay the visit, claiming that due to the proximity of the monsoon and the late arrival of the armadas the Mughals ‘would not have the pleasure of seeing all warships’.\textsuperscript{48} However, the diwan had ‘advanced his march’ (adiantou a sua marcha) and Sandomil was unable to refuse or delay the visit.

Before the imminent arrival of the diwan, Sandomil decided to call the Conselho do Estado to discuss how the Estado should treat the diwan. The councillors considered that it was not convenient to refuse the visit of ‘a vassal of a King who is a friend of the Estado and the subject of a powerful man’. The Council also believed that the diwan’s retinue was far from being a threat to the Estado’s security, since it was formed by forty men.\textsuperscript{49}

Meanwhile, the diwan decided to stay at the Sonda village of Massala, but Sandomil sent a small party of officials to welcome the divan. The officials, however, were confronted with the diwan’s demand to have his visit funded by the Estado. Goa regarded the demands as ‘inconvenient’ and ‘indecorous’. To avoid a diplomatic incident, the viceroy decided to meet the diwan in the border between the Estado and Sonda, and an informal meeting was arranged after the Saturday mass of the Church of the Madre de Deos, since the church was located ‘in the same road which he [the diwan] was going to use to visit the city, and then I could show that I had met him by chance’.\textsuperscript{50}

During the last days of the diwan’s visit, General António Cardim Froes received a letter from Nizam al-Mulk demanding the payment of a tribute. Froes refused to reply to the letter, and informed Sandomil of the new Mughal demands.\textsuperscript{51} Goa’s reaction to the tribute demanded by al-Mulk was to reinforce the Estado borders. Meanwhile, the diwan and al-Mulk wrote to Sandomil to explain the letter sent to Froes. According to Nizam al-Mulk, there was no intention of attacking the Estado or submitting Goa to the status of a tributary vassal of the Mughal Empire. The issue was only raised by an ambitious messenger who wanted to be favoured by al-Mulk. The

\textsuperscript{47} Alexandre Lobato, \textit{Relações Luso-Marata} (Lisbon: Centro de Estudos Históricos Ultramarinos, 1965), pp. 160-161
\textsuperscript{48} Ibid., f. 3.
\textsuperscript{49} Ibid., f. 3.
\textsuperscript{50} Ibid., f. 3v.
\textsuperscript{51} HAG, MR 106, “Carta do Vice-Rei Conde Sandomil a Sua Magestade”, f. 3v.
messenger would therefore be punished for not following his instructions and having insulted the Portuguese Crown.\textsuperscript{52}

**A case study of diplomatic receptions: the 1751 Sonda embassy**

After being defeated by the Estado troops in the last months of 1750, Sonda decided to organise a lavish embassy in the hope of mitigating the image of the principedom as a defeated potentate. The reception of the Sonda embassy was one of the last public ceremonies of Joanine Goa. Although João V had died on 31 July 1750, the news of his death only reached India on 24 September 1751, and most of the actions taken by Távora until this date followed the instructions given by João V in 1750. On 7 January 1751, a Sonda ‘gentleman’ (gentilhomem) visited the viceroy to present the intention of the Sonda diplomat to be received with the status of ambassador ‘in order to present his articles with all security’. Viceroy Marquis of Tavóra accepted the request and instructed the Jesuit College of Goa to prepare some rooms to lodge the Sonda ambassador and his retinue.\textsuperscript{53}

The anonymous account mentions that the Jesuits padres were forced to ‘empty three rooms and several sheds to lodge them’. The rooms were decorated with ‘rich red silks’ and the roof adorned with ‘enamelled shells of precious stones’. The floor was covered with tapestries and the rooms were equipped with chairs upholstered with ‘green damasks’. The meals would be served in serving sets of gold and silver and ‘everything else which was necessary to correspond in perfection to this great luxury’.\textsuperscript{54}

After the arrival of the ambassador, Távora sent an emissary with ‘a grandiose gift made of several and precious treats’ and guards ‘to watch his movements’. The Jesuit padres, meanwhile, were instructed by the viceroy to persuade the ambassador and his retinue to not visit Goa while the proposal of the Sonda rajah was not known. If the ambassador maintained his intention to go to the city centre, the Jesuits should ‘impede him with the pretext that the protocol followed in those parts stated that the first visit of an ambassador was his public entry’. The ambassador, however, stated that he had no intention of visiting the city before presenting his credentials, and the proposals of the

\textsuperscript{52} Ibid., fs. 3v, 8.

\textsuperscript{53} Anonymous, *Relaçam da Embaixada que o Sunda depois de vencido das armas Portuguesas mandou aos Illustrissimo, e Excelentissimo Marquez de Tavora, Vice-Rey da India e Capitam General daquelle Estado* (Lisbon, 1751), p. 2.

\textsuperscript{54} Ibid., pp. 2-3.
rajah any breach to the desire of the viceroy would be an ‘injury to the credit of Sonda’.  

After a week in which the ambassador sent several emissaries to prepare his entry, the viceroy appointed a day to receive the Sonda embassy. One of the oldest colonels of the Portuguese army in India was appointed to the ‘honorable post’ of conductor of the Sonda ambassador, and several troops were placed between the Jesuit College and the Viceroy’s Palace.

On 8 January 1751, the streets of Goa were crossed by an embassy from Sonda. The ambassador, a Sonda grandee described by an anonymous account as ‘a deceitful man, good humoured, very practical in political matters’, had followed the Goan protocol with extreme care. On the previous day, a Sonda ‘gentleman’ visited the viceroy to present the intention of the Sonda diplomat to be received with the status of ambassador ‘in order to present his articles with all security’.

The public entry of the Sonda ambassador was surrounded by an aura of pomp that disguised the status of the rajah as a defeated ruler and a tributary of the Portuguese Crown. The ambassador’s wore a red garment with golden fringes and covered with pearls. According to the anonymous account, ‘it was impossible for the eyes to examine his clothes because they were entirely covered with so many precious stones that their reflexes perturbed one’s vision...he was a composition of lights, as if the Sun for having in those parts its origin had given some of his rays to him’. The anonymous author also mentions that the ambassador carried a ‘shining’ diamond necklace with an image of the Sonda rajah which ‘made a sky full of stars’. The ambassador’s retinue included eighteen flute players, twelve buffoons, twelve elephants covered with velvets, silks, gold and silver which were led by two pygmies ‘dressed as nobles with blue garments with pink stripes’. Behind this group were sixty-four ‘kaffirs’ carrying golden swords and dressed with coloured silks and cotton turbans adorned with precious stones. The ambassador was escorted by twenty-four gentlemen dressed with ‘pearl color’ damasks adorned with diamonds; their heads were covered with yellow turbans with red and white plumes. Before the ambassador and his gentlemen were eight Indian women ‘wearing clothes made of scarlet satin covered with seed pearls of notorious greatness, and their heads were covered with a lustrous band, and their arms with a bracelet of the same quality’. Each one of them carried a box ‘full of pearls of an extraordinary value.

---

55 Ibid., p. 3.
56 Anonymous, Relação da Embaixada, p. 4.
and other precious stones’. If one of the objectives of the ambassador was to impress Goa, the embassy was a success. According to the anonymous account such pomp and ostentation attracted the Goan people and the guards were not able ‘to suspend the multitude of persons’.

Távora received the ambassador at a room ‘richly adorned with noble and ostentatious tapestries’. The viceroy was under a canopy ‘crowned by precious materials’ and flanked by magistrates and senior military officers, including the Secretario do Estado. When the ambassador entered the room, Távora made three steps forward to salute him and returned to the canopy to hear the ambassador’s greeting speech. After receiving the viceroy’s salute, the ambassador ‘with profound reverence’ made a brief speech which exalted the power of the Portuguese monarch and his delegate in India:

High and Sovereign Prince Viceroy of the powerful States, who represents the greatness and power of an illustrious and August Monarch, the King of Portugal, Lord of the West, Emperor of the World, and Vice-God of Earth. Before this victorious Sovereign is now subjected one Potentate which only the Portuguese, by the designs of Heaven, tribute to subjection. The principle reason for this impulse towards peace and friendship - which is so convenient for commerce between the peoples since the Very High Lord of all the nobility of this great city [Goa] does not forbid the communication between those who live under different Laws [religions] and customs – is my Sovereign’s decision to establish a solid and faithful vassalage by becoming a feudatory of the Portuguese Crown, which he respects with love, and which he loves with respect. As recognition for his subjection, he offers the Estado five arrobas [73,433 kgs] of gold per year, and will give for the defence of the Estado 500 men paid at his expense and who would be replaced each year, and all his forts will recognise the King of Portugal as their Lord.

After this speech, the ambassador asked the Secretario do Estado to order the eight Indian women to enter the room with their boxes to offer the precious stones to the viceroy. Before leaving the room, the ambassador kissed the feet of the viceroy ‘with such reverence lowering his head three times with his arms tucked’. While leaving the viceregal palace, the warships anchored in Goa’s harbours fired several salutes and the troops which were guarding the streets between the palace and the Jesuit College fired three salutes until the ambassador reached his residence.

57 Ibid., pp. 5-6.
59 Ibid., pp. 6-7.
60 Ibid., p. 7.
The new vassalage treaty between Sonda and Goa was concluded on 12 January, five days after the ambassador’s entry. After confirming the clauses established by the treaty, the ambassador had a final and private meeting with Távora ‘in which he had bid goodbye with many demonstrations of a reciprocal and faithful friendship’. Before leaving Goa, the ambassador ‘had showed his benign attentions towards those with whom he had contacted’ by making a donation to the Jesuit College of ‘two jewels of an invaluable value, which he placed at the feet of an image of the MOST BLESSED MARY’ and offering to the guards who protected the embassy some money. After these gifts, the ambassador was then escorted to the border by the viceregal guards.

Final Remarks

Protocol plays an important role in diplomacy since it establishes rules which allow the use or manipulation of symbols, gestures and language that define the position of the intervening actors. This may cause some tensions, especially when both sides have similar claims to a superior status. Oriental rulers, according to Simon de la Loubère who had served the French Crown as an ambassador in Siam, believed that sending embassies to other powers was an act of submission which suggested the existence of a relationship of dependence or the expectation of receiving favours from a more powerful destinary. The Fórma de Tratamento seemed to play with this belief. Indeed, its rules contributed to the construction of relations of equality (Mughal), respect (Keladi), hostility (Marathas) and dominance (Sonda, Pondá) in which the Estado preserved or reinforced its self-claimed superior position. As in the Ceremonial, the different treatments stipulated by the Fórma de Tratamento to the envoys of the Reis Vizinhos reflected the interpretation that the Portuguese had of the Indian political scene, as well as of the position or power enjoyed by the Estado da Índia. Indeed, the Fórma de Tratamento propagated or wished to construct a specific vision of the subcontinent’s political reality which would persuade foreign envoys to accept the status given to their rulers by the Estado and recognize the legitimacy of the interests of the Portuguese Crown. The rituals and speech established by the Fórma de Tratamento

61 Ibid., p. 8.
and the Ceremonial wanted to create what Richard Trexler called ‘systematic actions’\textsuperscript{64}, fixed modes of behaviour which highlight the different qualities of each actor and reduces the changes for innovation here in the relations between Goa and the Reis Vizinhos. Indeed, the Goan protocols aimed at suppressing any suggestions from the foreign envoys that their rulers enjoyed a superior position, or claims that the image presented by the Estado was not accepted by the other political actors of the subcontinent. The construction of the Goan protocol was also concerned about reconciling European and Indian diplomatic ceremonial. The introduction of Asian elements in the Goan protocol like the melinandar, the reciprocal offer of gifts and the offer of accommodation to foreign diplomats, for example, suggests that the Portuguese authorities wanted to promote an image of superiority according to diplomatic practices recognized and accepted by the Reis Vizinhos. This use of local practices also had the advantage of avoiding the emergence of diplomatic conflicts such as the one involving the English embassy led by Sir William Norris to the Mughal court in 1701. Norris’s desire to confirm the identity of the New East India Company as relevant political actors in the region led him to refuse to visit the Grand Vizier unless he was received according to the European style. The Grand Vizier rejected the demand and the embassy failed to cause a good impression at the Mughal court.\textsuperscript{65}

The Fórma de Tratamento and the Ceremonial were designed to offer to foreign ambassadors and envoys a personal experience of Portuguese power and superiority. Like most diplomatic ceremonies, the reception of emissaries from the Reis Vizinhos wanted to communicate deference, in order to maintain or improve the existing relations, but they were also designed to impress, offering a careful display of wealth and authority. By presenting to foreign diplomats the social, administrative and religious elites of Goa in a scenario of opulence, the Fórma de Tratamento wanted to transmit an image of collective strength and harmony, a perfect portrait of Goan society which contrasted with the widespread perception of decline. The importance of pomp for the Portuguese authorities in India could be also interpreted as a cultural manifestation of the baroque. Indeed, pomp was regarded by many political theorists of the period as a form of communication which expressed magnanimity and superiority, contributing to a certain obsession of Iberian political thought of the baroque with reputation, which led to a political and ritualistic idiom which used ostentation to


manipulate public opinion and project a favourable image. The isolation imposed on foreign diplomats from the local society was also an attempt to force foreign emissaries to have only contacts which would favour the diffusion of the desired image of the Estado da Índia. At the same time, there was a preoccupation with impeding ambassadors and envoys from showing their signs of power. The isolation imposed to foreign emissaries and the restrictions related to the number of persons of an ambassador’s retinue, for example, aimed at impeding the exhibition of signs of power and opulence that could damage the image which the Estado wanted to transmit of itself to the ambassador. The rigidity of the Fórma de Tratamento was what Muir called a ‘ritual defence’. By separating visitors from the outside world, and following precise precedence rules and gestures, the Goan protocol reduced the level of unpredictability regarding the actions of foreign envoys.

As with other viceregal rites and ceremonies, the Goan diplomatic protocol was preoccupied in securing a certain image of the Estado da Índia and the Portuguese Crown. The Fórma de Tratamento and the Ceremonial aimed at suppressing any suggestions from the foreign envoys that their rulers enjoyed a superior position, or claims that the image presented by the Estado was not accepted by the other political actors of the subcontinent. Besides ensuring that the desired view of the political status of the Estado was transmitted and accepted by the Reis Vizinhos, the two ceremonial protocols were able to transmit a continuous discourse on the ranking of Indian powers which highlighted Goa’s privileged position. Indeed, by following or establishing an index of honours, Goa seemed to have followed what Patricia Fortini Brown called ‘measured friendship, calculated pomp’.

The Fórma de Tratamento and the Ceremonial were, above all, instruments to attenuate the catastrophic events of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries which contributed to transform the Estado da Índia into a kind of theatre-state concerned with staging lavish ceremonies which resuscitated for a brief time the imperial myth of Golden Goa, the times when ‘Asia was a glorious theatre’ for the Portuguese, as the Marquis of Castelo-Novo once wrote. This concern or investment in a rigid diplomatic

---

68 Ibid., p. 264.
69 Academia das Ciências de Lisboa (ACL) – Cod. Cod. 552 – *Discurso que o Ilustrissimo e Excellentíssimo Senhor Marquez de Castelo Novo V. Rey Da India Fez no dia IX de Novembro aos Dezembargadores a primeira vez que foi á Relação*, fol. 40.
protocol was still present in the first decades of the twentieth century. A diary of an English visitor to Goa, Sir James Robert Dunlop Smith (1909), mentions in detail the diplomatic ceremonies of the Estado da Índia with some bewilderment describing them as a kind of *opera buffa* staged in a lavish setting and based on an evocation of a distant and glorious past.\(^{70}\)

---

4. Seeking Prestige and Survival: Gift-exchange practices between the Portuguese Estado da Índia and Asian rulers

Introduction

‘The Portuguese’, wrote Viceroy Vasco Fernandes César de Menezes, ‘only want to obtain glory, conserve their reputation, which is something that it is not found among the other Europeans who today reside in Asia’.¹ This concern about stating the prestige of the Portuguese Crown in India was deeply related to Goa’s strategy of re-inventing itself through the abandonment of its past image as a major European maritime power operating in India, in favour of a new strategy based on the definition of a concrete territorial implantation that would oblige Goa to assume the status of a native political agent.²

An integral part of this new strategy was the sagoate, a formal form of gift exchange which took place in most diplomatic contacts established by Goa with the Reis Vizinhos. According to Sebastião Dalgado’s Glossário Luso-Asiático, sagoate is a term with a Hindi-Persian origin, saughāt, also used in Konkani, which referred to a donation, a present or an indulgence (mimo) offered on festive occasions or in homage to someone.³ Documents such as the Assentos do Conselho do Estado or viceregal letters suggest that the sagoate was considered to be an act of courtesy from one ruler to another, a gift offered by ambassadors or special envoys to demonstrate their rulers’ goodwill, or to express congratulations for coronations, a military victory, or a royal wedding. It was usual that the ruler who received a sagoate offered a counter-gift to demonstrate his respect and affection for the giver.

The sagoate exemplifies the theory of gift-exchange developed by Marcel Mauss in his Essai sur le don, where he refers to three obligations: to give, to receive and to reciprocate. Reciprocity is, indeed, the key to gift-exchange and is connected to a moral bond between those who are involved in the process. This duty to reciprocate could be used to establish partnerships, consolidate alliances or confirm one’s status.

According to Mauss, the personal bonds established by gift-exchange, arise from the perception that the gift possesses something of the personality of the giver.\(^4\) Due to the association between the giver’s personality and the gift, money was often regarded as an inappropriate gift. As Ilana Silber argues, a gift of money is usually ‘abstract and anonymous’.\(^5\) The impersonal nature of money erases the giver’s personality and relegates the ties between giver and receiver to a merely economic sphere, annulling therefore the reciprocal and personal nature of gift-exchange.\(^6\)

The reply of a sagoate had an important symbolic value, which indicated that both giver and receiver shared an equal status – an assumption that could generate, in some circumstances, a tension related to the expectation of a return gift. Indeed, the refusal or inability to offer or reply a sagoate had a profound impact on the relation between powers. Failure to give, admit or repay a gift could be interpreted as rejection of friendship or, as Marcel Mauss would put it, a declaration of war.\(^7\) A similar interpretation was shared by Santo Sinai Dangui, a gentio who worked for Goa as a diplomatic envoy and led an embassy to the Mughal sarsubhedar (governor) of Sapuém. In a report destined for the Secretário do Estado (State Secretary), Dangui revealed that the sarsubhedar had demonstrated ‘his great affection’ for the Portuguese and, despite being ill, he read immediately the letters from the viceroy and the secretary that were presented to him stating, according to Dangui, that he was eager ‘to spend his entire life serving Your Lordship’. To express his friendship towards the Estado, the ruler declined to accept the sagoate, justifying his decision because until then ‘he had not made any service’ to the Portuguese. The Estado’s envoy was not expecting such a reaction, and stayed for more four days in Supém to convince the sarsubhedar to accept the gift. Dangui with the help of Ballagi Panta, an official that was presented as the Sarsubhedar’s right-hand man, was able to persuade the ruler to accept the gift suggesting that a refusal could be wrongly interpreted by the Portuguese, and that he should ‘send a more valuable return gift’ to Goa to demonstrate his goodwill and friendship.\(^8\) In fact, the absence of a return gift could also be associated with reduced

economic capacity, promoting an image of weakness that could damage any claims of superiority and power. Reciprocity, thus, was not only a sign of appreciation and politeness, but a convenient action to preserve peaceful foreign relations.

The absence of a counter-gift could be interpreted as a rejection of the giver’s personality or self. If a *sagoate* offered by the Estado was not reciprocated by a *Rei Vizinho*, the Portuguese authorities often interpreted this to mean that the Portuguese Crown had been put in the position of offering a tribute – a suggestion that attacked the supposed prestigious and powerful image of the ‘Majestic State’. Indeed, for the Portuguese authorities a gift was essentially voluntary and should be reciprocated as a gesture of goodwill; by contrast, a tribute was generally mandatory and non-reciprocal. The reciprocal spirit of the *sagoate* was sometimes distorted by the Estado and the *Reis Vizinhos* to transmit a particular political message. For example, in 1742 the rulers of Sawantvandi, the *sardesais*, complained to Viceroy Marquis of Louriçal that the Estado had not reciprocated their *sagoate*. Louriçal was reminded that a ‘most ancient style’ established that ‘when a horse is offered as a *sagoate*, another should be given in return’.

During the 1740s, the relations between the Estado and Sawantvandi were particularly tense. The *sardesais*’ support to the Maratha invasion of the Provincia do Norte and their several attempts to change the vassalage ties with the Portuguese Crown were regarded by Louriçal as an attack to the Estado’s authority. By not reciprocating the *sardesais*’ gift, the viceroy denied their status as autonomous rulers and suggested that Sawantvandi was still a vassal princedom of the Estado da Índia. The Overseas Council was also concerned with the possibility of *sagoates* being transformed into tributes and advised viceroys to be careful when they received a *sagoate*, and to ensure that the gifts offered by Estado da Índia were not interpreted by the *Reis Vizinhos* as tributes, or as gesture that implied that the Portuguese Crown might have an inferior status.

Like other forms of gift-exchange, the *sagoate* was an instrument of communication that can define or change a relationship. To borrow Edward Schieffelin’s expression, gift exchange is a ‘rhetorical gesture in social

---

communication’. To refuse to participate in this process of communication is to reject a normal intercourse. For Marshall Sahlins, there is a relation between the Maussian gift and the Hobbesian state of *Warre*, since gift-exchange is based on ‘a similar appreciation of reciprocity as the primitive mode of peace’.

The exchange of gifts may combine diverse motives. A gift could be offered in good faith, to challenge the receivers, or even to embarrass them. In other words, gift-exchange is a form of communication that the different positions of social actors and their possession of economic, political and symbolic capital. For Pierre Bourdieu, the different uses and implications of gift-exchange inspires social actors to base their actions according to a ‘spirit of calculation’ to accumulate different kinds of capital (cultural, social, symbolic, material). The success of this strategic interaction relies on their ability ‘to conceal the objective truth of the exchange’ and present it as a disinterested act.

Gifts to ambassadors and envoys were more than acts of diplomatic courtesy. Through their generosity to diplomats and courtiers, the Portuguese hoped to establish a rapport with influential political actors who could support the interests of the Estado da Índia and influence the decisions of their rulers. This practice was common in Europe and most Indian rulers also offered valuable gifts to diplomats in order to gain their sympathy. In these cases, the difference between a bribe and a gift is quite thin, since the gifts offered by the Portuguese authorities aimed at seducing or rewarding the efforts made by some relevant political actors on behalf of the Portuguese Crown.

The Portuguese attached special importance to the *sagoate* as a form of ritualised friendship and courtesy on a political scene shaped by a permanent formation and collapse of alliances. The *sagoate* was often used by the Portuguese authorities as a vehicle of communication that could contribute to reduce the hostility of potential enemies, maintain allies and forge new alliances. By following prestigious local political rituals which allowed a demonstration of wealth, such as the *sagoate*, the Estado da Índia could safeguard its transformation from an influential maritime power into a neutral enclave.

---

13 Ibid., p. 22.
Signs of an old friendship: the *sagoates* exchanged by Portuguese and Mughals

The special qualities of the *sagoate* promoted the creation of a personal and reciprocal bond which seemed to be appreciated by Portuguese and Mughals in their diplomatic contacts. Portugal regarded the Mughal Empire as the main Indian power and a precious ally against the Estado’s European and Indian rivals. Lisbon also believed that the survival of the Estado relied on the goodwill of the Mughal emperor - a view that was also shared by the Dutch, English and French East Indies companies, which made several attempts to construct an alliance with the Mughal. Viceroyos were often advised by the King and his councillors to promote good relations with the Great Mughal, and Goa seemed to follow Lisbon’s instructions through a regular exchange of *sagoates* with Delhi. For the Mughals, the Portuguese were an interesting ally who could contribute to Agra’s expansionist interests by securing the empire’s port cities.

Despite this convergence of interests, the relations between Goa and the Great Mughal were not free from turbulent periods. In 1707 the Portuguese attacked an Omani fleet in Surat, an event which could have caused a hostile reaction from the new Mughal emperor, Shah Alam. The incident was resolved by Viceroy Dom Rodrigo da Costa with an embassy and a *sagoate* valued at 8,569 xerafins, two tangas and 55 reis\(^\text{14}\) which was offered under the pretext of congratulating the emperor ‘for his victory and possession of the Crown’. The embassy led by the rector of the Jesuit college of Agra, a Portuguese *padre* called José de Abreu, was instructed to act ‘without showing fear and our suspicion that he is offended for the naval conflict in Surat’.\(^\text{15}\) Abreu’s mission seemed to be successful. On 27 November 1710, the viceroy informed João V that the Mughal emperor sent a counter-gift to Goa including a piece of gold adorned with thirty-eight diamonds, 106 rubies, twelve emeralds and other fourteen precious stones; two boxes ‘closed and sealed with his [Mughal] seal’ with oils, perfumes, and herbs; sixty fine shawls; and forty pieces ‘of ordinary satin’ (*atalas ordinarias*) of several colours.\(^\text{16}\) Dom Rodrigo decided to send Shah Alam’s gifts to Lisbon because ‘they deserve to be seen by Your Majesty’. The exotic and lavish goods from the Mughal court were presented by the viceroy as a sign that the relation between the Estado and


\(^{15}\) Doc. 84 “Proposta que manda fazer o Exmo Sr V. Rey Dom Rodrigo da Costa aos concelheiros do Estado sobre a materia que nella se declara” (14/08/1707), *Assentos do Conselho do Estado*, ed. P. Pissurlencar (Goa: Imprensa Nacional, 1954), p. 218.

the emperor were on good terms. Another indication of Shah Alam’s good intentions towards the Portuguese Crown was indicated by Dom Rodrigo’s report of 7 January 1711, which mentioned that in addition to the *sagoate* there was a letter addressed to João V and signed by the Mughal emperor.

Shah Alam’s letter revealed that his counter-gift expected another reciprocated act from the Portuguese Crown. The Mughal emperor confessed to João V that his *sagoate* was a sign of his ‘appreciation, and desire to conserve the old friendship’ and since the Portuguese king was also a ‘great lord’ Shah Allam asked his friend a favour: the free passage of Muslim merchants in the Estado da Índia. Shah Allam promised that if this request was granted he would do everything ‘whenever it is necessary to help you and if there is something that you would like from this land, I will be ready [to please you]; and when there is anything new the Portuguese will know’. The emperor ended his letter with kind and friendly words stating that he was awaiting a letter from João V with ‘novelties on your health, and Kingdoms’. 17 Shah Allam’s words suggest that the *sagoate* could be used as a ‘tie sign’, a term coined by the American sociologist Erving Goffman to describe actions that demonstrated the existence of personal relations between actors. 18 For the Mughal emperor the exchange of gifts created a bond between him and the Portuguese king which should be continued to honour and maintain this friendship.

Viceroy’s were often instructed to be careful when confronted with a *sagoate*, and ensure that an image of independence and authority was transmitted. Goa should avoid any situation in which *sagoate* offered to a local ruler could be interpreted as tribute, or recognition of inferiority.

After receiving a letter from Viceroy Vasco Fernandes César de Menezes reporting the preparation of an embassy to the Mughal court to offer a *sagoate* to congratulate a new emperor, João instructed his viceroy to suspend the embassy if possible. The Portuguese king considered that the *sagoate* sent by Dom Rodrigo da Costa was already enough, and that it was inconvenient ‘to repeat these ceremonies, in order to avoid the appearance of tribute, and to not create an example for this princes that would suggest that all new viceroy’s should do the same favour’. Menezes’ diplomatic actions were considered in Lisbon as dangerous, since the use of *sagoates* in a period when Goa relied on an alliance with Delhi could be interpreted by the Great

---

Mughal as a sign of weakness and a suggestion of vassalage. João was aware that the suspension of the *sagoate* could damage the relations with Delhi, and ordered Menezes to instruct his successors ‘to act with attention and prudence without neglecting the conveniences of the Estado, which depends so much on the friendship of the Mughal King, in order to avoid any appearance or interpretation of tribute’. 19

Confronted with the king’s instructions, Menezes was obliged to reply immediately to ensure that his embassy and future approaches to local rulers would not be affected by Lisbon’s refusal to follow Indian diplomatic etiquette. The viceroy wrote to Lisbon explaining how theEstado was forced to follow local traditions in order to guarantee its prestige, and ensured that these traditions had never affected João’s image, stating that the Estado da Índia had ‘such a notorious independence from any other power, that there is no one in Asia that does not recognize it, and during this time in which the weapons of Your Majesty were given to me they are more respected than revered’. The viceroy explained that the *sagoate* was a local tradition, an indispensable ritual between two equal powers and that the Mughal emperor ‘when he negotiates with the Estado, does not neglect this matter, being the first who does it [and] in such way that no-one is persuaded that a question of style is tribute’. 20 João was pleased with the viceroy’s answer and instructed him to only offer a *sagoate* when there was the need to have ‘serious business with the Mughal’. 21 The king’s strange change of opinion could be explained by an interpretation of the *sagoate* as a prestigious ritual which allowed the Portuguese Crown to introduce the same policy of prestige and diplomatic independence in Asia that João V followed in Europe. The importance of the *sagoate* for the consolidation of the Estado’s prestigious image was something João reminded Menezes’s successor, the Count of Ericeira, who on 18 March 1717 was advised by the king to offer *sagoates* only ‘when there is an occasion to do important businesses. Although João recognised that the *sagoate* was the ‘style observed’ (*estilo observado*) in Asia, and that the gifts did not represent a ‘fracture on the reputation of the Estado, or to my Sovereignty’ 22 there was still some concerns regarding the interpretations of the gifts offered by Goa. Indeed, by restricting the *sagoate* to ‘important business’

---

20 Ibid., p. 151.
22 Historical Archives of Goa (HAG), Livro das Monções do Reino (MR) 83, “Carta de Sua Magestade ao Vice-Rei Conde da Ericeira, 18/3/1718”, f. 27.
(negocios grandes), Lisbon wanted to reduce the risks of the sagoate having the appearance of a tribute.

The second sagoate offered by Menezes to the Great Mughal was related to one of Goas’ diplomatic successes of the period - the Mughal pravana which forbade the access of Omani ships to Surat, and allowed the Portuguese to attack any ship or fleet which belonged to the ‘velhaco’ (evil) and ‘prejudicial’ (harmful) Sultan of Oman.\(^\text{23}\) The pravana (edict) justified the decision with the Great Mughal’s ‘good relation with the Portuguese, especially with the viceroy, from whom he had received many courtesies, and with whom he wishes to correspond’.\(^\text{24}\) In a letter dated 10 January 1716, Menezes suggested that the success of the Luso-Mughal alliance against Oman was the result of Padre José da Silva’s embassy. This letter mentioned other successes of the Portuguese embassy such as the reduction from 6% to 2% on Mughal taxes on Portuguese products, and another pravana that stated that the Mughal nawabs who neighboured Goa should aid the Portuguese in times of war.\(^\text{25}\)

**The sagoate as an alternative to war in Luso-Maratha relations**

Besides creating personal links between Portuguese and Indian rulers, the sagoate was also used as a vehicle of communication, a pretext for establishing contacts with Goa’s neighbours, especially during moments of conflict and diplomatic tension. After the fall of the Província do Norte in 1739, Viceroy Count of Sandomil decided to execute what he described as ‘an extraordinary idea’ – an embassy to Shahu Raja to negotiate a peace treaty. To guarantee the success of the embassy, Sandomil appointed as a special envoy a Goan Hindu, Santa Sinay, who would offer to the Maratha ruler a sagoate containing gilded clothes, two giant mirrors, a piece of scarlet measuring 70 cubits, two pieces of Damasks, four Bengali hats [beatilhas de Bengala], 12 perfumes and five baskets of mangoes.\(^\text{26}\) The inclusion of mangoes in this sagoate was related to the quality and fame of Goan mangoes, which were often described by the Portuguese as the best in India and regarded as a symbol of the fertility of Goan lands. The embassy and its sagoate

\(^{23}\) Traduçöo da pravana que Abadul Axan, Vazir do Rey Mogor, por ordem sua envia ao Governador de Surrate, Momuchar, a requerimento do Vice-Rey da India’\’in Collecçöo de tratados e concertos de pazes que o Estado da India 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 sécöo XVIII, Vol. V, ed. Júlio Firmino Biker (Lisbon: Imprensa Nacional, 1885), p. 308
\(^{24}\) Ibid., p. 309.
\(^{26}\) Doc. 179 (12/08/1739), Assentos do Conselho do Estado, pp. 556, 559.
were regarded by Sahu, in a letter to the Secretário de Estado António Henriques, as ‘expressions of a faithful friendship’ which should be reflected by ‘the desired tranquillity [sossego]’ of the land, an aim that Shahu himself also sought ‘with all the necessary means’. Santa Sinay’s embassy seemed to have contributed to a relative normalisation of the relations between Goa and the Marathas. A peace treaty was signed on 18 September 1740. The Estado da Índia was obliged to pay a large compensation to Satara, and admit the loss of the Província do Norte. The Marathas, in their turn, agreed to not occupy Salsete and Bardez, as well as the fort of St. Jerome near Damão. Satara also gave to Goa the Naer Pragana – an area of vital importance for the survival of Damão. The treaty also included that Sonda would be a tributary of Satara, and that Maratha troops were allowed to be in Pondá, as well as the Portuguese trade with the Gates.

During the viceroyalty of the Marquis of Alorna, Goa’s relations with the Marathas were shaped by an atmosphere of mutual suspicion. Satara believed that the Portuguese would take any opportunity to recapture the Província do Norte, and the Estado feared another invasion. To erase the increasing rumours of a Portuguese invasion, and guarantee the Maratha’s neutrality during the military campaigns led by the Marquis of Alorna against the Bhonsles of Sawantvandi, a Maratha clan with close ties with Satara, Goa sent in August 1746 two envoys to the Maratha court, Dom António José Henriques and Gorquy Punddulica, to reply to an embassy sent in the same year by Nanasaheb, the Maratha peshwa.

The importance of this embassy was reflected in the sagoate. The peshwa’s secretary, Naro Ramo, received one box, on behalf of his Portuguese counterpart, and another two from the viceroy. The two envoys also offered several gifts to other high-ranking officials. The exchange of gifts, as well as its extension to the ruler’s inner-circle, family or the high ranks of his army and administration, was often used by the Portuguese to demonstrate their goodwill and respect. These practices not only helped to transmit a positive image of the Portuguese Crown in a foreign court, but also contributed to unlocking eventual obstacles that could emerge during the diplomatic contacts and negotiations. There was, in fact, an intention to create a network of ‘friends’ based on courtiers and officials that would eventually be seduced by the gifts and support Portuguese interests. Padres Abreu’s embassy to Delhi, for example,

---

27 Ibid., pp. 555.
28 Carreira, “Aspectos Políticos”, p. 75.
offered some gifts to validos of the emperor, especially Juliana Dias da Costa, a Portuguese woman that lived most of her life at the Mughal court as a protégée and a maid of honour of the imperial family, and who was described by Costa as ‘someone who this State owes a particular kindness, since her valimento with the Mughal King is the greatest of all, and one must admire the fact that she is a Portuguese, a good Christian and virtuous, living during so many years among Moors and in the palace of the same King’.  

Concerning the sagoates offered by the Portuguese to the Marathas, the inclusion of gifts destined for the favourites of the rajah and peshwa seemed to be relatively successful, especially with Naro Ramo, who was once mentioned by Alorna as someone who had feelings of affection towards the Portuguese. These feelings were also shared by his nephew, Ganaxamà, who inherited Ramo’s post and was married to a daughter of Vitogy Sinay Dumó, a Goan Hindu who served the Estado as a diplomat. Indeed, during the negotiations for the 1740 peace treaty, Viceroy Count of Sandomil wrote a letter to Naro Ramo suggesting that a peace treaty could be the first step for the formation of a profitable Luso-Maratha alliance. The letter was accompanied by a sagoate which included two beds decorated with damasks, 12 pieces of cuttanee (a silk or a cloth made of a mixture of silk and cotton), 25 pieces of Portuguese manufactured clothes, two artificial flowers made of gold, three cargoes (cargas) of mangoes as well as several pieces of red clothes (pano berne). Sandomil’s gift to Naro Ramo was probably a successful attempt to find a privileged interlocutor at the Maratha court who could influence Shahu’s decisions. The importance of having friends at the Maratha Court made Alorna advise Távora to ensure Ganaxamà’s affection for Goa, describing him as ‘the most intelligent and astute gentile’ qualities which obliged the new viceroy to act cautiously ‘in order to obtain news from him’. It seems that Ganaxamà was aware of the utility of his affection, and that he believed that could be rewarded for the good correspondence he had with Alorna. According to Alorna’s Instrução, the Maratha official used his friendship with him to acquire a village in the Kingdom of Sonda which had a ‘temple of his devotion’. Alorna interfered on his behalf,

29 Doc. II, Uma dona portugueza, p. 111.
31 Marquês de Alorna, Instruçção dada pelo Excelentíssimo Marquez de Alorna ao seu successor no governo deste Estado da India, o Excelentíssimo Marquez de Tavora (Goa, 1836), p. 21.
but delayed the transfer of the village to not increase the influence of ‘such a powerful Maratha’.

Punddulica’s report also mentioned the zeal of Mahipat Rao, a Maratha diplomat who had previously been at Goa as the peshwa’s envoy. Rao helped the Portuguese envoys by lobbying Nanasaheb to ‘increase this friendship because there was already a good state of relations since the time of His Father, and the Lord Marquis was fond of this friendship’. Rao also suggested that Satara should reply to the viceroy’s gesture of friendship, claiming that Nanasaheb’s virtues were ‘known all over the world, [and] His Excellency [Alorna] expected that Nana would not fail this friendship’. However, Rao became increasingly unhappy with the rewards offered by the Portuguese envoys. Punddulica also informed the viceroy that Rao told to an important Maratha official, Bara Mantry, that the Portuguese were not rewarding him accordingly to his services, while other Maratha officials and courtiers received several gifts valuing 400 or 500 xerafins despite not helping the Portuguese envoys. To please Rao, Punddulica offered him seven rupees, as well as an allowance of one quarter rupee per day until the end of the Portuguese embassy. Punddulica believed that he was forced to accept Rao’s demands due to his obligation ‘to show my master’s greatness’. The money offered to Rao, therefore, was not considered to be a bribe but an essential demonstration of wealth which would transmit a powerful image of the Estado and ensure the success of the Portuguese embassy, promoting at the same time the creation of a group of local officials that would be eager to promote Goa’s interests at the Maratha court.

The minor potentates: the case of Sonda

The apparent emptiness of sagoate exchange, suggested by its routines and notions of fair exchange, concealed an attempt to construct relations of political dominance. The obligation to offer a counter-gift after receiving a sagoate was appreciated by potentates who enjoyed a superior position and possessed the necessary means to use gift-exchange as an instrument of their authority. Indeed, through the concession of generous gifts, they were able to expose the receiver’s inferior status paving the way to the construction of a relation of dependence sustained by the need for reciprocity as a demonstration of gratitude. A return gift of a low value, however, could be interpreted

32 Ibid., p. 21.
as a sign of debility or inferiority. The absence of a counter-gift had even more dangerous connotations, since it suggested that the receiver was presented with a tribute.

In 1709, viceroy Dom Rodrigo da Costa received a present from the rajah of Sonda destined for the Portuguese king, after the news of João’s marriage to Marianna of Austria reached India. The present, a highly valuable jewel, was offered as a personal gift, but the viceroy advised Lisbon that it should be considered as a sagoate and replied with another gift of similar value which would be paid by the Royal Treasury. João agreed with Dom Rodrigo’s proposal, and instructed him to proceed in the same way with other ‘Kings of Asia who sent similar gifts of the same value’.34

The viceroy’s advice was influenced by the relation between Goa and Sonda. Although the treaties signed between the Estado and the rajah did not stipulate that Sonda had the official status of a tributary principedom of the Portuguese Crown, the Portuguese authorities regarded the rajah as a vassal. Indeed, Sonda was obliged to supply Goa with rice, spices and soldiers, as well as to buy Portuguese weapons. Goa was also extremely interested in maintaining an unequal relationship with Sonda due to the strategic location of the principedom in the Ghats, being considered an important buffer state between the Estado’s territory and the Marathas. Despite the apparent friendly relations between both sides there were, occasionally, moments of tension caused by delays in the supply of rice to Goa, as well as Sonda's reluctance to give military aid to the Estado. Indeed, it seems that Sonda wanted to avoid any feelings of hostility from other powers due to its involvement with the Estado, an attitude that the Portuguese often regarded as betrayal. Sonda rulers were often described by viceroys in negative terms. Ericeira, in 1720, described the rajah as a ‘merchant prince who like is subjects is incapable to go to war’.35 In 1750, the Marquis of Alorna in his Instrução (Instruction) to the Marquis of Távora described another ruler of Sonda as a ‘lazy and imbecile Prince, who [has] inherited from his father his Kingdom, weakness, and vices, especially his drunkeness’. Alorna alerted Távora to be prepared for a ‘puratory of patience’ when dealing with Sonda’s ‘slowness and quietness’.36

Before the fragility of this alliance, Dom Rodrigo considered that Sonda’s gift should be dealt with care. If the Portuguese Crown did not offer a counter-gift, the

34 Biblioteca Nacional de Portugal (BNP), Cod. 8529 – Carta N.º52.
35 BNP, Cod. 6427 - Carta N.º4, fol. 24
36 Alorna, Instrucção, pp. 4-5.
viceroy feared that Sonda would interpret this as a tribute and eventually reconsider its alliance with the Portuguese. On the other side, due to the value of the jewel offered to João V, if the Portuguese did not make a return gift there was a chance that Sonda would consider that the Estado and the Crown were financially weak, encouraging a transformation of the relationship between both sides. By treating the present as a *sagoate*, Goa had an opportunity to stress its power before Sonda and safeguard the reputation of the Portuguese Crown.

During the 1710s, the relations between Sonda and the Estado were damaged by the actions of the *Propaganda Fide* in Sonda, as well as by Sonda’s recruitment of Portuguese deserters. On 3 January 1713, Viceroy Vasco Fernandes César de Menezes informed Lisbon that he had persuaded the rajah to expel a group of Propaganda missionaries who were operating in Sonda, threatening the *Rei Vizinho* with the end of the a friendship which, according to the viceroy, ‘was convenient for him [rajah]’. However, the ultimatum had no effect. One year later, Menezes informed Lisbon that he had invaded Sonda and destroyed the fortress of Sirodã. The attack was justified by the viceroy as an attempt to force the rajah to expel the *Propaganda* missionaries and finalise the payment of a sum of money to the Estado that was agreed after the inclusion of Pondá in the Estado’s *dessaidos* (provinces). The relationship between Goa and Sonda would only be repaired during the tenure of Viceroy Count of Ericeira. On 22 July 1718, Ericeira wrote to the rajah to thank him for the embassy that he had sent to Goa to congratulate the viceroy for his arrival in India. Ericeira was pleased with the ‘expressions and wishes of conservation of a good friendship’ stated by the ambassador, a polite way of expressing an appreciation for the gift that was offered to the Estado. As a gesture of recognition and friendship, Ericeira informed the rajah that he had replied to Sonda’s ambassador with the ‘same [good]will’. In fact, Ericeira added to the record of this letter an appendix with a description of the *sagoate* of 50 *covados* (33 metres) of red clothes and four pieces of yellow damasks that he sent to Sonda.

---

37 “Carta do Vice Rey Vasco Fernandes César de Menezes a Sua Magestade datada de Goa a 3 Janeiro de 1713”, *Collecção de Tratados*, Tomo V, p. 260.
38 “Carta do Vice Rey Vasco Fernandes César de Menezes a Sua Magestade datada de Goa a 17 Janeiro de 1714”, *Collecção de Tratados*, Tomo V, p.259.
What was offered?

The important association between gift and giver promoted by the *sagoate* could also be exemplified by the type of objects that were offered. The *sagoates* mentioned before shared a common feature – the absence of money. Two reasons could justify this. First, offers of money were an essential part of the economic violence and submissive prostrations associated with tributes. Secondly, offers of lavish items possessed an important symbolic dimension which expressed the nature of the occasion that motivated the *sagoate*, or even the quality of the relationship between different actors. For example, when the rajah of Cannannore offered his vassalage to the Portuguese Crown, he decided to send a *sagoate* of pepper, cardamom, kari (mixture of spices), and sandal\[^{40}\] – the natural resources of his kingdom – to demonstrate the advantages that Goa could enjoy from this union. A similar strategy of gift-exchange was detected by David Cheal in his study dedicated to wedding gifts. Cheal noticed that for most interviewees, money was considered to possess an inferior quality ‘because it does not require much thought or time, and thus cannot symbolize a carrying relationship’\[^{41}\]. Indeed, gifts such as elaborated pieces of jewellery or exquisite tapestries had the advantage of being valuable items that could reflect the donor’s self, and express the existence of a relationship based on respect and affection, as well as the status of the recipient.

Another indication of the use of gift-exchange in the construction of personal relationships between rulers was the constant presence of cloths in the *sagoates*. Indian Muslims and Hindus regarded cloths as a special element which possessed a part of the owner or giver’s self. In the Mughal system of kingship, the offer of gifts of dress or cloth was an essential act of homage which symbolized the incorporation of one subject into the royal body, while one subject who received a cloth or dress from the emperor would benefit from his contact with the superior quality of royalty.\[^{42}\] This supernatural power of cloths made them a potent symbol and a vehicle for the creation or

\[^{40}\] “Carta do Ad Rajaó de Cananor ao Vice Rey, Vasco Fernandes César de Menezes”, Collecção de Tratados e Concertos de Pazes que o Estado da Índia fez com os Reis e Senhores com que teve relações nas partes da Ásia e África Oriental desde os Princípios da conquista até ao fim do século XVIII, ed. Julio Firmino Biker, Tomo VI (Lisbon: Imprensa Nacional, 1885), p. 5.


confirmation of political alliances.\textsuperscript{43} The 60 fine shawls and 40 pieces of satin offered by the Mughal emperor to João V were, therefore, a demonstration of Shah Alam’s wish to establish a true friendship with the Portuguese king. The piece of jewelry of the Mughal \textit{sagoate} also had a special meaning. According to Muslim tradition, gold and silver were symbols of royalty or high status. These two elements possessed a divine quality due to their capacity to absorb light – which was a manifestation of God. According to Bayly, Muslim rulers and nobles were eager to receive presents of gold and silver in order to become ‘mirrors of God’ transmitting divine light.\textsuperscript{44} By offering an elaborate piece of jewellery with gold and other elements associated with light (rubies, diamonds and emeralds), Shah Alam was recognizing João’s status as a king and equal ‘mirror of God’. Another important characteristic of the Mughal gift was the offer of satin, a mixture of silk and cotton. Silk was regarded by orthodox Muslims as a luxurious item which distracted the faithful from truly submitting to God. Indeed, silk was banned inside mosques, although it was tolerated outside religious spaces and events. Cotton-silk mixtures, like satin, became increasingly popular among less orthodox Indo-Muslims who wanted to enjoy the pleasures of silk without breaking the law. Although described as ‘ordinary’, the satin pieces were an attempt to honour João V with a prestigious piece of cloth.

One of the essential characteristics of the \textit{sagoate} was the diversity of items which were exchanged. For Mughal and other Indian rulers, variety was synonymous with greatness. A ruler who was able to offer several items to another sovereign could demonstrate his economic power and the riches of his dominions. At the same time, a ruler who received different goods in a \textit{sagoate} saw his status as a great sovereign confirmed, since only those who were touched with greatness were great consumers.\textsuperscript{45}

The presents offered by the Portuguese to the Marathas also played with the symbolism of cloths in the Hindu tradition. According to the Law of Manu, white symbolised purity and was the colour of Brahmins and widows. Red was associated with blood and danger, elements which reflected the nature of soldiers and powerful women. Yellow evoked fecundity and was the colour used by merchants. Dark cloths were related to inferior castes.\textsuperscript{46} These meanings were probably behind the selection of gilded and red cloths in Sandomil’s \textit{sagoate} to the Marathas. Indeed, this choice of

\textsuperscript{43} Ibid., p. 286.
\textsuperscript{44} Ibid., pp. 291-292.
\textsuperscript{45} Ibid., p. 300.
\textsuperscript{46} Ibid., p. 291.
colours were quite appropriate for the new emergent and dominant Indian power which was living a period of economic and military success.

The impact and success of a *sagoate* not only relied on the symbolism of what was offered, but also on its correspondence with local tastes and fashions. The content of most *sagoates* was therefore arranged with the help of local collaborators or informers who often advised the Estado on the selection of gifts. On 17 January 1728, Viceroy Saldanha da Gama informed Lisbon that Padre Manoel de Figueiredo would report to Goa the new tastes and fashions of the Mughal court before sending future gifts. Indeed, the viceroy, based on the reports sent by Padre Manoel, suggested to João V that the *sagoate* which would be offered to the Mughal emperor would not consist of gold or diamonds, but ‘of pieces with another appreciation in that court, or objects which are considered to be rare’.  

This need to be updated with the taste and consumption habits of the *Reis Vizinhos* led Viceroy Marquis of Louriçal to instruct, on 29 March 1741, the factor of Mangalore, José Antunes Branco, to consult Custam Sinay, a merchant based in the Malabar Coast, to know what should be offered to the *nayaka*.  

Indian rulers were often eager to acquire novelties. A ruler with a large collection of curiosities, or foreign inventions, was associated with an image of power and greatness since he could use objects and commodities that no one else possessed. Padre Abreu, for example, mentioned to Viceroy Dom Rodrigo da Costa that Shah Allam wanted to use weapons ‘in the manner of the Portuguese kings’, and asked to send them to Agra. Novelties and foreign inventions were an important demonstration of how one ruler enjoyed a close relationship with other distant sovereigns who respected and admired him. These beliefs could probably explain the *Peshwa*’s pleasure for receiving a Portuguese inkwell (*escrevaninha*). The Portuguese, as well as the other Europeans, were quite happy to offer European commodities and products. The excessive Eurocentric, not to say racist, vision of the Portuguese viceroys of local rulers and societies, often describing them as ‘barbarians’ or ‘uncivilised’, reveals a strong belief in the existence of a Portuguese, or European, superiority which needed to be demonstrated. The exchange of *sagoates* was a good opportunity to offer

---

48 HAG, *Cartas e Ordens*, 799, “Carta do Vice-Rei Conde de Sandomil ao Feitor de Mangalor, 29/03/1741”, f. 104.
local rulers a direct experience of the advantages and superiority of European civilisation. It is not a coincidence that after being defeated by the Marathas, Goa offered manufactured cloth and Portuguese furniture to the Peshwa – items regarded by Peshwa Nanasaheb as curiosities, and by the Portuguese as a clear evidence of their superiority.

Knowledge as a gift: doctors and mathematicians at the courts of the Reis Vizinhos

Apart from clothes and European 'curiosities', the Estado was also keen to offer doctors and scientists to the Reis Vizinhos. This exchange of knowledge was appreciated by the Portuguese authorities, who believed that the transmission of European medical practices or scientific discoveries would impress local rulers and support the Estado’s effort to create a prestigious image of the Portuguese Crown.

The Portuguese, as well as the European powers established in India, were particularly aware of the existence of a demand for European medical experts. Manucci, for example, commented that European doctors were widely admired in India and that most Indo-Muslim rulers considered that the ‘the Franks had received from heaven the gift of being accomplished doctors’.\(^{50}\) The prestige enjoyed by European doctors in India made them useful diplomatic agents. Manucci himself took advantage of his role as a doctor to offer his services as a diplomatic agent for the Estado da Índia, the EIC, the Compagnie des Indes Orientales and the Mughals.\(^{51}\) The Compagnie des Indes often employed French doctors established at local courts to establish contacts with rulers or obtain information on their activities. A good example of a doctor-diplomat is Jacques de la Palisse, a Frenchman who lived in the Mughal Empire. La Palisse used his access to the Mughal court to establish contacts between members of the French Compagnie des Indes and senior Mughal officials. His services and contacts with the Mughal hierarchy were especially useful to the French during the embassy to Aurangzeb led by Le Gouz and Bébert in 1666. La Palisse also maintained a regular correspondence with Pondicherry regarding the military and political activity of the Great Mughal.\(^{52}\) Antoine Destremeau was also an important intermediary between the Compagnie des Indes and the sultan of Golconda. Described by the Compagnie officials as a ‘médecin et


\(^{52}\) Ibid., pp. 87, 90.
marchand privilégie’, Destremeau kept a regular correspondence with the governor of Pondicherry, François Martin, and funded the activities of several French agents in the sultanate during the 1670s and the 1680s. During the siege of São Tomé, in 1673, for example, Destremeau offered Admiral Jacob Blanquet de La Haye his financial services.\textsuperscript{53}

On 27 August 1727, José Tavares, a Portuguese man who appeared to have replaced Juliana Dias da Costa as the informal Portuguese agent at the Mughal court after her death, informed Viceroy João Saldanha da Gama of the arrival of the \textit{cirurgião-mor} (first-surgeon) of Bassein. The surgeon was sent by the viceroy after a request from the Mughal emperor, and his presence at the court was regarded by Tavares as an opportunity to send more Portuguese experts in other areas of knowledge (\textit{offerecer homes de qquer Arte}). Tavares wanted to impress the emperor, and suggested to Saldanha da Gama that Father Manoel de Figueiredo, who had ‘a vast knowledge and experience of this lands and costumes’, should be instructed to report the needs of the Mughal court and how the Estado should send experts to solve them.\textsuperscript{54} The need to send Portuguese experts was pressing. A French surgeon was already serving the Mughal emperor, and Tavares wanted to impede the French from exploring the personal ties that could be established between the doctor and the emperor. Indeed, the Portuguese authorities believed that the presence of the Bassein offered the Estado a rare opportunity to consolidate Goa’s influence in Delhi, and influence the Mughal policy regarding the European powers.

On 13 October 1727, Tavares reported that the surgeon was invited by the emperor to perform a \textit{sangria} (bleeding) on one courtier. The surgeon, according to Tavares, ‘had opened a vein according to our fashion, and everyone who was present had abhorred the bleeding, especially one second [surgeon] who works with the French surgeon, who told the king before everyone that this was the custom among the \textit{firangi} [Europeans].\textsuperscript{55} The bad impression caused by the Portuguese surgeon, and the criticism made by the aid of the French surgeon forced Tavares to present the emperor a petition requesting another bleeding session which would be performed on a captive who was suffering ‘ailments which could be treated with that surgery, and who the surgeons of the Hindustan think that he had no cure for’.\textsuperscript{56} However, the emperor wanted to see the

\textsuperscript{53} Ibid., pp. 104, 112-113.
\textsuperscript{54} HAG, MR 94B, “Carta de Manoel Tavares ao Vice-Rei João Saldanha da Gama, 27/08/1727”, f. 656.
\textsuperscript{55} Ibid., f. 657v.
\textsuperscript{56} Ibid., f. 657v.
sangria performed by the Portuguese surgeon on his own body. If the surgeon accepted
the emperor’s proposal, the Mughal court would recognise that ‘he had not a any
mistake in his job’. Tavares and the surgeon accepted the proposal. In front of a
restricted audience composed of the Mughal grandees and the emperor, the Portuguese
surgeon cut his own veins in the same way as in the previous session. The emperor was
impressed by seeing that the bleeding ‘had not shaken the surgeon’ and praised the
Portuguese by asking all present to ‘see how these men are strong’. To confirm his
admiration, the emperor ordered another bleeding. As a sign of the emperor’s esteem
and respect, the surgeon received a siripão (robe of honour).

However, the surgeon refused to stay at Delhi, claiming that the wages which
had been offered to him were too low. Tavares tried to persuade him, claiming that the
post and salary offered by the emperor were temporary, and that he should take
advantage of all opportunities to raise his rank at the court ‘even the occasion to cure a
blister in the king’s body’. The surgeon was not convinced by Tavares’s arguments
and returned to Bassein. Tavares was shocked by the surgeon’s position, and confessed
to Saldanha da Gama that he was unable ‘to describe the sorrow which I have and which
was caused by the rude manners of a man, and they are so many that I do not have
words to explain them, but I can only tell Your Excellency that he is very unfaithful,
and not even a small bit of comfort he is able to give for the love of God’.

Padre Manoel de Figueiredo, revealed Tavares, considered that the surgeon ‘is not useful in
these lands, because he is very caustic, and then everything was clear for me’. Despite
this bad experience, Tavares asked the viceroy to send another surgeon with the next
envoy or Jesuit padre. The surgeon should be presented as the padre’s personal doctor,
and Tavares also suggested the name of the Jesuit Padre Manuel Durão, ‘who is
considerably aged, very practical in the local language and customs, and is very close to
D. Juliana’.

57 Ibid., f. 657v.
59 Ibid., f. 658.
60 Ibid., f. 658.
61 Ibid., f. 658.
The Padres Mathematicos

Besides the diffusion of European and Portuguese medical practices at local courts, the Estado da Índia was also interested in promoting an image of Portugal as a scientific power by sponsoring the scientific activities of the Jesuits at the Chinese court, for example. The Society of Jesus played an important role in the attempts made by the Estado to present the Portuguese monarch as a great patron of sciences. The Jesuit system was based on a well-organized network of communication between the Society’s educational institutions in Europe and missionary activities in Asia. The Portuguese Crown was therefore able to transfer scientific instruments and knowledge via the Jesuit networks. Although the country was quite far from the scientific culture and achievements of Britain and France, the reputation of the Jesuits as men of knowledge at the Chinese and Mughal courts allowed the Estado to be associated with the scientific and technological progresses transmitted by the missionaries. Moreover, although most Jesuits were not cutting-edge scientists, their role as transmitters of European science and technology allowed them to have access to Asian intellectual and scientific elites. This close relation to local elites, especially in China, was used by the Jesuits to guarantee the sustainability of their activities and promote a sympathetic vision of Christianity, and sometimes of Portuguese interests.

The experience of the Jesuits at the Chinese imperial court led Louis XIV of France to sponsor a similar mission under the Propaganda Fide, in order to enhance the reputation of France. As their Portuguese or Padroado confreres, the French Jesuits promoted several scientific activities, especially in astronomy and physics, but the so-called Portuguese mission was better funded and was well-connected with other Jesuit institutions in Europe, enjoying more prestige than the French missionaries. This competition between Portuguese and French sponsored Jesuit missions was also present in India and in Siam, where a group of French Jesuits worked as mathematicians.

Regarding India, the scientific activities of the Jesuits were, according to Hugo Baldini,

---

‘far less extensive’ than in China due to the perception of the absence of a ‘refined’ scientific tradition and the existence of a much less centralized ruling structure. 67 Such perception could be motivated by the incapacity of the Jesuit missionaries to engage with the Mughal scientific community, or by the fact that their successful promotion of a ‘flourishing artistic exchange’ 68 between Mughal India and Europe allowed the Jesuits to obtain considerable reputation at the court and gain access to the local elites, making unnecessary the investment in scientific activities to create a positive and prestigious image. However, with the decline of the Mughal Empire and the emergence of new regional actors, the Jesuits, as well as the Estado da Índia, needed to forge new alliances and consolidate old ones.

It was in the face of this scenario of a changing political scene and fierce competition between missionaries sponsored by the Portuguese and French Crown, that the scientific exchange between the Rajah of Amber and the Estado da Índia was established. Jai Singh II, the Rajah of Amber, had been since the reign of Aurangzeb an important actor in Mughal politics, serving Delhi as Subahdar of Malwa and participating in the Mughal efforts to control the expansionist ambitions of the Marathas. Despite his proximity to Delhi, during the 1730s Jai Singh also expanded his principedom by incorporating territories under Mughal control, or controlled by petty chieftains.

Jai Singh was also an amateur mathematician and astronomer who invented instruments, translated Euclides into Sanskrit and founded, with the support of the Mughal emperor, observatories in Delhi, Lijain, Benares and Mutra. At Jaipur, the capital of his principedom, the rajah built a lavish observatory compared by Louis Rousselet to a ‘fairy castle’. 69 After a casual meeting with the Portuguese rector of the Jesuit College of Agra, Padre Manoel de Figueiredo, the rajah decided to request that Goa send a mathematician to his observatory in Jaipur. According to Amandio Gracias, Padre Manoel had informed Jai Singh of scientific progress in Europe and had probably suggested some kind of collaboration with Jaipur. 70 Although Padre Manoel came from a country which was far from being known as a knowledge hub, the 1720s were a

70 Ibid., p. 193.
period of scientific renewal in Portugal. Under the patronage of João V an astronomic observatory was created in the Royal Palace and several educational courses and academies were founded\(^*\), such as the one short-lived school opened in 1725 by an Englishman called Lewis Baden dedicated to the study of ‘experimental philosophy’.\(^*\)

Padre Manoel and the rajah’s envoys arrived in Lisbon in January 1729. The presence of an embassy from as distant a principedom as Jaipur caused some curiosity in the Portuguese capital and was mentioned in some detail by the *Gazeta de Lisboa* on 20 January 1729. According to the official newspaper of the Portuguese court, the embassy was transported by ‘the ship which had lately arrived from India, by which came Father Manoel de Figueiredo from the Company of Jesus, and two Umbrias, or noblemen from the Court of the Great Mughal, both Mahometans with a gift for the King Our Lord; they were first at the City of Goa as sent by the same Great Mughal, and visited the Viceroy of India and offered him a Siripão, or garment according to the fashion of their country, with a jewel made of rubies and diamonds’.\(^*\) While in Lisbon, the Jaipur men had contacted the court scholars and in March 1729 João V granted a private audience to Padre Manoel and the other envoys, an event which was also mentioned by the *Gazeta*:

> ‘At the end of last month, His Majesty gave a private audience to Father Manoel de Figueiredo of the Company of Jesus, Missionary at the Court of Agra, who had presented letters from the King of Amber Savajay Jaffeng [sic], containing the business which the same King of Amber and the Great Mughal, Emperor of Hindustan, wanted to communicate; he was accompanied by Pedro Gy, a Catholic from the Mughal nation, and Sheik Gy, a Mahometan of nation, who brought from King Savajay Jaffeng the task of comparing the astronomic tables which are used in this court with those of his Country, and solve some doubts he has regarding this matter, and be informed of the modern and ancient instruments of Astronomy, in which he is very adept; and with the conferences he has had with the Mathematicians of the Court he comprehended the mistakes made by those of his Nation’.\(^*\)


\(^*\)*Gazeta de Lisboa Occidental*, Nº 10, 10 March 1729, p. 80. “Nos fins do mez passado deu Sua Magestade audiencia particular ao P. Manoel de Figueiredo da Companhia de Jesus Missionario na Corte de Agra, o qual lhe entregou as cartas, e o presente d’El Rey de Amber Savajay Jaffeng, e poz na sua Real presença os negócios que veiy comunicar por mandado do mesmo Rey de Amber, e pelo Graõ Mogor Mahamad Xêa Emperardor do Indostan; e trouxe em sua companhia Pedro Gy, Catholico, e Mogor de nação, Xeque Gy, Mahometano de nação, que da parte del Rey Savajay Jaffeng traz a incumbência de conferir as taboas Astronomicas de que se usa nesta corte com as do seu Paiz, resolver as duvidas que nelle há sobre esta materia, e tomar conhecimento dos instrumentos modernos, e
João V instructed one of his court astronomers to follow Padre Manoel to India and present Jay Singh with a copy of de La Hire’s tables published in 1702. Padre Manoel and Jay Singh’s envoys had probably left Lisbon on 30 March 1730, when, according to the Gazeta de Lisboa, three ships were ready to set sail to India. The voyage from the Portuguese capital to Goa ended in October or November 1730.

According to the documents from the Rajasthan State Archives studied by Virendra Nath Sharma, the astronomer sent by João V to Jaipur was not Xavier da Silva, as Amandio Gracias mentioned, but Pedro da Silva, who also served Jai Singh as his main physician. The account of the Jaipur Observatory written by Joseph du Bois, a French Jesuit who collaborated with Jai Singh at the Jaipur in the 1730s, also mentions Pedro da Silva as the astronomer sent by the Portuguese king. According to du Bois:

‘a certain Father of the Society of Jesus, of the Portuguese Nation, and Rector of the College in Agra…was sent by him to seek an astronomer in Europe. The Father went and returned, and brought with him the tables which I have described, along with other mathematical aids, as a gift from the King of Portugal. A certain young man, educated by the Father in India, and born endowed with great ability, by name Petrus da Silva, also Portuguese, studied astronomy at Riet Clarissima [sic] with Father John Baptist Carbone, and came to the Ruler. The Ruler very happily ordered the tables to be transcribed into his script, and ordered all his astronomers to make calculations by them. Now he longs for someone to go to Paris and London to drink astronomy at the source’.

The identity of Pedro da Silva as the Portuguese astronomer is also mentioned by the Diocesan Directory of Jaipur, stating that Pedro da Silva was the first Catholic layman to settle in Jaipur, and that he was accompanied by Father Emmanuel (Manuel) de Figuredo (Figueiredo). This Pedro da Silva was most probably the same Pedro da Silva Leitão who had a regular correspondence with Viceroy Count of Sandomil and who was described by the Portuguese sources as the rajah’s surgeon. Besides being credited as the promoter of Jaipur’s scientific achievements, Silva was also, according

---

antigos pertencentes a Astronomia em que he muy perito; e com as conferencias que tem tido com os Mathematicos da Corte tem comprehendid os erros em que estavam os da sua Naçãö”.

75 Amandio Gracias, “Uma embaixada científica”, p. 199.
76 Gazeta de Lisboa Occidental, Nº 13, 30 March 1730, p. 80
to Sharma, the director of the construction of a gun-foundry.\textsuperscript{80} However, the impact and competence of the Portuguese astronomer is questioned by David Pingree. Based on the Sanskrit poetic version of de La Hire’s tables written by Kevalarama, Pingree argues that Silva had several difficulties in explaining the tables to Kevalarama and other collaborators of the rajah, since their translations contained several errors.\textsuperscript{81} Silva died in Jaipur in 1792, and his grandson, Xavier da Silva, was also a physician, and became an influential courtier in 1799 referred to in local sources as Hakim Shewair or as Hakim Martin.\textsuperscript{82} William Hunter mentioned in 1797 that he had met one of the sons of Pedro da Silva.\textsuperscript{83}

The problems regarding the translations of de La Hire’s tables led Jay Singh to write a letter to the French Jesuits at Candranagara in 1732 with questions regarding the tables and requesting another astronomer.\textsuperscript{84} Between 1734 and 1736 two French Jesuits, Frère Pons and Frère Claude Bodiei, served Jai Singh at the observatory of Jaipur.\textsuperscript{85} The rajah seemed to have been satisfied by the results of the new collaborators, but in 1733 he wrote two letters to Goa and Pondicherry requesting astronomers to help the works of the Jaipur observatory.

On 30 January 1734, Sandomil informed Diogo de Mendonça de Corte Real that he had received two letters from the Jai Singh, ‘a vassal prince of the Mughal [emperor]’. The letters were addressed to the viceroy and João V, and both requested ‘some mathematicians’.\textsuperscript{86} Sandomil mentioned that the rajah was ‘fond of the priests of the Company [of Jesus]’ since he had been instructed by Jesuit mathematicians. The viceroy also informed the Secretary that recent reports from Jaipur indicated that the rajah had also written a letter to the King of France with the same request ‘after the suggestions made by the French priests who live in Surat’. In order to avoid the interference of the French, as soon as the ship anchored in Lisbon, the letter was to be destroyed.\textsuperscript{87}

\textsuperscript{80} Sharma, \textit{Sawai Jai Singh and his astronomy}, p. 127.
\textsuperscript{82} M. F. Soonawala, \textit{Maharaja Sawai Jai Singh II of Jaipur and his observatories} (Jaipur: Jaipur Astronomical Society, 1952), p. 11.
\textsuperscript{84} Pingree, “An Astronomer’s Progress”, p. 81.
\textsuperscript{85} Amandio Gracias, “Uma embaixada científica”, p. 195.
\textsuperscript{86} HAG, MR 102B, “Carta do Vice-Rei Conde Sandomil ao Secretário de Estado Diogo de Mendonça Corte Real, 30/01/1734”, f. 769.
\textsuperscript{87} Ibid., f. 769.
Following the viceroy’s advice, Lisbon recruited two Bavarian Jesuit astronomers, Anton Gabelsberger and Andreas Strobel. The appointment of these two *padres* was probably influenced by João’s consort, Queen Marianna of Austria, and her close relations to German and Austrian Jesuits. Indeed, on 27 October 1746 Strobl wrote to the queen to inform her of Jai Singh’s death and the state of the Jesuit mission in Jaipur.\(^{88}\)

On 20 March 1737, Sandomil wrote to the ‘Very Illustrious and very powerful and great’ Jai Singh to announce the arrival of a *Padre Matematico* who possessed ‘all the good qualities which are required to please Your Highness’. The *Padre Matematico* would depart to Jaipur after the monsoon escorted by Padre Manoel de Figueiredo.\(^{89}\) Also on 20 March 1737, Sandomil informed Pedro da Silva Leitão that the mathematician requested by Jay Singh had arrived in Goa and that as soon as the monsoon was over, he and Padre Manoel would travel to Jaipur.\(^{90}\) However, on 7 December 1737, in another letter to Jai Singh, Sandomil mentions the arrival of not one Jesuit but two, who were at the time unable to reach Jaipur due to the Maratha invasion of the *Provincia do Êglyph7B0orte*. Sandomil also thanked the rajah for his willingness to mediate eventual peace talks between Goa and Satara.\(^{91}\) Silva Leitão was also informed in a letter dated 7 December 1737 that the viceroy had prepared a *sagoate* for Jai Singh, but the ‘troubles on the roads’ caused by the Maratha invasion forced Sandomil to send the gifts to Surat, where the rajah should send an emissary to take them to Jaipur.\(^{92}\)

According to a letter from Sandomil to Silva Leitão, dated 3 August 1738, Jai Singh had sent a Brahmin to Goa to ‘take the Mathematician Fathers’. On 24 and 25 October, the viceroy informed the head of the Portuguese factory at Surat, Moisés Tobias, and Silva Leitão that the two Jesuits were travelling to Surat, where they would be lodged at the residences of the French Jesuits awaiting for escorts from Jaipur.\(^{93}\)

The two Bavarian Jesuits impressed Jai Singh, especially Strobel, since Gabelsberger died in 1741. The rajah was apparently so content with the improvement of the observatory since the arrival of the *Padres Matematicos* that, according to Strobel, he had decided to write to the pope requesting more European astronomers.

---

\(^{88}\) Amandio Gracias, “Uma embaixada científica”, p. 201.
\(^{89}\) HAG, 976, Reis Vizinhos Nº 9, “Para Raja Savae Jae Singa”, f. 12.
\(^{90}\) Ibid., f.12v.
\(^{92}\) Ibid., pp. 62-63.
\(^{93}\) Ibid., pp. 63-64.
However, Jai Singh’s death impeded the execution of this plan. Strobel continued to work in Jaipur and seemed to have maintained a regular correspondence with Rome until his death in 1751.94

Final Remarks

Vasco Fernandes César de Menezes, who seemed to be aware of the meanings of Indian political rituals, complained to João V of the poor quality of the sagoates which were offered during his tenure stating that ‘these kings of Asia chose what they offer according to what they are, so what they send could never be great since they are so limited’.95 This relationship between the sagoate and greatness suited the interests of the Portuguese Crown during the Joanine period. João V’s ambitions to level Portugal with the main powers of eighteenth-century Europe was behind a diplomatic policy based on the acquisition of a prestigious reputation for the Crown. This aim was not unknown to most viceroys, who found in the sagoate an instrument to introduce the king’s desired prestigious image in a way which would be immediately recognised by Indian rulers and erase the widespread perception among the Indian powers that the Estado was a local potentate without any imperial authority or ambition.96 Moreover, the apparent personal relationship between rulers suggested by the exchange of sagoates allowed the viceroys to approximate the Reis Vizinhos to the Portuguese king, who was a distant and abstract entity for most Indian rulers.

By associating the sagoate with João V’s persona, the Estado da Índia was also able to state its differences from the other European powers that were also present in India. It presented its European rivals as mere merchants who only cared about money and did not even obey a King, but rather anonymous stakeholders such as the Dutch and English companies. The Maratha Peshwa Bagi Rao, for example, seemed to agree with this view, stating in a letter to Goa, related to the actions of the English in Bombay, that the Portuguese King was among all the European powers in India ‘the most important, an admirable soldier, and not a merchant, as them, the English’.97 The sagoate as a gift from the Portuguese King or his deputy or doppelganger, the viceroy, offered the Estado

94 Sharma, Sawai Jai Singh and his astronomy, p. 301.
95 Arquivo da Casa dos Condes de Sabugosa/São Lourenço (ACCSSL), Inventário nº 92, A.3.21, Índia, fls.187-188v.
an aura of royal superiority that the EIC or the VOC could not claim. This association between the *sagoate* and the Estado’s royal aura allowed Goa to preserve a relatively prestigious image, in spite of the defeats at the hands of local powers, that would not be damaged by the secondary position that the Portuguese were forced to assume in the eighteenth century.

By making offers of lavish gifts during diplomatic negotiations, the Estado not only could transmit an image of power, authority and wealth, but also try to influence the course of negotiations by indicating a supposed or real superiority that, eventually, would provoke the admiration of the receiver and change his initially hostile position. The opportunities for exhibiting wealth offered by the *sagoate* could also be used to recover the mythical image of ‘Golden Goa’ and present an Estado da Índia which, despite all setbacks and humiliations, still enjoyed a considerable degree of power and wealth.
5. Vassals and Friends of Goa: The Estado da Índia and its relations and rituals of vassalage

Introduction

Since the initial stage of the Portuguese presence in India, the Estado da Índia favoured the construction of a system of foreign relations based on the celebrations of ‘Treaties of Peace and Friendship’ which established bonds of vassalage with rulers who were not able to resist the imposition of a permanent occupation or a situation of Portuguese military control. The pursuit of relations of vassalage in India was based on the Portuguese experience in North Africa, where vassalage treaties with Moroccan rulers were celebrated to protect the Portuguese possessions in the region. The relative success of this strategy and the Moroccan past of the first viceroys led to the implementation of vassalage relations in India, as well as in other parts of the empire. Indeed, treaties of vassalage and protection were still celebrated in the last decades of the nineteenth century with Angolan and Mozambican tribal leaders – an example of the strong belief that the Portuguese authorities had in these kinds of diplomatic instruments to secure their presence. Goa used these treaties as an instrument of indirect rule which allowed the Portuguese to interfere with the military and economic life of their vassals without occupying new territories. The imposition of these treaties was based on a feudal or a semi-feudal arrangement which paved the way to ‘the legitimate and juridical reality of an indirect rule by the Portuguese’.

Despite the progressive loss of military, economic and political prestige of the Estado, most viceroys continued to seek the establishment of relations of vassalage with local rulers. Two factors could explain this situation. First the preservation and expansion of the number of vassals of Goa was often presented by the Portuguese authorities as a reflection of the imperial authority of the Portuguese monarchy over Asian rulers, a palpable evidence of the vitality and power of the Estado da Índia or a demonstration of the continuity of Portuguese expansion and power in India which contradicted the widespread perception of Goan stagnation. Indeed, the viceroy as the king’s representative was obliged to conserve and expand the number of vassals, in


\footnote{Ibid., p. 397.}

\footnote{Ibid., p. 403.}
order to protect what the Portuguese considered their ‘good name’ in Asia. Most viceroys were particularly concerned about creating a network of vassals and friends, not only for the glory of the ‘very high and powerful King of Portugal’, but for their own reputation in Lisbon. The celebration of new vassalage treaties, especially after military victories, could be rewarded by the Crown with new royal privileges to the viceroy and his family, or with prestigious appointments in the metropolitan and colonial administration after the conclusion of a relatively successful tenure. Vasco César Fernandes de Menzes, for example, was rewarded by João for reducing the Nayaka of Keladi and the Raja of Sonda to the status of vassals of the Estado with the title of Count of Sabugosa and was appointed viceroy of Brazil in 1720. And in 1748, viceroy Marquis of Castelo Novo received the title of Marquis of Alorna after the successful campaigns against the Bhonsles of Sawantvandi which resulted in the expansion of the Estado’s territory and the vassalage of Sawantvandi and the Desais of the semi-independent neighbouring villages.

Second, the long-standing networks of vassals created by the Portuguese contributed to the Estado’s own survival. Since the days of Afonso de Albuquerque that the *pareas* (tribute) were used as an instrument to state the suzerainty of the Portuguese king over Asian rulers monarchs’, as well as means to create a regular supply of rice, spices, gold, silver, timber, soldiers, horses and elephants without any costs to the Royal Treasury. In 1741, for example, after a punishing expedition of a Portuguese army due to Sonda’s refusal to maintain his vassalage, the Raja was forced to sign a treaty which confirmed his status as a vassal of the Estado and consequent obligation to pay an annual tribute of 150 *candis* of pepper (1965 kgs). The treaty also allowed the Portuguese to buy all the pepper produced in Sonda, ‘whenever the Estado needs it’, for less than 30 *pagodes* and exempt from taxes. The commercial privileges of the Estado were also protected by Sonda’s obligation to impede the establishment at Karwar of factories from other European nations. Besides the 150 *candis* of pepper, Sonda was also forced to supply the Estado da Índia with a company of *sipais* (soldiers). However,

---

5 A *candil* was 13,1 kgs.
6 The *pagode* was a gold coin worth 3,600 Portuguese réis.
most treaties produced juridical fictions due to the inability of the Estado to enforce the treaties.

**Choreographies of submission**

Most relations consisted of the celebration of a solemn ceremony where a foreign ruler would declare his submission and loyalty to the King of Portugal, and promise to maintain it through the offer of a tribute which symbolised his dependence. The viceroy, as a gesture of appreciation, would confirm and welcome the new vassal promising the protection and friendship of the Portuguese Crown. Other conditions could be added such as reciprocal commercial privileges, the obligation of the vassal ruler to contribute to the number of soldiers of the Portuguese army, and the vassal’s authorisation and support to the missionary works of the *Padroado Real*. During the Joanine period most treaties of ‘Peace and Friendship’ were actually signed by special envoys and then ratified by the viceroy and the local rulers. Indeed, the sacredness of the treaties seemed to rely on the existence of a formal written document with the signatures of rulers or high-ranking officials. For Goa the words and signatures written in the treaties confirmed the existence of a special and indissoluble bond between the Estado and its vassals which was forged in ‘good faith’. Moreover, a written document signed by a Portuguese viceroy, or a Portuguese official, and an Asian ruler could be used as a proof of Goa’s high position, as well as an instrument of submission which reminded the vassal ruler of his obligations in future contacts.

The ceremonies of allegiance could include religious elements which intended to surround the treaty with a sacred nature. The 1714 treaty signed with the Nayaka Keladi involved a religious ceremony in which Viceroy Vasco Fernandes César de Menezes made an oath ‘with the Holy Gospels putting his hands on a missal’ and the Keladi envoy did the same ‘with his rite of rice and betel on his head and eyes’. During the last years of the Joanine reign the presence of religious elements in diplomatic ceremonies was almost nonexistent. In fact, in 1746 the organisation of the oath of allegiance made by the *dessais* of Sanquelem, Maneri, Bicholim, Sanvardem and Carambolim posed a serious problem to the Estado’s officials since there were no official rules regarding the

---

use of Hindu rituals. The solution seemed to be the staging of a secular ceremony which obtained a special distinction for being performed on 22 October, the day in which João V celebrated his birthday – an option which allowed the viceroy to include the dessai’s oath as a part of the official celebrations in honour of the king, as well as to establish a personal link between the dessais and the Portuguese king. According to Mascarenhas’s *Epanaphora Indica*\(^9\), the dessais entered Goa followed by a retinue of 250 people ‘preceded by trumpets and pipes, played with a reduced sonorous harmony, but according to their style’, and accompanied by ten battalions of the Portuguese army. At the viceregal palace, they were presented to the *Secretario do Estado*, who made a list of their names to prepare the oath.\(^10\) When the list was concluded, the dessais were presented to the viceroy, ‘who was accompanied by [the] numerous Nobility who serve the Estado, and went to the Palace to see such new ceremony’. Viceroy Marquis of Castelo-Novo was under a canopy, and talked to each dessai, ‘applauding their virtue and fidelity during the capture of Avaro and Morly’, while the declaration was being written.\(^11\) To receive the oath, the viceroy sat on the *cadeira de espaldas*, with his hat covering his head, ‘as it is done in similar occasions’. The dessais declared they had recognized the victory of the Estado over their former Lords, the sardesais of Sawantvandi, and claimed that they were ready to ‘ratify with the greatest oath of their rites their perpetual vassalage, obedience, and fidelity, which they had accepted when the Lord Marquis Viceroy decided to welcome them under the protection of His Majesty’.\(^12\) They justified their former obedience to Kudal as a consequence of the dependence they had of the fortresses controlled by Sawantvandi that were located on the lands of the dessais.\(^13\) The Portuguese victories over Sawantvandi provoked a change of scenario and forced the dessais to change their allegiance. Their transformation into vassals of the Portuguese Crown was confirmed by a brief speech in which the dessais expressed their wish to protest ‘at the feet’ of the viceroy ‘our sincere obedience, total submission, and perpetual fidelity which we, on the behalf of all of our dependents, and heirs, declare to desire to have of this Majestic State of India of the

---

\(^9\) Mascarenhas’ account of the oath of the dessais corresponds to the existence copy of the dessai’s oath existing at the Historical Archives of Goa (HAG, Vassalagem, 652). The only difference is the date of the ceremony. Mascarenhas claims that the oath was celebrated in 22 October, while the date of the HAG copy is 20 October. This difference was probably motivated by the need to approve the document before the ceremony.


\(^11\) Ibid., p. 70.

\(^12\) Historical Archives of Goa (HAG), 652, *Auto de Juramento de Vassalagem que fazem a El Rey Nossa Senhor...,* f.2.

\(^13\) Ibid., f.2v.
very high, and very powerful Lord King of Portugal as our Lord, and to be vassals of his High and Augustus Majesty [João V] who with most benevolent feelings had accepted us to live under His Royal Protection'.\textsuperscript{14} In exchange for the protection of the Estado, the \textit{dessais} promised to observe ‘with our freedom and goodwill, the wish of inviolably following all the obligations of loyal vassals’.\textsuperscript{15} As a proof of their goodwill, the \textit{dessais} decided to execute ‘the greatest oath of our rites, to place our hands in our swords’ and promised to ‘see our own swords against us’ if they breached their allegiance to the Estado.\textsuperscript{16}

When all the \textit{dessais} read the declaration and swore to obey the Portuguese Crown, ‘their leader placed his sword under the viceroy’s feet, and placing also his hand said: ‘May it [sword] turn against me if I am disloyal’’. This act was repeated by the other \textit{dessais}.\textsuperscript{17} After this, Castelo-Novó declared that the \textit{dessais} were welcomed to live under the protection of the Portuguese Crown, granting to all of them and their families and dependents the right of being vassals of the king of Portugal. Then, the viceroy rose and talked with the \textit{dessais}, ‘with great affability, but with more distinction to the lords of the largest district [Sanquelem]’.\textsuperscript{18} Castelo-Novó offered to the \textit{dessai} of Sanquelem a baton and a ‘rich cap’ (\textit{touca}) while the other \textit{dessais} received several caps and garments ‘in the Hindu [\textit{gentilica}] fashion’ which were brought by viceregal servants on silver trays.\textsuperscript{19} Finally, the \textit{dessais} left the palace, ‘preceded by the same music’, and were led to the lodges arranged by the Estado where ‘they were \textit{regalados} with food and refreshments’.\textsuperscript{20}

In spite of the formality of the celebration of what the Portuguese called ‘Treaties of Peace and Friendship’, some Indian rulers became vassals of Goa through tacit agreements like the case of the Rajah of Cannanore who established a relation of vassalage with Goa after an exchange of letters with viceroys Vasco Fernandes César de Menezes and Count of Ericeira. In an undated letter, the Rajah of Cannanore promised Viceroy César de Menezes ‘to correspond with all the friendship and favour your ships and subjects because Your Lordship took me as their protector and the same would be made by the viceroy’s who succeeded me’. The viceroy also stated that if Cannanore

\textsuperscript{14} Ibid., fs.2v-3.
\textsuperscript{15} Ibid., f. 3.
\textsuperscript{16} Ibid., f.3
\textsuperscript{17} Mascarenhas, \textit{Epanaphora Indica}, Pt. II, p. 72.
\textsuperscript{18} Ibid., pp. 72-73.
\textsuperscript{19} Ibid., p. 73.
\textsuperscript{20} Ibid., p. 73.
was ready to make war against the Estado’s enemies, Goa ‘would do the same as well as with the friends of Your Lordship to whom I swear would not miss anything’.\textsuperscript{21} In another letter, Menzes complimented the Rajah for his ‘faithful search for the protection of the Estado from whom you will always have everything’.\textsuperscript{22} In another undated letter addressed to Viceroy Count of Ericeira, the rajah mentioned that he had developed ‘a great friendship’ for the Portuguese nation and asked Ericeira to ‘give me the honour of accepting me, and my subjects under your protection’. In exchange for Portuguese protection the Rajah promised ‘to be an enemy of everyone who is against the Portuguese Lords’, to allow the construction of a Portuguese factory, protect the Christians who lived in his kingdom, and only to use Portuguese \textit{cartazes}.\textsuperscript{23}

\textbf{Friends and servants}

According to most Portuguese sources, the vassals of the Estado da Índia were classified with terms such as friend (\textit{amigo}) or servant (\textit{criado}) – it should be noted that the term ‘vassal’ (\textit{vassal}) was not only applied to the personal ties between a Lord and his subject, but also to describe the bond between subject and sovereign.\textsuperscript{24} The difference between friends and servants was based on the position which the vassals rulers of Goa enjoyed in the hierarchy of power defined by the Portuguese. The term friend was usually applied to rulers who possessed a royal nature, such as the rajah of Sonda or the nayaka of Keladi, which impeded the Estado from subjugating them to mere subjects of the Crown of Portugal. Servants were rulers without any royal quality, such as the \textit{sardesais} of Kudal or the Marathi \textit{dessais}, which meant that they could be treated as any other ‘vassal’ of the King of Portugal and forced to accept Goa’s permanent interference in their internal affairs.

Relations of friendship were more common than those of servitude. According to historians such as Vasconcelos de Saldanha, the Portuguese regarded friendship as an element of the Law of Nations which recognised a concord between two states and

\textsuperscript{21} “Carta do vice-rei da Índia, Vasco Fernandes César de Meneses Ao ilustre verdadeiro e fiel amigo Adraja de Cananor” in \textit{Boletim da Filmoteca Ultramarina Portuguesa} (BFUP), Volume 46 (1984), pp. 204-205.

\textsuperscript{22} ‘Carta do vice-rei da Índia, Vasco Fernandes César de Meneses para Adraja de Cananor e Principe das Cardinas’, BFUP, 46, p. 217.

\textsuperscript{23} “Carta do Ad-Rajão de Cananor ao Vice-Rey da Índia Vasco Fernandes Cesar de Meneses” in \textit{Collecção de Tratados e Concertos de Pazes que o Estado da Índia fez com os Reis e Senhores com que teve relações nas partes da Ásia e África Oriental desde os Princípios da conquista até ao fim do século XVIII}, ed. Julio Firmino Biker, Tomo VI (Lisbon: Imprensa Nacional, 1885), p. 5

supposed duties of unlimited cooperation, fidelity and mutual protection.\textsuperscript{25} Despite the apparent equality suggested by the use of ‘friend’, the conditions established by the treaties reveal an unequal relation in which the friends of the Estado were obliged to follow several duties, while the Portuguese, in exchange for the services and loyalty of their friends, only had the duty of protecting them. The spirit of this type of friendship was based on the Aristotelian principles of unequal friendship, in which the dominant friend was able to offer a favour (in this case protection) without an immediate return to a submissive friend who would be obliged to do future services as return, as well as to demonstrate respect and availability to serve his friend.\textsuperscript{26} Tributes were therefore regarded as an expression of the vassal’s gratitude for being protected and accepted as a friend by the Portuguese Crown, as well as his will to serve the interests of the Estado da Índia. In fact, the use of the term ‘friend’ was an attempt to promote the false idea of the existence of a direct personal relationship between the King of Portugal and his Indian counterparts which, ideally, would flatter the vassal rulers and hide their inferiority before the King of Portugal. This personal relationship was also evoked in the relations of servitude. Fond Sawant Bhonsle, the ruler of Kudal, for example, when confronted with a Maratha demand to pay a tribute declared that he would only answered to Goa since the Sar Dessai was a ‘Vassal of the King of Portugal, recognising him as [his] superior’ (\textit{Vassallo del Rey de Portugal, q reconhecia por superior}).\textsuperscript{27}

Goa liked to present the Estado as a power that valued friendship and knew how to reward its friends or protégés, and was often happy to aid its friends and vassals to demonstrate the potential advantages that local rulers could enjoy if they decided to join or conserve a relation of vassalage with the Portuguese. A friend or a servant who had a military victory thanks to Portuguese help was good publicity for the Portuguese, offering an opportunity to surround the Estado with the reputation of an influential and reliable ally. Despite the interest in consolidating a network of vassals and friends through the concession of military aid, Goa was extremely careful in ensuring that its aid would not damage the position of the Portuguese before other powers, and that the Estado’s aid would only be used by its friends and not by rival potentates who were also

\textsuperscript{25} Saldanha, \textit{Iustum Imperium}, p. 356.
\textsuperscript{27} ACL, Série Azul, Cod. 393 –Relação de todos os Sucessos que Houve no Tempo do Governo do Excelentíssimo Senhor Vasco Fernandes César de Menezes, Vice-Rei e Capitão Geral da India, fol.57.
allied to a friend of Goa. On 3 November 1719 the sardesai of Sawantvandi wrote a letter to Viceroy Count of Ericeira requesting help to face an imminent invasion from the Marathas of Kolhapur and the Angrias. The sardesai mentioned his ‘friendship with the Estado’ which made him to consider the enemies of the Portuguese as ‘their own enemies, repelling their attacks, and fighting them to impede their progress on the Estado. To resist the attacks against his lands, the sardesai needed guns, ammunition, and gunpowder from the Portuguese, as well as some men and warships to confront the Angria fleet. Before the potential involvement of the Estado in a conflict which involved other potentates to whom Goa was not at war, Ericeira called the Conselho do Estado. The councillors advised to the viceroy to help the sardesai according to the Estado’s capacity, and above all with some discretion to avoid the hostility of the other prancedoms involved in the conflict.

Despite the submission of the tributary princes to the Portuguese Crown, Goa was to respect their territorial integrity. Any attempt from the Estado to reduce judicial, religious or political structures of its vassals would allow them to redefine their status before the Portuguese Crown. Indeed, if the Estado breached any clause of the vassalage treaties, the vassal could have the legitimacy to end the relationship or to renegotiate it. Moreover, the principle followed by Lisbon that the Estado was never an aggressor forced the viceroys to adopt a careful approach in their dealings with the vassals of Goa. An example of Goa’s prudence is the incident provoked by Archbishop D. Inácio de Santa Teresa. In May 1722, the archbishop incited the population of Assolna to raid the nearby Sonda villages. A group of 300 armed men was rapidly formed and, under the guidance of D. Inácio, destroyed several temples. The raid deserved a harsh reprimand from Viceroy Francisco José de Sampaio e Castro on 25 May 1722. Castro warned D. Inácio to not interfere in the relations between Goa and Sonda. The archbishop was accused of damaging the ‘reputation of the Estado, and the nation, the public faith and my word, in this case which was never seen before in the whole world’. Castro ironically wrote that the king had not given him any ‘instructions [regimento] to govern the Estado based on the revelations that Your Reverence have from the other world, [and] since in your letter you have clearly mentioned that God has showed you how I

29 Ibid., p. 328.
30 HAG, Cartas e Ordens, 792, “Carta do Vice-Rei Francisco José de Sampaio e Castro ao Arcebispo D. Inácio de Santa Teresa, 25/05/1722”, f. 13.
should govern, however, for the time being, I do not believe in these revelations because I am convinced that God does not have the habit of giving this privilege to those who spend their nights in shameful follies, and whose actions are a reason of mockery’.  

The raid instigated by D. Inácio led to an inquiry directed by the viceroy on 6 November 1722. Castro wanted to know how the men obtained guns and ammunitions, who had supplied them and who had instructed them during the attacks. Goa also wanted to know if the arrests of the captain and the padre of Assolna had caused any disturbances in the village.  

Another example of what the Portuguese considered to be a misuse of the ‘treaties of friendship’ is the request made by the Marathas of Kolhapur for guns and ammunition during his campaigns against Narba Saunto, one of the sons of the sardesai. Confronted with Kolhapur’s request, the interim government led by Archbishop Sebastião de Andrade Pessanha called the Conselho do Estado to discuss the request. For the Archbishop, the aid to Kolhapur could not be refused in order to ‘not give him a reason to complain that promises made [by the Estado] failed’. However, Kolhapur’s alliance with the Angria princedom posed a serious problem to Goa, since there was the possibility that a part of the Portuguese aid could be destined to one of the Estado’s enemies. Moreover, four days before the Council’s meetings, a Kolhapur army raided the Provincia do Norte – an action which, despite the rajah’s guarantee that the general who led the raid would be punished, was regarded by the Council and the government as an aggression and a serious breach on the ‘friendship’. Due to ‘reasons of state’ the solution found by the Council was to delay the supply of guns and ammunition with an official justification based on the existence of logistic problems caused by the beginning of the monsoon in order to preserve the ‘friendship’ with Kolhapur.  

Relations of vassalage were intended to be frequent and based on a permanent flow of reciprocal communication. The need to maintain the channels of communication opened by the treaties was behind an intense correspondence and diplomatic contacts. Whenever the heads of the colonial authorities changed, vassal rulers were obliged to confirm their fidelity to the Portuguese Crown by sending an embassy to the new...
viceroy or governor. When a vassal or a tributary prince of the Estado died, the viceroy usually wrote a letter of condolences to the new ruler reminding the friendship between Goa and the princedom, as well as the need to continue and reinforce the existing relationship. On 1 July 1739, Sandomil wrote to the new Nayaka to present the Estado’s condolences and expectations regarding the new ruler.

Terror as the cement of friendship

Most relations of vassalage were not definitive, and most treaties were often renegotiated or replaced according to the balance of power between the Estado and its vassals. Any attempt from a vassal to change or cut his ties with Goa was replied by the Estado with violence and punitive acts. Violence was often the main reason for the preservation of the vassals of Goa, who were forced to accept their submissive position ‘with a knife on their throats’ (com o cutelo na garganta) to use Diogo do Couto’s expression. The Estado’s problems to submit its friends and servants increased after the setbacks suffered by the Estado at the hands of the Omani and the Dutch VOC, two events that were regarded by the vassal princes of Goa as an opportunity to renegotiate or end their association with Goa. An example of these attempts is the case of the Nayakas of Keladi, the rulers of what the Portuguese called the Kingdom of Kanara, a minor potentate which paid an annual tribute of rice to Goa in exchange for Portuguese protection to the Kanarese port city of Mangalore. The chronic shortages of rice production in the Estado made the Nayaka a vital contribution to the subsistence of the local populations, but the increasing demand of rice from the other European and Indian powers led Nayaka Basavappa to stop the regular supply of rice as a tribute to Goa, and requesting to the Portuguese authorities an exchange of silver for rice.

Basavappa’s refusal to act as vassal of Goa resulted in several moments of tension which led Viceroy Vasco Fernandes César de Menezes to declare war against the Nayaka in 1713. In a report to João V, Menezes justified the war against Keladi as an answer to ‘[several] years of incredible ignominies’, but the main reason was the

---

35 HAG, Cartas e Ordens, 799, “Carta do Vice-Rei Conde de Sandomil a El-Rey de Canará, 1/07/1739”, f. 85v.
36 Quotation taken from Saldanha, Iustum Imperium, p. 649.
need to guarantee the Estado’s relations with its main supplier of rice were based on advantageous conditions for the Portuguese. The nayaka’s last ignominy was a request to return a Keladi ship carrying horses which was captured by the Portuguese for not having a cartaz and call at enemy ports. The viceroy wrote to the nayaka stating that the ship was taken in accordance with the conditions established by previous treaties between the Estado and Keladi. Before the refusal to return the ship, Basavappa decided to ban all rice exports destined to Goa, and issued a decree which punished with death anyone who sold rice to Goan merchants or to merchants who operated in the Estado. Menezes replied with a fleet of 13 warships and an army of 350 men led by José Pereira de Brito, who was instructed to ‘seize all [Keladi] ships and do all the possible hostilities, taking the ports in order to not allow any rice to leave’. Brito’s men raided Keladi with extreme violence, ‘destroying everything and burning entire villages’. The port of Calianapor and its nearby villages, for example, were totally destroyed and set to fire ‘during all day’. The Portuguese blockade lasted until the first rains of the monsoon, and Brito left Keladi with another trail of destruction. Menezes guaranteed to João V that never ‘with so few men was so much achieved and in thirty-six legoas there was no Kanara village which was not destroyed or a ship which was not set into fire’. According to the viceroy, the nayaka lost 82 ships and four of his fortresses were demolished, while the Portuguese counted 32 injured and 12 deaths, including Brito who died in Goa ‘after being extremely ill at sea’.

In 1714, Keladi and the Estado da Índia signed a peace treaty which imposed new conditions vassalage to the nayakas. Basavappa and his successors should ‘always be loyal and faithful friends of the Estado da Índia, friend[s] of its friends, and enem[ies] of its enemies’. The treaty ended with the promise that ‘the Estado will forget all and any offence made by the King of Canara will forget any offence he had received from the Estado’. As a demonstration of friendship and submission the nayaka should pay 30,000 xerafins as a compensation for the expenses caused to the Estado, and immediately pay the 3,150 fardos of rice of pareas which were delayed.

---

39 Ibid., p. 91.
40 Ibid., p. 93.
41 “Tratado de paz e alliança de amizade feito e concluído na cidade Goa, em 19 de Fevereiro de 1714 entre o Ex. mo Sr. Vice Rey e Capitão geral do Estado da Índia, Vasco Fernandes Cesar de Menezes, e Qelady Bassavapa Naïque, Rey do Canara, por seu Embaixador Caddaxe Damarssê Porbú” in Collecção de Tratados, Vol. V, p. 281.
42 Ibid., p. 287.
43 A fardo of rice is usually 30kgs.
As a punishment for obeying to the conditions established by previous treaties, Keladi would pay each year a new tribute of 400 fardos of ‘white and clean rice’ to Goa. The Estado da Índia was allowed to build a second factory in Mangalore or to expand the existing one, and to possess a small force to protect it. All merchants and subjects of the nayaka were obliged to pay and use cartazes signed by the factor. Keladi was also obliged to allow his subjects to sell rice to the Portuguese whenever they wanted, and accept the presence of merchants ‘vassals of this Estado’ to buy rice from Keladi’s merchants or farmers. Keladi could be involved in a relation of vassalage with the Portuguese Crown, but Goa’s dependence on the goods which came from Mangalore was notorious. In fact, the tribute paid by Keladi to the Estado was a small part of the rice imported by the Portuguese. In 1720, viceroy count of Ericeira informed his successor, Francisco José de Sampaio e Castro that ‘[F]rom the factory of Mangalore comes the major part of the rice which is consumed in Goa, Bardes and Salsette, and unfortunately we have to pay with gold and silver, and some salt; and in this way Goa loses each year more than 800,000 xeräfins’.

Menezes regarded the negotiations with Keladi as an opportunity to increase the Estado’s influence in Mangalore, as well as to secure for the Portuguese Padroado Real (the papal concession to the Portuguese Crown of the monopoly over the missionary works in the African, American and Asian regions under Portuguese rule or influence) the control of the Catholic missionary works in the Kanara Coast. Lisbon and Goa were aware that the missions of the Padroado Real could be used by to secure a presence in regions where the Portuguese Crown did not had a formal or effective control. However, the foundation of the Propaganda Fide in 1622, which was allowed by Rome to act in the regions under the Padroado, was another setback for the ambitions of the Estado da Índia. Moreover, the French support to the Propaganda was regarded by Lisbon as a serious menace to the imperial ambitions of the Portuguese in Asia, and the actions of the Propaganda missionaries were often regarded as an attack on the interests of the Portuguese Crown. In order to guarantee that the Portuguese empire was an ‘emporium of faith and religion being among all nations, the one with the greatest

---

46 Ibid., p. 284.
48 Biblioteca Nacional de Portugal (BNP), Cod. 1445, Instrução que deixou o Conde da Ericeira Dom Luis de Menezes Vice Rey e Capitam General da India A Francisco Jozé de Sampayo e Castro que lhe foy succeder no dito emprego no anno de 1721, fol. 7.
devotion’, as the Brazilian-born friar, Apolinário da Conceição, wrote, Menezes and
other viceroys used the treaties of friendship and vassalage as an instrument to eliminate
the presence of the Propaganda Fide, as well as the Protestant missionaries supported by
the English and Dutch companies.

Despite this apparent religious zeal of the Portuguese Crown, the Padroado Real
was regarded as an important instrument to interfere in the local life of the vassal
princedoms. The nayakas’ friendship with the Portuguese Crown meant that all
Christians and clergymen had the right to move freely in Keladi and build churches.\footnote{49}
The factor and the padre vigário (father vicar) were allowed to exercise the function of
judges in cases affecting the Catholic community, or in cases opposing Catholics to
Hindus, and in any circumstance. The Keladi authorities would not interfere in the
judicial decision made by the Portuguese, and whenever a Mangalore Christian or a
Hindu (gentio) wanted to defer a sentence this should be done before the Estado
superior authorities at Goa.\footnote{50} Christian women who were ‘known for their sensuality’
\textit{(comprehendidas na sensualidade)}, a metaphor for prostitution, should be arrested and
presented before the Factor and then sent to Goa to be punished. The nayaka and their
subjects were also impeded to buy ‘sons of Christians’ and make captives ‘the sons and
wives of Christian soldiers who serve at the fortresses, for the debts of their fathers and
husbands’.\footnote{51} The nayaka should also ban marriages between Christians and Hindus, and
whenever such marriages were celebrated, the Portuguese missionaries were allowed to
arrest the couples and send them to Goa without any interference from the Keladi
authorities. Such interference with the judicial and religious life of Mangalore suggest
that the Portuguese regarded Keladi’s vassalage as an opportunity to obtain a
considerable influence, or even to retake an important port city which had already been
part of the Estado da Índia until 1640. In fact, one clause mentioned that the Portuguese
factory ‘should have all the privileges as if it was a fortress’, which meant that all the
taxes that were paid to the Old Portuguese fortress would be restored.\footnote{52} The fiscal
privileges were also extended to the ‘vassal merchants of the Estado’, who were only
obliged to pay taxes imposed by ‘ancient costume’. Despite these favourable conditions,
the Estado, due to its financial and military weaknesses, was unable to obtain a strong

\footnote{50} Ibid., p. 281.
\footnote{51} Ibid., p. 281.
\footnote{52} Ibid., p. 283.
position in the Kanara coast. In fact, the 1714 treaty is a good example of the juridical fictions produced by many treaties.

In 1735, Viceroy Count of Sandomil followed a similar strategy regarding the Kingdom of Sonda. Using as a pretext the Rajah’s increasing support to the activities of the Propaganda Fide, Sandomil organised a military intervention against Sonda which led to a treaty of vassalage signed on 20 December 1735 which confirmed the supremacy of the Padroado Real in Sonda. By protecting the missionaries of the *Padroado Real* in Sonda, Goa hoped to increase its influence over one of its main suppliers of pepper. In fact, the treaty offered to the Padroado missionaries several privileges which could allow them to interfere in the local life. They were exempt from taxes and allowed to be ‘private judges’ in legal cases affecting the Christian population, although this privilege was not extended to cases of murder and lesa-majesty. The Christian population was also contemplated with privileges. The Sonda authorities would no longer punish Hindus who converted to Christianity. The practice of enslaving Christian women who were single or widows, as well as their children and grandchildren would also end; and those who were captured or enslaved would immediately released. The members of the Christian community who were arrested due to unpaid debts should no longer be imprisoned and their cases would be monitored and solved by the missionaries.53 The commercial relations between the Estado and Sonda were also regulated by the treaty which, according to article 18, allowed the rajah to establish a factory at Goa.54

Although forcibly imposed, the privileges enjoyed by Portuguese subjects in Mangalore and Sonda were related with a well-established practice followed by Indian rulers of conceding a special status to foreign merchants. This long tradition was often used by the Portuguese, as well as the other Europeans powers, to establish what Charles Henry Alexandrowicz called ‘a miniature society’.55 These European enclaves used their autonomous status to interfere in the local socio-economic organisation creating the necessary conditions for the introduction of a European political control over the host societies. Indeed, the treaties with Sonda and Keladi could be used by Goa

---

53 “Tratado e condições com que o Vice-Rei da India aceitou a satisfação que El-Rey de Sunda lhe mandou dar para se restabelecer a antiga paz entre o Estado e os seus dominios” in *Collecção de Tratados e Concertos de Pazes que o Estado da Índia fez com os Reis e Senhores com que teve relações nas partes da Ásia e África Oriental desde os Princípios da conquista até ao fim do século XVIII*, ed. Julio Firmino Biker, Tomo VI (Lisbon: Imprensa Nacional, 1885), pp. 183-184.
54 Ibid., p. 187.
to create a parallel Christian society whose political allegiance was towards the Portuguese Crown and not the local rulers. And if the Padroado missionaires were successful enough to convert a substantial part of the local populations, Goa would have an effective control in Keladi and Sonda.

War was also used by the Portuguese to pressure their vassals during the final stages of diplomatic negotiations, as in the case of the process which made the dessais servants of the Estado. The negotiations started after the conquest of Alorna, when the Marquis of Castelo-Novvo published an édito, which was translated into local dialects, destined for the local dessais and inviting them to ‘obey, and swear their fidelity to the Majesty of the Most Serene King of Portugal’. The vassalage of the dessais was the result of a long process of negotiations. The dessais feared the Bhonsles’ reaction to their change of allegiance. The dessais of Monery, Sanquelem and Queri were particularly concerned with the consequences of their vassalage towards Goa, and wrote to Castelo-Novvo asking for special conditions or privileges under their live as Portuguese vassals. Before the constant delays and obstacles to finish the negotiations, the viceroy instructed his Ajudante-General, Pedro Guedes de Magalhães, to take two companies of grenadiers and infantry to raid the lands of the dessai of Sanquelem, whom the viceroy considered to be the most powerful and influential of all dessais. Castelo-Novvo’s decision to raid the dessai’s territories was an attempt to insinuate that their refusal to obey to Goa would have as a consequence the loss of their territories. Magalhães’s mission was a success. The Ajudante-General was able to occupy the dessai’s castle and provoke the exodus of the local population, but he did not conquer the territory, following the viceroy’s intention to show to the dessai that whenever the Portuguese wished he would lose his lands.

These demonstrations of power seemed also to have pressured the dessais to accept their new status of vassalage. During the winter months, the dessais of Sanquelem and Queri sent as a joint envoy a Brahmin priest to Goa to present new conditions for their vassalage. The dessais wanted to preserve all the Hindu temples on their lands, the absence of restrictions to the movements of the cowherds of Belagate, the concession of two villages, and the continuation of the Sanquelem fair and the right to gather its taxes. They also agreed to form a regiment of Sipais for the Estado’s army, but only if Goa paid their wages. Castelo-Novvo called the Concelho do Estado to

---

evaluate the dessay’s proposals. The council was divided in accepting the dessai’s proposal to maintain the temples, and the approval of this condition was only reached after the viceroy called a group of theologians who stated that ‘Religion could not be imposed by force’ and that since the dessais were offering ‘voluntarily their obedience to the Estado’ they should not be considered as conquered rulers, forcing Goa to accept their proposal. Castelo-Novó accepted all the conditions which were proposed, excepting the concession of two villages which should be evaluated again by the Conselho. If the councillors’ decision was negative, the dessais were promised to receive another ‘equivalent prize’, but only according to the dessais services and loyalty to Goa.\(^{57}\) The viceroy’s answer was welcomed by the dessais, who proposed to Castelo-Novó the conquest of the Bhonsle fortresses of Avaro and Morly to celebrate their vassalage. The project suited the viceroy’s Bhonsle policy, while for the dessais it was an opportunity to exhibit their loyalty and obtain more concessions from Goa. The two fortresses were easily taken by the Portuguese and the dessais, and had the collaboration of the local populations who were in an open conflict with the Bhonsles ‘for having denigrated their Nobility [caste]’.\(^{58}\) The hostility of the dessais of Avaro and Morly towards the Bhonsles led them to ask Castelo-Novó to accept as vassals of the Estado, a request which was particularly welcomed by the viceroy who regarded this as another opportunity to isolate Sawantvandi.

The cases of Sonda, Keladi and the dessais suggest that terror was used by Goa to control the actions of its friends and vassals. As Donald Kurtz observed in his study on Aztec politics, terror could be used as an instrument of political socialisation which instructs individuals on how they should behave.\(^{59}\) In this way, the military actions of the Portuguese in the territories of the rulers who paid tributes to the Estado often conveyed a message regarding the disobedience of the tributary princes of the Portuguese Crown, inviting them to adopt a more respectful or correct behaviour towards Goa. Such actions of what might be called colonial terror were regarded by most viceroys as just punishments which were essential to protect the interests of the

\(^{57}\) Ibid., pp. 65-66.
\(^{58}\) Ibid., Pt. II., p. 69.
Portuguese Crown against ‘Negroes [who] do not have any word, faith, or constancy, and only through force agree to do what they had promised to’.  

A fragile Lord: the chouto and the Estado troubles to be recognised as an equal by Mughals and Marathas

João V was extremely eager to guarantee that the Portuguese Crown lived according to the motto princeps non superiorem no recognoscens (a prince that does not recognise any superior) inaugurated by Manuel I’s imperial policy, and reinforced during the years of the Habsburg monarchy. Lisbon often instructed Goa to refuse the payment of any tribute or tax that could suggest that the Estado was in an inferior position before Asian rulers. As Saldanha pointed out, during negotiations with the Mughal Empire or the Reis Vizinhos, the Portuguese authorities were usually suspicious of any tax demanded by their Asian counterparts to regulate the commercial activities of Portuguese merchants.  

Despite the Portuguese sensibility on this matter, the Crown paid pensions to their vassals and neighbours, in order to certify the viability of its commercial relations. For those who received such pensions the money offered by the Portuguese was an interesting income that had the symbolic effect of supporting claims of military and political equality or superiority.  

The chouto, or cauth, was one of these pensions. It consisted on a kind of protection money that was paid by the Estado da Índia to the rajah of Ramnagar to avoid raids against the Daman territory from hostile princedoms. This pension was established by the viceroy Constantino de Bragança, after the integration of Daman in the Portuguese empire, as a compensation for the loss of the city. The chouto was a rather polemic issue for Goa, since it allowed an interpretation of the pension as a kind of tribute given to a minor potentate. Indeed, the Goan historian Pandurang Pissurlencar defined the word chouto as an equivalent to a tribute. Several Portuguese chroniclers and officials find it hard to establish a precise definition of the chouto. In his Decádas da Ásia, António Bocarro defined the chouto as a ‘pension’ and according to Diogo do Couto the chouto was accepted by the Portuguese authorities since it was regarded as a tradition and not a real tribute. Viceroy Pero da Silva in a report sent to Lisbon

---

60 “Carta do vice-rei da Índia, Vasco Fernandes César de Meneses para o Padre Joseph Botelho da Companhia de Jesus missionario das terras de Sunda em Ancola”, BFUP, 46, p. 250.
61 Saldanha, Iustum Imperium, p. 659.
62 Ibid., p. 676.
mentioned that the *chouto* was an arrangement between the Estado and the rajah of Ramnagar ‘to impede thieves to enter those lands and to not arrest people or cattle’. The *chouto* was described by the count of Ericeira in his *Noticias da India* as a ‘rent’ paid by Daman to the Rajah ‘for his subjects to cut the timbers which abound in those parts’. These coeval interpretations of the *chouto* suggest that the pension was used by the Portuguese as an instrument to support the existence of Ramnagar as a buffer state. Indeed, the Ramnagar rajah by being obliged to persecute thieves and guard the Daman border was in the position of a client of the Estado who performed a specific service in exchange for a pension which allowed him to fulfil his obligation.

However, the instability of Ramnagar, which was always under the pressure of the expansionist manoeuvres of Mughals, Marathas or smaller potentates such as Koly, and the concept of the *chouto* as local tradition with hereditary or transmissible features, meant that the Portuguese could face a situation in which the Estado would fall into the status of a tributary vassal. Indeed, the *chouto* could be a pension paid to the Ramnagar rajah in exchange of a specific service, or in respect to a certain tradition, but when paid to another ruler it was a mere tribute.

The ambiguous nature of the *chouto* would be a constant problem for the Portuguese authorities. When in 1638 Ramnagar was occupied by Mughal troops, Shah Jahan became entitled to receive the *chouto* from the Estado. Indeed, the Mughal authorities believed that the *chouto* was a good opportunity to force the Estado to accept a subaltern position before Delhi. The Estado da Índia made several efforts to delay the conclusion of the negotiations with the Mughal authorities until 1670, when the rajah of Ramnagar returned to power after accepting the status of a vassal prince of the Mughal emperor. However, the experience of the *chouto* being considered by other rulers as a kind of tribute paid by the Portuguese remained a problematic issue for the Estado with the emergence of a new Indian power, the Marathas.

In 1677 the Marathas occupied a large part of the territories of the rajah of Ramnagar, including the Daman border, giving to Shivaji the right to receive the *chouto*. According to Stewart Gordon, the Marathas had a first contact with the *chouto* when the Portuguese authorities offered the pension to Shivaji in 1659 if he was able to stop several raids organised by the Koli rajah. Gordon also suggests that it was from the *chouto* that Shivaji developed the Maratha tax based on a quarter of the produce of an

---

63 Quoted by Ibid., p. 679.
After the Maratha occupation of Ramnagar, the Estado da Índia decided to open negotiations with the Maratha ruler, but the proximity of Shivaji’s troops to Daman led the Portuguese secretly to aid the rajah of Sarceta in his efforts against the Marathas. The rajah had also occupied some lands belonging to Ramnagar and, as Shivaji, had a rightful claim to receive the *chouto* from Daman. Between Sarceta and the Marathas, the Portuguese preferred the first, a minor potentate which could be easily influenced and used as buffer against Mughal and Maratha expansionist movements. Indeed, while the conditions regarding the payment of the *chouto* were being negotiated with the Marathas, Goa allowed the payment of 2,000 rupees to Sarceta related to the *chouto*. The delays in the conclusion of the negotiations with the Marathas led to a rapid deterioration between Goa and Satara. In 1680, after several skirmishes in the border areas between the Estado and the Marathas, Portuguese troops were ready to enter in the Maratha jurisdiction of Ponda. The invasion was only cancelled when the news of the death of Shivaji reached Goa. The divergences in the Luso-Maratha relations caused by the *chouto* were solved for a brief period after the celebration of a treaty signed in 1684 with Sambagi which satisfied the Maratha claims. This agreement, however, was never executed. Immediately after the end of the negotiations between Portuguese and Marathas, the Ramnagar rajah became a vassal of the Marathas, and Goa decided to return the payment of the pension to the rajah.

Despite the return of the *chouto* to Ramnagar, the relations between the rajah and the Portuguese authorities were often turbulent. Goa used the fragility of Ramnagar to end the payment of the *chouto*, while the rajah retaliate the Portuguese attempts to end the pension by raiding Daman or joining the efforts of other rajahs to raid Portuguese territory.

In 1710, the Ramnagar rajah asked Dom Rodrigo da Costa to pay him the *chouto* and not to the Koly rajah, who had invaded his kingdom. The ruler of Ramnagar was exiled in Daman, and was making plans for the recovery of his throne. On a letter to the viceroy, the rajah presented his plans, mentioning that he hoped to get the support of the Great Mughal for price of 38,000 rupees, an amount that was out of his reach, unless Goa paid the *chouto*. To support his position, the rajah referred that the Koly

---

67 Ibid., p. 24.
rajah could use his kingdom as a platform against the Estado’s territories. D. Rodrigo decided to call the members of the *Conselho do Estado* to discuss the plans made by the rajah. The *conselheiros* were favourable to the payment of the *chouto*, ‘since he [the rajah] is now on our lands he must receive something for his living’, but the majority of the *Conselho* refused to offer any official military aid to the rajah. The viceroy was instead advised to ‘secretly give powder and bullets and lent weapons’.  

Two years later, the rajah, who was now exiled in the Mughal Empire, informed the viceroy that he had obtain the support of Shahu, the new Maratha ruler who promised him to reinforce the Ramnagar army with men and weapons. Once again, the rajah needed money and weapons, and suggested to the viceroy if he could make a loan using the *chouto* as a guarantee. The viceroy ‘wished to favour this king who in his disgrace and misfortunes sought the protection and aid of the Estado’, but the reply was that the Portuguese authorities were not able to satisfy such request. The rajah’s envoy ‘insinuated’ that the viceroy could instruct the so-called *Padre Administrador* of Daman to loan to the rajah the money he needed using the *chouto* to recover the money. Before this suggestion, Dom Rodrigo called the *Conselho*, who unanimously agreed to satisfy the rajah’s plans and help him ‘in everything that Estado’s strengths were responsible’. The *conselheiros* stated that their resolution was motivated by ‘political reasons, and the Estado’s credit’, referring to the need to help an ally, Ramnagar, against a common enemy, Koli. For the majority of the councillors if the viceroy was able to use the pension to cover Ramnagar’s debt, the Estado could change the nature of the *chouto* and establish a well-defined relation of vassalage with the rajah.  

In 1718 the Ramnagar Rajah attacked the province of Daman taking as hostages the *cherubins* and *abunhados*, as well as ‘some cattle’. When the news of this raid reached Bassein, an expedition was organised by the General do Norte. An army formed by several regiments from the Província do Norte invaded Ramnagar and released the hostages and their cattle. The Portuguese invasion of Ramnagar ended with the death of the rajah which paved the way to the celebration of a peace treaty mediated by the rajah of Pente. According to this treaty, Ramnagar would pay all the costs and damages related with the conflict, using for that effect the 18,000 xerafins of the *chouto*. This

---

68 Doc. 96 (16/05/1710), *Assentos do Conselho do Estado*, V, pp. 257-259.
69 Ibid., pp. 277-278.
70 A Cherubim or Curumbim was the Portuguese term for a rural worker of the Shudra caste or varna. An Abunhado was a native rural worker who was forced to live and work in the estate where he or she was born.
condition allowed Goa to revert the nature of the *chouto* from a pension paid by Goa into a tribute paid by Ramnagar.\(^{71}\)

Despite the position of superiority given to the Estado after the 1719 treaty, Viceroy Count of Ericeira informed his successor, Francisco José de Sampaio e Castro, that the kings of Colle, Assarecta, Pente and Ramnagar were a ‘constant cause of care for viceroy’s’ due to their frequent raids in Daman.\(^{72}\) Ericeira blamed the attempts made by the Daman governors to rent the villages outside their jurisdiction for the wars against the king of Pente.\(^{73}\) Besides this infringement, the payment of the *chouto* was often delayed to the ‘malice’ of the Daman officials, who often took the money.\(^{74}\) Sampaio e Castro was also informed that there was a treaty between Assarceta and Goa which allowed the inhabitants of Daman and its villages to collect timber in the nearby villages under Pente’s rule in exchange for a sum of 18,000 *xerafins* paid by the Estado to the rajah each year.\(^{75}\) However, the Daman authorities continued to neglect the payment of the *chouto*, and in 1723 the rajahs of Cotte and Ramnagar raided Daman as protest for not receiving the pension.\(^{76}\)

Despite the apparent signs of improvement in the relations between Portuguese and Marathas, in 1724 Bagi Rao decided to reopen the negotiations regarding the *chouto*. Alexandre Lobato was probably right when he described the *chouto* as a ‘neuralgic point’ on Luso-Maratha relations, which determined the conflicts between both sides. The 1670s negotiations regarding the Daman *chouto* motivated the Marathas to pursue the submission of the Estado to a status of feudal vassalage.\(^{77}\) Besides the important revenues which the Marathas hoped to obtain from the Portuguese, the vassalage of a European power would catapult the prestige of the Marathas in the Indian political scene, allowing Satara to claim a similar status to the one enjoyed by the Mughal emperor.

On 4 November 1724, Bagi Rao advised the interim governors to send an envoy with a *sagoate* to Satara to conclude the existing negotiations regarding a peace treaty, but maintained the Maratha intentions to receive a tribute from the Estado.\(^{78}\) In 1730, during the negotiations for a cease-fire to end a period of open hostilities between

---

\(^{71}\) BNP, Cod. 465, *Notícias da Índia*, f. 100.
\(^{72}\) BNP, Cod. 1445, fol. 37v.
\(^{73}\) BNP, Cod. 1445, f. 38.
\(^{74}\) Ibid., f. 38.
\(^{75}\) Ibid., f. 38v.
\(^{76}\) BNP, Cod. 465, *Notícias da Índia*, f. 117v.
\(^{78}\) Ibid., p. 87.
Portuguese and Marathas in the borders of Daman, Bassein and Galiana which culminated with a brief Maratha invasion of the *Provincia do Norte*. Bagi Rao proposed to the Estado an exemption to custom rights to Maratha merchants and ships, persisting in the payment of a tribute of 10% on the Estado’s revenues based on the *chouto*.79

**Sawantvandi: a case study of a friend and vassal of Goa**

Goa was also confronted with constant attempts from one of its servants, the *sardesais* of Sawantvandi, to break their allegiance with the Estado. In fact, the submission of the *sardesais* to a status of servitude was of particular importance to Goa. The strategic location of Sawantvandi, between the Estado and the territories controlled by the Marathas, made the principedom an important buffer state.80 However, the *sardesais* were a part of the same Maratha clan which ruled Satara and they also paid a tribute to Satara in exchange for their independence. Indeed, the Portuguese were concerned that this close relation could result in an increase of the Maratha intrusions on Portuguese territory - which often had a contribution from Sawantvandi troops – and there was a strong belief in Goa that if the *sardesais* were attached to the Estado, Sawantvandi would be transformed from a minor but hostile potentate into a real vassal which would impede future Maratha attacks. The Portuguese made several attempts to submit the *sardesais* which failed or succeed according to transformations suffered by Goa during the Joanine reign. Indeed, apart from the Mughal Empire and the Marathas, the *sardesais* were probably the rulers who were observed with more attention by the Portuguese authorities.

According to the *Tratado das Paxes*, in 1699 the Estado da India signed with *sardesai* Khema Sawant a vassalage treaty which reintegrated the potentate into ‘the society of good servants of the Estado’ after the punishment of a series of Sawantvandi raids into Portuguese territories. The treaty reminded that due to other agreements signed in the 1680s, Khema Sawant was obliged to be ‘a Vassal, and good servant of the Most Serene King of Portugal’ in exchange for the Estado’s protection.81 By evoking the existence of other treaties and the promises made by the *sardesai*, the

79 Ibid., p. 104.
81 BNP. Cod. 257, *Tratado das Paxes*, fol. 72v. [The *Tratado das Paxes* was a list of diplomatic treaties signed by the Estado da Índia with Indian rulers compiled during the first years of João V’s reign.]
Portuguese authorities wanted to expose the supposed inferiority of Sawantvandi and its obligations as a vassal. Despite Sawantvandi’s status as a vassal of the Portuguese Crown, the relations between the Estado and the sardesais were constantly shaken by the successive incursions of Sawantvandi troops in the Estado’s territories. Indeed, these raids seemed to be a part of a strategy designed by the sardesais to force a renegotiation of their status vis-a-vis Goa.

Indeed, the 1699 agreement was breached by a succession of Bhonsle raids in 1712 which provoked a violent reply from Goa. The vassalage was restored in the same year after Viceroy D. Rodrigo da Costa received a message from ‘third persons’ on the behalf of sardesai Fond Sawant, also known by the Portuguese as Babu, to open negotiations with the Estado. On 21 April 1712, the viceroy called the Concelho do Estado to discuss Babu’s request. The viceroy believed that sardesai’s vassalage was useful to Goa, arguing that his submission would allow Goa merchants to access to trade in the profitable Balagate region without fearing to have their goods confiscated by Sawantvandi’s forces, as well as increase the receipts of the Royal Treasure thanks to commercial taxes on the Balagate trade. Besides these reasons, Babu’s vassalage offered to the Portuguese an opportunity to promote the image of the Portuguese as a ‘king of kings’. As in other treaties, the preamble emphasised that the vassal had freely or voluntarily decided to be dependent from the Portuguese Crown – a rhetorical strategy which was also used in Africa, where Beatrix Heintze had noted that the vassalage treaties with Angolan chiefs were based on a ‘fiction of voluntariness’.

The treaty used a paternalist language which aimed to stress Sawantvandi’s inferiority and weakness before the Estado da Índia. Babu, who was described by the treaty as being ‘repented from the mistake he made of taking his weapons against the Estado, which has always protected his ancestors as its own creatures’, was accepted by the viceroy ‘to be admitted to the friendship of the Estado’ if he followed the conditions established by the treaty.

The eleven clauses negotiated by both sides were more concerned in regulating the relations between Goa and Kudal than imposing a violent submission of Sawantvandi. The sardesai should not attack the ‘vassal dessais possessed by the Estado’, have any kind of contacts with the ‘Arabs enemies of the Estado’, as well as attack Portuguese merchants operating in his lands. Whenever Babu’s troops attacked

82 Doc. 103 (21/04/1712), Assentos do Conselho do Estado, V, p. 279.
Portuguese vassals or subjects, the *sardesai* was obliged to pay compensation for the damages which were caused, and present to Goa those who were responsible for death and injuries ‘to receive the deserved punishment in the lands of the Estado’. Slaves (*cafres e cafras*) and ‘captives’ who belong to the Estado and sought refuge in Bhonsle’s lands should be arrested and presented to the Estado. Babu was also forced to pay an annual tribute of two Arabian horses or as an alternative a sum of 500 xerafins, ‘as recognition for the privilege that the Most Excellent Viceroy granted to him of being admitted under the protection of the Estado’. The *sardesai* also renounced any claim to the Islands of Panelan and Corjun, which were taken by the Portuguese, and accepted to pay 10,000 xerafins for the reconstruction of the churches destroyed by his troops.

Another significant change in the relations between Goa and Sawantvandi occurred in 1726, when Nagoba Sawant, the son of Fond Sawant, was in open rebellion against his father. Viceroy João Saldanha da Gama believed that the civil war was an opportunity to consolidate the vassalage of the Bhonsles, and decided to support Nagoba. On 27 May 1726, the viceroy and Nagoba signed a new vassalage treaty that Goa thought that would definitely cut Sawantvandi’s ties with the Marathas if the *sardesai’s* son reached the throne. In exchange for Nagoba’s promises to follow the 1712 treaty and continue to pay an annual tribute to Goa, the Portuguese would give him the fortress of Bicholim and its surrounding villages. If Nagoba failed to overthrow his father, Goa promised to receive him ‘with all the security, without the threat of violence’. However, on 22 August 1726 the viceroy also signed a new treaty with Fond Sawant, a diplomatic move that intended to secure Sawantvandi’s ties with Goa as well as to avoid Fond Sawant’s hostility for Goa’s support to his son. The document was a confirmation of the 1712 treaty conditions for ‘friendship and [good] relations from both sides’ and, according to the treaty’s preamble, these conditions were conceded again to the *sardesai* ‘due to his request, and promise of undoubted respect’ – a choice of words which not only concealed Saldanha da Gama’s intentions to interfere in Sawantvandi’s internal affairs, as it served Fond Sawant’s image as a respectable and legitimate ruler. Ten years later, during the tenure of the Count of Sandomil, Goa celebrated a new treaty on 14 July 1736 with Fond Sawant after a brief period of war caused by the capture of some Portuguese ships by the Sawantvandi navy. The *sardesai*,

---

84 “Tratado de paz que o Vice-Rey da India conced a Fondu Saunto Bounsuló, Sar Dessay das terras de Cuddalle” in *Collecção de Tratados*, VI, p. 27.
85 Ibid., p. 31.
who was now at peace with his son and declared to be ‘repentant from his acts’ promised to respect the 1726 treaty, but requested Sandomil to pardon the unpaid tributes, claiming that he was not able to pay his obligations to the Estado. In fact, since 1726 that the *sardesai* did not paid his tribute, owing 13,000 *xerafins* to Goa, probably because of the economic consequences of the civil war with his son. Sandomil accepted this request as proof of Portuguese goodwill, but this pardon was more related to the need to ensure that Sawantvandi would remain neutral or favourable to Goa whenever the Estado was at war with the Marathas.

After the death of Fond Sawant, Sawantvandi cut its ties Goa. The new rulers, Ramachandra Sawant and Jayrama Sawant, favoured an approximation with the Marathas and joined their invasion of the Provincia do Norte in the hopes of expanding their possessions at the cost of the territorial losses of the Estado da Índia. Indeed, the two *sardesais* annexed the island of Corjuem as well as a parcel of the province of Bardez. These new acquisitions changed Sawantvandi’s position before Goa from a small principedom whose existence relied on the protection of powerful neighbours, such as the Marathas and Goa, to an ambitious and aggressive potentate. The peace treaty signed by Viceroy Count of Sandomil and the two *sardesais* in 1739 was almost a confirmation of Sawantvandi’s new status. The treaty obliged both ‘to forget everything that happened in the past events, and faithful live according to a true solid friendship and help each other in the best possible way’, and the *sardesais* also promised to the Portuguese to return the territories occupied by their troops during the war. The first clause stated that ‘the peace made in past times would not be valid’ which meant that the relation of vassalage terminated.  

This document, however, was never put into practice since the *sardesais* considered that the treaty did not protect their position and interests in their new possessions of Bardez and continued their war with the Estado da Índia. The prolongation of the conflict suited the Marathas. The new Peshwa, Balagi Bajirao, who was also known as Nanasaheb, considered this situation as an opportunity to secure the control of the Provincia do Norte, since the military efforts of Sawantvandi forced the Portuguese to put a hold on their plans to recapture Bassein. In an attempt to consolidate their position, the *sardesais* occupied almost the totality of the province of Bardez in February 1741, forcing Viceroy Marquis of Louriçal to launch a violent

---

86 “Capitulações das pazes com o Bounsuló aceitas pelo Vice-Rey da India”, *Collecção de Tratados*, VI, pp. 197-198.
military offensive led by Manoel Soares Velho, who gained in this campaign a heroic reputation thanks to a rapid and successful victory over Sawantvandi. The war was finally over on 11 October 1741 after a peace treaty which restored the relations between Sawantvandi and Goa according to the treaty of 1736.

Before Goa’s military weakness, Louriçal preferred to protect the Estado through the reinforcement of the old vassalage ties established by Babu and D. Rodrigo da Costa. Louriçal favoured the imposition of strict vassalage ties on the Bhonsles which eventually would help Goa to control their activities. The treaty recovered the clauses signed with Babu and added new conditions related with the outcomes of Manoel Soares Velho’s campaign. The Bhonsles were forced to renounce any claim to Corjuem, Penelem, Maen, Arabo and Prina, and give to the Estado the villages of Macazan and Vazary. They also were to return all the ships which were seized from Portuguese subjects, and buy cartazes, as well as using Portuguese ports as a refuge during wartime, ‘but never in a number which may cause fear to the European nations established in India, or to the Indian princes and chieftains (regulos) of the (west) Coast of India.**88** In exchange for the sardesais’ commitment to the Estado, Goa promised to support and protect Sawantvandi; to receive the ‘first women of the lands of the sardessais’ when their territory was occupied; and, as a sign of friendship, the Estado would offer each year a cartaz.**89**

Louriçal’s plan was not fulfilled. In 1742, the sardesais wrote to Goa complaining that while they had executed their obligations, the Portuguese had not followed what was agreed. These complaints were attempts to renegotiate the treaty. Indeed, Sawantvandi wanted to recover the lost villages, claiming that they were ‘a thing of little interest to the Estado’, worth only 10,000 xerafins, and suggesting that if these villages were offered to the sardesais they would consider this as a ‘particular favour’. Since the former dessai of Macazan, to whom the sardesais owed money, was raiding the area due to the delays in the reception of the compensation promised by the Portuguese, the sardesais requested the return of the village.**90** The sardesais also presented a protest to the Estado for the absence of a Portuguese return gift to reward their sagoate since the ‘most ancient style’ established that ‘when a horse is offered as a sagoate, another one should be retributed’, and refuted Goa’s complaints against the

---

**88** “Copia do Tratado que se propoz no Concelho d’Estado feito a 11 de Setembro de 1741, pelo qual o Vice-Rey da India admite aos Sar Dessaes de Preagana Cuddale à amizade do Estado”, Collecção de Tratados,VI, p. 228.

**89** Ibid., p. 229.

**90** Ibid., p. 237.
sardesais recruitment of sipais serving Goa claiming that this practice respected the agreements made with the Portuguese due to the origins of the recruits.\footnote{Ibid., p. 237.}

After the sardesais’ complaints, the relations between Goa and Sawantvandi entered into a new phase of deterioration. The close relations between the sardesais and the Marathas, the constant attacks against Portuguese territories and merchants, as well as Goa’s knowledge that the sardesais were pressuring the rajah of Sonda to end his alliance with Goa raised the levels of suspicion among the Portuguese authorities.\footnote{Manuel Artur Norton, \textit{Dom Pedro Miguel de Almeida Portugal} (Lisbon: Agência Geral do Ultramar, 1961), p. 125.}

When Viceroy Marquis of Castelo-Novo concluded his induction, a Sawantvandi envoy named Santo Naique was sent to Goa to congratulate the new Viceroy on his arrival. Naique’s audience with Castelo-Novo was far from being a success. According to Monterroio Mascarenhas, the envoy’s ‘introductory audience was also his last one’. The viceroy inquired o Naique if he was in Goa to confirm the 1742 treaty and to compensate the Estado for the damages provoked by Sawantvandi. Without any instruction from the sardesais to negotiate a new treaty with Castelo-Novo, the envoy was forced to leave Goa, ‘although very happy for receiving all the attentions deserved by his position during his stay’.\footnote{José Freire Monterroio Mascarenhas, \textit{Epanaphora Indica}, Pt. III (Lisbon: Francisco da Sylva, 1748), p. 50.} Naique’s audience was again another low point, and was interpreted by the Portuguese as a sign that the treaty signed by Louriçal would never be respected.

Before the ‘provocations’ made by the sardesais, Castelo-Novo replied with relatively peaceful incursions into Sawantvandi territory led by the Viceroy himself, which aimed to demonstrate that the Portuguese could attack the sardesais’ lands whenever they wanted. This atmosphere of cold war reached its zenith in 1746, when Jayrama’s navy made an attempt to blockade Goa and captured some Portuguese ships of the carreiras of Mozambique, Daman and Surat. Castelo-Novo used the attacks as pretext to denounce the 1742 treaty and invade Sawantvandi. The viceroy’s policy towards Sawantvandi was presented to the Conselho do Estado on 27 April 1746. Castel-Novo wanted to declare war against the princedom claiming that ‘the obligations and fidelity that the sardesais as tributary, and consequently vassals of the Estado’ were not being respected. Sawantvandi was accused of capturing Portuguese ships illegally; inciting Portuguese soldiers to defect and impeding the Portuguese authorities to arrest them; and, above all, for making several attempts to forge an alliance with other powers
to attack the Estado. As an example of the *sardesais* ‘insolences’, Castelo-Novo mentioned the case of João de Souza Ferras, a Portuguese official who was captured by Sawantvandi troops at the same moment in which Castelo-Novo made his induction in Goa – a timing which was regarded as a deliberate provocation, especially due to the fact that Ferras had a *cartaz* and carried several letters addressed to the viceroy. On 5 May 1746 an army led by the Viceroy conquered the fortress of Alorna, an important Bhonsle fluvial port. Alorna’s success paved the way for the conquests of the fortresses of Rarin, on 1 December 1746, and Satarem on 4 December. Before the sudden loss of three fortresses, *Sardesai* Ramachandra was forced to negotiate with Castelo-Novo a peace treaty after the fall of Satarem.

The negotiations lasted for three days, a duration which was considered by the Portuguese as excessively long. According to Monterroio Mascarenhas, the *sardesais* prolonged the negotiations because ‘Asians are even more inclined to ceremonies than the Italians’. What Mascarenhas considered as a ‘useless preposition’, for Ramachandra was a crucial element of the negotiations which could affect their image before other local powers. The *sardesai* feared that the Portuguese would use the ceremonies related to the peace treaty to force Ramachandra to accept a status of vassal, as it had happened in 1742, and by prolonging the negotiations through the request of special ceremonial procedures, they wanted to certify that there would not be any kind of ceremony which would present the *sardesais* as vassals of the Portuguese Crown. However, the fear of a new wave of Portuguese attacks overcame the fear of Ramachandra being presented as submissive potentate. On 8 December, Ramachandra met Castelo-Novo at a Portuguese warship anchored near Rari to sign a peace treaty which would confirm Sawantvandi status as a vassal of the Estado da Índia. As a sign of Portuguese goodwill and to guarantee the *sardesai* safety, two Portuguese senior officers were sent to Ramachandra’s camp as a ‘deposit’ – a practice which, as Alexandrowicz has noted, was often used as a sign of good faith during diplomatic negotiations in India.

Castelo-Novo prepared Ramachandra’s reception with extreme care. The Portuguese viceroy wanted to organise a ceremony which would state the authority and

---

96 Ibid., p. 50.
superiority of Goa over the *sardesais*. The rituals behind the celebration of the vassalage treaty were meant to be an imposition of a particular vision of the superior position which the Estado considered to enjoy on the local system of foreign relations, as well as an attempt to erase the image of fragility caused by the loss of the Provincia do Norte. To impress the *sardesais* and other rulers, Castelo-Novio promoted a display of wealth and military power. The warship was especially decorated for the event, and the chamber where the ceremony was staged was covered with tapestries. At the end of the chamber was the viceroy’s *cadeira de espaldas* and an *escabello* (footstool) ‘with red velvet pillows with golden embroidments’ on which to place the viceroy’s hat. On the right side were several chairs for Portuguese officers and officials, while on the left were chairs destined for the Bhonsles. Twelve guards, covered with small armours to impress the *sardesai*, were stationed at the chamber’s entrance. From the chambers doors to the place where the Sar Desai would enter were two wings of sixty ‘heavily bodied grenadiers’ which were personally selected by the viceroy ‘to make his dignity more majestic, and provoke the respect of his enemies’.

Ramachandra was received by a group of senior officers who, ‘with all the urbanity’, led him to the chamber. As he entered, the viceroy left the cadeira de espaldas and ‘walked some steps’ to salute the *sardessai*. After the ‘first cumpliments’ the viceroy returned to his seat, and the *sardessai*, ‘with a loud voice’ made his oath:

‘Most Excellent Sir, I recognise the vassalage I owe to the very high and very powerful Lord King of Portugal, repented from the evil I had made to his states, and subjects, I came here to put myself to the hands of his viceroy, who is his delegate, and beg for his clemency, to give me the peace [since] I and my people are living oppressed for a year without it. If Your Excellency wishes that in my fortresses which were not conquered by you in my states that the Portuguese flag is waved from this very place I will give this order to those who govern them. I trust in the benignity of Your Excellency, and I hope that this time our friendship is definitely ratified [and that] it could not be dissolved from today’.

The *sardesai*’s speech seemed to follow David Kertzer’s idea that during the formation of international alliances the ‘nation or group that had previously been mistrusted, or even loathed, is placed in a new symbolic nexus, viewed now as benevolent rather than threatening’.

Indeed, Ramachandra’s words of repent and humility were meant to express inferiority before the Portuguese which confirmed his vassalage, transforming

99 Ibid., p. 52.
him from a foe to a friend. This transformation, however, required a ritual confirmation from the Estado which was guaranteed by a speech made by Castelo-Novo. The viceroy answered Ramachandra’s request with an improvised speech based on two ideas: that he and the Crown regretted the sardesai’s infractions of the previous treaties signed with Goa, and that ‘it was impossible that he ignored how profitable was the protection that the Estado gave to him, which had increased his dominions’. In spite all this, the Viceroy was inclined to ‘forget the past, if future actions corresponded to present words’, and admitted the Bhonsles to be a part of the vassals of the Portuguese king.101

As a sign of friendship and respect, Ramachandra offered a sagoate to the viceroy in which was included a ‘beautiful horse’. The gift was replied by Alorna with another sagoate ‘of bigger price’ – two pieces of velvet (one red, one blue) and several tendys to be distributed among the sardesai’s entourage. According to Mascarenhas, the tendys were hats used by the Bhonsles and which were decorated according to the social position of its user.102 After the exchange of gifts, Ramachandra Saunto left the ship and bade farewell ‘with large compliments, and great genuflexions, very satisfied with a pleasant manner in which His Excellency treated him lately’. As soon as Ramachandra’s escaler (boat) was far from the viceroy’s ship, all the Portuguese fired seven ships, a salute that was appreciated by the sardesai. When Ramachandra landed he offered to the Patrões, and sailors of the escaler as well as those who being to the crews of the baloes which followed several gratifications.103

Final Remarks

The imposition of vassalage upon local rulers was the solution found by the Portuguese Crown in the ultramar to exercise sovereignty. The rulers subdued by Portuguese military power were transformed into the vassals of the King of Portugal through ‘legal acts’ – to use Beatrix Heintze’s expression – which were documented and legitimised by the presence of witnesses – usually a large audience. These acts consisted of a declaration of submission from the vassal, who promised to follow the conditions imposed by the Portuguese Crown and to contribute to the military efforts of the Estado da India, while the Portuguese Crown promised to protect the vassal ruler.104 Most

---

101 Mascarenhas, Epanaphora Indica, Pt. III, pp. 52-53.
102 Ibid., p. 53.
103 Ibid., p. 53.
treaties, as Beatrix Heintze pointed out in relation to Angola, were essentially treaties of capitulation and subjection. The treaties were instruments of indirect rule. The territories of the vassal maintained the same borders, local customs and laws continued to be valid, and the privileges of the local elites remained untouched. Indeed, the treaties interfered only in the aspects which affected the presence of the Portuguese in India: the relations between the vassal and other European and local powers; the concession of commercial privileges to Portuguese or Goa-based merchants; the acceptance of the Portuguese naval passports (the *cartaz*); and the obligation of supporting the Portuguese military forces.

In the same way that the political system of the Estado da India was shaped by a discourse which exalted the viceroy as an executor of justice and distribution of rewards – a reflection of the traditional image of the Portuguese monarchs – the relations between Goa and the minor princedoms were based according to a similar paternalist perspective. Those rajahs who broke the conditions established by the treaties of friendship and vassalage were to be punished and reintegrated into the former *status quo*. Indeed, terror was regularly used by the Estado to convey a message regarding the disobedience of its vassals.

---

105 Ibid., p. 129.
6. The *cartaz* and the Portuguese claim to the ‘Lordship of the Seas of India’

**Introduction**

On 16 December 1715, Viceroy Vasco Fernandes César de Menezes replied to a letter from the Sidi commander-in-chief, who had presented to the viceroy a formal complaint after the capture of one of his ships, stating that ‘there is no prince in Asia who ignores the fact that the very high and very powerful King of Portugal is the lord of the seas of India, and the same is acknowledged by the great Mughal king and the magnificent King of Persia, since their vessels are not exempt from the *cartazes* and they observe its conditions’ (*não há nenhum príncipe na Ásia que ignore que o muito alto e poderoso rey de Portugal hé senhor dos mares da India, e assim o acreditão o grandioso rey Mogor, e magnífico rey da Persia pois se não izentão de que os seus barcos tomem cartazes e observemo que se lhes ordena nelles*).  

After learning that the English factory at Carwar was issuing its own passports to merchants operating in the Kanara Coast, Vasco Fernandes César de Meneses reminded the factor on 27 March 1716 that of the ‘*cartazes* used by the nations in the seas of India which are not from Europe, only this government [Goa] issues them’ (*cartazes no mar da India as nasções que não são de Europa só este governo os passa*).

This image of the Portuguese king as the ‘Lord of the Seas of India’ was based on the *cartaz*, a naval passport created by the Estado da Índia in the sixteenth century to control the seafaring activities of the *Reis Vizinhos*: this was described by Charles Henry Alexandrowicz as an instrument ‘to prevent unneutral service by excluding from the vessel persons liable to be of use to the enemy’.

According to Luis Filipe Thomaz, the *cartaz* system already existed in India before the arrival of the Portuguese. Indeed, the regulation of naval activities was not strange to Hindu rulers. Kautilya’s *Arthasāstra*, for example, describes the functions of the Superintendent of Ships, a post used by some Hindu powers to control fishing and trading activities, combat piracy and

---

1 “Carta do vice-rei da Índia, Vasco Fernandes César de Meneses ao estimável Sidy Acut Can general da armada do magnifico e poderozo rey Mogor” *in* Boletim da Filmoteca Ultramarina (BFUP), Nº 46, p. 214.

2 “Carta do vice-rei da Índia, Vasco Fernandes César de Meneses Para Gso Taylor feitor ingles en Carvar” in BFUP, Nº 46, p. 233

impede the navigation of enemy ships. George Winius and J.C. Heesterman also remarked that one of the reasons for the early success of the cartaz system was the vision that most Indian rulers had of the cartaz as a transposition to the Indian Ocean of the taxes imposed on merchant caravans in the Indian countryside, a comparison which made the cartaz a more or less tolerable demand from the Portuguese. Indeed, it is possible to follow Winius and Heesterman’s suggestion that the cartaz was an element which contributed to an ‘Indianization’ of the structures of Portuguese imperialism in India, but such a perspective requires a detailed comparative study of the Estado da Índia with other early modern Indian empires such as the Mughal or the Vijayanagara empires. Although the local powers could identify some similarities between the cartaz and their own fiscal system, the activities of the Portuguese in the Indian Ocean shocked many in the region. Teotónio de Souza mentions a Malabar poem, Tahful-ul-Mujahideen, written by the brother of Zaid-ud-din in the first decades of sixteenth century, which complained that the ‘Portuguese forbade ships to set sail for Mecca, and this was the worst calamity’.

Luis Filipe Thomaz also traced a Muslim, or Arabian, influence. His thesis is based on the origin of the term cartaz as a derivation from the Arabic quirtaz, the word for an instrument of sea trade control used by Muslim princedoms. The quirtaz was probably known by the Portuguese during the times of the Muslim occupation of the Iberian Peninsula, and seemed also to have inspired the Iberian kingdoms during the Reconquista to impose a tax of 1/5 on the value of the cargo of seized enemy ships, which was destined to their royal treasures. Another explanation for the origin of the cartaz is given by the sixteenth-century chronicler, Gaspar Correia, who mentioned in his Lendas da Índia that the convoying of merchant ships was implemented by the Portuguese around 1502 to avoid hostile actions from Calicut during the sixteenth century.

The Iberian experience of the quirtaz and the need felt by the Portuguese to reduce the influence of the Muslim trade in the Indian Ocean led to the development of the cartaz as an instrument to suppress the commercial networks, which escaped

---

4 Ibid., p. 62.
7 Luis Filipe Thomaz, De Ceuta a Timor (Lisbon: Difel, 1994), p. 221.
8 Ibid., p. 204.
Portuguese control or access. Although Serafim de Freitas in his dispute with Hugo Grotius presented the cartaz as an instrument of self-defence which allowed the Portuguese to control or impede the navigation of enemy ships\textsuperscript{11}, the reality was that the cartaz’, as Thomaz pointed out in his study, was a part of a strategy based on a ‘tension between two poles’ – the promotion of a state piracy and privateering activities to secure and maximize the profits of the Carreira da India and the receipts of the Royal Treasure; and the need to fight piracy to guarantee the existence of a peaceful regional trade.\textsuperscript{12}

During the first years of the eighteenth century, Goa was confronted with several problems in operating the cartaz system. The diverse versions of the document adopted by the emissary agents, the different modes of payment and the increasing hostility from the Reis Vizinhos to the actions of the armadas forced the Portuguese authorities to reorganise the system. In 1708, D. Rodrigo da Costa decided to homogenize the system and recover the traditional clauses of the cartaz. Some historians, like Teles da Cunha, regard this decision as an attempt to preserve the prestige of the Estado’s reputation by reintroducing the original elements of an instrument which was behind the naval power of the Estado in the Indian Ocean during the first stages of the Portuguese presence in the region. But the viceroy’s decision, as Teles da Cunha also observed, was motivated by the ‘immediate geographical horizon’ of Goa, or in other words the Malabar Coast, the Strait of Hormuz and the Persian Gulf\textsuperscript{13} - three regions which the Portuguese Crown believed could revitalise the Estado.

The standardisation implemented by D. Rodrigo was somehow successful. The viceroy was able to preserve a specific formula (estylo) for the text of the cartazes which rarely changed with the constant substitution of viceroys. The document presented the name of the viceroy and his titles, and then identified the name of the merchant and his ship. The document always mentioned that the viceroy had granted the cartaz as an act of benevolence (hey por bem). Even a cartaz issued to the Mughal emperor by Viceroy Saldanha da Gama on 3 September 1726 was written in the same estylo, although it mentioned that the document had been granted with no charges (gratuitamente) due to the ‘good friendship (boa amizade) between the Portuguese

\textsuperscript{10} Thomaz, De Ceuta a Timor, p. 427.
\textsuperscript{11} Ibid., p. 222.
\textsuperscript{12} Ibid., p. 557.
Crown and the Mughal Empire. Despite this exhibition of Portuguese goodwill and friendship, the viceroy stated that the concession of this free cartaz would not be repeated in the future. The cargo, artillery and weapons carried by the ship were enlisted and described with detail. The name of the ship’s captain and pilots, the number of members of the crew and the route followed by the ship were also mentioned in detail. The cartaz forced its holder to stop at Portuguese ports or factories, where the merchant would trade and pay custom rights. Apart from the obligation to stop at Goa, Mangalore and Bandar-Kung were the other usual ports of call. Indeed, the cartaz was at the heart of almost all activities of these two Portuguese factories. A significant part of the revenue of the factories was obtained by the cartazes sold to local merchants, as well as by the custom rights paid by the ships sailing with Portuguese passports. The ships bound for Mecca did not include, in their cartazes, references to Kung or Mangalore. The mandatory call at Goa and at ports with a Portuguese factory indicates that the economic activities of the Estado relied on the cartaz, which was used as a coercive instrument to guarantee the sustainability of the main Portuguese entrepôts and trading routes in the Indian Ocean.

The passports allowed Goa to maintain the remnants of the sixteenth-century monopoly of the Portuguese Crown on Arabian horses, by forbidding all the holders of the document from trafficking horses from Persia and from the Arabian Peninsula. Another condition which the merchants who obtained a Portuguese passport had to obey was to not have any kind of contact with the enemies of the Estado, especially the Omani. The Iman of Muscat not only represented a threat to the Portuguese aspirations in the West Indian Ocean, but it was a rival in the horse trade. One cartaz granted by Viceroy D. Rodrigo da Costa to a Keladi merchant called Nirvanyaoeste stipulated that the document was given under the condition that the ship should not transport ‘Abexins, Rumes, or Arabians who obey the Iman of Muscat, nor cargoes from the said Arabians’. Indeed, many in Lisbon and Goa regarded the cartaz as an useful instrument in reducing the influence of the Omani in the Persian Gulf and the Swahili Coast – two regions where the Portuguese believed that it was possible to re-launch the Portuguese imperial project in the region, and establish a new commercial monopoly which would revitalise the Estado.

14 Historical Archives of Goa (HAG), Cartazes, 1363, “Cartaz ao Rey Mogor, 3/09/1726”, f. 81v.
15 HAG, Cartazes, 1363, “Cartaz a Mucu Xetty da nasção Venio morador em Barcellor, undated”, f. 75v.
16 HAG, Cartazes, 1363, “Cartaz a Nirvanyaoeste morador em Bidanura terras do Rey do Canara, 1/02/170?”, f. 53.
Another condition to be strictly followed by the holders of cartazes was the ban on transporting Portuguese subjects, Christian slaves and their children. If a Portuguese warship had any suspicion or information that a ship sailing with a cartaz was transporting Christian slaves, the ship and her crew would be examined according to the procedures defined by the Goan Concilio Provincial. Whenever it was proven that there were Christian slaves on board, they would be released and their sons baptised in Portuguese territory – in the event they were born in captivity.

The conditions stipulated by the cartazes allowed the Estado to have a direct influence on the life of the West Indian Ocean by restraining the activities of all merchants who accepted or refused the Portuguese passports. The captains of the armadas and warships were often reminded by the viceroy of their function as enforcers of the cartaz system. During contact with Asian ships, the captain should ‘without sending any person to the ship, order them to present the cartaz, and if they have one you should allow them to continue their journey without any further examination regarding the conditions of their cartazes, because if they are sailing with a cartaz which is still valid, they should not be impeded to continue their navigation’.17 If the captain was confronted with an expired cartaz or with a ship which was sailing without the passport, the captain should order their arrest.18

Cartazes could be issued by Goa’s central administration, governors of Portuguese ports such as Daman or Diu, the heads of Portuguese factories, warship captains or even missionaries or clergymen such as the priest of Tanor, Father Simão de Mascarenhas, who was allowed in 1716 by Viceroy Vasco Fernandes César de Menezes to issue cartazes. According to the letter which granted Father Simão this special right, cartazes were sold at the price of 100 candins, from which 10 rupees were destined to the Royal Treasure and 5 (or 2,5 if issued in a factory) to the Office of the Secretário de Estado.19 Those who possessed a cartaz, after paying 100 candins for the document, were obliged to call at Goa, where they would pay customs to Goa’s custom house, and were forbidden to stop at the port ‘of princes with whom the Estado is at war’. Any ship which infringed these conditions would see her cargo ‘lost to the Royal Treasure and her cartaz will be deemed void’.20

---

17 HAG, Regimentos, 1430, “Instrução que se deo aos capitães das Armadas, undated”, f. 101v.
18 Ibid., f. 102.
The *cartaz* crisis

The success of the *cartaz* led the Dutch to emulate the Estado, and after taking Malacca from the Portuguese, the VOC successfully adopted a similar system in the region, the *pascedullen*. The EIC was also aware of the economic, military and diplomatic advantages of the *cartaz*, and like the VOC developed its own passport system in the mid-seventeenth century, issuing regularly passes to private shipping from England, residents of its settlements as well as to other European and Asian ships.21 Besides the European competition, Goa also faced several attempts from local powers to introduce passports. In 1670, the treaty signed by Goa with the Marathas established that both sides were obliged to use *cartazes* issued by them,22 and since the first decades of the eighteenth century the Angrias issued a naval pass, the *dastak*, modelled according to the Portuguese *cartaz*.23 A sign of the success of the *dastak* was the fact that several merchants started to equip themselves both with the Portuguese and the Angrian passports.24 Indeed, there were Portuguese merchants based in the Provincia do Norte who bought Angrian passports.25

At the same time, the revenues from the *cartazes* were becoming rather irrelevant for the Estado. According to a report from the Factory of Goa, the Estado’s treasure had only received a sum of 120 reis from the *cartazes* issued to Muslim merchants from 1719 to 1722. Comparing with the total of 547,170 reis taken from other revenue sources, the *cartaz* was probably regarded by the Portuguese authorities more as a political instrument than as a potential source of income.26 The reduced influence of the *cartaz* to the Estado’s budget could be related to the preference demonstrated by other merchants for the passports and protection granted by the EIC, the VOC or the French *Compagnie des Indes*. Even merchants or other economic agents related to the Estado seemed to have preferred using foreign passports. Rustamji

---

Manakji, the Portuguese broker at Surat in 1702, caused some scandal in Goa when he was caught by a Portuguese warship without a cartaz but with English, Dutch and French passports.\textsuperscript{27}

Lisbon was extremely concerned with the conditions in which the system operated, and any alteration to its modus operandi was carefully discussed at the Overseas Council. One of the most sensitive issues related to the cartazes were the prices asked by Goa for the passports. On 29 January 1719, Lisbon received a request from Goa to increase the price of the cartazes to improve the Estado’s budget. The Overseas Council wanted to know if the request had any credible foundation, and asked a former unnamed high-ranked Estado official to present report based on his opinion and experience with the cartaz system. The cartazes were described as ‘the greatest [privilege] we conserve in those parts and which will give us more Asiatic dominion’ proposing to the Councillors that the Estado should always impose this privilege in its negotiations with local rulers ‘for more unreasonable the clauses of the cartazes seem to be’. The report legitimated the use of the cartazes as a right conceded to the Portuguese by Indian rulers and the Persian Shah in treaties which allowed the Estado to undertake ‘an honest piracy’\textsuperscript{28} – a perspective which followed Serafim de Freitas’s classic argument that the cartazes were an instrument of self-defence which allowed the Portuguese to control or impede the navigation of enemy ships.\textsuperscript{29}

The official believed that the viceregal proposal should be accepted by the Crown in order to reduce the expenses of the Royal Treasury with Goa and increase the wages of the Estado’s officials and viceroys. The official believed that without the money obtained from the cartazes, the Crown would be forced to send 10,000 xerifins more to Goa each year. Moreover, the profits taken from cartazes were used to increase the wages of the Estado’s officials, and if the viceroys lost ‘the hope of getting more from confiscations, they would be damaged because they are the only ones who had not seen their wages increased when His Majesty decided to raise the pay of the Viceroy of Brazil and the other governors of America [Brazil] and Angola’.\textsuperscript{30}

On 20 January 1727 Viceroy João Saldanha da Gama wrote to João V an arbitrio regarding the ‘bad way in which is the capture of ships is undertaken in Your Majesty’s dominions’. This viceregal report begins with a brief history of the cartaz

\textsuperscript{27} Ibid., p. 267.
\textsuperscript{28} Arquivo Histórico Ultramarino (AHU), India, Caixa. 86, Doc. 4, f. 1.
\textsuperscript{29} Thomaz, \textit{De Ceuta a Timor}, p. 222.
\textsuperscript{30} AHU, India, Caixa. 86, Doc. 4, f. 1v.
system which allows the viceroy the opportunity of exposing its strengths and weaknesses, as well as the eventual solutions needed to correct the problems and improve its efficiency. The viceroy reminded the king that the *cartaz* was a privilege acquired by the Portuguese Crown thanks to ‘the first conquerors of the Seas of India’, and which was recognised by ‘the Asiatic nations due to the fear they have of the Portuguese arms’. This fear made several Asian rulers request ‘the freedom of sailing in the Seas of India offered by Your Majesty [and] as recognition, and as a kind of vassalage they buy a *cartaz*’. Saldanha da Gama regarded the *cartaz* as ‘a certain tribute, or right’ which was used by the Estado with ‘much utility to the Royal Treasury of Your Majesty, while the trade of India was made by the Portuguese nation, because when the forbidden goods are needed they could be conveniently taxed’. However, according to the viceroy, the arrival of the EIC and the VOC ended the Portuguese capacity for dictating the goods traded in the Asian seas. Indeed, the European companies were able to surpass the ban imposed by the Estado on goods such as horses, timber, iron or steel, offering several local merchants new types of naval passports which did not restrict their trading interests. This situation made the *cartaz* ‘abhorrent and useless among the nations of Asia, who avoid the Portuguese ports’. 

The ports of the Estado were not only avoided because of the existence of reliable alternatives to the *cartaz*, but by the opportunism and excess of zeal of the Portuguese officials and navy officers. According to Saldanha da Gama, even when the local merchants possessed a *cartaz*, or a European equivalent, and decided to stop in a Portuguese port, they were often arrested for carrying goods forbidden by the *cartaz*. These arrests were also based on differences of the tonnage declared by the merchants and the one examined by the official at the port; by the presence of Omani, Rumes, Abexcos in the ship as passengers or crew-members; the presence of slaves also led to the arrest of ships. The viceroy also accused the capitães de mar e Guerra of not having common sense when they had doubts about the veracity of one *cartaz*, forcing the ship to stop at Goa, where the document and the ship’s cargo would be examined in a process which could last three months ‘leaving the poor owner of the ships always ruined’. To convince the king of the injustices of the system, the viceroy mentioned the case of a ship which was released by the Court of Diu. Despite obtaining a

31 HAG, Livro das Monções do Reino (MR) 93B, “Carta do Vice-Rei João Saldanha da Gama a Sua Magestade, 20/01/1727”, f.530.
32 Ibid., f.530.
33 Ibid., f.530v.
favourable sentence, the owner had seen all the cargo stolen by the guards of the port during the four months which the process took to be solved. According to Saldanha da Gama, the repetition of these cases throughout the Estado was behind a negative image of the Portuguese as trading partners. The viceroy believed that most Indian merchants were ‘horrified to trade with us’. This aversion was benefiting the EIC, which was offering a similar protection given by the *carta*. The Honourable Company was selling at high prices (*alto preço*) passports or conceding privileges to local merchants such as the use of a British flag or British crew-members. The EIC factories were also offering their ships to be rented by local merchants at high prices. These alternatives developed by the EIC were transforming Bombay, Madras and Honor into the main commercial centres of the Indian Ocean trade and isolating the ports under Portuguese control, forcing the Estado merchants to buy goods to the EIC. The Estado’s trade was facing a ruinous scenario seeing most of its merchants moving to the ports controlled by the EIC.  

To solve the imminent ruin of the Estado, Saldanha da Gama suggested that Lisbon should approve an increase of the custom rights related with the *cartazes* and the abolition of the tax on forbidden goods, ‘to allow that a Ship which presents a *cartaz* would not have to be submitted to any more examination under the condition that the Ship would trade at the port of Goa’. All the ships possessing a *cartaz* which traded at Goa would receive half of the price they had initially paid for the *direitos*. With this measure, the viceroy believed that the Estado could recover from damages imposed by the EIC. However, Saldanha da Gama refused any project for a complete reform or abolition of the *cartaz* system, ‘since it is fair that Your Majesty conserve the privilege and right of granting the *cartazes*’. João should therefore continue to order and support the inspections of ‘all ships which to do not possess them, since this would offer some revenue to Your Majesty’s Treasury’. Saldanha da Gama’s *arbitrio* was rejected by João V, who preferred the continuation of the old system in order to maintain a political discourse based on Manuoline imperialism.  

---

34 Ibid., f.530v.  
35 Ibid., f.530v.  
36 Ibid., fs.530v-531.  
Attempts to maintain the system

To surpass the competition from other passport systems, Goa was forced to find a way to make the *cartaz* the preferable passport in the region. Private merchants, for example, were invited by the Estado to adhere to the *cartaz* system in exchange for privileges in their commercial exchanges in Goa. On 22 November 1728, Saldanha da Gama wrote to Sundardas, a merchant based on Mangalore, to congratulate him for recognising that the arrest of ships without *cartazes* was ‘a right that the King of Portugal My Lord acquired from his dominion of the seas, conceding the liberty of sailing to those who have a *cartaz*. As a reward for this recognition, the viceroy was willing to offer his protection to Sundardas and allow him to use Portuguese flags on his ships as well as to grant him the right to carry ‘some forbidden products’ (*alguns generos dos prohebidos*). Besides using only *cartazes* issued by the Portuguese, Saldanha da Gama expected that Sundardas would send to ‘a cargo of rice, or other [product]...to make this privilege better’.

Besides using friendly prices and offering privileges to influential merchants, the Portuguese regularly resorted to violence to persuade the potentates who were forced by treaties signed with the Estado to buy and only use *cartazes* to follow their obligations. In 1717, for example, Viceroy Count of Ericeira organised a fleet to blockade the port city of Por Patane as a punishment for the *diwan*’s refusal to pay his tribute to pay a debt of 32,000 xerafins for the concession of *cartazes* to ships from the city. Initially the fleet led by D. Lopo José de Almeida aimed at achieving a peaceful negotiation of the debt, but Almeida apparently, according to Ericeira’s letter to João V, ‘exceeded my orders’, and attacked the city. After a ‘bloody combat’ (*sanguinolento combate*) the Portuguese set the city’s treasure, ‘which was full of marble, and other precious goods’, and more than 400 houses onto fire. Almeida also destroyed ‘four ships which were doing business with Mocha’ and one Arabian ship. As a trophy, Almeida brought to Goa two flags of the city. According to Ericeira’s letter to the king, ‘more than four hundred enemies were dead’.

Goa’s efforts to maintain the *cartaz* system led to several diplomatic incidents with the allies and vassals of the Portuguese Crown in the Indian Ocean. The

---

restrictions imposed by the Portuguese naval passports collided with the economic interests of several princedoms, and it was often regarded as an intromission from the Estado in the economic affairs of the Reis Vizinhos. Although the Mughal emperor accepted the supposed Portuguese supremacy in the seas of India – Goa often informed Lisbon that the Mughals did not have ‘any inclination to have maritime power being obliged until today to use the cartazes of the Estado as the Persians do even if they conquer the Arabians’⁴⁰ – Delhi regularly presented formal complaints regarding the overzealous and aggressive behaviour of the Portuguese armadas. In an attempt to preserve the good terms with the Mughal emperor, and reduce the damages caused by the cartaz in the diplomatic relations between Delhi and Goa, the count of Ericeira instructed the captain of the Armada do Norte to tolerate ‘the ships of the Mughal King which have cartazes and do not exceed their conditions, giving to them all the attention and offering a good passage concealing the fact that you know that they have infringed some of the conditions of their cartazes’.⁴¹

Most of the protests presented by the Mughal authorities were signed by the Sidi of Janjira, a Mughal mansabdar and jagirdar that served the emperor as the protector of Surat and the leader of the Mughal admiralty, being also responsible for collecting tributes along the Gujarat coast. The relations between Goa and the Sidi were often turbulent. The Mughal admiralty had its own ambitions of controlling the West Indian Ocean, and adopted an aggressive behaviour which collided with the interests of the European powers. In 1690, for example, the Sidi occupied Bombay Island.⁴² At the centre of the conflicts between Janjira and Goa was the claim made by the Sidi that the Estado had exempted its ships from the obligation of sailing with cartazes as a sign of recognition for the military aid offered by the Sidi to Goa during the 1683 Maratha invasion. However, since the tenure of Viceroy Saldanha da Gama, the Estado had considered that the exemption was no longer valid. This decision was probably related to the increasing naval power of the Sidi and the convergence of interests between Janjira and two maritime rivals of the Estado – the Angria clan and the Omani. During Saldanha da Gama’s tenure, two Sidi ships were seized in 1728 and 1730. According to the Noticias da Índia, in 1728 the Sidi reacted to the capture of the ships with several attacks against Portuguese ships, forcing Goa to retaliate in a brief conflict which ended

⁴⁰ AHU, Cod. 213, f. 120v.
‘with the good success of our arms and a peace asked [by the Sidi] who renounced his pretensions’. This treaty, however, was short lived. In 1730 Goa was on the verge of declaring war on the Sidi, after the arrest of a Portuguese ship and all her officials and crew in Janjira, as revenge for the arrest of one Sidi ship which sailed without a cartaz. On 14 November 1730, Padre Manoel de Figueiredo was sent to Delhi as a special envoy with instructions to exhibit intelligence data gathered by Portuguese spies which revealed that the Sidi had secretly forged alliances with the Omani, the Marathas and the Angria clan, ‘capturing ships owned by his [Mughal] vassals and by people of all nations’. Not only were the Sidi establishing close ties with common enemies of the Mughals and the Portuguese, as Janjira was also issuing cartazes to merchant ships, claiming that they would be protected by the Estado. This attack on the cartaz system undermined the claim of the Portuguese Crown to possess the ‘lordship of the seas of India’, and it was also regarded by Goa as a sign that the Sidi intended to break its ties with Delhi. Padre Manoel was instructed to persuade the emperor that the Sidi had forged an alliance with two enemies of the Estado and the Mughals– the Omani and the Marathas. In 1732 the Estado’s interim government made an attempt to restore the relations with the Sidi, inviting the ruler to send an envoy to Goa to discuss a solution. The governors promised that in return for the Portuguese ships, the Sidi ships would be returned, and the value of their cargo restored if their envoys presented an appeal to João V ‘which would certainly be approved by his royal greatness’. However, the agreement was never fulfilled. The Sidi delayed the return of the Portuguese ship and refused to send men to receive the seized ships at Goa. Meanwhile, a Sidi warship was captured after an attempt to attack a Portuguese frigate. The Sidi replied with the capture of a Portuguese ship from a group of Daman merchants. Diplomatic negotiations were restored after the arrival of Viceroy Count of Sandomil who received a Sidi envoy to discuss the release of the warship and the Daman ship. Sandomil wanted to restore the 1670 Luso-Sidi treaty which obliged Janjira to use Portuguese

---

43 Biblioteca Nacional de Portugal (BNP), Cod. 465, Noticias da India, fol. 136v.
44 Ibid., fol. 151.
45 HAG, Regimentos, 1429, ‘Instrução que se deo ao Padre Manoel de Figueiredo da Companhia de Jesus que hora vay para a Corte del Rey Mogor’, f. 70v.
46 Ibid., f. 70v.
47 Ibid., f. 71.
49 Ibid., p. 390.
cartazes in order ‘to conserve the privilege of the dominion of the seas of India’, but until the 1770s the Sidi rejected the Portuguese demands.\textsuperscript{50}

The cartaz was also a serious obstacle in the relations between the Estado and the nawab of Surat. Daman was often attacked by the nawab’s forces as a revenge for the seize of a Surat ship which sailed with cartazes, forcing Viceroy Count of Ericeira to recommend to his predecessor, Francisco José de Sampaio e Castro, to block Surat and seize all Mughal ships whenever Daman was raided by the nawab. When Castro decided to terminate the blockade, all seized ships and their cargo should be release as a proof of Goa’s friendship towards the Mughal emperor, but only if the nawab presented a formal apology and paid the damages caused by the raids.\textsuperscript{51} The nawabs of Surat considered that the cartaz was an intrusion into their private trading interests, as well as an obstruction to the different nations which used the city’s ports. An example of the conflicts between Surat and Goa was the seizure of a Turkish ship made by a flotilla led by Captain Sarmento in 1708. Despite sailing with a Portuguese passport, Sarmento considered that the ship was illegal since its captain and crew were Turkish and the cartaz presented to Sarmento was issued to another ship belonging to a Mughal merchant. The nawab of Surat presented a formal protest in Goa, claiming that the ship belonged in fact to a subject of the Mughal emperor and threatened to attack the Provincia do Norte if the viceroy did not release the ship. Indeed, the seizure was polemic and some Estado officials believed that the seizure would led to a deterioration in the relations with the Mughals. According to the viceroy, the Turkish captain was advised by several officials to present a complaint against Sarmento and accuse him of stealing some goods carried by the ship estimated to worth 200,000 xerifins. Meanwhile, Goa’s High Court declared that the ship and its cargo should be returned to its Turkish owners since there was no valid reason for the seizure. Motivated by the judges’ decision and the officials’ advice, the Turkish captain presented a petition to D. Rodrigo da Costa, who instructed the ouvidor-geral do crime to launch an inquiry to the behaviour of Sarmento and his armada. The ouvidor declared that the captain did not misuse the cargo, and that only a small group of soldiers had stole ‘things of little value’ (couza de tão pouco porte). According to a viceregal report, the Turkish were pleased with the inquiry and decided to not proceed with the complaint against the soldiers.

\textsuperscript{50} Ibid., p. 391.
\textsuperscript{51} BNP, Cod. 1445, Instrucção que deixou o Conde da Ericeira Dom Luis de Menezes Vice Rey e Capitam General da India A Francisco Jozé de Sampayo e Castro que lhe foy succeder no dito emprego no anno de 1721, f. 40.
Sarmento, however, was not convinced with the result of the inquiry. The captain maintained his statement that the ship had no relation to the Mughal Empire, and belonged to an Ottoman merchant who was going to settle in Mecca with his family. Sarmento also informed D. Rodrigo that when he seized the ship there was ‘no woman who was a friend or a relative of the nawaba of Surat as I have written in my first letter, this being a claim made by the Turkish captain, a created fiction in the hope of doing a better business’.  

As other Asian powers, Persia regarded the cartaz as a form of aggression on their sovereignty and an impediment to their trading activities. Isfahan was also suspicious that the presence of the Portuguese Armada do Estreito, which was partly funded by the Persian treasury, was used by the Portuguese authorities to implement the cartaz system in the Gulf and control the local trade. For many Persian merchants the obligation to possess a Portuguese passport was not only a burden, but a serious barrier to expanding their activities. Indeed, those who acquired a cartaz were forbidden to trade with Oman or other enemies of Goa, and were forced to call at ports or factories under Portuguese control. These restrictions eliminated several business opportunities and impeded Persian merchants from having access to the extremely lucrative trade of Arabian horses which was dominated by Oman, forcing several merchants to reject the cartaz system and its restrictions. The regular capture of Persian ships which sailed without cartazes or carried Arabian horses by Portuguese warships increased the unpopularity of the system in Persia and led several influential merchants who had access to the Persian court to pressure the Shah and the Grand Vizier into acting against Goa.

In 1709, a ship owned by an influential Persian courtier, Mirza Mahamede Nasir, who owed 40,000 xerafins to a Portuguese merchant called João Pimentel Falcão, was seized by a fleet of Portuguese warships. According to the Persian authorities, the ship carried items which belonged to the Shah and the royal family, a claim which the Portuguese factory at Bandar-Kong rejected, declaring that the fleet commander did not find any document mentioning the existence of goods destined for the Persian court. Isfahan was not convinced by the factor’s explanation and made several unsuccessful diplomatic protests to force Goa to restore the lost cargo. Faced with the intransigence

---

52 HAG, MR 73, “Sobre o barco que foi reprezado na costa do Norte pelo Capitão mor da Armada Antonio de Amaral Sarmento, 13/12/1708”, fs. 3-4.
of the Portuguese authorities, Isfahan decided to take a dramatic approach on 3 April 1710 when a small army led by the Shah’s nephew, an official called Sultun by the Portuguese sources, entered Bandar-Kung to arrest the lingoa (interpreter) of the Portuguese factory at Bandar-Kung, an Indian Christian called Callamanchy.\textsuperscript{54} According to António dos Santos de Abreu, the Bandar-Kung factor, the Persian authorities had been bribed by Mirza Nassir. In a report destined for Viceroy D. Rodrigo da Costa, Abreu mentioned the existence of rumours which suggested that one of the sons of Mirza Nassir had promised the Shah a ‘large amount of money’ if the ship and its cargo were recovered. The arrest of Callamanchy, therefore, was a kind of retaliation, or a warning, which aimed at reminding the Portuguese of their fragility and dependence of Persian goodwill.\textsuperscript{55} Some months earlier, Friar António do Desterro complained to the Viceroy that he was being harassed by the Persian authorities, who threaten to close his church and expel him if he did not sign a document instructing the Portuguese factory at Bandar-Kong to restore the cargo of Nasir’s ship, or compensate the Persian merchant with an adequate sum of money.\textsuperscript{56}

The problems posed by the cartaz in the relations between Goa and Isfahan forced Viceroy César de Menezes to delay a decision on the seizure of three ships captured by the Armada do Estreito in 1713. The ships, which carried 150 Arabian horses, were taken to Goa where a year-long inquiry took place. On 15 January 1714, the Viceroy explained his procedure to João V stating that he was motivated by ‘the convenience of demonstrating some impartiality’ to the Persian authorities.\textsuperscript{57} Menezes was extremely suspicious of the sheiks who claimed to be vassals of the shah, and instructed the Bandar-Kung factory to treat them as ‘enemies’, since it was believed that they were ‘unreliable’ faced with the scenario of political instability in Persia.\textsuperscript{58} The sheiks were accused by Goa of buying cartazes issued by the Portuguese factory at Bandar-Kung to cover up their commercial activities with the Omani. The Estado was also particularly annoyed with Sheik Raxete. Despite being recognised by the viceroy as a ‘friend’, Raxete’s ships were often intercepted by Portuguese warships without cartazes and transporting Omani horses – a cargo which was prohibited by the Estado.

\textsuperscript{54} AHU, INDIA, Maço 101, Doc.3, 3 Janeiro 1711, fs.1-1v.
\textsuperscript{55} AHU, INDIA, Maço 101, Doc.3, 3 Janeiro 1711, f. 2.
\textsuperscript{57} Doc. 64 (15/1/1714), APO, Vol. III, Pt. II, p. 88.
\textsuperscript{58} “Carta do vice-rei da Índia, Vasco Fernandes César de Meneses para Rozendo de Couto feitor e superentendente do porto do Congo, 22/02/1715”, BFUP, 46, pp. 183-184.
da Índia to everyone who possessed a cartaz. In March 1715 three ships owned by Raxete were seized by a Portuguese ship for carrying horses which were not included in the original list of products mentioned by the cartaz which was issued at Bandar-Kung. The news of the seizure was received in Goa with apprehension. Menezes feared that the sheik, who was working as a mediator during the peace negotiations between Goa and the Nayaka of Keladi after the 1714 Portuguese attack on Mangalore and other Keladi ports, would stop his participation as revenge. The problem, however, was easily solved by Menezes. After consulting the Conselho do Estado, the viceroy decided to compensate Xeque Raquete by paying 100,000 xerafins for the 150 horses carried by the sheik’s ship.

Despite the violence used against the potentates who refused to accept the cartazes, by the mid-1720s the passports issued by the Portuguese were becoming less and less respected. The vassals of the Estado also made several attempts to breach their obligation to use cartazes. In 1722, a Keladi ship was seized for not sailing with a cartaz. There were rumours in Goa that the ‘Queen of Kanara’ would answer by increasing the price of the rice destined Goa. The Council decided that the ships and their cargo should not be returned to Keladi ‘since it would set a bad example against the rights of the Estado to prohibit the navigation of any ship without a cartaz’. In 1727, the Keladi authorities of Mangalore attacked the Portuguese community after the seizure of a Keladi ship which sailed without a cartaz. Keladi claimed that the ship was sailing with the cartaz which Goa offered to the Nayaka each year – a claim which was refused by the Viceroy. The head of the Catholic Church at Mangalore was arrested by the local authorities, forcing Saldanha da Gama to issue an ultimatum. If the Portuguese missionaries were not released and the pension paid by Keladi to the Portuguese factory suspended, Goa would attack Keladi as in the times of Viceroy Vasco Fernandes César de Menezes.

After the arrival of the count of Sandomil, the rajah of Sonda sent a fleet to Cape Rama with the aim of forcing all merchant ships to pay custom rights to the principedom. Sandomil informed Lisbon of ‘several complaints from the merchants of the Estado’

60 ACL, Série Azul, Cod.393 – Relação de todos os Sucessos que Houve no Tempo do Governo do Excelentíssimo Senhor Vasco Fernandes César de Menezes, Vice-Rei e Capitão Geral da Índia, fs. 39v-41v.
and of Sonda’s refusal to release a Portuguese ship which had been arrested for rejecting to pay duties. In 1736, Sandomil was forced to act against Sonda, after a complaint presented by a merchant based in the Provincia do Norte who refused to pay the taxes demanded by Sonda and a report from a Jesuit missionary who informed the viceroy that Sonda was breaching the vassalage treaty. The Padroado missions at Sonda, according to this report, were suffering several mistreatments (mal tratos) and forced to abandon their churches, in what was a clear violation of the treaty signed by the rajah with the Estado. Sandomil believed that Sonda was trying to impose a system of *corso* which aimed to make all trading activities of the Portuguese dependent on the princedom.\(^63\)

Faced with the aggressive behaviour of Sonda, Sandomil decided to raid the princedom forcing the rajah to request a cease-fire and to negotiate a new treaty.\(^64\)

**The European powers and the *cartaz*: the case of the arrest of the Hamedy**

The competition posed by the European companies to the *cartaz* system was a serious threat to the validity of the royal *ditado*, and a problem without a clear solution. Any attack on a ship sailing with a French, English or Dutch flag had the potential of damaging the neutrality adopted by the Portuguese Crown in Europe, as well as to breaking the alliance with Great Britain. When a ship owned by the Karwar factor was seized by a Portuguese armada, Bombay reminded Viceroy Francisco José de Sampaio e Castro of the consequences of the imposition of the *cartaz* on ships which sailed with a British flag. According to the Bombay Presidency, the EIC and the British Crown rejected the exclusivity of the Portuguese *cartaz* system in the Indian Ocean, since Britain was the only European power which could impose its will in the seas of India: ‘Your Excellency cannot ignore the authority of the British Crown in Europe, and particularly of His Majesty’s naval forces, which in the British Seas impose their law to the whole world, and do not accept any other [law] in other seas’. Castro was therefore advised ‘to reflect on the acceptance of Your Excellency’s actions in Great Britain’.\(^65\)

In order to avoid a direct confrontation with the European companies Castro’s predecessor, the count of Ericeira, instructed the *capitães de mar e guerra* to adopt a

\(^{63}\) HAG, MR 105, “Carta do Vice-Rei Conde Sandomil a Sua Magestade, 20/01/1733”, f. 53.

\(^{64}\) Ibid., f. 53v.

cautious approach when they met Asian ships which ‘use the flag of other nations from Europe, employing as well a captain or a pilot from the same nation to present the ship and its cargo as European’.\textsuperscript{66} If one Armada or a warship intercepted one of these ships, the captain should request ‘the list of the cargo, and if its written in Moorish or Gentile [Hindu] characters and not in any European language, you should arrest the ship and bring it to this city [Goa] to be trialled’.\textsuperscript{67} The need to offend the other Europeans led Sampaio e Castro in 1723 to send an armada to punish Sanjane for buying English and French flags to escape the obligation of using Portuguese cartazes. Lisbon’s reaction to success of the armada was ambiguous. Invited by the Overseas Council to present a parecer, the Procurador da Coroa suggested that João should instruct his ambassadors in Paris and London to present formal complaints on the interference of the French and the English companies on the Estado’s privileges. The Council recommended to João that he congratulate the Viceroy and the officers involved in this action for their ‘good services’, and remind them of the need to increase the Estado’s naval power. One of the councillors, António Roiz da Costa, stated that the diplomatic initiatives related to the actions of the European companies ‘had never produced any result’, and that the only way to face the competition from other European nations was to increase the number of ‘men of quality’ in Goa.\textsuperscript{68}

The arrest of the *Hamedy*, a Persian ship which sailed between Bandar-Kung, Surat, Mangalore and Mecca without a cartaz but under a French flag, was used by Goa to send a direct message to its European rivals. The ship was owned by a Persian merchant based in Bandar-Kung called Aga Mehdy, the son of Moula Amet, a Bandar-Kung merchant who during the tenure of Viceroy Count of Ericeira saw one of his ships seized for not possessing a Portuguese passport. According to the shocked anonymous writer of the *Noticias da India*, Mehdy refused to accept the offer of a cartaz by the Portuguese factor at Bandar-Kung on 18 February 1725, claiming that there was no need for a cartaz because ‘there were no Portuguese in this world’.\textsuperscript{69} Mehdy’s words indicate that most merchants were aware of the decreasing naval power of the Portuguese in the Persian Gulf and in the Indian Ocean. This reduced capacity to control Asian seas had led merchants like Mehdy to buy passports from other new naval powers, such as the English or the French, in the hope that they would offer a more

\begin{footnotes}
\item[66] HAG, Regimentos, 1430, “Regimento que se deo às Armadas, undated”, fs.46- 46v.
\item[67] Ibid., f. 46v.
\item[68] AHU, Cod. 213, fs. 167v-168.
\item[69] ACL, Série Vermelha, Cod. 547 - *Noticias da India desde a moçançã de 1723, até a de 1726*, fols. 120-120v.
\end{footnotes}
reliable protection to their ships. One of the methods used by Indian and Persian merchants who refused to use the cartaz was to sail with a European flag, since this made them able to take advantage of a tacit agreement between the European powers that no ships sailing under a European flag would be seized or inspected by European warships. In the case of the Hamedy, the captain of the ship was also a Frenchman called Ciprian Estors, in an attempt to hide the Persian origin of the ship.

Mehdy’s refusal to buy a cartaz and his alleged insult to the Portuguese made the Persian merchant an easily identified target for the Portuguese navy, who apparently decided to make him an example of what could happen to those who refused to follow the rules imposed by the Estado da Índia in Asian seas. Indeed, on 16 January 1725 the Portuguese factor at Surat, João Vaz, informed the interim governors that Goa should take immediate action against the French practices of selling passports and flags for ‘little money’ to Persian and Indian merchants in order to avoid the end of the cartaz system ‘in a short time’, and suggested that the General do Norte should be instructed to arrest the Hamedy since the ship carried a valuable cargo and did not possess the necessary means to face an attack from warships.70

A few days after leaving Bandar-Kung, the Hamedy was intercepted by a Portuguese fleet and its valuable cargo (7,000 rupees) was lost to the Portuguese Crown. According to the Notícias da India, ‘God had punished the pride of this Moor, making him a captive of those whom he did not suppose who still the Lords of the seas’. The inclusion of the arrest of the Hamedy in a journal dedicated to Goan events such as the Notícias da Índia suggests that the Portuguese authorities not only wanted to demonstrate to their Asian and European rivals that Portuguese warships still had the capacity to impose Goa’s rule, but also to a metropolitan audience. In fact, in 1724 the utility of the Portuguese presence in India was questioned by the Marquis of Abrantes, who presented to João V a project to sell the Estado da Índia to the Dutch VOC. Abrantes’s proposal caused some scandal. India was regarded as the jewel of the Portuguese Crown, and ‘the greatest theatre of the glories of the Portuguese Nation’.71

The Church was particularly concerned with the possible sale of Goa to the Dutch, and a group of Goan Jesuits wrote a ‘Letter from St. Francis Xavier written from the Other World to the King’, a pamphlet which aimed to pressure João V into rejecting

70 AHU, INDIA, MAÇO 156, Doc. 29 Abril 1725 - “Aos Illm. Snore Gouernadores da India por S. Magestade Portuguesa”, f. 8v.
71 AHU, Cod. 213, f. 91.
Abrantes’s proposal, claiming that to sell India to a Protestant rival would be a treason to the Catholic faith. The circulation of news such as the seizure of ships of important Asian merchants allowed the supporters of the continuity of the Estado to contradict the widespread perception of Portuguese decline in India, as well as to reinforce the image of the Crown as a strong imperial power before its own subjects.

The arrest of the Hamedy was also an attempt to dissuade other European powers from establishing an alternative to the cartaz system, as well as message that the Estado was ready to break the tacit agreement of respecting all ships with European flags if they persisted in competing with the cartaz. As the Capitão-mor of the Armada do Norte, Francisco de Mello reminded the governors on 3 March 1725, all the European powers established in India were awaiting Goa’s decision to punish the Hamedy ‘to know if they could do the same [as the French]’. Mello also accused the Captain of Daman of benefiting from the French passports, and that despite the seizure of the Persian ship, the French were still selling passports to local merchants, which made the punishment of the Hamedy even more urgent.

The Compagnie Française was aware of the implications of the seizure of the Hamedy, and on 8 February 1725 wrote to the Estado’s interim governors a letter demanding the return of the ship and her cargo. The directors accused the Captaincy of Diu of impeding the French crew from communicating with the Company. The directors also demanded that in the future, the Estado should respect the union between Paris and Lisbon, by instructing its navy not to capture or search any ship sailing with a French flag. On 14 February, the directors wrote another letter requesting a ‘satisfaction for the insult to our Pavilion’. Faced with the French demands, the interim governors adopted a surly position and informed Pondicherry that their decision was irrevocable since the Hamedy had attacked a ‘point of sovereignty of His Portuguese Majesty’. However, as a gesture of goodwill towards Pondicherry, the governors asked Goa’s High Court to analyse the complaints presented by the Compagnie, suggesting that the capture of the Hamedy could only be solved through a rigorous inquiry ‘under the terms of the law’. The interim governors also ensured that the Royal Judge would be fair, and
mentioned that the absence of news from Estor and the pilot was probably related to the sailing conditions in Diu, or with a delay of the French ships which used the Portuguese port.76

Confronted with the governors’ intransigence, the French Company decided to send to Goa a special envoy, Louis de Saint Paul, to present a formal protest to the interim government and negotiate the release of the ship. On 10 March 1725, the French envoys presented his formal complaint stating that ‘no reason is enough to insult a flag in peace time, because this is a sacred respect between all nations’, and reminded the governors that the *Hamedy* was sailing after a commission granted by the *Compagnie Française*, which obliged all European nations to treat this ship as if she were sailing in European waters.77 Another argument used by Saint Paul was that despite the information that the Estado had signed with ‘the Moors a treaty which established that this people was obliged to use your passports [cartazes] when they put their ships into the sea’, Goa still did not had the right to seize Moorish ships with a French commission, since this commission granted the French nationality to the ship for a brief period. Saint Paul also contested the seizure of the cargo, stating that the 200 or 300 rupees paid for a *cartaz* did not gave to the Estado the right to confiscate goods of a superior value78, and complained that the *Hamedy* carried several letters from Paris destined to the French consuls in Persia which were not returned to the FC ‘against the rules of the gentes’.79

Saint Paul’s arguments were replied to the new Viceroy, João Saldanha da Gama, who claimed that the Portuguese right to capture non-European ships sailing without *cartazes* was based on the antiquity of the system as well as on the Portuguese Crown’s ‘ancient possession’ of the Indian Ocean. For the Viceroy, the fact that Portugal was the first ‘to open these seas’ made the French claims ‘harmful to the rights and possession that only My Lord the King is allowed to possess’.80 According to the Viceroy, the Portuguese possession of the Indian Ocean was proved by the fact that the owners of the *Hamedy* were not present at the trial held by the Goan Royal Court ‘to defend their cause’, as well as by the refusal of the FC’s envoy to defend the

---

76 AHU, INDIA, MAÇO 156, Doc. 29 Abril 1725 “Carta que escreveu aos Snores Gouve‘es Arcebispo Primas, Dom Christovão de Mello, e Cristovão Luís de André”, f. 5.
77 AHU, INDIA, MAÇO 156, Doc. 29 Abril 1725 - “Aos Illm snores Gouernadores da India por S. Magestade Portuguesa”, f. 5v.
78 Ibid., f. 5v-6.
79 Ibid., f. 7.
80 Ibid., f. 7.
Company’s claims before the Royal Judge. Saldanha da Gama accused the French of trying to ‘disturb the peace between the powers of Europe, using such actions to trouble the most ancient possession of this Estado which is corroborated, and established not only by the Law of its Sovereign, and utility of his respect, and Custom Houses, but by the consent of the other European Lords, without any alteration whatsoever’.  

Before Goa’s rejection of all French demands, the Compagnie Française seemed to have tried to lobby the Mughal emperor to launch an attack against Daman, as the Portuguese factor at Surat reported to the interim governors on 15 February 1725.

Besides this attempt to introduce a local power in this dispute, the directors had successfully appealed to the intervention of the French Crown. On 1 October 1726, Jacques de Montagnac, the French ambassador at Lisbon, presented to the Secretary of State a requerimento which asked for the release of the ship and the return of her cargo. De Montagnac claimed that the French Crown and its ships had enjoyed since ‘time immemorial the right to freely sail in those seas under its flag and passport’, and refused to accept the bull signed by Pope Alexander VII which divided the world in Portuguese and Spanish areas, defending the freedom of the seas. De Montagnac reminded the Secretary of State that until the seizure of the Hamedy all ships sailing with French flags and passports were never inspected or stopped by Portuguese warships. The requerimento was analysed by the Overseas Council which asked Viceroy Saldanha da Gama to present a report on the seizure of the ship. According to the Viceroy, Louis de Saint Paul was invited to present his case before Goa’s High Court while the Hamedy was on trial, but he refused Saldanha da Gama’s invitation, preferring to wait for the results of De Montagnac’s efforts in Lisbon. For the councillors, the King should reject the requerimento presented by the French ambassador due to its implications for the future of the cartaz system. Indeed, the councillors argued that a positive answer of João V to the French claims would encourage other European powers to establish their own passport systems.

---

81 AHU, INDIA, MAÇO 156, Doc. 29 Abril 1725 - “Aos Illm” Snore Gournadores da India por S. Magestadte Portuguesa”, f. 7v.
82 AHU, INDIA, MAÇO 156, Doc. 29 Abril 1725 - “Copia dos Capitulos da Carta que João Gomes Phebos escreveo aos Goun” do Estado da India aos 15 de Fevereiro de 1725”, f.10
83 AHU, INDIA, MAÇO 156, Doc. 29 Abril 1725, “Diz Jacques de Montagnac Consul geral da nação Franceza nesta Corte”, f. 3.
84 Ibid., f. 3v.
86 Ibid., fs.1-1v.
Court to seize the *Hamedy* and confiscate her cargo. According to the *Procurador* the Goan judges were right since it was known that the French had always recognised the *cartaz* system and it was proven in court that the *Hamedy* was using the French flag as a cover for Aga Mehdy’s smuggling activities in the Indian Ocean.\(^{87}\) Following the *Procurador*, the Council stressed its argument that João should reject the French request, reminding the King that the *cartaz* was the ‘greatest right and privilege that we have in the seas of the Estado da Índia, and it could be considered as the greatest [privilege] of the Crown of Portugal’. \(^{88}\)

It has not been possible to find more sources related to the *Hamedy* affair. Despite not knowing João V’s final decision, the intransigence of the Estado da Índia and the Overseas Council regarding the supposed Portuguese privileges in the Indian Ocean reveals that the *cartaz* was regarded by the Portuguese authorities as an important political instrument that allowed the Estado to interfere in the economic life of the region and disturb the activities of its European rivals. Indeed, the efforts made towards the conservation and enforcement of the *cartaz* system had in mind the preservation of Goa’s political weight during a time of profound transformations in the Indian political theatre. To renounce the *cartaz* was therefore to accept a political status which collided with the narrative of the Portuguese presence in India, and above all with the desired image of the Portuguese monarchs.

**Concluding Remarks**

During the 1740s, the *cartaz* enjoyed its last period of influence in the Indian Ocean. Portugal’s neutrality during the War of the Austrian Succession (1740-1748) made the *cartaz* more attractive to Asian merchants, since it allow them to operate freely and without the restrictions imposed by the French and the British.\(^{89}\) Indeed, one of the reasons for the survival of the *cartaz* system in the first half of the eighteenth century was the need felt by several Asian merchants to have a viable alternative to English, French and Dutch passports. The superior naval power enjoyed by the two European companies allowed them to control the main trading routes of the Indian Ocean, especially in the Gulf of Cambay. For several merchants who wished to escape to a

---

\(^{87}\) Ibid., f. 1v.

\(^{88}\) *AHU, INDIA, MAÇO 156, Doc. 29 Abril 1725 – “O VRey da India João Saldanha da Gama da conta a VMagº por este Consº em carta de 16 de Janeyro deste prezente anno”, f.1v..

\(^{89}\) João Teles da Cunha, “Economia e Finanças”, p. 263.
scenario of a monopoly of the European companies, the Portuguese *cartaz* became a reliable alternative.\(^{90}\)

For the Joanine Estado da India, the *cartaz* was still a valid ‘political and economic weapon’\(^{91}\), to borrow João Teles da Cunha’s expression, which simultaneously supported the Portuguese sovereignty claims over the Indian Ocean and justified the Estado’s interference and control of the local maritime trade. Lisbon and Goa believed that the *cartaz* should be used to reinforce and protect the Estado’s position in the local political scene, since it provided a justification for the Portuguese armadas to intercept the main trading routes in the Persian Gulf and the West Indian Coast. Examples of this strategy are the treaties signed with Calicut and Keladi, which allowed the Estado to claim the right to maintain surveillance of the Malabar Coast to verify that all clauses were being respected. The presence of the so-called *Armada do Sul* not only enforced the *cartaz* system in the region, as it pressured the Zamorin and the Nayka to supply Goa with spices and rice.

The efforts made by the Joanine viceroy to enforce and revitalise the system was a reflection of the importance of the *cartaz* as an expression of sovereignty which supported the Estado’s claims to enjoy a privileged position in the region’s hierarchy of powers. However, this demonstration of Portuguese superiority has dependent on the Estado’s naval power. As the *Noticias da India* explained to its readers, the *cartaz* was based on ‘the ancient and good maxim that the conservation of the Estado da India relies on its armadas which sail during the summer the seas [of India]’.\(^{92}\) The naval power of the European companies and the aggressive behavior of local potentates such as the Sidi and the Angrias created a scenario which forced the Estado to improve its naval capacity. However, the lack of funds of the Goan treasury and Lisbon’s difficulties in reinforcing the military and naval apparatus of the Estado contributed to a gradual decline of the influence and utility of the *cartaz*, putting an end to the Portuguese ambitions of controlling the seas of India. After João V’s reign, the *cartaz* faced a serious crisis. With the emergence of British power in India after Plassey, and the transformation of the Estado da Índia from an imperial actor to a secondary figure in the evolution of the subcontinent’s political scene, the *cartaz* system became an anachronism. In 16 January 1774, Joseph I signed an edict which ended the *cartaz*

---

\(^{90}\) Ibid., p. 257.

\(^{91}\) Ibid., p. 255.

\(^{92}\) BNP, Cod. 465, *Noticias da Índia*, f. 99v.
system. However, during the reign of Joseph’s daughter, Maria I, the cartaz was revived between 1777 and 1816.\textsuperscript{93}

\begin{flushright}
\footnotesize
\textsuperscript{93} João Teles da Cunha, “Economia e Finanças”, p. 271.
\end{flushright}
7. Mombasa: A failed project to materialise the royal dictado

Introduction

The Swahili Coast was regarded as one possible solution to the problems faced by the Estado da Índia in the subcontinent. At the beginning of the seventeenth century almost all Swahili rulers were vassals or tributary princes of the Portuguese Crown. This privileged position of the Estado da Índia in East Africa, compared with its European rivals who were struggling to establish a formal presence in the region, led the Overseas Council to plan a reorganisation of the Portuguese empire in the Indian Ocean. Mozambique and Mombasa were considered to be two strategic points which Goa could use to revitalise its commercial activities by becoming the subcontinent’s gateways to East African in goods such as slaves, ivory, diamonds and gold. The Portuguese experience in Mozambique was also associated with the search for the silver and gold mines of Monomotapa (Mutapa). This kind of African Eldorado inspired the Overseas Council to draw several unsuccessful projects for the colonisation of modern-day Zimbabwe – most settlers succumbed to the so-called febres malignas (bad fevers). Besides offering new commercial prospects to the Estado, Mombasa was regarded as a strategic point in the Indian Ocean which would allow the Portuguese to influence the military and economic activities of the West Indian Ocean.

The control of the Swahili coast was also vital to restrain the growing power and influence of one of Goa’s main rivals in the West Indian Ocean – the Omani. Since the second half of the seventeenth century, Oman had been able to match the Portuguese naval power in the Persian Gulf and along the Western Indian Ocean. In 1650 the Omani conquered Muscat and in 1660 Mombasa was blockaded and besieged by an Omani expeditionary force. Goa was not capable of reacting against the Omani challenge with efficiency. On 12 December 1698 Mombasa finally fell at the hands of the Omani, and all the Swahili vassals of the Estado became tributaries of the Imam of Muscat. The recapture of Mombasa became almost an obsession to Goa and Lisbon, which was encouraged by several rumours mentioning the unpopularity of the Omani

along the Swahili Coast and the readiness of Swahili rulers to support the return of the Portuguese.

A problem of information

After João V’s accession to the throne in 1707, the Overseas Council made several plans to recapture Mombasa. On 23 February 1707, João asked Viceroy Caetano de Mello de Castro to report to Lisbon all the contacts made by the Estado with the chieftains and rulers of the Swahili Coast regarding the re-conquest of Mombasa. The King reminded the Viceroy that the return of the Swahili port to the Portuguese Crown was ‘a serious matter, with so many important consequences to the Estado’.  

However, the distance between Goa and the Swahili Coast was a serious obstacle which impeded the Overseas Council and the Viceroy from obtaining reliable intelligence sources which would support the elaboration of a detailed project for the recapture of the former Portuguese conquista. Most of the intelligence collected by the Portuguese was provided by slaves, merchants or travellers. One of the most reliable informers of the Portuguese during D. Rodrigo da Costa’s tenure was a ‘black woman who had been imprisoned inside the [Mombasa] fortress, and for having some liberty escaped’. This woman seemed to have been able to contact with some regularity other inmates and inhabitants, offering the Portuguese authorities in Mozambique a detailed picture of the state of Mombasa. Most of the informers, however, were far from being trustworthy. Merchants and chieftains, for example, often changed their allegiance according to their commercial and political interests, or created rumours which could please the Portuguese authorities in the hope of receiving a reward. D. Rodrigo, for example, alerted João V to the fact that most of the intelligence gathered by the governors of Mozambique was inaccurate or simply false. An example of the lack of reliability of the information received by the Portuguese authorities consists in the two reports sent by the governor of Mozambique, Francisco de Mello de Souza, and one Friar Manoel to Goa. Based on news brought by ‘kaffirs of Kilwa’, the governor indicated that Mombasa was still ‘in the same state as when he left’ and that the Queen of Zanzibar, before her death, had given instructions to one of her daughters to keep a

---

4 Historical Archives of Goa (HAG), Livro das Monções do Reino (MR) 71, “Carta de Sua Magestade para o Vice-Rei Caetano de Mello de Castro, 23/02/1707”, f. 125.
5 Ibid., f. 311.
6 HAG, MR 75 “Carta do Vice-Rei D. Rodrigo da Costa a Sua Magestade, 29/11/1709”, f. 50.
letter which should be ‘presented to the Portuguese when they return to the island’. The prospect of Zanzibar’s support was shaken by Friar Manoel’s report which stated that Mombasa, Zanzibar, Pemba, Anchole, and Kilwa supported the Omani presence. Only the Muslim ruler of Tanga, Moenhe Chamê, was in open conflict with the Omanis, after declaring that ‘he would only obey the Portuguese’. Following Tanga’s resistance to the Omani presence, Friar Manoel believed that the obedience of the other rulers to the Iman of Muscat was motivated by the ‘lack of Portuguese’, and if Goa decided to invade the region all Swahili rulers ‘would rebel against the Arabian enemy’. Besides the problems of reliability of the informers, the practices of sigilo (secrecy) followed by some viceroys and their successors made Lisbon unaware of any contacts established by Goa and the Swahili rulers. On 21 November 1709, Viceroy D. Rodrigo da Costa complained that all the correspondence of his predecessor related to Mombasa had disappeared from the Estado’s archives.

An important element in the Portuguese attempts to recapture Mombasa was the Prince of Ampaze, Banadao Banaxeque (Bwana Daud bin Bwana Sheik). After the Omani conquest of the city, Banadao decided to live in exile in Mozambique and Goa, where he often offered his services to the Portuguese authorities. All viceroys considered him to be loyal, and his services were appreciated by Lisbon. In a letter to Viceroy D. Rodrigo da Costa dated 23 January 1708, João V expressed the Crown’s concerns regarding the ‘serious business’ (negocio grave) of Mombasa and instructed the Viceroy to ‘encourage’ (mover o animo) Banadao to visit the surrounding areas of Mombasa, as well as other territories controlled by the Omani, in order to collect new intelligence data. Banadao’s good services, however, were often disturbed by the Estado’s lack of funds. On 18 November 1709 D. Rodrigo complained to the Overseas Council Lisbon that the Estado was unable to provide to Banadao the necessary means for his livelihood. Despite the financial problems, Banadao was an active element of the Estado’s espionage, recruiting new spies, contacting local rulers and collecting himself more information in areas controlled by the Omanis.

The governors of Mozambique also had an important role in the plans for the recapture of Mombasa, although the information which reached Mozambique Island

---

7 HAG, MR 74A, “Carta de Francisco Mello e Sousa ao Vice-Rei D. Rodrigo da Costa, 30/06/1709”, f. 268v.
8 HAG, MR 74A, “Carta de Frei Manoel de Santo Alberto ao Vice-Rei D. Rodrigo da Costa, 18/05/1709”, f. 270.
9 Ibid., f. 270.
11 HAG, MR 72, “Carta de Sua Magestade ao Vice-Rei D. Rodrigo da Costa, 23/01/1708”, f. 155
12 Ibid., f.156
was often based on rumours which could not be verified. Governor Francisco de Mello de Souza and his successors were often instructed to ‘acquire all news regarding Mombasa’. The proximity between the Portuguese colony and the Swahili port encouraged several governors to elaborate proposals for an expedition based on the information collected by missionaries, spies and local merchants who traded with the Omani.

**Preparing the Restoration of Mombasa**

In spite of the doubts concerning the veracity of most intelligent reports, Goa and Lisbon were surprised by the number of informers who mentioned the unpopularity of the Omanis in the region, and the lack of improvement works in Mombasa. Since 1705, Goa had been receiving news of the unpopularity of the Omanis along the Swahili Coast. These reports stated that the Omanis had impeded the freedom of trade and were imposing heavy taxes, and that some islands and cities were willing to support the return of the Portuguese, who were considered less violent and allowed a greater freedom of trade. These encouraging rumours led Caetano de Mello de Castro to organise an armada to recapture Mombasa in the last stages of his tenure, but the Viceroy was forced to delay the expedition due to the lack of ships in Mozambique. Mello de Castro’s successor, D. Rodrigo da Costa was also encouraged to organise an expedition to Mombasa after a report presented on 30 December 1708 by the governor of Mozambique which mentioned that Friar Manoel Alberto had been informed by a *cafre* who had lived in Mombasa for two years that the Omani garrison was small and that the fortress had not been repaired since the Omanis conquered the city. This information led the Viceroy to organise a new expedition. D. Rodrigo instructed the Portuguese authorities at Mozambique to establish contacts with the Queen of Zanzibar and other Swahili rulers regarding a rebellion against the Omani, which would be supported by a Portuguese armada. However, the poor state of the Estado’s finances and army forced the Viceroy to slow down the preparations, and pressure the Overseas Council to send the necessary means to recapture Mombasa. On 21 November 1709, D.

---

15 HAG, MR 73, “Sobre os particulares da Fortaleza de Mombaça, e o estado em que ella se acha, 28-30/12/1708”, f. 48v.
16 Ibid., f. 272.
Rodrigo confessed to the Overseas Council that if João V decided to send the necessary ‘men and funds (gentes e cabedais), he would personally led the expedition." One year later, in November 1710, D. Rodrigo complained again that the ‘lack of funds’ (falta de cabedales) was impeding him acquiring the roupas (clothes) which were needed ‘to support the men who would serve the armada, and to facilitate and acquire the friendship of the Princes and chieftains of that coast’. Another obstacle was a severe monsoon which ‘even the oldest men have never seen before’, and impeded the production of new ammunitions, forcing the armada to delay its departure. D. Rodrigo hoped to send the warships to Mombasa immediately after the monsoon season in order to anticipate the arrival of possible Omani reinforcements. However, Goa was confronted with new priorities. The civil war at Sawantvandi, and the movements of the Maratha armies, forced the Viceroy to keep most of the army in the Estado’s borders, which meant that only a small force would be sent to Mombasa.

Despite D. Rodrigo’s intention to relegate Mombasa to the bottom of Goa’s priorities, the Overseas Council’s plans to recapture the Swahili port received a new impetus on 12 December 1710, when D. Rodrigo informed Lisbon that one of Banadao’s servants, Muenha Juma, met a Moor called Sabuti who had gave him important news. According to this Moor, who was serving the Omani, the Mombasa garrison counted fifty men, another fifty Omani soldiers were stationed at Kilwa and Zanzibar, while the Pemba garrison counted with thirty men. Sabuti also informed Juma that the Omani garrison was led by Made Rasul who was living at the factor’s houses, and that the 50 soldiers were lodged in several houses at Padre Juliano Street. The fortress was not repaired by the Omani and was already ‘full of weeds’ (cheya de mato) and guarded by only five men. Mombasa’s streets were also showing signs of abandonment and most of them, according to Sabutu, were already ‘covered with bushes’. The relation between the Omani and the local tribes was tense. Sabuti mentioned several ‘clashes’ (piques) between the garrison and Mamolaya, the son of Mamozaonga, one of the main tribal leaders. Most of these skirmishes were due to disagreements in commercial transactions. One of the causes for the tensions was the ban imposed by the Omani authorities to all commercial contacts between the local

---

17 Ibid., f. 272.
18 HAG, MR 75, “Carta do Vice-Rei D. Rodrigo da Costa a Sua Magestade, 12/12/1710”, f. 179.
19 Ibid., fs. 179-179v.
20 Ibid., f. 180
21 Ibid., f. 180.
tribes and the Portuguese. Apparently the tribes were not satisfied with the offers made by the Omani for the ivory they sold. The tensions between the tribes and the Omani were behind the emergence of pro-Portuguese feelings which, according to Sabuti, were openly shown. The King of Pate, after the incident involving Mamolaya, had declared to Mamozaonga that he would be the first ruler to support a Portuguese invasion.\textsuperscript{22} Sabuti also told Muenha that in Zanzibar the son of the queen had been arrested for trying to send a letter to Mozambique, and that the inhabitants of Mombasa, Ampaze, Melinde and Zanzibar were ready to expel the Omani. After Banadao’s report, the governor of Mozambique sent three \textit{Malemos} (pilots) to Goa to present to D. Rodrigo more details of Mombasa in order to prepare a new campaign to recapture the city.\textsuperscript{23}

In the face of these encouraging reports, on 4 September 1713 João V asked D. Rodrigo’s successor, Vasco Fernandes César de Menezes, to collect more information on the state of Mombasa and the military power of the Omani ‘on land and sea’.\textsuperscript{24} On 10 January 1715, Menezes informed Lisbon that the reports obtained by the Portuguese informers along the Swahili coast mentioned that the Omani had still not made any improvement works on the Mombasa fortress, and that most of the artillery was shipped to Muscat. Due to the lack of conditions of the fortress, and continuous health problems, the Omani garrison only had 300 men. According to the Viceroy, the Omani had more men in Pate and Zanzibar who could be rapidly sent to Mombasa in case of an attack.\textsuperscript{25}

Despite the debilities faced by Muscat on the Swahili Coast, in 1717 an Omani fleet attacked Fort Agoada. The short distance between Agoada and Goa (15 km) not only exposed the fragilities of the Estado’s defences, but showed that the Omanis still enjoyed a considerable naval power. Viceroy César de Menezes claimed that the combat ended with a ‘glorious’ victory for the Portuguese, but Lisbon believed that the failure of the Omani to destroy one the main forts of Goa was more a ‘miracle’ (the Omanis were forced to retreated due to a heavy storm) and a sign of the ‘great weakness’ of Goa’s military and naval forces. Moreover, the fact that the Omanis could attack without obstacles a distance only 15 km from Goa exposed the deficiencies of the Estado’s defence system.\textsuperscript{26}

\textsuperscript{22} HAG, MR 75, “Carta do Vice-Rei D. Rodrigo da Costa a Sua Magestade, 12/12/1710”, f. 180v.
\textsuperscript{23} Ibid., fs. 184-184v
\textsuperscript{24} HAG, MR 80, “Carta de Sua Magestade ao Vice-Rei Vasco Fernandes César de Menezes, 4/09/1713”, f. 47
\textsuperscript{25} HAG, MR 80, “Carta do Vice-Rei Vasco Fernandes César de Menezes a Sua Magestade, 10/01/1715”, f. 48.
\textsuperscript{26} AHU, Cod. 213, f.91.
Meanwhile, Lisbon’s dreams of recapturing Mombasa and building an empire in ‘Oriental Africa’ were encouraged by João Baptista, a former sailor and gunman who was imprisoned by the Omanis for three years. After presenting a requerimento (petition) requesting an allowance for him and his ‘orphan brothers and widow mother’, Baptista was called by the Overseas Council to discuss the state of Mombasa. The sailor claimed that after his escape from Oman, he had met Viceroy César de Menezes and presented ‘important accounts to the preservation of the Estado’. The councillors and the King were curious about Baptista’s alleged knowledge of the ‘things of Mombasa’ (couzas de Mombasa). Indeed, the Overseas Council did not possess any detailed information about the state of Mombasa, Omani military power and the evolution of the political scene in Muscat. According to the so-called ‘captive of Muscat’, the Portuguese could easily conquer the city. Muscat had not seen infrastructural improvements since the Portuguese had been expelled, and Baptista believed that an armada would not face any obstacles in destroying all the ships anchored at Muscat, if Goa or Lisbon decided to allow a night-time attack between July and August, the months when the city ‘had few people to help the inhabitants to escape to the hinterland’. Baptista had also been at Mombasa. The captive claimed that he was invited by the Omani to be the condestável of the fortress, since the Omani authorities believed that the Portuguese sailor was a French soldier. Baptista did not mention why he had refused the post, or if he had served the Omani in Mombasa in other functions. However, he made a detailed account of the fortress. According to Baptista, the fortress had 18 or 20 cannons, and was guarded by 70 or 80 men who were lodged outside the fortress’s walls due to the poor conditions of most buildings. The captive mentioned that the fortress was not improved after the Omani conquest of Mombasa, and that the surrounding moats were covered with rubbish (entulho). These encouraging signs were reinforced by the claims that the local tribes (negros moradores) ‘desire very much the recapture of Mombasa because of the oppression imposed by the Arabians’. Baptista believed that only two frigates were enough to conquer the city if they landed at Guilidine, where the Omani artillery was unable to hit the Portuguese soldiers.

28 Ibid., f.285.
29 Ibid., f.285.
30 Ibid., f. 285.
31 Ibid., f. 285.
Baptista’s account was regarded as ‘very useful’. On 9 March 1718 the Viceroy Count of Ericeira was instructed by João V to analyse with the Conselho do Estado the account made by Baptista, who was meanwhile rewarded by João and the Overseas Council with a pension of 40,000 cruzados. The Viceroy was reminded that the return of Mombasa to the Portuguese Crown should be considered as one of the priorities of the Estado da Índia’s foreign and military policy, since the Omani control of the region was allowing the Sultanate to obtain ‘large profits by trading ivory, amber and other goods and impoverishing our trade, making themselves more rich and powerful, and putting Mozambique at risk due to their proximity’. The Viceroy was therefore instructed to call the Conselho do Estado and study the possibility of recovering Mombasa, and report the councillor’s opinions. Ericeira replied on 8 January 1719. His report informed João that he had not met the councillors ‘because it is most certain that it would be impossible to keep this in secrecy’. Not only were the councillors indiscreet in matters of state, but they did not possess the necessary knowledge and experience to prepare and discuss a military campaign against the Omani.

Baptista’s account and the new instructions from Lisbon coincided with a moment when the Omani supremacy was shaken by a civil war and several defeats in the Indian Ocean at the hands of the Portuguese. These events led Ericeira to secretly plan an expedition to recapture Mombasa. The Viceroy wanted ‘to take advantage of the diversion made by our armada in Persia against the Arabians’. An army of 300 men was prepared under the leadership of D. João Fernandes de Almeida, and a group of ‘Moorish inhabitants of Daman’ was commissioned to work as pilots of the conquering fleet. The Viceroy was also counting on Persia’s support under the treaty of alliance signed in 1718. At the same time, the Viceroy was exploring the possibility of opening negotiations with the Omanis to recover Mombasa. On 6 November 1719, Ericeira wrote to Father José Pereira, a Portuguese missionary based in Sonda, to thank him for his contribution to the Luso-Omani peace negotiations and to Ericeira’s ‘personal glory’ if the negotiation were successful. The Viceroy instructed the clergyman to approach the Imam of Muscat ‘to give us back Mombasa’. If the answer was negative, Father Pereira should state that Goa wished to concede to the Omani ‘some utilities and

33 HAG, MR 84B, “Carta do Vice-Rei Conde da Ericeira a Sua Magestade, 8/01/1719”, f. 286.
34 Ibid., f. 286.
35 Biblioteca Nacional de Portugal (BNP), Cod. 1445, Instruccion que deixou o Conde da Ericeira Dom Luis de Menezes Vice Rey e Capitam General da India a Francisco Joze de Sampayo e Castro que lhe foy succeder no dito emprego no anno de 1721, f. 11.
privileges to make this devolution more honourable’. Ericeira was ready to give free *cartazes* to all Omani merchant ships, to end Goa’s ban on Omani horses, and to sign with the Imam an ‘offensive and defensive alliance’ which would oblige the Estado da Índia to aid Oman and to not help Persia in the event of war between Muscat and Isfahan. However, Ericeira’s diplomatic approach failed before Oman’s political instability. Meanwhile, the monsoon and the arrival of the *Armada do Estreito* in December forced Ericeira to cancel the expedition to Mombasa. Ericeira’s plans were also affected by disease and the destruction of the frigate which would transport the troops. Despite the failure to organise an expedition, in his instructions to his successor, Francisco José de Sampaio e Castro, Ericeira expressed his personal belief that the Swahili rulers and population would support a Portuguese presence in the region ‘because of the oppression made by the Arabians’. The Viceroy also predicted that after the conquest of Mombasa the Estado would be able to control the ivory, amber and turtle trade in the Indian Ocean. Besides, Ericeira believed that the conquest of Mombasa would make the establishment a network of factories along the Swahili coast ‘inevitable’, securing a solid presence of the Portuguese Crown in the region.

The Restoration of Mombasa

Despite the setbacks of Ericeira’s tenure, the Estado da Índia continued to establish contacts with important Swahili political actors. On 5 January 1723, Sampaio e Castro informed João V that the factor of Bandar-Kung had obtained new intelligences which indicated that the ‘pressure on the Arabians is becoming more intensive’. It was rumoured that one of the factions would use Mombasa as a base. According to the factor, ‘there had been such carnage throughout all Arabian land that it is supposed that there is [a ration of] only one man for a hundred women’. According to Castro, Goa needed to act immediately. The report sent by the factor mentioned the rumour that if the faction supported by the Mombasa garrison was defeated in the Omani civil war,
most of its members would ‘ship their families and possessions and settle in Mombasa’. Castro feared that the presence of the ‘rebel Imam’ would make the recapture of Mombasa impossible and ‘bring terrible consequences to Mozambique and its Coast’.\(^{42}\) The Viceroy hoped to prepare an expedition against the Omani after the conclusions of the negotiations with the EIC on the borders between the Estado and Bombay. Indeed, Castro informed the Overseas Council that he was making plans to collect more funds and recruit men to organize an armada to Persia. It was believed that this armada would be able to receive the pensions owed by the Persian shah to the Portuguese Crown. The money collected in Persia and the reinforcements (socorros) sent by Lisbon would then be used in a new expedition led by the Viceroy himself against the Omani garrison at Mombasa.\(^ {43}\) Indeed, to stress the importance of Mombasa for the Estado, Castro had sent to Lisbon Friar João de Christo to pressure the Overseas Council to approve a reinforcement of 1,000 soldiers and 60 gunners.\(^ {44}\) Castro’s premature death, however, delayed again the recapture of Mombasa.

On 10 January 1724, the interim governors who replaced Castro as the head of the Estado da Índia reported to João V more promising signs regarding Mombasa and Muscat. According to the information obtained by the factor of Bandar-Kung, João Gomes Febos, the Omani civil war was already spread across all ‘Arabia Felix’, and the Mombasa garrison supported the rebel Imam. The renegade status of Mombasa suggested that if the Estado decided to attack Mombasa, Muscat would probably not send reinforcements to expel the Portuguese troops. Banadao Banaxaque, who was also closely following the evolution of the civil war, also presented a report suggesting that Mombasa could be easily recaptured with an army of 4,000 men. The success of this expedition, however, was dependent on the occupation of the surrounding islands (ilhas vizinhas) to cut the supplies of food and weapons.\(^ {45}\)

The prospect of recapturing Mombasa moved even closer when an unnamed Omani officer proposed to the Goan interim government to return Mombasa in exchange for a considerable bribe. Before presenting any sum to the officer, the governors asked one of their ‘Melidian’ collaborators, Miunha Mamede Asani Guipane, to evaluate how the Portuguese would be received by the local populations and leaders. Guipane claimed that the inhabitants of Mombasa and the ilhas vizinhas would favour

\(^{42}\) Ibid., f. 189.
\(^{43}\) Ibid., f. 189.
\(^{44}\) Ibid., fs. 189-190.
\(^{45}\) HAG, MR 89B, “Carta dos Governadores Interinos a Sua Magestade, 10/01/1724”, f. 450v.
the return of the Portuguese, mentioning that ‘the people of the coast were scandalised by the Arabians’ behaviour, who are not loved, and the people desire in public their expulsion’.46 Another promising sign was the contact established by the Portuguese factor of Mangalore, Matias Rodrigues Chaves, with two Arabians who wanted to discuss with him ‘some businesses of convenience to the Estado’ related with Mombasa. One of the men was a Pate nobleman called Mānni Hanid Hasan-bin-Kibai. Described by Boxer as ‘an ambitious, though well-connected and able adventurer’, bin-Kibai had been trying since 1724 to bring the Portuguese back to the region in hope of obtaining a powerful position as a reward for his services to the Portuguese Crown.47 To attract the Portuguese authorities, bin-Kibai, guaranteed that Fort Jesus was in a desolate state and that only one warship would be enough to expel the Omani garrison.48

During the negotiations with bin-Kibai, Viceroy João Saldanha Gama was encouraged by a letter from King Hybrahimo of Kilwa encouraging the invasion of Mombasa stating that ‘God is offering you the Restoration of Mombasa, because this fortress has not been reinforced in the last years with men and roupas, being these things the soul of war on this coast, not mentioning the great troubles affecting Muscat due to the different factions. 49 Hybrahimo mentioned that the different Omani factions were already fighting in different areas of the Swahili Coast ‘with each other and with the rulers of this Coast, including the Prince of Pate’.50 Kilwa claimed to have been a loyal and useful ally of the Portuguese, ‘not only during the time when the fortress of Mombasa was dominated by the Crown of Portugal, but also after being defeated by the enemy’.51 Hybrahimo drew attention to his ‘good procedure’ (bom procedimento), when he allowed the establishment in his kingdom of all Portuguese who had been expelled from Mombasa, an action which the King regarded as the ‘obligation of a loyal vassal’.52

Hybrahimo mentioned that he had collected intelligence data for the Estado during the tenure of D. Rodrigo da Costa, after being contacted by Moenha Juma, one of Banadao’s agents. After this contact, the King wrote a report to Goa, and was again contacted by the administrator of Mozambique Island, Father João de Menezes via

46 Ibid., f. 451v.
49 HAG, MR 94B, “Carta de El-Rey de Quíloa ao Vice-Rei João Saldanha da Gama, 25/05/1726”, f. 632.
50 Ibid., f. 632.
51 Ibid., f. 632.
52 Ibid., f. 632.
another Moor, Vollay Maomed, who was sent by Father Menezes as an ambassador to Kilwa to present a gift to Hybrahimo which was paid by Father João.\textsuperscript{53} The Omanis, according to Hybrahimo, were aware of his contacts with the Estado and had attacked the island. Despite defeating the Omani troops, Hybrahimo decided to retreat to Mozambique fearing a new wave of Omani attacks.\textsuperscript{54}

### The recapture of Mombasa

In 1727 the Mombasa faction which opposed to the ruler of Muscat attacked Zanzibar. After a five-month siege, the Omanis of Zanzibar surrendered and were allowed to return to Muscat. However, they went to Pate in the hope of receiving support from the local garrison. The King of Pate, Bwana Tamu Mkuu, allowed them to land on the island on the condition that they would eliminate the other Omani soldiers, who came into conflict with the King’s interests. The Zanzibar men agreed and executed their counterparts, but the new garrison continued to be at odds with the King, and after several skirmishes the Omani were massacred.\textsuperscript{55} Before the hostility of the two Omani factions, Pate was forced to seek Portuguese help, and an ambassador, Mwalimu Bakar, was sent to Goa via Surat.

While at Surat, the ambassador wrote to Viceroy Saldanha da Gama accusing bin-Kibai of being an impostor, and offered Pate’s collaboration in the conquest of Mombasa since the political events of the regions were offering a ‘good occasion’ (\textit{occazião boa}) for the return of the Portuguese, which would also be supported by Zanzibar and the Mazangulo tribe. However, to secure this support, Goa needed to send \textit{roupas} (clothes) to the Swahili rulers, ‘because this is the way to conciliate them’.\textsuperscript{56} To convince the Viceroy of the favourable moment for Portuguese interests in the region, the Pate ambassador mentioned that there was a ‘great uproar’ (\textit{grande alvoroço}) whenever a ship was seen in Mombasa, the Omani believed that it could be a Portuguese warship, since the Omani feared a supposed prophecy –also mentioned by prince Banadao in his reports – which suggested that in 1725 Mombasa would return to its ‘former Lord’.\textsuperscript{57} All this made Saldanha da Gama request more funds to organise an

\textsuperscript{53} Ibíd., f. 632v.
\textsuperscript{54} Ibíd., fs. 653-654.
\textsuperscript{55} Strandes, \textit{The Portuguese Period in East Africa}, p. 242.
\textsuperscript{56} HAG, MR 92, “Carta do Vice-Rei João Saldanha da Gama a Sua Magestade, 8/10/1725”, f. 307.
\textsuperscript{57} Ibíd., f. 307.
expedition which would make João V the ‘Lord of the entire [Swahili] Coast until Mombasa, and of all its ivory, a good which in Asia is more valuable than gold and diamonds’.  

By controlling Mombasa, the Viceroy believed that the Portuguese monarch would be the ‘only Lord of all the ivory of the world, if we set this next to that of Angola’.

The negotiations between Goa and Pate ended in December 1727 when Saldanha da Gama and Bakar signed a document with the ‘preliminary conditions’ for an alliance between the Estado and Pate. According to José Gonçalves da Silveira’s account of the Mombasa campaign, Tamu Mkuu had secretly sent the envoys to Goa due to his intention ‘to be a vassal and completely subjected to His Portuguese Majesty’, a position which collided with the strong pro-Omani faction at the Sultan’s court. Indeed, the document signed by the Viceroy and the envoys secured Pate’s intentions to be protected by the Portuguese Crown and to cut his ties with the Omani. The first clause stated that the Sultan ‘would recognise as his legitimate sovereign the very high, and very powerful Lord João V of Portugal, and all of his Most Serene Successors’. In exchange, the Portuguese Crown would protect Pate from ‘any invasion from the Arabians’. Any inhabitant of Pate ‘whatever his level, quality, and prominence’ who had contacts with the Omani would be arrested and ‘accused of lèse-majesté’ and tried in the Portuguese courts. Even the sultan could be arrested and turned over to the Portuguese authorities if he collaborated with the Omani. The Sultan was responsible for presenting to the Portuguese authorities anyone who dealt with the Omani. Tamu Mkuuu should also maintain Pate’s political organisation, and to not remove the members of his council, since Goa believed that they favoured a Portuguese presence in the region. Each year, Goa would send to Pate a ship which would be exempt from custom rights. The Portuguese authorities at Pate would be allowed to collect custom revenues from ‘the ships of vassals of the Estado’. Pate would give the ports of Cavo and Tucuto to the Estado and ban access to its ports of ships belonging to ‘European

---

58 Ibid., f. 307v.
59 Ibid., f. 307v.
61 “Condições preliminares com que o Embaixador de Pate, o honrado Banamade, e Bonu Malimo Bacar em nome de seu Rey, o muito ilustre Sultan Abu Bacar Bonu Sultan Humade, se submete á soberana protecção do muito alto e muito poderoso Senhor Dom João V, Rey de Portugal e dos Algarves, ajustadas com o Excellentissimo Senhor João de Saldanha da Gama, Vice Rey e Capitão Geral da India” in *Collecção de Tratados e Concertos de Pazes que o Estado da India fez com os Reis e Senhores com que teve relações nas partes da Asia e Africa Oriental desde os Princípios da conquista até ao fim do século XVIII*, Vol. V ed. Júlio Firmino Júdice Biker (Lisbon: Imprensa Nacional, 1884), pp. 32-33.
nations and Turks’. Pate was also prohibited from negotiating ‘alliances, pacts or contracts with the said nations’. The sultan was also obliged to denounce any ruler who wished to attack the Portuguese, and help the Estado in their punishment. Pate would contribute to the Portuguese expedition to recapture Mombasa with 30 ships ‘well equipped with militias’ under Portuguese command and travel on Portuguese ships.

All Asian ports, excepting those possessed by Oman, could be frequented by Pate merchants and all ships owned by Pate merchants would enjoy the right to have free cartazes if their owners compromised to return them, in order to avoid that foreigners would buy them from Pate merchants. All ships from Surat bound to Pate should use cartazes. The Sultan and his subjects were free ‘to use the religion they like’, but should not allow the conversion of Catholic and Hindu subjects of the Estado to Islam, being obliged to arrest and present proselytisers to the Portuguese authorities. In order to avoid potential religious conflicts with the population of the island, the Inquisition would not operate in Pate. However, the Estado secured special privileges for the Catholic Church in Pate. If former Christians decided to abandon Islam and ‘be reconciled with the Catholic Church’ the sultan should allow it. If the converted were slaves the Estado would pay their value to the owners, and all Christians who had embraced Islam could by catechised by Portuguese missionaries.

On Christmas Eve 1727 (according to the Notícias da India the armada left Goa on 22 December 1727), a fleet led by Luis de Mello de Sampaio left Goa and reached Pate in January 1728. The Mombasa expedition involved 3 warships: the Nossa Senhora da Penha de França with 625 soldiers, 70 pieces of artillery led by Luís de Mello de Sampaio; the Madre de Deos led by Figueiredo e Utra with 472 soldiers and 56 pieces of artillery; and, finally, the Aparecida with 288 soldiers and 40 pieces of artillery under the command of José Barbosa Real. A patacho, the Monserate, and a palla, the Assumpção, were added to the armada with 122 soldiers and 16 pieces of artillery each. There was also a galiota with 18 men. The armada had at its disposition 4 mortars and 24 mortars of granadas reaes.

---

62 Ibid., p. 34.
63 Ibid., p. 35.
64 Ibid., p. 35.
65 Ibid., p. 35.
66 BNP, Cod. 465, Notícias da Índia, fols. 127-127v.
When the Portuguese Armada landed at Pate, General Mello de Sampaio was confronted with a scenario of an imminent civil war between King Bwana Tamu Mkuu and his cousin Bwana Makua (alias Mdogo, the Small). Indeed, the succession of the Pate throne was surrounded by a cloud of uncertainty. Bwana Makua was the son of the last King, Bwana Minhomuy, and Bwana Tamu Mkuu was the son of the latter’s elder brother and predecessor, Bwana Minhogombe.\(^{67}\)

Despite Pate’s political turmoil Sampaio’s mission to defend the Swahili Island was successful. On 4 February, 1727 Luso-Pate forces defeated an Omani army which landed in Pate. This victory allowed Sampaio to force Bwana Tamu Mkuu to make an oath of allegiance to the Portuguese Crown. After the King’s consent, Sampaio entered into Pate escorted by 200 soldiers. A procession composed of Portuguese and Pate soldiers and local dignitaries went to Siyu where Bwana Makua Mkubwa (the Great) ‘on behalf of his King’, made an oath of fidelity to the Portuguese Crown, while in return Sampaio promised to defend the Sultan of Pate and his family ‘as Friends and Allies’.\(^{68}\) The treaty was ratified and sworn before a Bible and a Koran.\(^{69}\)

While in Pate, Sampaio learned that Mombasa was no longer occupied by the Omani but by a group of rebellious Bantu slaves. Silveira mentions that the leaders of the rebels wrote to the Sultan inviting him to take the island, or to ask the Portuguese to do so, with the condition that the slaves would maintain their freedom.\(^{70}\) Before inviting Sampaio to invade Mombasa, Tamu Mkuu tried unsuccessfully to negotiate with the rebels the integration of the island into his Sultanate, offering money and privileges to the leaders of the Mombasa slaves. However, the delays in the negotiations led to a failed military intervention by Pate which forced Tamu Mkuu to ask Sampaio to intervene. Pate’s support for the recapture of Mombasa was based on three conditions: (1) all the Omani in Mombasa would be slain; (2) Bwana Makua and his faction would be arrested and deported to Goa; (3) all the Omani who settled in Lemu would be captured.\(^{71}\) Sampaio only accepted the first condition claiming that Bwana Makua had already sworn his allegiance to the Portuguese Crown, and there was no solid evidence that he was conspiring with the Omanis. Moreover, if the relations between Goa and Pate went astray Bwana Makua was considered to be a reliable alternative to Bwana

---

\(^{67}\) Strandes, *The Portuguese Period in East Africa*, p. 245.

\(^{68}\) Silveira, “Relação da Restauração de Mombaça,” p. 43.

\(^{69}\) Strandes, *The Portuguese Period in East Africa*, p. 245.

\(^{70}\) Silveira, “Relação da Restauração de Mombaça”, p. 44.

\(^{71}\) Strandes, *The Portuguese Period in East Africa*, p. 246.
Tamuu. Regarding Lemu, Sampaio considered that the available military resources were not enough to undertake another expedition. 72 Sampaio and Tamu Mkuu verbally agreed that the Pate troops would accompany the Portuguese army to participate in the attack against the Omani garrison and to negotiate with the rebels the transition of Mombasa into Portuguese hands. The agreement confirmed that the Portuguese Crown would restore its authority along the Swahili Coast, while Pate, in exchange for its support, would have 50% of the ivory trade – with the exception of Mombasa, Kilwa, Mafia and Kwale, which were reserved to the Portuguese. 73 Tamu Mkuu also agreed to abandon Pate’s intention to conquer Mombasa in exchange for the totality of the proceeds from the city’s sacking. 74

The Portuguese army landed in Mombasa on 7 March, but the siege was delayed for three days due to the resistance posed by some Omani soldiers ‘who were wandering about on the beaches’. 75 On the night of 10 March, Sampaio received the oath of vassalage of the ‘local Moors’, who according to Silveira promised to not ‘raise their arms against us, and asked for the immunity and fairness which they had obtained in the past as our subjects, and which was granted to them again as a surviving but defeated people’. 76 On the day after, the Portuguese bombarded Mombasa, forcing the Omanis to ask for a three days cease-fire to create the necessary conditions to negotiate a peace treaty. As a gesture of mutual goodwill, two Omani officers were exchanged for two Portuguese officers as hostages. An ad hoc treaty was signed establishing that if all Omanis surrendered their lives would be spared. According to the agreement, the Omani soldiers abandoned the fortress ‘marching in front of the Portuguese troops’. Sampaio also allowed the three ‘major women’ who were at the Fort to abandon Mombasa with their faces covered with veils. The Omani finally retreated on 13 March, the same day in which the Pate troops took the Mombasa Fortress from the Bantu slaves. The decision to spare the live of the Omani garrison was received with apprehension by Tamu Mkuu, who wanted the Omanis ‘to be beheaded in cold blood’ in order to delay the arrival of the news of the fall of Mombasa. The divergences between Sampaio and Tamu Mkuu were also aggravated by the general’s decision to allocate most of his

72 Ibid., p. 246.
74 Silveira, “Relação da Restauração de Mombaça”, p. 45.
75 Ibid., p. 46.
76 Ibid., p. 46.
soldiers to Mombasa, instead of Pate.\textsuperscript{77} To show his disagreement Tamu Mkuu took advantage of the fact that the Pate soldiers were the first to enter the Mombasa fort to delay the ‘delivery’ of Mombasa against Sampaio’s decision.\textsuperscript{78}

After several days in which Tamu Mkuu delayed the ‘delivery’ of the city on the grounds that the fortress needed to be repaired and improved, Sampaio finally took possession of Mombasa on 16 March. The return of the city to the Portuguese Crown was officialised in a ceremony in which the King of Pate, accompanied by the principais or grandees of his court, offered the city’s keys to the Portuguese general, who was escorted by ‘two-hundred opulent Portuguese’. A solemn mass was performed at the Sé of Mombasa, which was used as storehouse during the Omani occupation. To confirm the return of the city to the Catholic faith, when the host was elevated the Portuguese flag was raised and all the ships of the Armada fired cannon salutes. At the end of the mass, a \textit{Te Deum} was sung by the Augustinian missionaries who followed the expedition.\textsuperscript{79} The conquest of Mombasa was celebrated in Goa ‘with all the solemnities’ and ‘public feasts’ offered by the municipality and a ‘magnificent’ \textit{Te Deum}. All officers who participated in the expedition paraded through the main streets of Goa ‘passing triumphal arches’.\textsuperscript{80}

Meanwhile, the rulers of Macombe, Mitangata, Vumby, Tanga, Pemba, and Pangani presented their homage and vassalage to the King of Portugal. Fifteen days after this ceremony, more Swahili rulers decided to be vassals of Portugal. According to the \textit{Noticias da Índia}, ‘almost all potentates of the [Swahili] coast from Cape Delgado to Cape Guardafas’ were now paying tribute to Goa – something that the \textit{Noticias} proudly claimed that the Omani had never achieved, despite sharing the same religion with the Swahili.\textsuperscript{81} This important diplomatic victory allowed the establishment of Portuguese factories along the Swahili coast.\textsuperscript{82}

In fact, the presence of the Portuguese in the region seemed to have been interpreted by some local rulers as an opportunity to secure their authority and territories, although with the status of vassals of the King of Portugal. This vassalage, however, was negotiated and relied on the concession of certain privileges to the local rulers. For example, the promises of ‘total obedience’ made by the King of Zanzibar,

\textsuperscript{77} Ibid., p. 49.
\textsuperscript{78} BNP, Cod. 465, \textit{Noticias da Índia}, fs. 131-131v.
\textsuperscript{79} Ibid., f. 132.
\textsuperscript{80} Ibid., f. 135v.
\textsuperscript{81} BNP, Cod. 465, \textit{Noticias da Índia}, fol. 132.
\textsuperscript{82} Boxer, “The Portuguese on the Swahili Coast, 1593-1729”, p. 78.
Asane Boroanha, relied on specific conditions. Boroanha regarded the return of the Portuguese as a sign of ‘good fortune’ and personal happiness since he was ‘brought up with affection to the Portuguese’. In a letter dated 5 August 1728, he reminded the Viceroy of his grandmother’s attempt to resist the Omani’s attack ‘in the hope of seeing again the Portuguese’ and that her ‘loyalty and love’ for the Portuguese Crown was still alive in his family. However, to secure Zanzibar’s loyalty and utility, the Viceroy should make the necessary arrangements to improve the Portuguese garrison and send merchants to the island to avoid ‘any damage to the greatness of our King of Portugal’.

Zanzibar’s proposal was reinforced in an audience between Costa Ribeiro and King Asane which was reported to Goa on 6 August 1728. According to the captain, the King of Zanzibar and his son, as well as the population of the island, were ‘sympathetic towards the Portuguese’. Asane revealed to the Portuguese captain that each year the island produced 100 bars of ivory. Zanzibar was aware of Goa’s interest in establishing a Portuguese monopoly on the Swahili ivory, and proposed to the Estado to exempt the local ivory from future Portuguese taxes in exchange for the full support of Zanzibar to the Portuguese presence in the region.

**Mombasa and the reorganisation of the Estado da Índia**

João V was only informed of the so-called Restoration of Mombasa on 20 January 1729. In a letter signed by the Viceroy, the King was told that an armada had captured Mombasa and submitted Zanzibar and Pemba to Portuguese control, and the other Swahili kingdoms and princedoms were adhering to ‘Your Majesty’s obedience’. According to Saldanha da Gama, João’s rule in East Africa stretched from Cape Delgado in Mozambique to Cape Guardafui in modern day Somalia, and all trading activities in this area were now banned ‘to all nations of the world’. The Viceroy also confirmed the reports that the sack of Mombasa had been ‘rampant’ (copioso), blaming the lack of discipline of the soldiers and the negligence of the officers for the situation. Not only was the sack violent, but most of its ‘product’ was diverted away from the

---

84 Ibid., f. 390.
85 Ibid., f. 390.
88 HAG, MR 95B, “Carta do Vice-Rei João Saldanha da Gama a Sua Magestade, 20/01/1729”, f. 484.
89 Ibid., f.484.
Royal Treasury – a serious disobedience to the *regimento* which regulated the Goan army, and which was justified by the Viceroy by the poverty faced by most soldiers.90

The Viceroy considered that the recapture of Mombasa was a consequence of an opportunity granted by the Divine Providence, since all stages of the expeditions were ‘favourable and miraculous’.91 Given the lack of military resources faced by the Estado, the conquest of Mombasa made the need for reinforcements more pressing. Without a new supply of men and weapons from Lisbon, Goa feared to lose Mombasa again. To convince Lisbon of the urgency of reinforcements, Saldanha da Gama appealed to João V’s Catholicism stating that only with new troops ‘the Cross of Christ Our Lord would not be again expelled from those places’.92 Before the appeal made by the Viceroy, João V was advised by the Overseas Council on 11 March 1729 to send 400 or 500 men and two warships to Goa. According to the councillors, the reinforcement of Goa’s military capacity was essential to ensure that Mombasa would be protected from future Omani attacks. The councillors also had in mind the Persian Gulf. João was reminded of the suggestion made by one report from the General do Estreito which insinuated that the control of the Swahili Coast and the never-ending Persian civil war would pave the way to the return of Hormuz to the Portuguese Crown. João V was therefore encouraged to take advantage from an exceptionally favourable scenario, which could restore the Portuguese hegemony ‘of the seas of India and Arabian gulfs as in past years’.93

Before taking Hormuz it was necessary to reduce the Omani threat. Indeed, the ambitious plans made by the Overseas Council included the conquest of Muscat. The councillors believed that the acquisition of the Omani capital would ‘make us lords of other ports of that coast’, and force the Omani ‘to be stuck in the mountains, making us free from the formidable war that they make against us’. To convince João to approve the project, the councillors played with the King’s ambitions to make Portugal a recognised power in Europe, stating that the conquest of Muscat and other Omani ports ‘would be very glorious to the memory of Your Majesty in future centuries and even more useful for the Commerce of the Estado’.94 Brazil would also contribute to this ‘restoration of India’, not only for being the wealthiest dominion of the Portuguese Empire, but due to a moral obligation. For a large majority of the councillors, Brazil

---

90 Ibid., f. 484.
91 Ibid., f. 484.
92 Ibid., f. 484.
93 AHU, Cod. 213, f. 210v.
94 AHU, Cod. 213, f. 211.
‘was conquered and occupied with monies from India when she [India] was flourishing, and now [Brazil] should contribute to the [Estado da Índia’s] restoration’. The justice of this decision would increase João’s respect among his subjects, ‘because similar actions exalt the reputation of princes’. After sending this Socorro, the Crown should appoint a new governor for Mombasa, since the man whom Saldanha da Gama initially appointed, Álvaro Caetano de Mello, did not possess a lineage which corresponded to the quality of the post. Caetano de Mello was also accused of being imprudent, a ‘circumstance which is the most important to conserve cities and peoples’. João should therefore instruct the governor to return to Goa, and appoint Luiz de Sousa Countinho, António Marinho de Moura or António de Brito da Silva. João was also advised to present his gratitude to the Viceroy for his efforts in organising a successful expedition at a moment when the ‘Estado was destitute of means’. Saldanha da Gama was hailed by the council for his ‘industry’ and willingness ‘to not be discouraged by the example of his predecessors who after the civil wars of the Arabians still considered this expedition to be difficult and even impossible without reinforcements from the Realm’.  

Rise and fall

After the news of the restoration of Mombasa reached Goa, Saldanha da Gama appointed Álvaro Caetano de Mello de Castro as governor of the city, and António de Albuquerque Coelho as Governor of Pate. The regimentos that were given to the two governors on 31 December 1728 aimed to secure the Portuguese presence in the region. In Mombasa, the local population was forbidden to have any kind of contact with the Omani. Ships from European or Asian nations were not allowed to trade in Mombasa and along the Swahili Coast, unless they were operating on behalf of the Portuguese authorities. Goa was particularly concerned about promoting a peaceful relationship with the local populations, especially Mombasa. Mello de Castro was instructed to treat the Muslim communities and the local tribes with ‘moderation and justice’ (moderação e justiça). Albuquerque Coelho also had instructions to do everything in his reach to

95 Ibid., f. 211.
96 Ibid., f. 211.
97 Ibid., f. 211.
98 HAG, Regimentos, 1429, “Regimento que se remeteo a Antonio Cayetano de Mello de Castro, Governador da Fortaleza de Mombaça”, f. 33.
99 Ibid., f. 33.
be on good terms with Tamu Mkuu. In order to maintain the alliance between Pate and Goa, the governor was advised to please the local ruler with flatteries (lizongeado-o). One of these flatteries was the permit granted to Pate subjects to trade without restrictions along the Swahili Coast. However, after the construction of the Portuguese fortress, and according to the evolution of the local political scene, Albuquerque Coelho should impose restrictions on Pate’s trading activities.  

Despite the success of the Portuguese expedition, Goa did not possess the necessary logistical and financial resources to control the region. An example of the Portuguese inability to secure the new dominions is another letter from Asane Boroanha dated 5 August 1728, in which the King of Zanzibar requested the reinforcement of the Portuguese regiment stationed at the island. Boroanha considered that the troops sent by Goa were made of ‘very limited people’ (gente muito limitada). Indeed, the regiment led by Captain Manuel Jardim da Costa Ribeiro was formed by only four soldiers and one constable (condestável) with provisions for only three months. The King suggested that most of the island’s agricultural production could be used to supply Mombasa, and suggested the involvement of Portuguese merchants in the Zanzibar, Kilwa and Mafia ivory trade.

After his arrival at Pate, Albuquerque Coelho was confronted with several complaints from Bwana Tamu, who accused Luis Mello de Sampaio of infringing the treaty. During his time in Pate, Albuquerque Coelho maintained a regular correspondence with the Governor of Mombasa, Caetano de Mello, but the relations between the two officials soon became sour, after the governor of Pate was informed by Banadao that the Mozungulus were unhappy with the lack of payment from Mombasa for the supplies of food they sent to the city. Immediately after the departure of Sampaio, Álvaro Caetano de Mello e Castro ordered the arrest of Bwan Makua on the grounds that he was planning to escape to Muscat and incite the local population to rebel against the Portuguese.

On 25 March 1729, the Portuguese flag was raised in the place where the fortress would be built in a ceremony attended by Albuquerque Coelho, Tamu Mkuu ‘and all the grandees of the kingdom’. After this ceremony, the rulers of Porto Brava asked to be accepted as vassals of the King of Portugal, promising to help the

---

100 HAG, Regimentos, 1429, “Regimento que se deo a Antonio de Albuquerque Coelho, Capitão General do Reino de Pate”, f. 35.
Portuguese in their military campaigns and to regularly supply Goa with ivory.\textsuperscript{103} Despite the apparent success obtained by the Estado in the region, the position of the Portuguese was becoming increasingly fragile. Albuquerque Coelho continued to receive more complaints on the behaviour of the governor of Mombasa who seemed to increase his hostility towards the local populations. In the face of Caetano de Mello’s erratic behaviour, Hasan-bin-Kibai offered his services to the Omani and organised a successful rebellion against the Portuguese on 1 April 1729.\textsuperscript{104}

The news of the fall of Mombasa reached the other Swahili cities and islands where the Portuguese started to settle and inspired their inhabitants to rebel as well.\textsuperscript{105} In Pate, several rumours about attacks made by the Omanis and the hinterland tribes against Mombasa started to circulate between May and June. Tamu Mkuu told Albuquerque Coelho that the rumours were related with the hostility of the local population to the presence of the Portuguese on the island after the construction of the fortress, which was being increasingly criticised by the pro-Omani faction of the Pate hierarchy, who regarded it as an instrument of Portuguese oppression.

Indeed, the building works were facing several problems caused by local workers. According to the \textit{Noticias da Índia}, since 1 July the ‘black workers’ were arriving late for work and on the eve of St. Anthony’s day, they were accused of stopping the Moorish workers from doing their work claiming that there would be no work on that day, since the Portuguese were preparing a feast in homage to St. Anthony. On the same day, to the surprise of the Portuguese, Tamu Mkuu visited the building site escorted by ‘more armed people than usual’. During St. Anthony’s day, a fire broke out nearby the building site, raising the suspicion that Pate was ready to rebel against the Portuguese. Coelho was informed by Banadao that the fire was ordered by Tamu Mkuu, who had suddenly abandoned the city with his entourage. Banadao was also advised by his sister to leave the city since Tamu Mkuu had instructed his army to ‘kill the Portuguese’. On the following day, a Portuguese patrol met a ‘Moorish grandee’ who had revealed that he was going to leave Pate because the King did the same. Meanwhile, Bwana Makua, who supported the Portuguese presence, arrived at Pate ‘surprised for not being told of what was happening’.\textsuperscript{106} This chaotic scenario forced Albuquerque Coelho to negotiate his retreat from Pate with Bwana Makua, who promised the

\textsuperscript{103} BNP, Cod. 465, \textit{Noticias da Índia}, fol. 137.
\textsuperscript{104} According to different sources the rebellion was in 12, 25 or 26 April 1729.
\textsuperscript{105} Boxer, “The Portuguese on the Swahili Coast, 1593-1729”, p. 80
\textsuperscript{106} BNP, Cod. 465, \textit{Noticias da Índia}, fols. 137v-138.
Portuguese governor that Pate would help the Estado da Índia to recover Mombasa.\textsuperscript{107} After signing this agreement, the governor set sail to Goa to prepare a new expedition to restore the Estado presence in the region.

The news of another defeat at the Swahili Coast was received with annoyance in Goa. Saldanha da Gama decided to open an inquiry and arrested Coelho and Caetano de Mello while the investigations took place to examine the governors’ behaviour. An expedition to recover Mombasa was organised and given, again, to Luis de Mello de Sampaio. However, Pate’s preference for Albuquerque Coelho and the low reputation of Luis de Mello de Sampaio in the region undermined the project, as well as several logistical problems, which forced Sampaio to return to Goa. Sampaio’s fleet, however, never reached Goa, being caught by a deadly hurricane on the night of 18 May 1730.\textsuperscript{108} Albuquerque Coelho and Caetano de Mello were also investigated by the Viceroy and the Overseas Council, after the emergence of suspicious information indicating that the local populations rebelled against the Portuguese due to ‘scandalous causes’. Albuquerque Coelho was also accused of leaving Pate without resisting the rebellion, an action which the Overseas Council believed that should be punished with prison.\textsuperscript{109} However, he would be later cleared of all accusations.

**Rethinking the Estado again**

Lisbon received the news of the fall of Pate and Mombasa with anger. Following a report written by Saldanha da Gama, the Overseas Council on 26 September 1730 presented the Crown with a *parecer* (report) which requested João to ‘help immediately the Estado da Índia’ after the fall of Mombasa. The councillors presented João V with a gloomy picture of the Estado after the loss of Pate and Mombasa. According to them, if Saldanha da Gama decided to recover these ports with the existing forces in Goa, the Estado would lose most of its defences and be at the mercy of ‘Idolater Princes’. The risk of losing the best of the four ships of the Goan navy would ‘extinguish the little maritime power we have in India’. But, worst of all, the end of the Portuguese presence on the Swahili Coast would encourage the other European powers ‘to make use of violence and extractions’, especially the Dutch, who the councillors believed would

\textsuperscript{107} Boxer, “The Portuguese on the Swahili Coast, 1593-1729”, p. 80.
\textsuperscript{108} Boxer, “The Portuguese on the Swahili Coast, 1593-1729”, pp. 81-82.
\textsuperscript{109} AHU, Cod. 213, f. 230.
establish factories and fortresses in the Sofala area. Moreover, the Dutch ‘lordship of trade’ would finish the cartaz system, since, as the councillors informed João, the VOC was already issuing its own passports at Surat. At the same time, the ‘disdain’ of the Indian rulers towards Goa would grow and ‘more peaces and pacts broken by insignificant reasons’. An example of this was a Mughal Nawab who ‘wrote to the Viceroy demanding a tribute’. These ‘insults’, the councillors believed, would instigate the ‘Dutch and other Europeans’ to isolate the Estado and force the Portuguese to retreat from the subcontinent.110

To avoid this scenario, João should send a ‘powerful armada’ to India as ‘the Lord King’s glorious predecessors of Your Majesty did’. Despite its appeal to João’s obligation to follow his ancestors, the Overseas Council knew that the current situation was different from the past, since this new armada was not sent ‘to expand dominions, but to not lose them’.111 The councillors considered that the ‘only commerce in India which is useful, and profitable, and maintains the cities we have there is the one of Mozambique and Senna Rivers’. João should therefore support the efforts to expand the Portuguese presence in East Africa in order to establish ‘from the Cape of Good Hope until [Cape] Delgado and the neighbouring islands one government which would be subordinated to [the Estado da]India’. The success of this project required the recapture of Mombasa and Pate ‘with a maritime power which counts three small frigates and other light ships’, which would allow ‘help to [any] port which needs aid’. In the case that the cities of the new government did not need help, the new armada would attack ‘the ports of the Arabians and Moors of the Strait’.112 Based on several reports which indicated that the Senna Rivers were ‘the richest rivers in the world, full of gold, and silver’, the councillors hoped that the new conquista would be self-sufficient and offer a regular and profitable source of income to the Crown. It was believed that the conquest of the region would not be difficult, since the existing reports only mentioned that the inhabitants ‘had a rude nature, being blacks without any knowledge or practice of weapons and instruments, and military policy’. There was also the belief that the Swahili Coast was the place of the mythical Solomon mines.113

Most councillors regarded the need to relieve Goa and recover the lost fortresses as a religious matter. João was incited to defend the Christendom of India and ensure

110 Ibid., f. 228-229v.
111 Ibid., f. 228v.
112 AHU, Cod. 213, f. 229.
113 Ibid., fs. 229-229v.
‘the expansion of the Sacred Gospel in the Orient’. The way to do this, according to the councillors, was to use Brazilian gold, the ‘treasures that God’s liberality has give to Your Majesty’. Indeed, there was the belief that if God’s treasures were not used adequately in the relief and expansion of the Estado da Índia and the Goan Church, God would end his generosity towards the Crown. Following the providentialist thought of early modern Portugal, the councillors warned the King that if he used the Brazilian riches well in India, God would give him ‘even more rich treasures’.114

Final Remarks

The plans made by the Overseas Council in 1730 were never executed. From 1733 onwards, the Estado da Índia was confronted with several Maratha invasions which culminated in the loss of the wealthy Provincia do Norte in 1739. The defeats at the hands of the Marathas led to a reorganisation of the Estado da Índia focused on a progressive abandonment of the network paradigm. After 1739, and before the emergence of aggressive local powers, Lisbon favoured the preservation of the remaining territories in the subcontinent which meant that any expansionist plans should be in increasing the boundaries of Goa, Daman or Diu. Meanwhile, Mozambique was becoming a de facto autonomous colony.

For the history of the Portuguese presence in the Indian Ocean, the 1728 expedition against Mombasa is the last chapter of Lisbon’s ambitions to control the western part of the Ocean. For the history of the European presence in East Africa, the Portuguese attempts to recapture Mombasa is an example of the lack of knowledge or the inability of the European powers to understand and obtain reliable information on the subtleties of different political and economic structures. Goa did not possess enough information on the local political scene, and the Portuguese authorities were unable to understand the interests of the Swahili rulers, who only accepted the presence of a foreign power if their political and economic autonomy was preserved. Almost four decades later, in 1772, António José de Noronha proposed in his Sistema Marcial Asiático a reorganization of the Estado da India based on the creation of a local science, or in other words, an effective knowledge of the local populations and their languages. Noronha considered that the Asian empire needed to be structured according to the

114 Ibid., f. 230.
compilation of different information on the geography of the territories under Portuguese control, as well as on the political, social, economic and military organization of the potentates with whom the Estado had contacts.\textsuperscript{115}

\textsuperscript{115} António José de Noronha, \textit{Sistema Marcial Aziático} (Lisbon: Fundação Oriente, 1994).
8. Conclusion

The policies followed during the Joanine years (1707-1750) contrasted with the aggressive expansionist policies followed by the Portuguese Crown in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The first half of the eighteenth century was a confirmation of the Estado’s decline and transformation into a minor political actor in the Indian Ocean. João V was confronted with a new political scenario which questioned the existence of the Estado da Índia. The decline of Goa coincided with the fall of the Safavid and Mughal empires, the traditional allies in the region. The gradual ascendancy of the EIC and the expansionist ambitions of the Marathas posed an immediate threat to the Portuguese commercial and territorial presence in India. Without a potential strong ally in the region, the Estado was forced to redefine its position in the subcontinent and abandon the expansionist projects which were pursued in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

This change of attitude was not only a consequence of the transformations of the Indian political theatre, but a result of an acknowledgment by the Portuguese authorities of the existence of serious structural military and economic weaknesses in the Estado da Índia. Dramatic reports from viceroys complaining about the lack of men and funds were usual throughout the history of Portuguese India, but the spiral of losses initiated in the seventeenth century deepened the shortage of soldiers, men, warships and money. The Crown was also aware of the problems faced by the Estado. On 2 April 1723, João V decided to send to India more soldiers and warships. The king and the Overseas Council were concerned with the reports sent by Viceroy Francisco José de Sampaio e Castro who, as João stated, made the Crown aware to the fact that ‘the Estado has few soldiers, as well as people and ship, and is surrounded by powerful enemies’ (attendendo as poucas forças com que se acha esse Estado asy de gente como de Naos estando cingido de inimigos tão poderosos).\(^1\) However, despite the efforts made by the Crown to attenuate the troubles of Goa, the weaknesses of the Estado da Índia were far from being solved. On 11 January 1733, Viceroy Count of Sandomil sent to João V a report which presented a depressing picture of the Estado da Índia. The viceroy was concerned with the prospect of the ‘extinction’ of Goa’s trading activities. The lack of trade, and therefore taxation, was leading the Estado’s military and administrative structures to the

---

\(^1\) AHU, INDIA, Maço Nº 119, Doc. 2 Abril 1723, f. 1.
brink of collapse – a scenario which made Sandomil request more funds. Trade with Mozambique, Persia and China was no longer a viable solution for Goa’s problems. Mozambique was far from being profitable and required more investments, since it was still too dependent from the unstable Provincia do Norte. The Persian civil war and the Omani attacks in the Gulf had ‘put an end’ to the presence of Estado based merchants in the Strait of Hormuz. In China, Macao was facing the competition of other European nations after Beijing’s decision to ‘admit foreigners’. Besides, as Sandomil reminded the king, the Indian Ocean ‘was disturbed by many pirates’ who had the ability to attack commercial fleets even when protected by warships.²

The Reis Vizinhos were also aware of the problems of the Estado. As the count of Ericeira mentioned in his instruction to Francisco José de Sampaio e Castro, the growing perception of Portuguese decline in India exposed the Estado to the ambitions of ‘all rulers and rebel leaders’ of the region, who now attacked the territories controlled by the Portuguese in the hope of receiving a tribute from the Estado.³ The Maratha invasions, for example, were not only motivated by the fact that the territories controlled by the Portuguese were located in the Maratha ‘lebensraum’, but also by the perception that the Estado would not be able to retaliate the attacks of the Maratha troops.

This scenario of uncertainty and crisis led the Portuguese authorities to adopt a pragmatic approach and abandon the expansionist ambitions of the past in favour of a neutral position which would secure the existence of the Estado da Índia and protected the trading activities of the Portuguese in the region. This change was well summarised by Sebastião José de Carvalho e Melo, the future marquis of Pombal, in a letter addressed to D. Luís da Cunha. The future prime minister of José I considered that before a harsh reality which demonstrated that ‘we [the Portuguese] are no longer what we used to be in Asia’ (ja não podemos ser na Asia o que fomos), and the Crown should do its best ‘to maintain at least what we could be [in India]’ (concervaremos pelo menos o que poderemos ser).⁴ In order words, the Crown should follow a policy that was able to secure a Portuguese presence in the subcontinent without damaging the political influence and prestige of the Estado da India in the region.

² AHU, Cod. 213, fols. 286v-287.
³ BNP, Cod. 1445, Instrucção que deixou o Conde da Ericeira Dom Luís de Menezes Vice Rey e Capitam General da India A Francisco Jozé de Sampaio e Castro que lhe foi succeder no dito emprego no anno de 1721, fol. 37.
⁴ ACL, 612 - CUNHA, D. Luís: Noticia enviada por Sebastião José de Carvalho e Melo acerca da perda de Goa (3/05/1740), f. 307
Pragmatism was therefore the guiding principle of the strategy followed by the Portuguese Crown in the first half of the eighteenth century. The Portuguese developed a pragmatic approach in their diplomatic affairs in Asia from the early years of the Estado da Índia. The instability of the subcontinent’s political scene and the existence of different levels of sovereignty in a region where boundaries were very fluid, forced the Estado to adopt a careful strategy based on the establishment of friendly relations with the main political actors of the Indian Ocean and the Indian subcontinent, such as Persia and the Mughal Empire. Another pragmatic element of Portuguese diplomacy was the establishment of a network of friends and vassals which guaranteed regular supplies of spices, rice and soldiers. Some of these vassals, like Sonda, could also be used as buffer states which separated the Estado territories from aggressive potentates such as the Marathas. The Portuguese authorities believed that by matching or adjusting its interests with the main local powers, the Estado da Índia would avoid their hostility and enjoy their sympathy, and even protection, in the Portuguese attempts to obtain commercial privileges and reduce or surpass the activities of the European companies. However, in the first half of the eighteenth century, a period when the traditional allies of the Portuguese collapsed and the other political actors of the subcontinent were generally hostile to Goa, the main concern of the Estado’s diplomacy was not to obtain commercial privileges, but to secure its existence and relevance in the subcontinent’s political theatre.

Machiavelli’s advice to princes to invest in the development of a strong image in order to avoid an image of weakness before their counterparts seemed to have been followed by the Portuguese authorities in India. Indeed, while the subcontinent’s political scene was facing several turbulent changes which were leading to an aggravation of the decline of the Estado da Índia, Goa invested in ritual to attenuate potential damages to the reputation of the Portuguese Crown. This relationship between the decline of the Portuguese and the improvement of the rites and ceremonies staged by the Estado da Índia was based on a strategy which aimed to promote a ritual construction of political prestige that would allow Goa to enjoy a calm transition from an active imperial power to a kind of neutral regional enclave with no expansionist

---

5 “Men in general judge by their eyes rather than by their hands because everyone is in a position to watch, and few are in a position to come in close touch with you. Everyone sees what you appear to be, few experience what you really are”, Niccolò Machiavelli, *The Prince* (London: Penguin, 1999), p. 58.
interests without destroying the reputation of the Portuguese Crown as an imperial power before other European and Asian powers.

This was a clear change from the old usages of ritual by the Portuguese authorities in India. In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the Estado used ritual to confirm its status as a leading actor in the Indian Ocean. Even after the end of the Portuguese monopoly in the Indian Ocean, the Estado staged ceremonies that boasted an image of power and superiority. Indeed, until the 1640s, the Portuguese controlled Malacca, Nagasaki, Cochin, Cragnanore and several strongholds in Ceylon. Despite the constant attacks of the VOC, the fall of Hormuz and the decline of the commercial activities of Goan-based merchants, the Estado da Índia was still by this time an actor with a considerable relevance in the destinies of the region. The lavish ceremonies performed in Goa and their messages of power, authority and superiority were in tune with the political scenario. Things started to change in 1641 when Malacca fell at the hands of the Dutch. Between the 1650s and 1663, the Portuguese lost Colombo (1656), Jaffna (1658), Cragnanore (1662), Naggapatinam (1662) and Cochin (1663). This spectacular fall of the Estado da Índia caused serious damages to the prestige of the Portuguese Crown and questioned the survival of Goa and the remaining ports and territories under Portuguese control. The Portuguese authorities were therefore confronted with a need to redefine their position and strategies. During the reign of Pedro II, as Glenn J. Ames demonstrated in his studies on the reforms implemented by the Crown between 1663 and 1683, the Estado enjoyed a brief period of stabilization, despite the permanent state of warfare with local and European rivals. While in the two previous centuries, the ceremonies and rituals of the Estado coincided with periods of visible power and influence, in the eighteenth century the Estado was no longer able to interfere in the local political scene or in the main trading routes of the Indian Ocean. It was therefore necessary to hide the problems and decline of the Estado. Without men and funds to revitalise the old Asian possessions, the Portuguese authorities opted to invest in ritual. The first half of the eighteenth-century saw, for the first time, the elaboration of protocols, like the Ceremonial and the Fôrma, which aimed to consolidate the image of the Magestoso Estado (the Majestic Estado). If, in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the rituals staged by the Estado were used to reflect the military victories and commercial successes of the Portuguese, during the eighteenth

---

century the Goan rituals were used to contradict the catastrophic losses suffered by the Portuguese at the hands of rivals and enemies such as the Marathas or the Omani.

The importance of ritual

The viceregal ceremonies, the busy religious calendar and the regular performance of ceremonies celebrating the royal cycles (anniversaries, births, deaths, and weddings) offered the Portuguese authorities a pretext to stage more or less lavish ceremonies which helped to hide the fragilities of the Estado. Events such as the viceroy’s *entrada*, the numerous processions or the occasional triumphs were especially concerned with resuscitating the imperial myth of Golden Goa, the times when ‘Asia was a glorious theatre’ for the Portuguese, as the Marquis of Castelo-Novo once wrote. In face of the progressive decline of the Estado da Índia, the Portuguese authorities used the Goan public ceremonies and their lavish decorations, richly clad *fidalgos* and clergymen, as well as the exhibition of military strength, to control the damage inflicted by rival powers, and create a façade of power, authority and wealth that could conceal its economic and military weaknesses and support the Estado da Índia’s claims to enjoy a superior position in the Indian political scene. The viceregal public ceremonies offered not only a particular narrative of the Portuguese presence in India to their audience and performers, but an illusory or ephemeral sense of continuity since the glorious times of the past. Indeed, by evoking a glorious past, the Portuguese authorities hoped to sustain an influential position in the subcontinent and in the western Indian Ocean which would be based more on prestige than on economic or military power.

In order to recreate the past, the Estado da Índia rarely changed its ritual and civic life. The rites and ceremonies of the Estado had a ‘traditional’ spirit which allowed the Joaime viceroyals and officials to relate their actions and ceremonial performances to a certain memory of the Portuguese presence in Asia. Rituals, as David Cannadine observed in his studies on the British monarchy, are often deliberately unchanged to create a feeling of continuity in periods of change, conflict or crisis. Indeed, the Portuguese concern for preserving all the elements of the ceremonies created by the founders and heroes of the Estado da Índia was an act of refusal or resistance to the

---

7 Academia das Ciências de Lisboa (ACL) – Cod. Cod. 552 – *Discurso que o Illustissimo e Excelentissimo Senhor Marquez de Castelo Novo V. Rey Da India Fez no dia IX de Novembro aos Dezembargadores a primeira vez que foi á Relação*, fol. 40.

transformations of the Indian political theatre. The need to transmit a prestigious image of the Portuguese Crown and contradict the decline of the Estado forced Goa to adopt an attitude of ceremonial inflexibility in their diplomatic contacts with Asian rulers.\(^9\) Goa’s belief that Indians rulers were obsessed with rites and ceremonies – Monterroio Mascarenhas, for example, wrote that ‘Asians are even more inclined to ceremonies than the Italians’\(^10\) – also contributed to the creation of a rigid diplomatic protocol which made the Portuguese as obsessive as their Indian counterparts.

Rituals could also be used as a way of public communication based on stereotyped and symbolic language.\(^11\) The Portuguese concern with the rituals staged by the Estado was associated with this use of rituals as instruments of communication. The rites and ceremonial rules of the Estado da Índia allowed the Portuguese authorities to sustain a continuous monologue regarding the balance of power in the subcontinent and the presence of the Portuguese in the region. There was, indeed, an intention to express a particular view of the hierarchy of powers in India.

If in early modern Europe most public ceremonies were an expression of political theories, providing ‘a continuous discourse on the constitutional order’\(^12\), in Goa the ceremonies of the Estado transmitted a continuous discourse on the ranking of Indian powers. Much of this discourse was based on a worldview inspired by the Portuguese past in Asia, as well as on the Greco-Roman categories of ‘barbarianism’ or the Judeo-Christian notions of ‘gentile’\(^13\). Persia (which for most early modern Portuguese was a part of India or of its cultural world) and the Mughal Empire, despite their Islamic nature, were considered as equals, or sometimes as superior, due to their economic and military power. The other powers in the subcontinent were relegated to an inferior status which was often demonstrated in the diplomatic reception offered by the viceroy to their envoys. Indeed, the diplomatic rituals of the Estado forced the *Reis Vizinhos* to accept not only the supposed prestigious and relevant position of the Estado da Índia, but their own minor status vis-à-vis the Portuguese. By highlighting the


\(^{13}\) See for example the discussion on the influence of Greco-Roman and Judeo-Christian categories in the relations between Portuguese and Asian and African potentates in António Vasconcelos de Saldanha, *Iustum Imperium: Dos Tratados como Fundamento do Império dos portugueses no Oriente: estudos de história do direito internacional e do direito português* (Lisbon: Instituto Superior de Ciências Sociais e Políticas, 2005), pp.228-234.
different qualities of each side, Goa aimed to persuade other potentates to adhere to a worldview where the Portuguese were recognised as naturally superior, despite the evolution of the political theatre.

**A mixed language**

Since the times of Afonso de Albuquerque, the Portuguese had developed a special concern for performing rites and ceremonies which would demonstrate their supposed superiority and power in India, as well as present their monarchs to local rulers. Albuquerque and his successors believed that it was necessary to surround the viceroy, the Estado’s senior officials and diplomats with ‘greatness’ (grandeza), in order to impress the *Reis Vizinhos* with a demonstration of the power of the King of Portugal.\(^{14}\) From the second half of the sixteenth century onwards, the Estado’s ritual apparatus was already well-established and defined. In the 1550s, the viceregal budget, for example, included sums destined to members of the viceroy’s house (servants, guards, musicians, physicians, chaplains, etc.).\(^{15}\)

The Indo-European court established by Albuquerque would face some transformations with the arrival of the Jesuits in 1542 and the adoption of the decrees of the Council of Trent by the Portuguese Crown in 1566.\(^{16}\) These two events led to a westernization of the Estado da Índia. Hindus and Muslims were rarely recruited by the Estado. These restrictions led most Brahmins to embrace Catholicism in order to gain access to privileged posts in the Estado’s administrative apparatus. At the same time, the Christian Brahmins adopted a European way of life (dresses, education). This westernization, together with the union of the Portuguese and Spanish Crowns in 1580, approximated the ritual life of Goa to Europe. Indeed, the descriptions of the viceroy’s daily life made by the French travelers François Pyrard de Laval and Jean-Baptiste Tavernier presented the viceroy as a political actor who lived surrounded by pomp in a court that was very similar to most early modern European courts.\(^{17}\) Tavernier, for example, compared the viceregal court with the courts of the seventeenth-century

---

\(^{14}\) Catarina Madeira Santos, “*Goa é a chave de toda a Índia*”: perfil político da capital do Estado da Índia (Lisbon: CNCDP, 1999), p. 214.

\(^{15}\) Ibid., pp. 217-218.

\(^{16}\) Ibid, p. 221.

\(^{17}\) François Pyrard de Laval, *Viagem de Francisco Pyrard, de Laval*, Tomo I (Nova Goa: Imprensa Nacional, 1858), pp. 63-64.
German princes. Nevertheless, the Portuguese authorities kept some features of the Indian courtly and ritual life which were considered to be prestigious or useful to the Estado’s interests and political prestige. In 1674, for example, Charles Dellon, another French traveller, mentioned that the viceroy and the Goan aristocracy still used sumptuous palanquins.

The Goan diplomatic protocols are another good example of the absorption of certain Indian and Persian ideas of prestige and kingship. The careful way in which the Portuguese viceroys were instructed by the Ceremonial de que uzão os VReys quando escrevem aos Reys da Azia to address the Mughal and Persian rulers according to their protocol and ideas of kingship, and to present to them the Portuguese monarch in similar terms, reveal that there was a somewhat subtle negotiation between European and Indo-Persian notions of kingship. Moreover, the inclusion of a preamble mentioning the unity of God in the letters destined to the Mughal emperor, in what was a clear effort to reduce the religious antagonism between Christians (Portuguese) and Muslims (Mughals), indicates that the Portuguese were conscious of the religious role played by Mughal emperors, and that they wanted to present their monarch with a parallel role. Some features of the Mughal and Persian protocol were also present in the diplomatic receptions staged by the Estado da India. The use of the melinandar, the exchange of gifts, the offer of a special accommodation to foreign diplomats and their reception by the viceroy in a special room, like the Mughal diwan-i’amm, suggest that the Portuguese were aware of the local ideas on prestige and kingship, and sought to conciliate them with the Portuguese or European traditions.

In fact, the materials analysed in this dissertation indicate that the rites and ceremonies of the Estado were somehow influenced by local ceremonial practices, being the result of a long cross-cultural interaction between the Portuguese and the Indo-Persian world. The regular diplomatic contacts with the Reis Vizinhos, the different experiences of Portuguese travellers, ad hoc diplomats and merchants in Asian courts, as well as the important presence at the Mughal and Persian courts of Padroado missionaries (who often served as reliable informers and experts of the political and social organisation of the Persian and Mughal empires), resulted in the selection or incorporation of some Asian elements which were used to facilitate the negotiations.

between Goa and the Indian courts. The presence of these elements also helped the Portuguese authorities to develop an image which was quite familiar to the Reis Vizinhos. The Portuguese engagement in the exchange of sagoates, a practice which played a crucial role in the diplomatic strategies and interests of the Estado, is a good example of this attempt to present the Portuguese Crown according to local political traditions. However, this interaction was somehow problematic and was not entirely accepted by the Portuguese authorities in Lisbon. João V’s suspicions of the true nature of the sagoate were largely based on the notion that the local practices diminished the Estado’s image and questioned Portuguese (or European) ideas of kingship and political prestige. These suspicions caused some tensions between Goa and Lisbon. It would also be interesting to compare, in a future research, the diplomatic practices and the rituals of the Estado da Índia with the Portuguese colonies in Africa, where there were also regular diplomatic contacts with local rulers.

Another important element of the Goan ceremonies was ostentation. As in the baroque Lima studied by Alejandra Osorio, the imperial baroque in Goa used ostentation to build and accumulate the symbolic capital which was believed was necessary to protect the Estado da Índia from the transformations of the Indian political scene.²⁰ The lavishness of most ceremonies staged by the Portuguese authorities was therefore inspired by a need to hide the economic stagnation of the Estado as well as to state the power of the Portuguese monarchy. Besides the influence of the baroque, the opulent atmosphere which surrounded the civic life of Goa was influenced by a perception that Asians were obsessed with luxury and all Oriental rulers measured the superiority of a nation through its capacity to display wealth. Francisco de Sousa, in his Oriente Conquistado, for example, mentioned that ‘Orientals naturally despise and abhor poverty’.²¹ Early modern Europe, however, also shared this obsession with wealth. Nations and dynasties were also ranked according to power and wealth. For most early modern Portuguese, for example, the inability to match the level expenditure with one’s social position was a sign of demerit.²² The lavish display of Goan wealth aimed to persuade, or to convince, the audience of the Goan ceremonies of the greatness, power and imperial nature of the Portuguese monarchy. This utilization of

---

wealth has something of Thorstein Veblen’s notion of conspicuous consumption as an ostentatious display and waste of possessions and goods to demonstrate wealth, power and status. Indeed, the pomp which surrounded the rites and ceremonies of the Estado seemed to be related to Maravall’s argument that the baroque concern for ostentation was related to a desire for a ‘triumphant affirmation’ in a world that was affected by crisis and change.23

**The internal audience**

Like other cities of the Portuguese overseas empire, Goa had a military, economic and administrative function, but it also served a symbolic function by representing the power and authority of the Crown as the capital of the Estado da India.24 The symbolic power transmitted by the ceremonies of the Estado, in particular those focused on the viceroy, was not only aimed at the *Reis Vizinhos*, but also at the subjects of the Portuguese Crown in India. The multiracial character of Goan society, the rivalries between *reinóis* (newcomers from Portugal) and *indiáticos* (persons born of Portuguese parents in India), the presence of a Hindu element whose loyalty was not certain, and the existence of different factions surrounding the viceroy and other actors such as the archbishop or the judges, were often perceived as threats to the social and political order of the Estado. In a society like Goa which was based on complex social, racial and religious divisions, with a great potential for conflict, the celebration of royal power and the presence of the king’s delegate, the viceroy, aimed to reduce the risk of a collapse of the social and political order of the Estado. The viceregal ceremonies and the celebrations of the royal life cycle were, as Stuart B. Schwartz pointed out in his studies on colonial Brazil, moments ‘when the reciprocal support of the *republic* and the king was reaffirmed’, contributing to a revalidation of the ties between colony and metropolis. Indeed, the colonial ceremonies were intended to promote patriotic feelings and eradicate any potential for dissent or rebellion.25 The audience of the viceregal *entrada*, for example, by mirroring the social and political organisation of the Estado,

---

presented a more than perfect image of a harmonious society which was loyal to its king and Church. The celebrations of João V’s birthday also had a similar function.

This concern for securing the loyalty of the colonial was particularly visible during the Joanine years. In comparison with the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the ceremonies related to the royal family were more luxurious and frequent during the reign of João V. The imperial ideal and absolutist power pursued by the Portuguese king led to some innovations in the Portuguese overseas empire. For the first time, all the events related to the life of the monarch and his family were celebrated throughout the empire. João was, for example, the first king whose funeral was celebrated across the empire.\(^{26}\) In fact, the Joanine ceremonies seemed to have been planned for a vast imperial audience, and aimed of creating a sense of unity between the court in Lisbon and the different parts of the empire.

Some aspects of the symbolic ideology promoted by the viceregal ceremonies in Goa were quite similar to the beliefs transmitted by the rituals performed by Spanish viceroys in New Spain and Peru. The sixty years of Habsburg rule in Portugal introduced to the Estado da Índia some features of the Mexican and Peruvian viceroylatories, as the *Ceremonial de que usaõ os Senhores V.Reys e Capitaens Generaes da India* suggests. Indeed, the Spanish Habsburgs tried to establish in the colonies a model of government that would be able to reproduce the ideas of kingship that dominated Iberian early modern political thought.\(^{27}\) As in Goa, the viceroys in New Spain, as Alejandro Cañeque noted in his studies on colonial Mexico, were forced to emphasize their power symbolically, in order to protect their public image as the ultimate representation of the supreme authority and power of the monarch.\(^{28}\) A comparative study of the Spanish and Portuguese viceroylatories in the Americas and Asia would shed a new light on the similarities and differences of the Iberian solutions for the problems of colonial government.


\(^{28}\) Ibid., p. 128.
The importance of the *royal ditado*

The Estado da Índia was particularly concerned about presenting the King of Portugal to the major Asian powers in an effective and compelling way. João V, as well as other Portuguese monarchs, was a distant and unknown monarch for most Asian rulers who only had a direct contact with the Crown through the mediation of the viceroy at Goa. The creation of the viceroy as alter-ego of the monarch is a reflection of this concern in ensuring that Asian rulers would be able to contact the Portuguese Monarchy and experience its power and majesty – hence the use of the expression the ‘Majestic State’ by most Portuguese officials in their correspondence with the local potentates. Viceroyes, factors, ambassadors, generals and captains were extremely concerned about choosing the rights words to present the Portuguese monarch to Asian sovereigns.

According to a French missionary, the Portuguese were quite proud and protective of the supposed prestigious image of their king in Asia: ‘To talk to a Portuguese of the power and authority of his king, is to inflate his heart to such a point that for him there is no excess to maintain it’ (*Parler à un portugais de la puissance et de l’autorité de son roi, c’est lui enfler tellement le coeur que pour la soutenir, il n’y a point d’excès où il ne s’abandonne*).29 Much of this pride in the authority of the Portuguese monarchs was based on the royal *ditado*, the list of titles and privileges of the Portuguese Crown. The royal *ditado* with its sovereignty claims over Africa and Asia was an attempt to make the Crown’s imperial project public, and promote a tacit recognition from other powers of Portugal’s supposed rights.30 As Saldanha pointed out, the royal *ditado* was a ‘powerful juridical-political fiction’31, which was created to increase the prestige of the Crown and legitimate colonial expansion. Despite being the result of military conquests and diplomatic agreements established by the Portuguese Crown with non-European rulers, the validity and longevity of the titles and privileges claimed by Lisbon required a continuous effort from the Portuguese colonial authorities. To be valid, the *ditado* required the preservation of the *conquistas*, the expansion of the colonial territories and the recognition by Asian and African rulers of the superiority of the Portuguese Crown through treaties of alliance or vassalage.

From the early years of the Portuguese presence in Asia the Estado da Índia faced the problem of presenting the monarch and the ditado in a way that could be immediately recognised and accepted by Asian rulers. Albuquerque’s son commented that his father ‘while governing India had always used artifices with Kings and Lords to scare them and bring them to friendship and maintain the authority of the Estado of His Majesty Manuel I’. 32 This strategy was continued by Albuquerque’s successors and was still used by Joanne viceroyos. One of these artifices was to present the royal ditado whenever the name of the King of Portugal was referred in the Goa’s correspondence with local rulers. The Count of Ericeira, for example, before addressing the Mughal emperor, presented João V by enunciating all the titles of the Joanne ditado: ‘By the grace of God in Europe reigns the very high and very powerful and magnificent João the Fifth Lord of the four parts of the world, King of Portugal and the Algarves and of either sides of the sea, in Africa Lord of Guinea and Lord of Conquest, Navigation and Commerce in Ethiopia, Arabia, Persia, and India and Brazil and the Coast of America’. 33 Another artifice was to mention some of the supposed privileges of the Portuguese Crown in the Indian Ocean. In a letter to the Sidi, Viceroy César de Menezes reminded him that the ‘very high and very powerful king of Portugal is the lord of the seas of India, and is recognised as such by the great Mughal king and the magnificent king of Persia who do not exempt themselves from obtaining cartazes for their ships’. 34

The importance of the ditado to the diplomatic influence of the Estado in the subcontinent and in the Indian Ocean was behind the imposition of relations of vassalage, the enforcement of the cartaz system and the disastrous attempts to control the Swahili Coast. The claims of the Portuguese monarchs to be ‘Lords of Conquest’ in Asia instigated Goa to pursue the establishment of relations of vassalage with minor potentates. The treaties of vassalage were probably the most effective instrument of Portuguese colonialism in India, allowing the Estado to create a network of vassals


34 “Ao estimável Sidy Acut Can general da armada do magnifico e poderozo rey Mogor”, BFUP, 46, p. 214. (o muito alto e poderozo rey de Portugal hé senhor dos mares da India, e assim o acreditão o grandiozo rey Mogor, e magnifico rey da Percia pois se não izentão de que os seos barcos tomem cartazes).
which regularly supplied Goa with essential goods such as spices and rice, besides offering evidence of the claims of the Portuguese monarchs to be ‘kings of kings’. The existence of the *cartaz* allowed the Portuguese monarch to justify his claims to be the ‘Lord of Navigation and Commerce of Ethiopia, Arabia, Persia and India’, and legitimated the interferences made by the Portuguese armadas in the commercial life of the Indian Ocean. Besides being part of a project to re-shape the Portuguese presence and revitalise the Estado’s economy through the military control the Swahili Coast and the imposition of a Portuguese commercial monopoly along the east coast of Africa, the attempt to recover Mombasa was related to the title of ‘Lord of Conquest’. Indeed, the expedition organised by Viceroy Saldanha da Gama, and the projects developed by his predecessors, often mentioned the importance of a victory against the Omani and the local tribes to recover the military prestige of the Portuguese, which had been seriously affected by the defeats imposed by the VOC and the Marathas.

These efforts made by the Portuguese to materialise the *ditado* through military activities were far from being successful. The emergence of the Marathas as the main military power in India, and their victories over the Portuguese had discredited Goa in the eyes the friends and servants of the Estado, and invited them to renegotiate their status or cut their ties with the Portuguese Crown. Despite its longevity, the *cartaz* system was becoming gradually ineffective due to the competition from naval passports from the European companies and the attempts made by local potentates to discredit and delegitimate the Portuguese passports. The Mombasa expedition inflicted profound damage on the military capacity and prestige of the Estado, exposing and confirming the Estado’s incapacity to renew its forces and protect all its territories.

Outside the world of ritual, the royal *ditado* was heavily challenged and its unsuccessful materialisation questioned the imperial project developed by the Portuguese Crown and the image constructed by João V as the ruler of an imperial power. The contradiction between the claims of the Portuguese monarch and the political and military reality of the subcontinent and the West Indian Ocean was a problem with a difficult solution. In the face of the inability to materialise the ambitious messages of the Estado’s ceremonies, Goa was forced to maintain the investment in ritual in order to control the damage caused by the disasters of Mombasa and Bassein and to preserve the image of the Portuguese monarch before local rulers.
A distinctive strategy?

Investment in ritual and the elaboration of lavish ceremonies were not an exclusively Portuguese phenomena. Philip Stern’s recent study of the evolution of the EIC argues that Madras and Bombay also made a similar investment in ritual. The charter which confirmed the municipality of Madras, for example, was announced with all ‘due solemnitye’ and state honours.\(^{35}\) Like the Portuguese viceroy, the high-ranking members of the EIC administration in India had special privileges. Like the Lord Mayor and aldermen of London, the members of the Madras administration had the right to have umbrellas carried before them, as well as ‘decently furnished’ horses.\(^{36}\) The diplomatic audiences of the EIC on Sumatra, the *bitchaus*, involved lavish retinues, and a feast organised according to rigid precedence rules that highlighted the deputy governor.\(^{37}\) Regular exchange of gifts was also a common practice. As one official mentioned, gifts were useful to ‘make them your instruments to keep the people in subjection while you governe them and keep them in dependence upon you’. Gift-giving was, therefore, ‘the ancient and true method for Europeans to maintain their Dominion in those Countryes’.\(^{38}\)

Another good example of the importance of ritual and ostentation for the European powers in India was John Surman’s embassy to the Mughal court in 1715. Surman was instructed to offer gifts estimated to have been worth around 200,000 rupees. Since Surman was sensitive to the reputation of the EIC as a mere merchant company, it was therefore necessary to ‘appear in a more publick manner than its possible to doe at presente, that we may have the greater respect from the government’.\(^{39}\) To ensure this, Surman and his entourage crossed Delhi in silver palanquins followed by 160 wagons carrying the gifts to the court, 15 camels, 10 carts and 22 oxen pulling cannons. Surman made his public entry escorted by drums and trumpets, and rupees were thrown into the crowd to ‘aggrandize’ the first appearance of the ambassador. The *gurzbardar* who brought the news of the firman granted to Surman was greeted in Bombay by a procession of *palanquins* and followed by soldiers, local

---


\(^{36}\) Ibid., p. 94.

\(^{37}\) Ibid., p. 96.

\(^{38}\) Ibid., p. 96.

\(^{39}\) Ibid., p. 201.
merchants, flags, trumpeters and ‘Country Musik’. At a ceremonial pavilion adorned with English textiles, Charles Boone awaited the gurzhar Dar in a ‘chair of state’ and received the sarapa, the ceremonial dressing, and gifts were exchanged. When Charles Boddam, an EIC captain, arrived at Bombay with the text of the firman, Boone met him in a palanquin called the ‘Chariot of State’ accompanied by 50 grenadiers, the Bombay Council, naval officers, native soldiers ‘with Colours and Trumpets’, four state horses, and a procession of the EIC’s native servants ‘with their swords drawn’. Boddam presented the firman to Boone on a ‘satin-lined silver plate’ which was then ceremoniously placed on a velvet stool. To reinforce the importance of the firman, the fort and the ships fired salutes and an ‘Entertainment to all the principal English inhabitants’ was offered during the night. At Madras, the celebrations included a procession to the ‘Tipping Garden’ and a lavish banquet offered to the English, Portuguese, Armenian and Muslim communities which included a bonfire, fireworks provided by the ‘Black Merchants’ and a ‘feasting of the soldiers with tubs of punch’. The Compagnie des Indes also organised sumptuous ceremonies. In 1749, Dupleix received Mozuffer Jung, the Subadar of the Carnatic, in a lavish scenario that was aimed at reflecting ‘the natural consequence of a wealth and influence based upon a power that nothing in the south of India could resist’. Once again, as in the Portuguese and the English case, the exhibition of wealth was related to an attempt to define a prestigious image in the Indian political theatre.

According to Jean-Baptiste Tavernier, the Dutch governors of Batavia followed a public image of distinction and authority that was not far from the Portuguese viceroys. The French traveller mentioned that the governor and his wife used to travel in a carriage ‘drawn by six horses’ which was followed by the councillors on horseback and richly-clad squadrons of cavalry and infantry. In the eighteenth century, the ritual surrounding the governor-general and the councillors was more elaborated. As Jean Gelman Taylor pointed out, the first half of the eighteenth century was a period marked by an ‘apotheosis of the governor general’. From 1719 onwards, it became obligatory for all to alight from their carriages or to dismount from their horses when the progress of a senior official of the VOC was announced. In 1729 it was decreed that only senior

40 Ibid., pp. 201-203.
officials and their wives were allowed to enter in the Castle of Batavia on horseback or carriages.\textsuperscript{44}

Historians such as Michael Pearson have commented that the Portuguese presence after the seventeenth century was something close to an ‘\textit{opera bouffe}’\textsuperscript{45}, but the adoption of a similar approach by the EIC indicates that ritual and pomp were relevant instruments at the service of the expansionist ambitions of the European powers in India. Moreover, the implementation of a similar strategy by the other European companies questions how effective was the use of ritual by the Estado, and what were the differences in the rituals performed by the Portuguese and their European rivals.

Apart from evoking a glorious past, the ritual language of the Estado da Índia was structured according to an articulation between the royal political body and the viceroyalty. In other words, the Estado was a replication of the Portuguese Monarchy in Asia. It was this royal nature of the Estado da Índia that allowed Goa to claim a prestigious position and differentiate its presence from the other Europeans. The fact that the Estado was the dominion of a monarch, and not of a commercial company as the other possessions controlled by the VOC and the EIC, was constantly present in the rites and ceremonies of the Estado. However, the other European powers in Asia also explored the diplomatic advantages of being associated with a monarch. The embassy of Sir Thomas Roe to the Mughal court is a good example of how the EIC was able to relate itself to royal dignity. The royal card was also played by the French in Asia. The 1684 French embassy to Siam led by Chevalier de Chaumont and Abbé de Choisy, for example, was presented as mission from Louis XIV to the Siamese ruler.

In the eighteenth century, the great difference between the rituals of the Estado and the ones performed by the EIC, the VOC or the French \textit{Compagnie des Indes} was, therefore, in their aims and audiences. While the rituals of the European companies were particularly concerned about demonstrating their power and success to an Asian audience, the Portuguese rites and ceremonies were aimed not only at the \textit{Reis Vizinhos}, but also at a metropolitan and European audience. During a period when the possibility of selling the Estado to an European rival was debated in Lisbon, and the Portuguese

\textsuperscript{44} Jean Gelman Taylor, \textit{The Social World of Batavia: European and Eurasian in Dutch Asia} (Madison, Wisconsin: University of Wisconsin Press, 1983), pp. 56-57.

faced more military disasters at the hands of local potentates such as the Marathas or Oman, the detailed description of sumptuous ceremonies, and the somehow euphoric accounts of the military successes of viceroys offered to the Portuguese an opportunity to present a different image of their presence in India. The detailed descriptions of viceregal ceremonies and diplomatic receptions or embassies made by the authors of the panegyrics and accounts published in Lisbon, as well as the translations into French and Italian of the panegyrics dedicated to the victories of the Marquis of Castelo (which included detailed descriptions of some rites related to the viceroy as well as the triumphal parades organised by the Estado to celebrate the conquest of Alorna)⁴⁶, suggest that the Portuguese authorities used the rituals staged in Goa to influence the perceptions that the subjects and rivals of the Portuguese Crown had of the Estado da Índia.

Bibliography

Primary Sources

Manuscripts

Academia das Ciências de Lisboa (ACL)

ACL, Cod. 273 – *Cerimonial de que usaõ os Senhores V.Reys e Capitaens Generaes da India.*
ACL, Série Azul, Cod. 393 – Relação de todos os Sucessos que Houve no Tempo do Governo do Excelentissimo Senhor Vasco Fernandes César de Menezes, Vice-Rei e Capitão Geral da India.
ACL, Série Vermelha, Cod. 547 - *Noticias da India desde a monçaõ de 1723, athe a de 1726.*
ACL, Cod. Cod. 552 – *Discurso que o Illustrissimo e Excelentissimo Senhor Marquez de Castelo Novo V. Rey Da India Fez no dia IX de Novembro aos Dezembargadores a primeira vez que foi á Relação.*
ACL, 612B CUNHA, D. Luís: *Noticia enviada por Sebastião José de Carvalho e Melo acerca da perda de Goa (3/05/1740).*

Arquivo da Casa dos Condes de Sabugosa/São Lourenço (ACCSSL)

ACCSSL, Inventário nº 92, A.3.21.

Arquivo Histórico Ultramarino (AHU)

AHU, Codice (Cod.) 213.
AHU, INDIA, Caixa. 86, Doc. 4.
AHU, INDIA, MAÇO 101, Doc.3, 3 Janeiro 1711.
AHU, INDIA, MAÇO Nº 119, Doc. 2 Abril 1723
AHU, INDIA, MAÇO 156, Doc. 29 Abril 1725 - “Aos Illm. de Snore Gouernadores do Estado da India por S. Magestade Portuguesa”.
AHU, INDIA, MAÇO 156, Doc. 29 Abril 1725 - “Carta que Francisco de Mello Capitão-mor da Armada do Nort escreveu aos Governadores do Estado da India”.
AHU, INDIA, MAÇO 156, Doc. 29 Abril 1725 - “Copia dos Capitulos da Carta que João Gomes Phebos escreveu aos Gouerndores do Estado da India aos 15 de Fevereiro de 1725”.
AHU, INDIA, MAÇO 156, Doc. 29 Abril 1725 – “O VRey da India João Saldanha da Gama da conta a VMag.de por este Consº em carta de 16 de Janeyro deste prezente anno”.
AHU, INDIA, MAÇO 156, Doc. 29 Abril 1725 “Carta que escreveu aos Sños Gouerndores Arcebispo Primas, Dom Christovão de Mello, e Cristovão Luís de Andrês”.
AHU, INDIA, MAÇO 156, Doc. 29 Abril 1725 -“Carta que o Concelho Superior da Companhia Franceza em Surrate escreveu ao Arcebispo Primas de Goa”, fols. 4-4v.
AHU, INDIA, MAÇO 156, Doc. 29 Abril 1725, “Diz Jacques de Montagnac Consul geral da nação Franceza nesta Corte”.

Biblioteca Nacional de Portugal (BNP)

BNP. Cod. 257, *Tratado das Paxes*.
BNP. Cod. 465, *Notícias da Índia*.
BNP. Cod. 1445, *Instrução que deixou o Conde da Ericeira Vice Rey e Capitam General da India A Francisco José de Sampayo e Castro que lhe foy suceder no dito emprego no anno de 1721*.
BNP. Cod. 6427 - Carta N.º 4, fol. 24
BNP. Cod. 8529 – Carta N.º 52.
BNP. Cod. 9587 – *Carta que nas Naós da India Se meteu por Industria entre As mais que vinhaó para El Rey, para assim hir a Sua Maó, Na Ocaziaó em que o Marques de Abrantes pertendia vender a India Aos Holandezes Fingindo ser escrita Por San Francisco Xavier Anno de 1724*.
BNP, F. 3087, *Embaixada do Marquez de Fontes*.

British Library (BL)

BL, I/3/148 – *Victories of the Portuguese in Asia (1717-1720)*.
BL, I/3/157 – *Notícias da India (1717-1750)*.

Historical Archives of Goa (HAG)

*Cartas e Ordens*

HAG, Cartas e Ordens, 792, “Carta do Vice-Rei Francisco José de Sampaio e Castro ao Arcebispo D. Inácio de Santa Teresa, 25/05/1722”
HAG, Cartas e Ordens, 799, “Carta do Vice-Rei Conde de Sandomil a El-Rey de Canará, 1/07/1739”.
HAG, *Cartas e Ordens*, 799, “Carta do Vice-Rei Conde de Sandomil ao Feitor de Mangalor, 29/03/1741”.

*Cartazes*

HAG, *Cartazes*, 1363, “*Cartaz ao Rey Mogor, 3/09/1726*”.
HAG, *Cartazes*, 1363, “*Cartaz a Nirvanyaoeste morador em Bidanura terras do Rey do Canara, 1/02/1707?*”.
HAG, *Cartazes*, 1363, “*Cartaz a Mucu Xetty da nasção Venio morador em Barcellor, undated*”.

*Livro das Monções* (MR)

HAG, MR 71, “*Carta de Sua Magestade para o Vice-Rei Caetano de Mello de Castro, 23/02/1707*”.
HAG, MR 72, “*Carta de Sua Magestade ao Vice-Rei D. Rodrigo da Costa, 14/12/1707*”.
HAG, MR 72, “*Carta de Sua Magestade ao Vice-Rei D. Rodrigo da Costa, 23/01/1708*”.
HAG, MR 73, “*Sobre o barco que foi reprezado na costa do Norte pelo Capitão mor da Armada Antonio de Amaral Sarmento, 13/12/1708*”.
HAG, MR 73, “Sobre os particulares da Fortaleza de Mombaça, e o estado em que ella se acha, 28-30/12/1708”, f.
HAG, MR 74A, “Carta de Francisco de Mello e Sousa ao Vice-Rei D. Rodrigo da Costa”, 30/6/1709.
HAG, MR 74A, “Carta de Francisco Mello e Sousa ao Vice-Rei D. Rodrigo da Costa, 30/06/1709”.
HAG, MR 74A, “Carta do Vice-Rei D. Rodrigo da Costa a Sua Magestade, 21/11/1709”.
HAG, MR 74A, “Carta de Frei Manoel de Santo Alberto ao Vice-Rei D. Rodrigo da Costa, 18/05/1709”.
HAG, MR 75 “Carta do Vice-Rei D. Rodrigo da Costa a Sua Magestade, 29/11/1709”.
HAG, MR 75, “Carta do Vice-Rei D. Rodrigo da Costa a Sua Magestade, 12/12/1710”.
HAG, MR 75, “Carta do Vice-Rei D. Rodrigo da Costa a Sua Magestade, 12/12/1710”.
HAG, MR 80, “Carta de Sua Magestade ao Vice-Rei Vasco Fernandes César de Menezes, 4/09/1713”.
HAG, MR 80, “Carta do Vice-Rei Vasco Fernandes César de Menezes a Sua Magestade, 10/01/1715”.
HAG, MR 83, “Carta de Sua Magestade ao Vice-Rei Conde da Ericeira, 18/3/1718”.
HAG, MR 84B, “Carta de Sua Magestade ao Vice-Rei Conde da Ericeira, 9/03/1718”.
HAG, MR 84B, “Carta de Sua Magestade ao Vice-Rei Conde da Ericeira”.
HAG, MR 84B, “Carta do Vice-Rei Conde da Ericeira a Sua Magestade, 8/01/1719”.
HAG, MR 88, “Carta do Vice-Rei Francisco José de Sampaio e Castro a Sua Magestade, 5/01/1723”.
HAG, MR 89B, “Carta dos Governadores Interinos a Sua Magestade, 10/01/1724”.
HAG, MR 92, “Carta do Vice-Rei João Saldanha da Gama a Sua Magestade, 8/10/1725”.
HAG, MR 93B, “Carta do Vice-Rei João Saldanha da Gama a Sua Magestade, 20/01/1727”.
HAG, MR 94B, “Carta de El-Rey de Quíloa ao Vice-Rei João Saldanha da Gama, 25/05/1726”.
HAG, MR 94B, “Carta de Manoel Tavares ao Vice-Rei João Saldanha da Gama, 27/08/1727”.
HAG, MR 94B, “Carta do Vice-Rei João Saldanha da Gama a Sua Magestade, 17/01/1728”.
HAG, MR 95B, “Carta d’El-Rey de Zanzibar ao Vice-Rei João Saldanha da Gama, 5/08/1728”.
HAG, MR 95B, “Carta d’El-Rey de Zanzibar ao Vice-Rei João Saldanha da Gama, 5/08/1728”.
HAG, MR 95B, “Carta d’El-Rey de Zanzibar ao Vice-Rei João Saldanha da Gama, 5/08/1728”.
HAG, MR 95B, “Carta de Manoel da Costa Ribeiro ao Vice-Rei João Saldanha da Gama, 6/08/1728”.
HAG, MR 95B, “Carta do Vice-Rei João Saldanha da Gama a Sua Magestade, 20/01/1729”.
HAG, MR 102B, “Carta do Vice-Rei Conde Sandomil ao Secretário de Estado Diogo de Mendonça Corte Real, 30/01/1734”.
HAG, MR 105, “Carta do Vice-Rei Conde Sandomil a Sua Magestade, 20/01/1733”.
HAG, MR 105, “Carta do Vice-Rei Conde Sandomil a Sua Magestade, 20/01/1733”.
HAG, MR 106, “Carta do Vice-Rei Conde Sandomil a Sua Magestade, 20/12/1736”.
Livro dos Reis Vizinhos

HAG, 976, Reis Vizinhos Nº 9.
HAG, 978, Reis Vizinhos Nº 11.

Regimentos

HAG, Regimentos, 1426, “Instrução que se deu ao Padre João de Abreu da Companhia de Jesus para os negócios que foi propor e alcançar d’El Rey Mogor”.
HAG, Regimentos, 1429, “Instrução que se deo ao Padre Manoel de Figueiredo da Companhia de Jesus que hora vay para a Corte del Rey Mogor”.
HAG, Regimentos, 1429, “Regimento que se deo a Antonio de Albuquerque Coelho, Capitão General do Reino de Pate”.
HAG, Regimentos, 1429, “Regimento que se remeteo a Antonio Cayetano de Mello de Castro, Governador da Fortaleza de Mombaça”.
HAG, Regimentos, 1430, “Instrucção que se deo aos capitães das Armadas, undated”
HAG, Regimentos, 1430, “Regimento que se deo às Armadas, undated”.

Vassalagem

HAG, 652, Auto de Juramento de Vassalagem que fazem a El Rey Nosso Senhor.

Printed Sources


Alorna, Marquês de. Instrucção dada pelo Excelentíssimo Marquez de Alorna ao seu successor no governo deste Estado da India, o Excelentíssimo Marquez de Tavora (Goa, 1836).

Anonymuos, Relaçam da Embaixada que o Sunda depois de vencido das armas Portuguesas mandou aos Illustríssimo, e Excelentíssimo Marquez de Tavora, Vice-Rey da India e Capitam General daquelle Estado (Lisbon, 1751).


*Gazeta de Lisboa Occidental*, Nº 10, 10 March 1729.

*Gazeta de Lisboa Occidental*, Nº 13, 30 March 1730.

*Glossário Luso-Asiático* ed. Sebastião Dalgado (Hamburg : Helmut Buske, 1928)

Laval, François Pyrard de. *Viagem de Francisco Pyrard, de Laval: contendo a noticia de sua navegação às Indias orientaes, ilhas de Maldiva, Maluco, e ao Brazil, e os diferentes casos, que lhe aconteceram na mesma viagem nos dez annos que andou nestes paizes: (1601 a 1611)* com a descrição exacta dos costumes, leis, usos, policia,
e governo: do trato e commercio, que nelles ha: dos animaes, arvores, fructas, e outras singularidades, que alli se encontram, Tomo I (Nova Goa: Imprensa Nacional, 1858).


Mascarenhas, José Freire Monterroio. Epanaphora Indica, Pt. I. (Lisbon: Francisco da Silva, 1746).

Mascarenhas, José Freire Monterroio. Epanaphora Indica, Pt. II (Lisbon: Francisco da Silva, 1747).

Mascarenhas, José Freire Monterroio. Epanaphora Indica, Pt. III (Lisbon: Francisco da Silva, 1748),

Mascarenhas, José Freire Monterroio. Relaçam dos Progressos das Armas Portuguezas no Estado da India no anno de 1713...(Lisbon: Officina Pascoal da Sylva, 1716).


Secondary Sources


Brazão, Eduardo. Apontamentos Para a História das Relações Diplomáticas de Portugal com a China, 1516-1753 (Lisbon: Agência Geral das Colónias, 1949).

Brazão, Eduardo. Dom João V e a Santa Sé: As relações externas de Portugal com o governo pontifício de 1706 a 1750 (Coimbra:Coimbra Editora, 1937).


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


Hunter, William. “Some Accounts of the Astronomical Labours of Jayasimha, Raja of Ambere or Jayanagara”, *Asiatic Researches*, 5 (1797), pp. 177-211.


Lobato, Alexandre. *Relações Luso-Maratas* (Lisbon Centro de Estudos Históricos Ultramarinos, 1965)


Luz, Francisco Paulo Mendes da. *Livro das Fortalezas que a Coroa de Portugal tem nas partes da Índia* (Lisbon: Centro de Estudos Historicos Ultramarinos, 1960).


Malleson, George Bruce. History of the French in India: From the Founding of Pondichery in 1674 to the Capture of that Place in 1761 (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1868).

Maravall, José António. Culture of the baroque: analysis of a historical structure (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1986).


Noronha, António José de. Diário dos Sucessos da Viagem que Fez do Reino de Portugal para a Cidade de Goa, D. António José de Noronha, Bispo de Halicarnasse, Principiada aos 21 de Abril de 1773 ed. Carmen M. Radulet (Lisbon: Fundação Oriente, 1995);
Noronha, António José de. *Obras Políticas* ed. Carmen M. Radulet (Lisbon: Fundação Oriente, 2001);


Santos, Catarina Madeira. “‘Goa é a chave de toda a Índia’: perfil político da capital do Estado da Índia” (Lisbon: CNCDP, 1999).


The Koran; commonly called the Alcoran of Mohammed: translated from the original Arabic, Volume 2, translated by George Sale (London: T. Maiden Sherbourne-Lane, 1801).

Thomaz, Luis Filipe. De Ceuta a Timor (Lisbon: Difel, 1994).


