INTRODUCTION

In the annals of the world history India’s relation with Portugal remained an affair of age-old. These two states have been maintaining their historical interactions for more than five hundred years. The relationship has experienced different vicissitudes but the basis has always remained intact. These two countries are very much connected with each other through political, economic, social, cultural and various aspects of life.\(^1\) The present research is an attempt to review all of these aspects of the relationship between them.

The interaction between India and Portugal is an outcome of the maritime activities\(^2\) of the Portuguese during the ‘Age of the Discoveries’. The Portuguese led the way in this mission for a number of reasons. First, Portugal’s location on the southwestern most edge of the European landmass placed the country at the maritime crossroads between the Atlantic and the Mediterranean. Secondly, Portugal was by the fifteenth century a compact, unified kingdom led by an energetic, military aristocracy, which, having no more territory on the peninsula to conquer, sought new fields of action overseas. Thirdly, Portuguese kings were motivated by a deeply held belief that their role in history was as the standard-bearers of Christianity against the Muslims. Fourthly, Portugal’s kings had, since the founding of the monarchy, encouraged maritime activities. King Dinis (1279-1325) founded the Portuguese navy in 1317, and Fernando Melo Gomes encouraged the construction of larger ships and founded a system of maritime insurance in 1323. Finally, Portugal’s new inventions in nautical sciences like the astrolabe, the quadrant and the lantine-rigged caravel, made them to perform more perfectly and paved the ways of winning the high seas.

The Crown of Portugal wanted to develop the country as a maritime power.\(^3\) At the same time, it wished to participate in a general war of Christianity against the Moors. Hence, Prince Henry\(^4\) (1394-1460) and Manuel I (1481-1495)\(^5\) tried very hard to find the mythical Prester John, ruler of Christian Ethiopia, who in the eyes of that fifteenth century Europe was considered as a great and powerful emperor. The possibility of producing as well as procuring several valuable goods in cheap price motivated the commercial interests of the Portuguese. These include sugar, slaves, exotic animal skins and spices. There was also an urge to search for new sources of
gold. However, in 20 May 1498, the arrival of Vasco da Gama (1460-1524) to the coast of Malabar, in South India opened a new era in the relations between Asia and Europe. The commercial, cultural and political activities of the Portuguese began to develop from Goa, the seat of the first archdiocese created in Asia in modern times.

In India, the Portuguese introduced new methods in agriculture, opened new industries, established new customs, taught a new religion and countenanced a policy of inter-marriages between themselves and the natives. The consequences of each of these spheres of activities of the Portuguese are still manifesting today in India. Other Europeans, who entered into India, often modified or sometimes amplified the works of the Portuguese. A Portuguese stamp can be discovered on whatever they came in contact with. India has incorporated the Portuguese culture by their names, their blood, their institutions, churches, languages, as well as their way of life, almost automatically through the evolutionary nature of history.

In the sixteenth century, the Portuguese made their maiden visit to Bengal. It was in many ways an important period in the political, social, religious, and economic history of Bengal. At the beginning of the seventeenth century, the Portuguese occupied a position in Bengal comparable to that of the British in the middle of the eighteenth century with their settlements and factories not only at the principal ports, Hughli and Chittagong but also at many important centres of Eastern and Western Bengal and as far up the Ganges as Patna. Some of the Portuguese settlements in Bengal became virtually independent of the Mughal rulers of India, being directly subject for a time, to the jurisdiction of the Portuguese Government of Ceylon.

The Portuguese were the first to introduce Christianity in Bengal and the Missionaries of different orders were active in all their settlements. Christian churches and settlements still existing in Bengal are the most conspicuous and enduring memorials of Portuguese influence in the province. The first type-printed works in the Bengali language were a Catechism, a Compendium of the Mysteries of the Faith and a vocabulary published at Lisbon in 1743. It is difficult to realize now, that at once Portuguese was the common language of the important centers of maritime commerce in India. It was spoken by the Europeans of all nations, who came for trade in this country. Even the Indians adopted the Portuguese language who did business with them. Current Indian languages contain many Portuguese words, connected with
trade or the Christian religion or names of articles of common use imported from Europe.

Portuguese were the foremost Europeans who portrayed the mystery of the East to the West. In fact through them the western world gained the first impression of the East. These impressions were more profound and lasting than it is generally acknowledged. Particularly, the Portuguese as pioneers of European Commerce and Culture in India has not perhaps been sufficiently recognized. It may truly be said that they paved the way for the commercial ventures of the Dutch, French, English and other European nations in India. There are immense interesting elements in the Indo-Portuguese Relationship, which have been left for the scholars to study.

The Portuguese were not only the foremost colonizers. In 1947, when India obtained her independence, the French left with grace as did the British but the Portuguese who had always regarded Goa as ‘the overseas territory of Portugal’ and as such an integral part of their country, refused to oblige Jawaharlal Nehru (1947-1964), the first Prime Minister of India. They stayed up to 19 November 1961, when Goa was finally liberated. So in this regard, Portuguese were the last Europeans to leave India as colonizers. They ruled Goa for about four hundred and fifty years. This long time span itself is a signifier of the strong basis of the Indo-Portugal attachments.

Diplomatic relations between India and Portugal were established in 1949. However, following certain problems with the Salazar regime on negotiations over Goa, India closed its Embassy in Lisbon on June 11, 1953. India annexed the small enclaves Dadra and Nagar Haveli from the Portuguese on August 2, 1954. The Portuguese Embassy in Delhi was closed in August 1955. All diplomatic and consular links were finally severed on September 1, 1955. Again, on December 19, 1961, the Indian army marched into Goa, Daman and Diu and annexed these territories.

Following the Carnation Revolution of April 25, 1974 overthwithstanding the dictatorship and the ushering-in of a democratic process in Portugal, the diplomatic relations between India and Portugal were re-established. A Treaty to this effect was signed in New Delhi on December 31, 1974. The Embassies of the two countries were reopened; the Indian Embassy in Lisbon in June 1975, and the Portuguese Embassy in New Delhi in July 1975. In 1975, the Foreign Minister of the two countries, Mario Soares (1974-1975 and 1977-1978) for Portugal and Yeshwantrao Chavan (October 10, 1974-March 24, 1977) for India, signed a treaty, which finally paved way for full
diplomatic relationships between the two countries. It is worth to note that since the 1975 rapprochements Portugal has afforded India significant assistance concerning access to the European Economic Community.\textsuperscript{17}

Owing to a prolonged period of active political and economic instability in Portugal immediately following the revolution, the Indo-Portuguese bilateral interaction remained at low ebb. Nevertheless, a bilateral Agreement on Trade, Economic, Industrial and Technical Cooperation\textsuperscript{18} was signed in 1977. A Joint Committee established under this Agreement had its first and only meeting in November 1981.

A Cultural Agreement\textsuperscript{19} was signed in 1980, under which several Cultural Exchange Programms have been drawn up and implemented. The last Cultural Exchange Programme (2005-2007) was finalized in Lisbon during April 2005. A Bilateral Air Services Agreement\textsuperscript{20} was signed during the visit of Foreign Minister Jaime Gama (1983-1985)\textsuperscript{21} to India in February 1997. The relations between Portugal and India got a serious boost in 1997-99 and went on expanding in 2000 and after. Agreements providing for co-operation have been signed and are in operation between the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI) and Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) and their Portuguese counterpart ICEP and AIP. The JBC with FICCI held meetings in May 1993 (Lisbon), April 1995 (New Delhi) and in May 1997 (Lisbon). A Double Taxation Avoidance Agreement was signed between India and Portugal on September 11, 1998, during the State Visit of President Shri K.R. Narayanan (1997-2002) to Portugal.

In the mid of December 1998, the first ever Portuguese Parliamentary delegation, headed by the Speaker, Dr. António de Almeida Santos (1995-2002) was sent to India. The delegation stayed three days in New Delhi and discussed the possibilities to enrich the relationship of these countries. Ministers of Science & Technology of both countries signed the first ever Scientific and Technological Cooperation Protocol during the visit of Portuguese Minister for Science and Technology, Prof. Jose Mariano Gago (1995-2008), to New Delhi in December 1998. This was followed up by two Protocols signed at Lisbon by the Ministers for Science and Technology of India and Portugal. The first one was provided for cooperation in Science and Technology and was essentially spelt out a working arrangement for undertaking joint research projects in identified areas of mutual interest. The second was a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) providing for cooperation in the specific area
of Ocean Science and Technology. Two more agreements, viz. Bilateral Investment, Protection and Promotion Agreement and economic and Industrial Co-operation Agreement were signed at Lisbon in March 2000.

The Prime Minister of India, Atal Bihari Vajpayee (1998-2004), made an official visit to Portugal on June 28-29, 2000 following an invitation from his Portuguese counterpart, Mr. Antonio Guterres (1995-2002). It was the first-ever Official Visit of an Indian Prime Minister to Portugal. Political issues as well as economic relations and cultural-social aspects of the bilateral relations between India and Portugal were discussed. The positive outcome of India-Portugal exchange visits was the opening of representation offices of a Portuguese bank named Banco Nacional Ultramario in Mumbai and in Panjim-Goa in October 2000.

As the world enters a new century and a new millennium, India and Portugal and specially, the business and industry of these two countries, have to break out into looking at each other differently, looking at each other for markets and economies beyond just Portugal and India respectively and learning to cooperate even where there has been competition in the past. The future can definitely be different. On June 13, 2007, The Times of India reports that India is already setting the stage for this year’s India-European Union summit, with a diplomatic exercise under way with Portugal, forthcoming president of the European Union.

A thorough study of the Indo-Portugal interactions is thus essential in order to reviewing the historical linkages of India-Portugal relations with a special reference to Bengal. It needs to cover the political, economic, social, cultural, anthropological and all other related aspects of the connections between India and Portugal to understand the unique nature of the relationship between the two distant and distinct, but at the same time, two well attached countries.

The fact of the matter is that when we try to understand the relationships between two different countries it is only the broader representations of the human relationships with the same ‘me’ and ‘other’ demarcations. The study of human relations demand much micro level observations whereas the attempt to understand the relations between two different countries demand incorporations of all the micro level details into a macro one. To understand the relationship between India and Portugal we need to look both of these countries with a close contact.
Overview of Literature

The Indo-Portuguese relationship has not been considered as a very attractive area for historical studies. This particular area of study drew very few scholars’ attention. Too much attention has been given to England and its activities, which hampered the study about Portugal. Only in the last decades of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth, some scholars have published some important works on this area of research. The first English book we may refer here is *The Portuguese in India*, by F.C. Danvers (London, W.H. Allen, 1894). In this book, Danvers has given a detailed description of the Portuguese commercial and political activities in India. This work provides the background of the Indo-Portuguese relations. However, this is basically a narrative work without a proper analytical attitude.

Six years later a great scholar of the Indo-Portuguese relations like C.R. Boxer published some books with much more refinements like—(i) *The Portuguese sea borne empire (1415-1825)*, (London, Hutchinson, 1900); (ii) *Four centuries of Portuguese expansion (1415-1825): A succinct survey* (Johannesburg, Witwatersrand University Press, 1961); (iii) *Portuguese India in the mid 17th century*, (Delhi, Oxford University Press, 1980); (iv) *From Lisbon to Goa (1500-1750): Studies in Portuguese maritime enterprise* (Delhi, Oxford University Press, 1984) etc. Boxer is such kind of a scholar who has devoted all his intellect to the Portuguese studies. From all his works, we can have a vivid idea about the strategies and ups and downs of the Portuguese in India. All these works are full with information, comments and analysis. However, all his writings have been written from European point of view neglecting the Indian attitude.

Another scholar who gave some inputs in this field was R.S. Whiteway. In his *The rise of Portuguese power in India (1497-1550)* (Westminster, 1899) Whiteway has given a full description about the beginning of the Indo-Portuguese relations. However, it has the same narrative attitude only.

In 1959, an author namely, Marjay, Frederic P. wrote *Portuguese India a Historic Study* (Livrarria Bertrand, 1959, Lisbon, Portugal). Here the author has attempted to give a History of the rise of the Portuguese power in India. He has drawn his conclusion from the best available sources. It is a record of military expeditions
and changes of Governors, with best illustrations of the social life and of the 
idiosyncrasies of the chief men of the time.

The most interesting job on the Indo-Portuguese relations in Bengal has been 
done by J.J.A.Campos in his *History of the Portuguese in Bengal* (Calcutta, 1979). He has touched all the interesting parts of the Bengali-Portuguese interactions. This work provides important clues for the scholars to pursue a thorough research in this particular area.

We find a new attitude to understand the Indo-Portugal relations in Sanjay 
Subrahmanyam’s works like-*The Portuguese Empire in Asia (1500-1700): A political 
and economic history*, (Delhi, Oxford University Press, 1993); and *The career and 
legend of Vasco da Gama*, (Delhi, Oxford University Press, 1997). Subrahmanyam 
has mainly dealt with the economic aspect of the Indo-Portuguese relations. Nevertheless, much more focus on economic aspects is a limitation of this work.

Cf. M. N. Pearson, another scholar on Portuguese studies, has contributed a lot in this particular area of study. Pearson’s volumes of Portuguese history are a clear account of their activities in India and the Indian Ocean from the sixteenth century onwards written squarely from an Indian point of view. Laying particular stress on social, economic and religious interaction between Portuguese and Indians, the author argues that the Portuguese in fact had a more limited impact on everyday life in India than is sometimes supposed. Their imperial effort was characterized throughout more by reciprocity and interaction than by any unilateral imposition of Portuguese mores and political structures. The books as a whole has a significance well beyond its ostensible subject since it illuminates a whole range of more general historical themes including religious conversion, race relations, the nature of pre-modern society and early colonialism, and the very beginnings of the world economy.

Pearson’s valuable works are : (i) *India: Studies from the Portuguese Coastal 
Western Records*, (New Delhi, Concept Publication House, 1981); (ii) *The Portuguese 
in India* (1987); (iii) *Merchants and Rulers in Gujarat, the response to the Portuguese 
in the 16th Century* (Berkley, University of California Press, 1976); (iv) *Before Colonialism: Theories on Asian-European Relations 1500-1750* (Delhi, Oxford University Press, 1988). All these works have a different attitude to define every thing. However, none of these books is focused on the India-Portugal relations. Pearson has also edited a few works like- (i) *Spices in the Indian Ocean World* (Aldershot,
Hampshire, Eng: Variorum, 1996); (ii) Pearson M.N. & Kling Blair B. edited *The Age of Partnership: Europeans in Asia before Dominion* (Honolulu, The University Press of Hawaii, 1979) etc. In these works, Pearson and others have addressed diverse methodological biases, past and present, the issue of availability and provenance of sources, and the uneven coverage of the area under consideration. They dealt every aspect much more theoretically.

A renowned scholar in Portuguese studies is Fr. K. S. Mathew. He has contributed a lot in this area of studies. His works like-(i) *Portuguese trade with India in the Sixteenth Century* (Delhi, Manohar Publications, 1983); (ii) *The Portuguese and the Malabar Society during the Sixteenth Century. A study of mutual interaction* (Lisbon, In *STUDIA N° 49*, pp. 39-68, 1989); (iii) *The Portuguese and the Sultanate of Gujarat, 1500-1573* (Delhi, Mittal Publications, 1986); (iv) The Portuguese naval establishments, In: *Mare Liberum, Revista de História dos Mares N° 9*, VII Seminario internacional de Historia Indo-Portuguesa, Goa 1994 and Lisbon 1995) and (v) Mathew, K.S. and Ahmad, Afzal: *Emergence of Cochin in the Pre-Industrial Era: A Study of Portuguese Cochin*, (Pondicherry, Pondicherry University, Dept. of History, 1990) etc are important contribution in Portuguese studies. He has written any articles also regarding the Portuguese influence on Indian commerce. Nevertheless, all of these works has given emphasis on the economic activities and the commercial aspects of the Indo-Portuguese relations only.

*Indo-Portuguese Trade in the Western Coast of India (1600-1663)* (Delhi, 1991) and *Portuguese Trade and Socio-Economic Changes on the Western Coast of India* (Delhi Originals, 2000) are two specialized works of Afzal Ahmad. These works are based on original documents that cover history, politics and commerce. These works have also highlighted the interesting transformation of traders and commercial agents into empire builders. Another scholar Stephen Jeyaseela, has also added some valuable points in this respect. There are some periodicals where we find some indirect references about the Portuguese influence in India published in the beginning of the twentieth century. In various volumes of these journals, we find different articles related to the present research with less elaboration and lack of analysis. Regarding this theme, we have to face some serious problems like change of geographical identity, partition, political divisions etc. To study and understand the current theme we have to take into account all of these factors. Most of these writings
have neglected some of these issues and that gives me an opportunity and inspiration to prepare the present work.

**Source Materials and Research Methodology**

As the Portuguese were not a very good record keeper, we have to face many problems regarding the collection of the source materials. Therefore, we have to rely mostly on the indirect materials mainly. A proper interpretation and analysis is very essential in this regards. Source materials may obtain from indigenous literature of India particularly from Bengali literary documents, Assamese literary documents, South Indian literary documents etc. Portuguese literature particularly writings of various Portuguese writers of the Golden Age, writings on the Discoveries etc are also very much useful. Archival Materials including various travel-accounts, personal-diary, legal documents, official letters, personal letters, maps and various cartographic notes etc are also important sources for this study. Archaeological remains, churches, forts, Portuguese architectural influence on various temples, buildings and monuments and some coins from all over India are additional sources. All recent newspapers, political magazines and periodicals from India and Portugal, the documents from the Embassy of India as well as the Embassy of Portugal are also very important documents for this research work. Beside this, occasional interviews have been taken to enrich the present work. A comparative and an analytical study of all these materials will help us to draw some conclusions about the interaction of two different cultures i.e. Indian and Portuguese.

Through these following chapters the progress of this research will be determined.

**Introduction:** The introduction is itself is the overall introduction of the present work. This provides an idea about the whole project.

**Chapter I: Rise and Destiny of the Portuguese Power in India and its Impact on Indian Society:** In this chapter, there is an attempt to draw a total picture of the coming of the Portuguese in India, their interaction with each other and the foundation of Portuguese influence in India. This study will focus on the political, social, cultural and religious aspects of their relationship and its impact on Indian society.

**Chapter II: Indo-Portuguese Relations During Cold War Years (1947-1990):** This chapter will cover the Indo-Portuguese relations from 1947 up to 1990s. This is a
very important period in terms of international relations. This study is an attempt to understand the graph of the Indo-Portuguese relations during this vital period.

Chapter III: Indo-Portuguese Relations During Post Cold War Years (1991-2007): This chapter will give an idea of Indo-Portuguese relations in the period from 1991 to 2007. This is an important period for both of these countries to enrich their bonding in terms of political, economic as cultural spheres.

Chapter IV: The Historical Legacy of the Indo-Portuguese Relations: In this study, there is an attempt to understand the influences of the India-Portugal interaction in different parts of India and its legacy in Indian mind and society. This will also focus on the distinctive regional characteristics of these legacies in Indian society.

Conclusion: A proper analysis and new dimensions of this study is presented in the form of the conclusion. This also provides the justification to present the Indo-Portuguese relations with a different approach.

Notes and References


2. The maritime expansion of Portugal was the result of the threat to Mediterranean commerce that had developed very rapidly after the crusades, especially the trade in spices. Spices traveled by various overland routes from Asia to the Levant, where they were loaded aboard Genoese and Venetian ships and brought to Europe. Gradually, this trade became threatened by pirates and the Turks, who closed off most of the overland routes and subjected the spices to heavy taxes. Europeans sought alternative routes to Asia in order to circumvent these difficulties.


4. The Infante Henrique, Duke of Viseu (1394-1460), was an infante (i.e. prince) of the Portuguese House of Aviz and an important figure in the early days of the Portuguese Empire, being responsible for the beginning of the European
worldwide explorations. He is known in English as Prince Henry the Navigator or the Seafarer (o Navegador in Portuguese).

5. Manuel I (1481-1495) the 14th king of Portugal and the Algarves was the son of Infante Fernando, Duke of Viseu, by his wife, Infanta Beatriz of Portugal. His mother was the granddaughter of King John I of Portugal; his father was the second surviving son of King Edward of Portugal. Manuel succeeded his first cousin John II of Portugal, who was also his brother-in-law, in 1495.


7. East Bengal was the name used during two periods in the 20th century for a territory that roughly corresponded to the modern state of Bangladesh.

8. West Bengal is a state in eastern India. With Bangladesh, which lies on its eastern border, the state forms the ethno-linguistic region of Bengal. To its northeast lie the states of Assam and Sikkim and the country Bhutan, and to its southwest, the state of Orissa. To the west it borders the state of Jharkhand and Bihar, and to the northwest, Nepal.

9. Bengal subah was one of the wealthiest parts of the Mughal Empire. The Nawabs of Bengal were the hereditary nazims or subadars (provincial governors) of the subah (province) of Bengal during the Mughal rule and the de-facto rulers of the province.

10. For centuries the Muslims had trade connections with Ceylon, which created some friction when the Portuguese arrived in 1505. The Iberians had been fighting to remove the Muslims from their homeland for several centuries, so there was no love lost between the two cultures. Portugal, the sole European trading power in Asia, did not want economic competition from anyone. When Dom Lourenço de Almeida landed at Colombo, he had to establish a Portuguese power base to protect national interests, so he began construction of a fort at the harbor town. The king of the lowland Sinhalese population, at the capital city of Kotte, welcomed the Portuguese. He was impressed by their guns and armor, and asked their protection in return for an annual tribute to be paid in cinnamon. King Parakrama Bahu VIII hoped to use the Europeans to
secure his position against threats from the Tamil peoples in the northern part of the island, the highland king of Kandy, and the Moors.

11. A catechism is a summary or exposition of doctrine, traditionally used in Christian religious teaching from New Testament times to the present.

12. Cunha, Tristao de Braganca: Goa’s Freedom Struggle Selected Writings, Bombay, Cunha Memorial Committee, 1961


15. António de Oliveira Salazar, served as the Prime Minister and dictator of Portugal from 1932 to 1968. He founded and led the Estado Novo (New State), the authoritarian, right-wing government that presided over and controlled Portugal’s social, economic, cultural and political life from 1932 to 1974

16. The Carnation Revolution (Revolução dos Cravos) was an almost bloodless military-led pro-democratic coup d’etat, started on April 25, 1974, in Lisbon, Portugal, that effectively changed the Portuguese regime from an authoritarian dictatorship to a democracy after two years of a transitional period known as PREC Processo Revolucionário Em Curso, or On-Going Revolutionary Process, characterized by social turmoil and power dispute between left and right wing political forces.

17. The European Economic Community was also known as the “common market” in the United Kingdom was an international organization created in 1957 to bring about economic integration between Belgium, France, Germany, Italy, Luxembourg and the Netherlands. It since enlarged to six other states and from 1967 its institutions also governed the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC) and European Atomic Energy Community (EAEC or Euratom) under the term European Communities. When the European Union (EU) was created in 1993, the EEC was transformed into the European Community, one of the EU’s three pillars, with EEC institutions continuing as those of the EU.

18. Basis of the relations and interactions between two countries.
19. The cultural agreements are bilateral treaties covering all the Ministry’s fields of competence: education, research, arts, cultural heritage, libraries and archives, civic organizations, cultural institutes, sports and youth.

20. A bilateral Air Transport Agreement (also sometimes called a bilateral Air Service Agreement) is an agreement which two nations sign to allow civil aviation between their territories.

21. He was a founder of the Socialist Party, in the German exile of Bad-Münstereifel. He was elected for his Party as a Deputy to the Assembly of the Republic for the Azores from 1975 and for Lisbon from 1983. In the 1st Constitutional Government, he was Minister of Internal Affairs (1976-1978), and Minister of Foreign Affairs in the 9th Constitutional Government, from 1983 to 1985.


25. Marjay, Frederic P. *Portuguese India a Historic Study*, 52 pp., heliogravures and photos, 80 pp. plates. Livraria Bertrand, Lisbon, 1959


Subrahmanyam, Sanjay: *Improvising Empire, Portuguese Trade and Settlement in the Bay of Bengal 1500-1700*, Delhi, Oxford University Press, 1990


29. Mathew, K. S.: Portuguese trade with India in the sixteenth century, Manohar Publications, Delhi, 1983

30. Ahmad, Afzal: Indo-Portuguese Trade In the Western Coast of India (1600-1663), 1991

31. Ahmad, Afzal: Portuguese Trade and Socio-Economic changes on the Western Coast of India, Delhi, Originals, 2000
