In the Introduction to this work, a question was raised as to how far the Portuguese made use of the *communidade* system as a tool for carrying out their colonial designs and for extracting the rural surplus of Goa. An attempt was made to examine the ways by which the *communidade* system functioned within the colonial frame of the Portuguese and to show how the agrarian segment of the society responded to the diverse channels of colonial sponging.

1. *Communidade* formed the principal rural institution around which the society and economy of Goa revolved. The bulk of agrarian operations carried out by *gaunkars* or by different segments of people linked with *communidade*, used to give cohesiveness and unity to the geo-economic space of Goa. Of course there were diversities in Goa as far as environment, ecology, economy, religion, house-type and even village settings were concerned. But in the midst of such diversities, the elements of unity were very much evidently visible in the organization of Goan villages, where agriculture formed the basis of societal and economic activities. This unity could be attributed to the predominant agricultural system of the region being closely knit with the rhythm of the regional climate. It appears that Goan rural life was wrought in various colours, like the wet rice cultivation in the low lying fields of the Old Conquests or the up-land and terraced cultivation in the New Conquests. But everywhere the patterns were similar and
controlled by the rhythm of the monsoons, which had its direct impact on agricultural productions.

As the economy of the villages was then primarily linked with agriculture, the gaunkars, who controlled a major part of agricultural activities, naturally dominated in the society and economy at the village level. The servicing groups like priests, teachers, barbers, carpenters, smiths, temple servants, dhobi, shoemaker etc., were often maintained at the cost of the comunidades; but not admitted as its members. However, the comunidade system created economic and social ties bringing the various sections of the village into one group. The artisans and the service groups were often paid in grains at harvest and they were also provided with free food, clothing and even residence. In this way the comunidade system gradually made its headway in the fabrics of the Goan villages.

2. The Portuguese during their 450 years, particularly during the period under study, tried to control the economy and society of Goa by modifying the structure and functioning of the comunidade on the basis of their colonial strategies. In 1526 and 1735 laws were passed to transform this agricultural institution into a resource generating institution, particularly with a view to sustaining the Portuguese colonial rule. With the decrease in the trading activities of the Portuguese in the later part of the seventeenth and beginning of the eighteenth centuries following the loss of several of their principal colonies and important trade centers to the Dutch, the Lusitanians tried to augment their revenue by resorting to different techniques of extracting agrarian surplus. This went on
increasing unprecedentedly especially with the increasing pressure to pay the salaries of the bureaucracy. Even now and then the Portuguese government increased the taxes on the farm sector. During the period between 1870 and 1871, the state collected about 145,393,000 xerafins as direct tax and 95,508,800 xerafins as indirect tax, which meant about 626.6 réis per head. During the period between 1880-1881 the value of direct tax was 184,994,444 xerafins while that of indirect tax was 92,833,333 xerafins, which was equivalent to 671.5 réis per head. However there was a tremendous increase in the taxing rate by 1890s. The amount collected from direct tax rose to 219,046,000 xerafins and that from indirect tax rose to 299,294,400 xerafins during the period between 1890 and 1891. This meant that the per capita tax was about 923 réis. The amount collected by direct taxation more than doubled during the next decade. In 1900-01, the value of direct taxation rose to 507,120,000 xerafins while that of indirect taxation was 261,422,000 xerafins, the per head distribution being 1,445 réis. This means that the increase for each inhabitant was of 28% and 36% for the direct and indirect taxes respectively for the thirty years period from 1870 to 1900. However, though there was a substantial increase in burden for the people in the last quarter of the nineteenth century mention may be made of the fact that no grand projects of great monetary value were undertaken by the government so as to justify the augment in taxes. Neither were there any natural calamities to necessitate that people be taxed so highly.

3. Along with the attempts to generate more agrarian surplus, there was an increasing move from the Portuguêsé to expand agricultural activities to more regions and to increase production. It was this drive that made the Portuguese conquer and
occupy the neighbouring territories (Novas Conquistas or the New Conquests) like Ponda, Satari, Canacona, Quepem, Pernem, etc., and use their cultivable space for generating wealth required for the assorted needs of the state. Coinciding with it, there were more and more attempts to bring the low-lying and marshy areas under cultivation with the help of dykes and embankments. Vast wastelands, marshy and swampy areas were brought under cultivation through the formation of subsidiary associations called Bouços in the various comunidades of Goa. Land-reclamation received an increased momentum with the extensive introduction of Bouço system under the leadership of gaunkars. Moreover, the confiscated property of the Jesuits, who were expelled from the Portuguese possessions including Goa in 1759, formed an important and sizeable segment of cultivable fertile land, which was distributed among enterprising farmers on lease or as free gift with a view to increasing agrarian production. These ventures, though may appear to be highly supportive of the local population, were directed ultimately towards to colonial goal of the Lusitanians with the help of the Department of Agriculture (1776-1834), which finally turned out to be the ultimate agency to decide the type of crop to be cultivated in each eco-regions, the intensity of land utilization, the extent of cultivation etc., in Goa. Here the communitarian as well as the individual preferences of the gaunkars in the cultivaitonal processes was made subordinate to the interests of the colonial state, whose sole aim was to augment the production of those items that would ensure its sustenance.

4. With the colonial adaptation of the institution of comunidade there appeared certain elements of change in the structure and function of this agrarian institution. The
new land revenue system brought changes in the ownership pattern and with it the system of cultivation and its relationship with the different members of the rural society. The most important and evident change following the colonial intervention of this period was the entry of the capitalist group called interessados, the cuntocares and the adventicos in the farming sector, who were interested only in earning dividends for the shares that they held of the various comunidades. However it should be admitted that their capital and enterprising nature had given a boost to expansion of agriculture at least in some areas.

5. With the passage of ownership rights of cultivable land space into the hands of “individual capitalists” and people with private initiatives, community-owner lands started decreasing and privately owned lands increased, making community spirit give way to individualism. Correspondingly, there were increasing demands beginning from the first quarter of the nineteenth century from the shareholders that the comunidades be disbanded and the assets be distributed amongst those who held shares of the value of 300 xerafins or above. With the entry of entrepreneurial and capitalist groups in the farming sector, the extent of land held by private owners increased unprecedentedly. Consequently the traditional social order and economy of Goan villages, which had community spirit as their intrinsic character, decayed. By 1910, the comunidades were no longer the biggest proprietors of immovable property in Goa. Private owners held about 54% of the total area covering agricultural and tree crops, forests and cultivable waste, while the government and the comunidades held 32% and 14% respectively. However, if we consider only the paddy producing areas of Goa, then the comunidades of Salcete, Bardez and Ilhas controlled over 55% of the rice fields. On the other hand, the
private owners controlled the paddy fields of the New Conquests, particularly those of Quepem, Pernem, Sanguem, Canacona and Satari.

6. the Portuguese found that the best way of utilizing the agricultural activities of the New Conquests for their favour was to retain the agricultural institutions of the region like Dessaidos intact, at least outwardly, and use it conveniently for penetration into the heart of newly conquered territories. This led to several socio-economic developments of long-standing impact. The Dessais were allotted by the Portuguese a place in the power ladder, which the former had to cautiously maintain by regularly supplying cavalry and infantry forces and by subjecting themselves to protect the larger interests of the Lusitanians.

7. The Portuguese intervention in the working of the comunidades to accelerate agrarian production with a view to sustaining the state also helped in minimizing the cereal deficit of Goa. The attempts to bring additional land space under cultivation and the entry of the capitalist group in the farming sector and the introduction of the Department of Agriculture changed the very picture of agrarian production in rural Goa. Paddy production in Goa which was as low as 25 and 58 cumbos for the years 1777 and 1779 respectively, jumped up to 146 cumbos by 1780. Within a decade i.e., 1790 paddy production hovered around 700 cumbos. The average production of rice for this period was around 500 to 550 cumbos. However, by 1835 the production reached about 19,000 cumbos for Goa as a whole. The average production for the period from 1820 to 1835...
was around 17,500 *cumbos*; however it rose to 43,631 *cumbos* by 1910, which helped considerable in lowering the cereal deficit of the state.

8. The Portuguese developed an indirect way of taking away the agrarian surplus from the *gaunkars* by shifting a great share of the welfare activities to give capital and labour, besides land for laying the infrastructural network of roads, for building bridges and other facilities. Many *communidades* had to meet the expenses incurred in the process of moving military forces in war, in setting up educational institutions, in mobilizing medical service in times of epidemics, in the sustenance of divine cult, in looking after orphans and widows of rural Goa etc. they were also required to perform different farm-related functions like erection of dykes, embankments etc., and take care of the diverse needs of the people involved in the production activities of primary sector including giving funeral expenses to the members, maintenance grants to the widows and unwed daughters of *gaunkars, culacharins, jonoeiros* etc. the distributable surplus, which the *gaunkars* could keep with themselves, got radically minimized, as the different welfare activities’ thrust upon the *gaunkars* by the Portuguese state turned out to be ultimately wealth-draining channels for the enterprising farmers in the long run.

9. What was produced locally became insufficient with tremendous increase in the population. The population of Goa, which was only 3,63,993 in 1852, rose to 4,86,752 in 1910. To feed the ever increasing population, Goa had to import rice and other cereals from neighbouring regions. About 14,379 *cumbos* of rice was imported in 1910. Several customs-houses were established by the Portuguese state in the junctional points of land
routes and water-routes to take a share out of this trade. The networks of intra-Asian trade and the trans-continental trade that emanated from Goa were also interlinked with regional trading circuits. At this juncture, people with agrarian surplus appear to have come forward to take advantage of this situation either by investing a share of this wealth in trade or in taking up tax-farming and customs collection as wealth-multiplying ventures.

10. Goa faced a unique and unparalleled situation with the Anglo-Portuguese Treaty of 1878, which made possible the economic sponging of Goa by the English, besides by the Portuguese, and in that way it brought in the burden of “double colonization”. The Goan craftsmen, salt manufacturers, and the various people engaged in the production activities of secondary sector were denied of their job-opportunities in Goa because of the stiff competition of finished goods from England. Those Goans who were very tragically affected because of this development started out-migrating to British territories in India, where they found a promising job-market. Moreover the increasing burden of taxation, which the Portuguese thrust on the shoulders of common man, reduced the purchasing power of many Goans, who, as a result, found a way out in emigration to regions under British control. With steep rise in direct taxes (28%) and indirect taxes (36%) during the period between 1870 and 1910, the amount of surplus that remained with the gaunkars and other people engaged in farming sector became practically nil and most of the emigrants during this period were from the traditional comunidade pockets of Old Conquests. The railway route which was built immediately after this treaty connecting Goa (under the Portuguese) with Bombay (under the British) turned out to be the greatest
channel for the emigration of the Goans. The outflow of several able-bodied men and a
greater volume of labour force to British territories affected negatively the farming sector
and agrarian production, as the number of people needed for cultivational activities
decreased drastically with it by the end of the nineteenth century.

11. However there was increasing import of cereals from neighbouring territories
of British India to sustain the people of Goa. Consequently, the public expenditure rose
from 633,862,000 xerafins in 1870-01 to 1,029,000,000 xerafins in 1900-01, out of which
a considerable share was utilized for importing food materials and other essential goods
for the consumption of the people. Earlier the trade deficit that Goa faded every year as a
result of import of large quantities of rice was balanced through the exports of local agro-
based products like coconuts, jaggery, feni and also salt. However with the increasing
emigration of people from the farming sector of Goa to British territories and with the
increase in imports, export of agro-based products was insufficient to meet the trade
balance. It was the remittances paid by the emigrants that helped in reducing the large
trade deficit of this period. In fact, by this time the Goan economy was transforming
radically from an agrarian-based economy into a remittances-based economy.

Thus the impact of Portuguese rule on the Goan economy and society during the
period between 1750 and 1910 had multifaceted dimensions. The social and economic
structure of Goa, which was principally based on the comunidade system, underwent
radical changes during this period. By 1910 the remittances despatched by the emigrants
made people depend less and less on the comunidades. Following this the land-based
economy started giving way to remittances-based economy in Goa. The focus had clearly shifted from collectivism and communitarian ownership of land to individualism. This is rather evident from the fact that a large part of remittances were utilized for, besides procuring the essential quantities of cereals, acquiring private properties. By 1910, the people of Goa as individuals rather than the *Estado* began to decide the economic indices of the region.