CHAPTER I

EMERGENCE OF PORTUGUESE MARITIME POWER, 1387-1495

(i) Early History of Portuguese Maritime Power:

A.D. 1387-1495 the first King of free Portugal, Dom Joao II signed the Treaty at Windsor in A.D. 1386 by which England and Portugal were to be allies for ever in every transaction. The long reign of King Dom Joao II is believed to the main reason for peaceful development of Portugal expansion which lasted 200 years. King Dom Joao was the first to establish the Kingdom upon a solid basis the glorious dynasty. Hence following political stability, the commercial rise attributed to the discoveries of Dom Henrique, who was the son of King Dom Joao II.

The Prince Dom Henrique had made several expedition to reach India by the south point of the African Continent. After the fall of Roman Empire the great Indo-European trade was handled by the Moors or Arabs. The crusade against them was the chief stimulus to find a new passage to Indian continent. Dom Henrique


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1. PRINCE HENRIQUE (LONG CAP) AND KING JOAO II (HOLDING A BOOK).
gathered much information from the Moors. He made deep studies of several sciences regarding marine expeditions.

Dom Henrique's brother Dom Pedro visited Western Asia and Europe. He extensively traveled and returned home land after 12 years with the most valuable gift, a copy of the travel of Marco Polo together with a map which had been with Venetians.

The Azores, Cape de Verde Island, Senegal, the Gambia and Rio Grande were discovered by the expeditions during the period of Dom Henry and a concession of all the land discovered beyond Cap Bogdar was obtained.

The great King and navigator Dom Henrique died in Lagos and was buried in Santa Maria de Batalha in A.D. 1460. Don Henrique's nephew King Affonso V was willing to project world map prepared by a Venetian Fra Mauro. By repeated stipulated expeditions and explorations, they were successful to cross equatorial Africa for the first time in 1471. After the death of Affonso V his son Joao II continued the effort with applications of the astrolabe to navigation. [Fig.1]

The discoveries of Dom Joao II made his continuous attempts to
2. ASTROLABES
discover the land of Prester John. The King charged Joao Peres de Covilhao with Affonso da Paiva in A.D. 1487. They crossed Alexandria and reached Cairo as merchants. From there they went to Aden and Tor. They sailed to Suakim where they planned to take different routes from each other. Covilhao sailed towards India and Paiva sailed towards Ethiopia with the view to agree to meet again at Cairo on a fixed date.

Covilhao reached Cananor, on Malbar coast of India. He moved thereafter to Zeila and Sofala and reached Madagascar. There he got much information regarding different passages of Indian traders which he conveyed to the Portugal King via Joseph (a shoemaker Portuguese Jews). Covilhao could not reach his destination back home. Rabbi Abraham and Joseph two Portuguese Jews met him in Cairo where he heard about the murder of Affonso. Covilhao started for Ormuz with Abraham. Then, Abraham was sent with duplicate descriptive account of his travels and he was compelled to spend his remaining life in Abyssinia where he also married and dwelt in honourable captivity till his death.


To discover the country of prester John (Prete), the Portugal King Dom Joao sent Bartholomeu de Diaz with two ships. He discovered Diaz Point, Cape of the Turns (Cap Voltas) and Angra das Vaque-eiros and Algoa Bay. Diaz had to back due to insistence of his men. He came across a new place which he called Cap of Good Hope. This voyage was a memorable one as it was the last during the period of King Joao II (A.D. 1497). 

At Lisbon, the great explorer Christopher Columbus, a Genoese, married Felipa Moniz de Perestrello. She was a daughter of famous cartographer whose map provided much information and he became confident of new land discoveries towards the west. Many sailors had evidence of wood sculptured pieces sailing across the sea near by Cape St. Vincent and Madeira. After his failure to acquire any help from the Portuguese King and his nobles, He secretly left Portugal (A.D. 1484) and went to Spain where his project was hailed, though royal finances were drained by Wars.

The Queen of Spain, Isabella did not hesitate to offer her jewels for the novel expedition designed by Christopher Columbus. As a result of discovery of Columbus, Spanish King obtained and celebrated Papal Bull granted to Spain in A.D. 1493.

**Treaty of Tordesillas, 1494.**

The King of Portugal was very discontented and finally had to settle disputes with Spain which is known as Treaty of Tordesillas in A.D. 1494.

King Joao II died on the 25th Oct., 1495. His successor was King Monoe. King Monoe also was ambitious to explore maritime expedition to India and procured three ships which were ordered by his father, King Joao II before his death.

**[ii] Portuguese Nautical Science and Technology:**

The studies of Navigation in first Deca of 16th Century:

In 16th century, Portugal had its roots in Atlantic navigation of the previous century created by ocean navigation and new possibilities had opened up. The navigators began to study sea currents, wind directions and other geographical parameters in light of cartography.

The studies of currents and wind and other parameters began when Portuguese exploratory ships ventured even further south along the west coast of Africa. Return journeys were rather
difficult and a technique was evolved for dealing with head or beam wind going above a tacking; then lighter vessels better suited to this type of navigation were designed.

The returning sailors realized that they would reach their destination through "Guina Return". It was "Guina Return" which means on the way back from Jorge de Mina, the Portuguese trading post on the Gold coast (Ghana), they should sail via Guina.

Meridians and Compass:

The pilots calculated the meridian altitudes of stars with the aid of Sextant or Astrolabe (Quadrant). This technique was novel and innovative, a landmark in the history of navigation as it enabled latitudes to be determined almost daily on board. But the problem of determination of longitude was still a problem.

In 2nd half of 15th century, the art of navigation had made rapid strides. Pilots could learn to determine latitude from the altitude of stars by using daily declination and tables as well as time tables of tides at various points along the coast. All such information was recorded in the navigation manuals and charts known as portolans. First two anonymous guides were published in Lisbon in 1509 A.D. and 1516 A.D. based on sailing experiences with rudiments of cosmography. Soon they were translated into other European Languages.

3. Sexton (Quadrant)
Ship Building and Cartography:

With navigation, shipbuilding also started to develop in the 16th century. Different designs of vessels were made to carry out different voyages. They preferred light and fast caravels. Gradually, the heavier and larger carracks and galleons were developed to carry more cargo. During this period, ships began to be equipped with super structure which enabled canoes to be mounted on them. In this history of naval architecture, the oldest treatises on shipbuilding are also evident from documents and Portuguese historical records.

Major contributions of Bartholomeu Dias and German cartographer Henricus are notable as their works are a landmark in the history of geographical inventions. Firstly, Bartholomeu Dias completed his voyages which proved that Atlantic and Indian Oceans were connected with each other, while the German cartographer H. Martellus prepared a map of the African coast as far as the Rio Infante.

"Guide to Geography", a Latin translation is also an important source document to carry out the navigations. Many subsequent editions were prepared throughout Europe which included new maps and data. In these maps, all the lands and inhabited islands had been recorded by navigators up to that period. It is a remarkable map known as "first map" (Plain sphere) included in the Strasborough edition and made by an
anonymous person Portuguese map of the world which is called Cartino Map (1502 A.D.), in which for the first time the equator and the two tropics were represented on the map. (Fig. 4) In 1504, Padro Reinel incorporated a scale of latitudes for the first time in the history of cartography. The work of Portuguese cartographers were well appreciated in Europe. e.g. services of Portuguese cartographer like Luis Teixeira were often made available in 16th century for Dutch engraved cartography.

Significance of Voyages and Discoveries:

The voyages above mentioned opened up new direction of discoveries, ways of thinking with adventures, enterprises wealth, travel, freedom and propagation of the Christian faith. Portugal became largely responsible for bringing closer Africa, Asia, America and Oceania. The significance of the discoveries of Portuguese in the history of civilization is that they made an extraordinary contribution. Information resources in the form of books, letters, reports and maps were published and circulated not only in Southern Europe but also in Goa (India), Macao and Nagasaki. Thus, they were rendered into the wider open world. Due to enterprise, Portugal became a vast source or Data Bank on a worldwide scale.

Thus in 16th century, Portuguese started Estado da India (State of India) to create vast network of relations between different civilizations stretching up to Japan. The State of India was organized on the basis of small number of territorial Portuguese possessions in India.

It was necessary to ensure control over the high seas from a number of strategic locations such as Goa, Hormuz and Malacca. Hence from 1502 onwards securing partial control of the seas and exchange of goods, became a reality. Therefore the Portuguese imposed "Cartaze" safe conduct system on navigation by non-christian vessels in the Indian Ocean.

Portuguese language came to be the main medium of maritime and mercantile communication especially along the sea coast of East Africa. It is significant that the Portuguese language has more Indian words than any other language of Europe.

The Portuguese - The Portuguese nation was patterned in a hard school. Until the end of the 11th century it was Spanish Peninsula. People originally by Celts, it had been thoroughly incorporated with the Roman Empire, but its subsequent history so far differed from that of Spain that the waves of invading Visigoths had spent some of its forces before the Western Ocean was reached, and its nobility rarely claimed Gothic descent. With the rest of the Peninsula, it was subdued by the Moors the Arab traders in the 8th century. Its existence as a separate entity began in 1095 A.D., when Count Henry of Burgundy was given the Country of Portugal as the dowry which comprised, however, only the districts of Coimbra and Oporto, which during the preceding 100 years had been won back from the Moors by dint of hard fighting. This contest had not been carried on by the original inhabitants, the Celts, but by the armies recruited from the north. And the first Count of the new country was a French Knight. In the struggle with the Moors that occupied the next two and a half centuries, the leaders, in the absence of a native nobility, were the followers of northern chivalry. The armies, too, were at first recruited by northern crusading soldiers, and it was not until some years had elapsed that the native inhabitants of either the cities or the country were swept into the general movement. By the middle of the 13th century, however, when the Muhammedan Wars on Portuguese soil ceased the
effects of the long struggle had penetrated to all classes. The towns emerged with municipal institutions, and the people had, through the Cortes, some voice in the government of the country. Still a large share of the soil was owned by the great military orders of foreign knights, the price that had to be paid for their assistance. Early in the 14th century the connection of the knights with foreign orders was severed, and they themselves remained to form the nucleus of an aristocracy, northern in blood, but Portuguese by residence. In the civil troubles at the end of that century which shook the foundations of the monarchy, the aristocracy and the people were found united, and in 1385 they fought side by side at the Battle of Aljubarrotta.

The next 100 years of Portugal history was the strenuous effort to discover the sea-route to India, and the leading figure was Prince Henry of Portugal, the navigator, son of King Joao I of Portugal, and great-grandson of King Edward III of England. Early in the 15th century, he settled at Sagres and from the date till his death in 1460, he sent out annual expeditions that explored painstaking the African coast. His vessels were half-decked boats, his men, long-shore sailors who would or could not navigate out of land. The assistance of mathematicians and astronomers, often Jews, was called in and a school of navigators formed. Cape-Boyaedor, on the African Coast, 1000 miles from Portugal, was not passed until 1434. For years expedition after expedition had been turned back by the terrors of a shoal
that stretched far out to sea, over which the water foamed and boiled.

By the rounding of the Cape of Good Hope in A.D. 1487, by Bartholomeu Dias, that route to the East, for which the King of Portugal and Prince Henry had been so long seeking, was at last opened. In these explorations, the leaders of the Portuguese nation were following a national policy and their aims were chiefly commercial. The Italian republics had for many generations been enriched by the trade with the East, and beyond the Italian merchants lay the Muhamedan merchants. The discovery of a sea route to India promised to transfer the profits of both to the Portuguese. That, in so doing, the hated Muhamedan would suffer, was an added incentive. They hoped also to discover an ally in a Christian Prince whose territory they had located vaguely in Africa, a powerful and mysterious potent Prester John. The first object was commercial. Set back to their hereditary foe, the Muhamedan, supplied an undercurrent of crusading interest. This coincided with the period, however, in which the spiritual head of the Christian Church, the Pope, was in treaty with the Sultan of Turkey by which he the Pope would murder the latter's brother. But on his mind empire and commerce went hand in hand; he supplied no new aim, he merely pointed out a new method of attaining an old object.

King John II (1481-95) during his short but illustrious reign continued the sea explorations and land expeditions also.