CHAPTER - II

PRE PORTUGUESE GOA

The study of the economy and society of Goa prior to 1510 is imperative for comprehending the framework structure in the sixteenth century. The investigation will assist in assessing the extent of the transformation caused by the policies which the Portuguese had introduced in that region of the subcontinent. As far as the geographical confines of the area under study is concerned, it is important to realize that both the pre Portuguese and, the sixteenth century Goa were not identical to the contemporary city in terms of territory. The Portuguese conquest towards the inception of the sixteenth century, beginning with the occupation of Tiswadi and the adjoining ilhas, expanded to include Bardes and Salsette. These were amalgamated and classified as the Velhas Conquistas and form the base for the period under discussion. Geographically the occupied region was comparatively small as the Portuguese were primarily inclined only towards gaining a foothold on the coastline. They were also incapacitated in their efforts to permeate into the immediate hinterland due to the presence of the two powerful kingdoms of Vijayanagar and the offshoots of the Bahamanis who, in fact had indirectly contributed to the port's prosperity. The extent to which the Portuguese, while fulfilling the demands of these kingdoms, were able to benefit and further their gains through commerce will also be discussed.

The chapter has been divided into four subsections. An elucidation of facts regarding the origin of the name of Goa is given below. Goa being a port, and having easy access to the sea, attracted and constituted a portion of various kingdoms through the centuries. The manner in which alterations at
the political level influenced the administrative structure is discussed. Since all kingdoms survive on returns from land i.e., agriculture, the subsequent portion is an elucidation of land revenue. The role of the village communities and the taxes collected are analyzed in detail. Goa’s extensive contacts through trade form the third part of the chapter. As all these factors could have inevitably contributed towards the development of the port-city, urban growth forms the concluding portion.

There are a number of references regarding the ancestry of the name ‘Goa’. For puranic sources, it has been derived from the Gomanta fort, Gomanchala, the earliest known reference in the ancient records \[1\]. Goya or Kuya is also considered the ancient name of the Southern Konkan \[2\]. Other contemporary names were Sundabur and Chintapur \[3\]. These forms evolved into Goa over a period of time. Goa, the Portuguese form of ‘Gowa’, was originally restricted to include only the name of the island of Tiswadi (Gopakadwipa denoting the island of the cow herds and the city Gopakapattana, referring to the abode of cow herds) \[4\]. As the Portuguese possessed Goa till 1961, the name persisted in their interpretative designation.

**GEOGRAPHICAL LOCATION:**

In terms of location, on its eastern side, Goa was encompassed by the Western Ghats which served as a buffer against Bijapur. The Kanara region was towards its southern side and the Arabian sea fringed its western end. It was situated along the coastline in an approximately central position between Chaul and the trading centres of Calicut, Cochin and Cananor. It presented a picture of being placed in a comparatively focal position facilitating easy access to serve the economic needs of the hinterland as well as the ports on its either side \[5\].

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GOA underwent a multitude of political variations as it constituted a part of different kingdoms prior to the Portuguese conquest. As such, there is no specific reference even to its existence before the third century A.D. Goa subsequently was in the possession of various dynasties. It is assumed to have been ruled by the Bhojas. The Shiroda copper plate inscription mentions a ‘Devaraja’ who could probably have been the Bhoja king Devaraja. These kings must have ruled over the island of Goa as epigraphical evidence corroborates to their existence and of their donating land tracks bordering Tiswadi. Further testimony is supplied by the Asokan edicts which describe them to be the autonomous rulers of the Deccan and Konkan. Their presence can be visualized to be a form of feudal allegiance as they persisted in their political loyalties to a superior political power. It is reflected for instance in their acceptance of the suzerainty of the Satavahanas who were later eased out by the Konkan Mauryas. The latter Mauryas were the next major dynasty to rule Goa till the sixth century A.D. This control terminated with their defeat by Kirtivarman Chalukya in 578 A.D. Goa subsequently came under the control of the Chalukyas of Badami for the period c. 578 to 753 A.D when it formed part of the portion of Revatidwipa. In c. 753 A.D., they forfeited their authority when the Rashtrakutas of Malkhed usurped the overall sovereignty and consolidated themselves in the Deccan, Konkan, Karnataka and Gujarat. These rulers were in power till the eighth century A.D. when they were overthrown by the Kalyani Chalukyas. The Southern Silaharas (750 A.D. - 1026 A.D.) were the next dynasty to possess Goa. They had earlier been perpetual feudatories of the more powerful overlords, the Chalukyas, the Paramaras, the Kadambas and finally the Rashtrakutas. The records of the family, that is, firstly, the Chikodi copper plate grants of Avasara III (988 A.D.) and, secondly, the grants of Rattaraja (Kharepatan...
plate of 1010 A.D.) testify to their sway over Goa which is referred to as a dwipa \textsuperscript{12}. A major part of contemporary Goa and the Iridige tract was under their dominion \textsuperscript{11}. With the defeat of the Goan Silahara king Rattaraja by the Western Chalukyan emperor Jayasimha, Goa appears to have reverted to the control of the north Konkan Silaharas \textsuperscript{14}. It is opined by some scholars that the port city was under the latter's control before the Kadambas wrested some portions of the Silahara kingdom and ruled Salsette and part of Konkan \textsuperscript{15}. The founder was Gullala Deva I. These rulers were feudatories of the Chalukya rulers of Kalyani and they reigned from Chandrapur which served as their capital till 1049 when the king shifted it to Gopakapattana in the Goa island \textsuperscript{16}. The transfer in turn provided an unprecedented fillip to the city. Goa being a port, consequently flourished in terms of returns from trade, and became renowned and prosperous.

In an endeavor to assert his individuality from the Chalukyas, Jayakeshi II, the grandson of Jayakeshi I, assumed the title 'Konkan Chakravarti'. When Goa was later annexed by the Yadavas, the Kadambas were once again reduced to the position of feudal chiefs. Goa however suffered repeatedly as it proved to be in the path of destruction of both Malik Kafur during the reign of Alauddin Khilji as well as the Tughlaks. The city Gopakapattana was totally devastated by the former \textsuperscript{17}. The period ensuing the Kadamba era can be considered tumultuous. Their capital, shifted to Chandrapur, was razed to the ground by Mohammed bin Tughlak. It was later reinstated at Gopakadwipa. A form of political suzerainty followed. The Vere (\textit{Ponda Goa}) copper plate of Malik Bahadur Tinima of c. 1348 indicates a portion being administered by Malik Bahadur, the local officer presumably appointed initially by the Delhi Sultan, and, later by the Bahamanis \textsuperscript{18}. Indirect rule was thus enforced for some period.
The political arena however came to be confined to an intense tussle between two major powers in the following phase. Over the years the other political powers had got localized. They no longer worthy competitors for the control of Goa.

Political altercation between the Vijayanagar and the Bahamanis followed as these two kingdoms were interested in possessing Goa, a bone of contention in their power struggle for supremacy. Rapid inroads were constantly made and even as early as 1391 there is evidence corroborating the extension of the Vijayanagar empire up to the boundaries of Goa. A copper plate recording the execution of a grant by the chief of Goa in 1391 in the name of ‘viraharai’ dates to this year. The ruling king then being Harihara, it can be seen as an indication of his name. Territorial acquisition continued and, Sawant-wadi and the parganas of Ponda, Maneri, Pedne, Bicholim and Sankla came under the control of the empire [19].

The Kadambas do not appear to have lost their control over Goa altogether as their descendant continued as the naval chief under the Vijayanagar kingdom. He could have probably liberated himself by 1440 AD. There is, however, a controversy regarding the exact date and period as to when it constituted portion of firstly Vijayanagar empire and later, the Bahamanis.

Portuguese chroniclers record that forty years before its conquest by the Bahamanis in 1472, Goa had liberated itself from Vijayanagar domination. On the other hand, muslim chroniclers state it to be an integral part of the Vijayanagar empire even until 1472 [20]. Inspite of such contrasting points of view, it is possible that, Goa could have been ruled by its own nayaka like other adjacent outlying districts of Vijayanagar empire [21].
The Bahamanis attacked Goa in 1471. Mohammad Gowan, the captain of the Bahamani ruler invaded and destroyed it entirely. The conquest proved economically as well as religiously lucrative as it gave the Bahamani kingdom access to the west coast and a supreme position in sea borne commerce. It also guaranteed safety for the muslim pilgrims travelling to Mecca [22]. Due to the muslim takeover, the ancient hindu rulers of Goa found it necessary to migrate. They consequently settled at Hanovar under the region of Vijayanagar empire. This move however created social problems as the persecution by the hindus compelled the Naitaias, Arab, Persian descendants and others to flee to New Goa from Hanover and Bhatkal under Malik Hussain's leadership in 1479. Goa as stated above was already under Bahamani domination by this time. As the old Govapuri port on the banks of Zuari was found to be unsuitable both for navigation and for anchorage for the large merchant ships, the new city of Goa in 1479 on the adjacent bank of the river Mandovi was founded by Malik Hussain. These immigrants whose primary occupation was trade in horses continued the practice here as well. The constant wars between the kingdoms of the hinterland perpetuated demand for continuous import of horses and facilitated the development and the expansion of New Goa, which politically continued as part of the Bahamani kingdom [23]. For the proper working of the administration, Mohammad Gowan entrusted the territory to his officer, Khush Kadam [24].

The Bahamanis stronghold had proved invincible and with its break-up, Goa passed into the dominions of the Yusuf Adil Shah of Bijapur who possessed it till the Portuguese conquest in 1510. His presence is authenticated by João de Barros who says, 'when we came into India, the lord of the city of Goa was a man named Soay, captain of the king of the Deccan, whom we commonly call Sabayo' [23]. Thus, the two centuries prior to the Portuguese conquest witnessed incessant wars between the Vijayanagar Empire and the
Bahamanis for gaining control over Goa. The primary incentive was to grasp the monopoly of the horse trade. Moreover even otherwise, Goa being a very prosperous port yielded large revenues.

VILLAGE COMMUNITIES AND LAND REVENUE

Land and the revenues derived from it are indispensable factors for the foundation and existence of any economy and society. The necessity to understand the machinery involved in its collection arises as the proceeds extracted from it formed the main source of income for the State. Since the very beginning, the village had always formed the backbone of the Indian economy. In fact, it was the fundamental unit on which the entire agrarian structure was established.

Regarding the administrative machinery under the various dynasties, there is scanty evidence dating to the previous period. The proof of the earliest available list of customs is available only of the eleventh century. Since the concept of nayakas had already been an established practice in the administration of the Vijayanagar empire, Goa during this epoch can be surmised to have experienced a similar form of hierarchy as it was either governed directly or was under the nayakas, who owed allegiance to the central seat of power. A definite form of formal allegiance was maintained.

Some administrative changes occurred during it's takeover by the Bahamanis. J.A.J.daCosta considers Mohammad Gowan the able minister of Mohammed III responsible for the same. For convenience and for streamlining the administration, the big provinces were divided into two segments. Irrigation works were introduced for enhancing production. The control of forts was entrusted to officers directly appointed and paid by the Sultan himself [26].
For further efficiency, Yusuf Adil Shah of Bijapur developed and augmented these reforms. Each district was split into subdivisions. These were termed in Persian as Paragana, Kargat, Somat, Mahal and Taluka. They were also designated as Prant and Desh, names used by the hindu rulers. Inspite of a large hierarchical setup and innovative transformation at a higher level, the village however continued to remain the last and fundamental administrative unit.  

Different social strata were also appointed into senior positions in administration. Yusuf Adil Shah strengthened his domination and control by giving civil and military authority to hindu landlords. Lands were entrusted to loyal hindus especially brahmins, lingayats and Marathas. It is therefore evident that brahmins came to occupy positions of high authority and responsibility. Jagirdars and Deshmukhs became powerful. Other hindu landlords were also titled Desais, Sardesais, Rajab, Naik and Rao. This class which grew in preponderance and gained prosperity, later contributed to the furtherance of political turmoil as the Desais oppressed other hindu landlords. It culminated in widespread social discontent. Intra class struggles grew and the latter subsequently played an influential role as they incited the local hindu population to aid the Portuguese against the muslim rulers. It was one of the active groups that remained loyal to Timoja during the phase of Goa’s conquest in 1510.

For the collection of land revenue, there was a rigid hierarchical setup. Each district was under a subehdar. The mokasdar was next in hierarchy. He exercised control over a subordinate group of Amils. This post subsequently became hereditary. Property matters involving significant political issues of those cases requiring interference by the government, were referred to the Bijapur jury which was rated a higher level of justice.
Though the Amil was basically nominated for the collection of revenue, he had wide ranging powers. He was responsible for the maintenance of law and order; being endowed with the prerogative of an executive officer, he also served as a civil judge [29].

While it is true that a few features were transformed over a period of time, it is amply evident that the village retained in perpetuity some of the basic characteristics peculiar to its existence. These included the services of the washerman, the blacksmith, the carpenter, the potter, etc. which were integral to its framework and contributed to its daily needs. It also strove to generate funds for its survival as it had to discover and realise all conditions of money economy and self sufficiency within itself. It was deeply influenced by the demands of the market [30]. Yet, the mode of administration and payment was transformed as lands sometimes came to be collectively owned. Such lands were termed as gaunkarias.

The concept of the village, the basic agrarian unit on which the entire structure was based, has been analysed in detail by Baden Powell. He objects to considering all villages as uniform. According to him, there are only two kinds of villages. In the first form, each man was individualistic; he possessed his own holding which was either inherited or made available through the clearing of land. While this procedure was specifically for land in the village, the area surrounding it was utilized primarily for cattle grazing and could also serve a commercial purpose as it provided wood for cutting. The second type of village consisted of a cohesive joint body that could have descended either from a single body or head. As these bodies owned the lands, they attempted to justify some form of superiority to the tenants who lived on and worked for the estate. The joint group claimed control over both the cultivated and the waste areas.
Baden Powell considers these owners of many holdings the original village settlers. They existed under the guidance of a common headman. Their needs were served by some officers and local artisans. The latter who found nearly exclusive employment in each village, were paid in the form of an annual payment on a communal basis. In other words, the artisan had to meet the demands of the entire village based on predefined payment which was to be compulsorily contributed by all the inhabitants [31].

Thus, it is evident that village committees had always existed. The concept has to be analyzed in this context as they constituted a major basis of Goan economy. They are considered to have a long lineage dating from a very early period. We shall discuss a few interpretations regarding their origin. The Portuguese historian, João de Barros traced the ancestry of Goan village settlers to some impoverished Kanara immigrants who are presumed to have descended from the ghats. Finding the region conducive for agriculture, they claimed land for cultivation. They were permitted to do so and became autonomous only after they consented to pay a fixed amount per village as rent to the local native ruler. This established rate was founded on joint responsibility of all the families of the original settlers in each village [32].

Another hypothesis has been suggested by Afonso Mendes who developed his calculations on the basis of a copper plate inscription issued by the Kadamba ruler Jayakeshi II in 1099. He has also accepted the total infallibility of Barros tradition. The theory has been further substantiated by Fr.Heras.

P.S.S.Pissurlencar attempted another notion as he endeavored to combine Barros idea with that recorded in Sahyadri Khanda and Konkana Khayana. He has visualized the possibility of one early migration of laboring classes who could have been South Indians. These people were followed by saraswat.
brahmins. The latter subsequently established themselves as administrators. According to another tradition, with the Arab invasions around the eighth century, the Kutch Saurashtra region underwent political turmoil. In an attempt to escape from it, the servis Saraswat brahmins are presumed to have undertaken immediate immigration.

It is possible that these migrant brahmins being numerically in minority could not entirely displace the early settlers. They must have slowly arrived in various batches. Differences within the group of Saraswats corroborate to the fact that they came in successive waves of migration. Their superior education and skill in assisting the ruler proved to be advantageous as it enabled them to achieve political and social predominance through the latter's good will. It perhaps explains the brahmin's high position at the desa level. Due to their abilities, they also gained control of economically very lucrative and fertile areas. Each desa had a general assembly with selected candidates of the villages in the taluka as represented by tradition. Therefore, nine chief villages sent desais in Bardes, eight in Tiswadi and twelve in Salsette to the taluka. However, even in the assembly, the brahmins were so influential and dominant to such an extent that, out of the twenty-nine chief villages, seventeen were controlled exclusively by them. It is thus clear that the communities not only had a long lineage but also persisted in a definite form with the brahmins at a preponderant level till the sixteenth century.

To begin with, the village communities developed mainly as agricultural associations of private interest for the promotion of agricultural markets. The joint ownership of the villages was most manifest in the distribution of paddy fields. In the earlier years of the settlement, the entire community had worked in a coordinated method to cultivate areas. The produce was also equitably shared. Originally autonomous, with each political conquest by
different powers, the gaunkars had to pay taxes to local overlords or rulers for acquiring permission to possess and enjoy their lands. They also benefited from additional responsibility as they were entrusted with responsibility of exacting revenue from others who either owned property or had leased their lands within a limit [37]. An egalitarian form of society thus came up. However, matters changed over time. Even among the various constituent vangads of the village, a hierarchical gradation had developed. It was based on the degree of contribution of each vangad towards the progress of the village during the early years of settlement. The representative elder of the first ranking vangad who had contributed substantially was designated as the chief gaunkar. He was granted certain social privileges. This position in terms of power and privileges can be equated with the Mirasdars in Maharashtra or the Khudkasht pattern under the Mughals [38]. The execution of activities of the village councils were unanimously delegated to other officials whose posts were hereditary. These included the Kulkarni, Parpoti among others. They obtained offices through the farming out system. The procedure was a common phenomenon. The offices of the Potekar and Gramavarika were commercially beneficial as they were farmed out to the highest bidders. It was also however, stipulated that these people had to perform their duties diligently and could encounter dismissal and punishment if found indulging in unfair practices [39]. The two categories of non-gaunkars who could openly voice their opinion were the Kulachari and Vantely [40].

The process of the State receiving land revenue can be seen to be dating from the earliest times. Land was taxed even under the Silaharas. From the beginning, unclaimed property without heirs and forests not belonging to anyone, were directly accessible to and reverted back directly to the State [41].
T.R.deSouza opines that the *Rayarekha* system of land assessment of Vijayanagar must have been introduced in Goa during 1378 - 1472. He derives the conclusion on the basis of *sidan* paid by the village to the State *diwan*. The land revenue then collected was approximately one fifth of the gross income of the village [42].

Matters underwent further classification under Mohammed Gowan of the Bahamani. He is responsible for the introduction of new revenue system based on survey, assessment of land and the insistence on cash payment [43].

The rate of land revenue also appears to have doubled in this period. According to Baden Powell, the hindu system was *ryotwari* with the State taking a proportion of the actual production of every cultivating family. Under the muslims, especially the Adil Shahis, the revenue became payable in cash and the unit of payment as, mentioned earlier, was the village. The practice subsequently enhanced the power of the village leaders and the *gaunkars*. There are instances of land transfers dating to this period. References to Turkish auxiliaries of the Bijapur sultan who wrested land from their customary hindu holders also exist [44]. Revenue farming as an institution prevalent in the fifteenth and sixteenth century Vijayanagar was confined largely to both the farming out of customs in the port as well as other levies like octroi. Thus, in Bhatkal and Pulicat, c. 1500, the person referred to as the 'governor' of the port was interchangeable and finds mention in the Portuguese documents as *rendeiro* [45]. Other taxes derived from land cultivation included horse tax which was a levy of an additional one fourth of the entire revenue of the land [46]. The system, prevalent under Vijayanagar Empire persisted under the Bahamanis [47].
The extent to which the village communities had evolved is elaborated by the hypothesis of H.S. Maine. His theory regarding the development of the Indian village communities proposed that it unravelled 'in those parts of the country in which the village community was most perfect. The authority exercised by the headman was lodged with the village council'. The situation existing in Goa falls in line with Maine's thinking. There is however no evidence of the headmen exercising control as executive heads of the village communities. Historians who describe them so usually generalize as they tend to apply to Goa the situation prevailing in contemporary Maharashtra. In Goa, the only existent form of gradation was among the various constituent vangads of a village. As mentioned, the hierarchy had perhaps originated with each vangad's initial contribution towards the village [48]. It was these communities who as a unit collectively paid rent to the rulers.

**NON AGRARIAN PRODUCTION**

It forms the other alternative form of economic activity distinct from agriculture. Non-agrarian production is relevant as it reflects the mechanism of the organization and operation of guilds. It also incorporates the industries, the taxes inflicted and the concept of monetization. Some form of the guild system had existed since a very early period [49]. These were developed mainly to protect commercial interests. As during the reigns of the Bhojas and the Silaharas, trade and industry were regulated by gremias even under the Kadambas. Settlements designated as the Hanjaman denoted the flourishing community of vanias dealing primarily in gold, silver, cotton cloth, victuals, paddy, pepper, fruits etc. Shrestis or sethis of artisans and traders find mention in the Kadamba inscriptions giving donations to the towns in the form of income for temple worship.
There are references in the Lakshmeswar inscriptions of the Chalukya emperor Vikramaditya of Kalyani testifying to a guild being authorized to collect certain taxes from all classes within a stipulated period of time for \[50\]. There is mention about the existence of industries in the inscription of Jayakesh I. It is implied from the records that the most important non-agrarian activities were those of spinning, masonry, brass works, carpentry, jewelry, iron works, basket weaving and extraction of oil \[51\]. Taxes were levied such that both the buyer and seller were obliged to pay \[52\].

The table below lists only a few of the commodities that were taxed before they were either purchased and sold. It is abundantly clear that the tax on the boats and the ships was higher. The fact that these ships and boats were considered worthy enough for enhanced tax payments reflects abundantly on the expanded level of commerce which was fetching high returns. All these activities could have generated much commercial exchange. The great utility of money especially under the Kadambas clearly indicates that commerce had become economically lucrative and extensive trade contacts were maintained. The early Kadamba inscriptions in Goa consist of references to a variety of coins in circulation like the gaddianacas and nishkas. The intrinsic value of the existing coins at the time of the Portuguese conquest will be discussed in a later chapter \[53\].

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Kind of Goods</th>
<th>Tax paid by</th>
<th>Seller</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ship</td>
<td>1 gaddianaca</td>
<td>1 gaddianaca</td>
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<tr>
<td>Parangue</td>
<td>5 drachmas</td>
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<td>Mane</td>
<td>2 drachmas</td>
<td>5 drachmas</td>
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<tr>
<td>House</td>
<td>1 drachma</td>
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<td>Palmgrove</td>
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Goa, being a port, had access to the sea. The extent to which it constituted a significant part under the various dynasties before the Portuguese conquest is important as trade immensely enhanced Goa’s prosperity. Its strategic location contributed tremendously to its economy. Since the very beginning the Arab merchants played a very major role in fostering trade. They participated either directly or as middlemen. The Rashtrakutas, the overlords of the period could have accepted these Arab sea traders as intermediaries for associating in their overseas trade. Goa also served as an export centre especially for precious stones being transported from Malkhed near Hyderabad. It was and continued to be a great commercial centre.

Relations of the earlier period were extended further under the Kadambas. Under Jayakeshi I, the commercial prosperity increased as links developed with Simhala, Zuagarara, Callah, Pandya, Chanda, Gauda, Khyata, Gurjura, Latta, Pusta, Sristanal, Srityam and Pulikat. In addition to the contacts links with these regions which led to good commodity exchange, some of the traders could have imported horses from Arabia, Persia and Afghanistan. Thus, in addition to strengthening of links and establishment of new contacts, trade also came to be regulated through customs during this period.

Ships coming to Gopakapattana from different regions of the country as well as overseas were obliged to pay customs duties. The Silaharas insisted on payment of customs of one suvarna gaddianaca for ships from abroad for gaining entrance into the port. On the other hand, only one suvarnadharana
was levied on ships participating in coastal trade. The Panaji plate of Jayakeshi I also clearly stipulates a prescribed form of compulsory payment for all merchant ships entering Gopakapatana. Though obligatory, it however varied from ship to ship. The income derived from the taxes on the ships was transferred to meet the needs and the demands of the House of Charity established by the Arab minister Chaddam. In fact, these were levied primarily to assist in accumulating sufficient quantity of finance to feed the poor. Another avenue for diverting money for this purpose was in the sudden demise of any merchant without legal heirs; after meeting the funeral expenditure, the remaining amount was officially diverted to the Houses.

It is evident from inscriptions that the extensive contacts and conducive local environment in terms of climate, encouraged many foreign traders to reside in the town. The Goa charter of Jayakeshi I corroborates the mercantile community to constitute traders from all quarters. Their presence in turn supported even local commerce.

With such widespread commercial transactions, the Kadamba kingdom consequently grew rich. The mercantile community as well as the bureaucracy could have benefited tremendously and amassed wealth.

According to the earliest Portuguese authors, pre-Portuguese Goa continued to be the main port of trade for both the Bahamani and Vijayanagar kingdoms. Trade was extensive and in the year 1472, in addition to other commodities in circulation, it imported spices from Malabar, horses from Arabia and other products. Politically, economically and even militarily, the most important commodity of import was horses. Their incessant demand existed due to political altercations and constant warfare. The best horses were desired for war by the Indian states of the fifteenth century. These bred locally in Kathiawar were considered to be physically incapable...
and of inferior quality. Since the local supply available within the country did not satisfy the rulers, it became expedient to depend on good quality horses imported from Oman, Arabia and Persia. As a minimum number of 1000 horses came to Goa each year, it can be surmised that half of the total revenue was collected through levying tax on those entering the port and selling of the same. A tax of twenty pardaus was charged under the Adil Shahis, though on an average, fortytwo pardaus were paid at entry as custom duties. However, horse trade was not the only avenue of regular commerce. Large revenues were also available from the dues on merchandise and anchorages. Regarding other commercial activities overland, there are references to oxen loaded with merchandise from many distant kingdoms in the interior entering Goa.

The Malabar coast, Chaul, Dabul and the kingdoms of Gujarat maintained contacts with Goa for commerce. Pepper, ginger and other varieties of spices from the Malabar coast were transported to Goa. Locally cultivated commodities like the high quality betel were exported to Aden, Hormuz and even Cambay. Goa therefore had extended contacts and traded lavishly on a grand scale. It is possible to surmise that all these activities could have fostered the development of the shipbuilding industry. In fact, maritime trade depended tremendously on it. Transportation of the timber from the Kanara region, its ready procurablity and the presence of skilled craftsmen made Goa a feasible centre for constructive activity. Efficient ships of high quality were manufactured. Consequently there was a large influx of merchants from all over Asia. As mentioned, the transactions were dominated by muslims especially the Arab traders. The other influential group were the Gujaratis. These people were involved even in local day to day trade within the city as they owned many shops. Goa's location was so strategic that it facilitated the arrival of merchandise from all over Asia and attracted
Trade was not politically controlled by any State to which an influential merchant belonged. In this period, there was considerable freedom for the participants who only paid only custom duties. Politics in the true sense of monitoring the Indian ocean waters to monopolize personal gains had not yet emerged as a phenomenon during this period. Since it was a period of free commercial activity, M.N. Pearson maintains that none of the Konkan ports of the fifteenth century were particularly important. On a comparative level, Dabhol, Chaul and Goa were the biggest. Of the three, Goa was however considered to be better than Chaul. In fact, it can be seen as an example of a true entrepot even in the fifteenth century, channelling exports from the Vijayanagar Empire, the Bahamani kingdom and the other regions and importing goods for the interior markets.

THE GROWTH OF THE CITY GOA

The above discussed issue clearly point to the fact that Goa must have developed and attained a high level of urban growth; a natural corollary due to its strategic location and enhanced prosperity over the centuries.

The city has undergone a number of locational changes through the centuries. Govapuri also referred to by other names like Gopakapattana, Gopakapura and Gova, was situated in the island of Goa. The Kadambas had Chandrapur (placed in Salsette) as their capital. They transferred it to Gopakapattana in 1052-53 and reverted back in the early decades of the fourteenth century. Both the cities were subsequently destroyed by rulers from Delhi. Gopakapattana however gained importance under Vijayanagar.
Prior to the Portuguese occupation, Goa was a walled city with forts and gardens. The ancient city of Goa situated on the southern end of the island, was on the right bank of the Zuari river. It was then the capital of the Kadambas. Due to its commercial nature under Jayakeshi I, Goa attained a comparatively more cosmopolitan outlook. The capital was also served by an important highway, the Rajavithi which linked it with Old Goa. A new city was created only at a later period. It is corroborated even by the Portuguese chroniclers who record the development of a new city towards the end of the fifteenth century. This process had become a practical exigency. It is stated that around 1440, the old city then the capital of an extensive empire, was transferred to its present position due to the shallowness of the Zuari river. On the other hand, as the river Mandovi had become deeper due to monsoon waters, it proved to be increasingly incapable of offering shelter to a number of merchantsmen in times of need.

The establishment of a new city is further testified by Ibn Batuta who reports that in 1443 - 44, 'there are in the island, two cities, one ancient built by the pagans, the second by the Musalmans when they conquered the island for the first time.'

Further transformation occurred during the reign of the Khiljis. By 1472, firstly, due to Malik Kafur's and later Mohammed Gowan's invasions, Goa was converted into a muslim city when the latter destroyed all the hindu temples. In the 1480's, the present Old Goa progressed as a new city. The muslim city extended due to the Royal patronage. Fortification was strengthened further under Yusuf Adil Shah of Bijapur when, in addition to the already erected ramparts, the city came to be protected by strongholds. In other words, the ruler emphasized on and gave utmost priority to security and constructed a citadel, a palace and surrounded the city with a
wall and a moat to thwart any external invasion. For internal security and in order to secure the kingdom from within, a large garrison of about nine thousand people was constantly maintained. Adil Shah in an effort to prevent spies etc. from gaining access to the city, appointed a captain to prohibit movement of anybody without a pass in the island \[^{83}\]. He also constructed a number of monuments including the majestic palace of the ‘Sabayo’; it was later utilised as the Portuguese governor’s official residence in Goa \[^{84}\].

Trade and the economy thrived and Goa attained high levels of prosperity under the Adil Shahis of Bijapur. Returns from revenue reached such unimaginable heights that the city of Goa itself paid 100,000 gold pardaus per year in addition to the surrounding districts of Goa that yielded 400,000 pardaus. Goa before the Portuguese cannot be classified as static or isolated. It was a great port with wide ranging contacts \[^{85}\]. It served for religious travel as well since an author claims it to be a reputed embarkation port for muslims on their way to Mecca \[^{86}\]. This development could perhaps be seen to coincide with the invasion of Mohammed Gowan who managed to create an easy outlet for the pilgrims in the fifteenth century.

Goa was thus a well developed city and port before the Portuguese conquest. Religious toleration was also practised under the various rulers. The hindus, the Jains and the Buddhists peacefully coexisted during the rule of the Southern Silaharas. The Saiva sect could have been a comparatively more predominant branch in Hinduism in this period. A number of temples were dedicated to it. Interest in the religion and social life of the people continued even during the rule of the Vijayanagar empire. The stone inscription at Nagesh temple at Bandiwadi Ponda records the grants made by this village to Devi Mahalakshmi. Dated 1413, the grant was conferred by Mai Senavai, the representative of the Vijayanagar ruler at Cuncolim. A stone inscription dating to Devaraya’s reign in 1425 records the grant of two villages -
Vagurumbe and Akshya to the Jain basti of Neminath at Bandiwadi. It is amply evident that a number of temples were also constructed. Evidence corroborate that the Portuguese demolished most of them to suit their economic purposes and diverted the resultant revenue available to their churches in the following century.  

If we attempt to examine the possibility of the kind of feudalism that could have existed in Goa prior to the Portuguese conquest, the proposal by D.D.Kosambi regarding the prevalence of both forms in the region will have to be taken into account. On the one hand, Goa was ruled by powerful and as well as weak feudatories during different phases of history. On the other hand, at the local level, a class of landowners within the multiplicity of villages was organized into desas, mahals or tanadarias. There were a large number of merchantsmen who could have constituted a form of feudalism from below. It has also been suggested that the process of feudalisation could have actually commenced with the arrival of muslim rulers who due to their attitude to political conquest had a tendency to overrule the ownership rights of the original settlers. In other words, it would then refer to the period of muslim domination even in Goa prior to the Portuguese conquest.

FOOT NOTES:


15. Ibid. p. 69.


17. Ibid. p. 8.


20. V.T.Gune, Ancient shrines of Goa: A pictorial survey, Panaji, 1965,


25. J.A.J.daCosta, *op.cit.*, p. 120.


27. Ibid, p. 88.


33. P.S.S.Pissurlencar, *Goa pre-Portuguesa atraves dos escritores*, Goa, 1962,


36. Ibid., pp. 57 - 58


40. T.R. de Souza, 'Rural economy and life' in his (edtd.), Goa through the ages, Delhi, 1989, p. 92.

41. Gerald A. Pereira, op. cit., p. 33

42. Gazette of the Bombay Presidency, XV, pp. 2; 1557, in T.R. de Souza, op. cit., p. 78.

In the Kanara region, the Imperial authorities were concerned directly with the customs revenue of the ports and the tolls on the highways connecting the same to the imperial city of Vijayanagar; it has found mention in T.R. de Souza, 'Rural economy and life' in his (edtd.), Goa through the ages, 1989, p. 96; Hast-o-bud has been defined as a summary assessment.
by calculating the entire produce of a village through a procedure of inspecting all the fields and counting the available ploughs. It is also been referred to in Irfan Habib, *The agrarian system of Mughal India*, 1556-1607, London, 1979, p.198, note. 11.


46. J.A.J.daCosta, *op.cit.*, p.120.


49. Merchant guilds have been defined as ‘internal structures in which taxes are paid or remitted’, in Sanjay Subrahmanyam, *Merchants, markets and the State in early modern India*, Delhi, 1990, p. 247.


55. HAG, Monçôes 93D, fls. 396, in P.S.S.Pissurlencar, *Goa pre-Portuguesa através dos escritores*, Goa, 1962, p.15


60 Gerald A.Pereira, op.cit. p 9


63. M.N.Pearson, *Merchants and rulers in Gujarat The response to the*
Portuguese in the sixteenth century, (henceforth referred to as Merchants and rulers), California, 1975, pp. 12,39; M.N.Pearson, Coastal western India; New Delhi, 1981, p. 70.

64. M.N.Pearson, Coastal western India; Delhi, 1981, p. 70, João de Barros, op.cit., II, V, 2; Gaspar Correia, Lendas da India, Coimbra, 1922, Tomê II, XVI.


67. Ibid. pp. 57,78.

68. V.T.Gune, p.136. This statement is substantiated in the book by Armando Cortesão (edtd.), op.cit., pp. 54,57.


80. There is another reference in Armando Cortesão (edtd), *op.cit.*, p. 72.

81. As quoted in B.S.Shastry and Navlekar (edtd.); *op.cit.*, p.46.


translated by M.L. Dames, London, 1921, p. 175.


86. J. M. Richards, Goa, Delhi, 1982, p. 18.
