PREFACE

Way back in 1982-1985 when I chose to do the Bachelor of Arts Degree in Double Main – History and English – offered by the Calicut University, Kerala, India, I hardly knew the real academic intentions of the course designers in creating such a curious combination. Even when I made my choice to do higher studies in literature, the orientation my B.A. exerted in me took the form of an uneasy fascination with history without which literature began to appear to me quite incomplete. It was also a time, I noticed, when many historians seemed to think of their own discipline in association with literature in a similar sense of incompleteness.

However, the mainstream historians as well as the mainstream literary critics were seen holding on to assumptions of independence and self-sufficiency in their so-called individual disciplines. The tendency appeared to be a sort of anachronism in a time often described as postmodern to pretend to live by faith in values expressed in such terms as mainstream, independence, individuality, identity, compartmentalization etc. any further, whereas the intellectually inherent intentions of my old Bachelor Degree seemed to challenge all such fallacies, even without a legitimatization from postmodernism. Consequently, the confluence of literature and history seemed to me too spontaneous.
To channelize these thoughts into a fruitful research topic as 'literature as a source of history' and to decide on the Portuguese epic as its case study, I owe immeasurably to my Guide and Supervisor, Dr. K.S. Mathew, himself a renowned authority on Indo-Portuguese history. But for his constant encouragement and guidance, this work could not have been started nor completed. I place on record most sincerely the indebtedness of this research project to him.

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DAVEES C.J.